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God's People in Fellowship at the Communion Table

Lowell C. Green

We are living in what may well be the most exciting age since the world began. Discoveries in natural science, medical research, technology, and other areas of knowledge." Also the Christian Church is being confronted by radical change. A primary example is the Ecumenical Movement. Changes in the Church of Rome, changes in our Protestant neighbors, and changes within our own circles make it necessary to reassess our own position. We shall attempt here to reexamine the stand of the Evangelical Lutheran Church on the question of Communion fellowship, both within our own church and within the Christian Church as a whole.

I. The Communion Table

A. The Theological Basis of the Sacrament

It is commonly said that the chief doctrine of the Reformation was forensic justification. There is much truth in this. But we shall never understand forensic justification unless we see that even more important was the doctrine of Christ (Christology). It was on this point that the Lutheran and the Reformed groups of Protestantism parted company in 1529. Many people assume that the cause for the split between Luther and Zwingli was merely the question of Christ's presence in the Sacrament. Actually it went far beyond that to the question of Christ's presence under any circumstances. Zwingli held that on Ascension Day, Christ ascended to heaven in such a way that he is now separated from the Church on earth till he comes again at the end of time. Behind this was what Bultmann calls the mythological view that the earth is flat, and that heaven and hell are both spatial places like this world, except that the one is above the earth and the other beneath its surface. Since Christ had gone straight up in his Ascension, according to Zwingli, he could not be present in the Bread and Wine of the Sacrament. Therefore the earthly elements were symbols alone of the Body and Blood of Christ, which were at some far away spot beyond the clouds. It was Zwingli's naive idea of the universe, and his concept of a Christ separated from his followers, that led to his view of the Sacrament. Luther and his friends saw that therefore the real problem was a matter of the doctrine of Christ.

Lutheran theologians did not accept the mythological view of heaven and hell. They understood that heaven was not a spatial, material place, but rather a spiritual realm. What did Scripture therefore mean when it said that Christ ascended to the Father's right hand? It meant that he freed himself from earthly restrictions and took upon himself the divine powers that were his before the Incarnation. "For," said Luther, "the right hand of God is everywhere!" In other words, through his Ascension, Christ becomes closer to his followers, rather than more distant. Hence the Festival of the Ascension is one of the key church-days wherever Lutheran faith is strong. It is significant that this festival has little significance for our brethren in the Reformed Churches. Where this day is overlooked, could it mean that the doctrine of justification, of Christ, and of the Lord's Supper are not being understood? Ascension Day is the festival of our Lord's Real Presence and therefore a chief festival where Lutheranism is strong! Perhaps where Ascension Day services have been discontinued, it is due to the misconception that a day is great because of the number of people that can be gathered into one church, rather than because God has made the day great by one of his immeasurable acts for our salvation.

Werner Elert writes: "It was Luther's Reformed opponents, who played their view of Christ's Ascension against Luther's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, that led Luther to loose the relationship between Here and the Hereafter from the worldview of his time. 'Heaven' as the dwelling-place of God is not a place in the spatial sense. Even if his doctrine of the Lord's Supper had had no other importance than that it led Luther to clarity on this point, and that it led Luther to insist upon this in spite of all the condemnations of the Reformed theologians, its importance would have been very great. The results of Luther's stand have had an incalculable influence on the development of the modern worldview."¹

Lutheranism has taken a very positive view toward the world as God's Creation. The highest indication of God's love for this world was when he himself became part of Creation through the Incarnation. In that act, God who was Infinite became Finite. Now it is true that the ancient Greek philosophers denied that this was possible. They taught, "The Finite cannot contain the Infinite." (*Finitum non capax infiniti.*) Unfortunately, the Reformed leaders took up this slogan, and applied it to Christ and the Sacrament. On the other hand, a modern Lutheran theologian like Ernst Kaesemann is able to see a very positive meaning in Christ's becoming a part of what is earthly. Kaesemann points out that in the New Testament, the body is the possibility of Christ entering

into communication with his people. In the Sacrament, under the Bread, Christ gives us his Body. "He is for us there 'bodily', he gives us participation in himself 'bodily'. Thus he who is now the Exalted One can, in the Lord's Supper, ever and again give that which he who was the Dying One gave once and for all: 'My Body which is given for you'."²

B. The Sacrament as Communion

A recent translation of the Small Catechism changes Luther's question, "*Was ist das Sakrament des Altars?*" to read, "What is Holy Communion?" While this is not an exact translation, it commends itself for teaching purposes. The name of the Sacrament, under American influence, has more and more changed to Holy Communion. As Evangelical Lutherans, we see a three-fold communion taking place in the Sacrament—the Sacramental Union between the earthly element and the heavenly gift, the union of the believer with Christ through oral eating and drinking, and the union of the unbeliever with the foes of Christ when he eats and drinks judgment to himself. Let us study these three phases of Communion more closely.

1. *Holy Communion is the Sacramental Union of the Bread and Wine with the Body and Blood of Christ.*

Are we dealing with merely "a personal presence of Christ"? This is not an adequate description of the position of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The earliest text that we have in the New Testament describing the institution of the Lord's Supper is I Corinthians 11:23-25—"For I have received from the Lord that which I also transmitted to you: Our Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my Body which is for you. This do in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after they had eaten, he took the Chalice, saying, 'This Chalice is the New Covenant in my blood. This do, as often as you drink, in remembrance of me.'"

One of the principles of proper Biblical interpretation is that the literal sense is to be understood in a text, unless it was clearly intended to be interpreted in some other light. The literal meaning of these words is clear enough. "This is my Body" meant that when the communicant took the Bread, he received the Body of Christ. In his controversy with the Reformed, Luther placed all his emphasis on this phrase: "This is my Body." When Zwingli tried to say that "is" here means "represents," Luther steadfastly clung to the text of Scripture.

Some have tried to prove that Luther was wrong by pointing out that Christ probably spoke in the Aramaic language, which has no word for "is." Such an argument is pure sophistry. For

one thing, even if there is no separate word for "is" in Aramaic, it like all languages, is capable of expressing thoughts which, to be rendered in other languages, must have the copulative verb, "is." How strange our Bible would sound in Greek or in English if we became such literalistic fools that we left out every "is"! Furthermore, the text that we have was given to us in Greek, and it tells us that that which Christ said must be rendered in Greek, as in English, in such a fashion as this: "This is my Body."

Various attempts have been made to explain how the Body of Christ is present in the Bread. The medieval theologians taught *transubstantiation*, claiming that through a miracle of the officiating priest, the bread was changed into the Body of Christ. Other medieval schoolmen held that while the Body of Christ was present, the bread was still bread; their view is called *consubstantiation*. Our Lutheran forefathers held that Scripture does not tell us *how* the Body of Christ is present in the Bread, but only *that* it is there. Hence they avoided terms such as transubstantiation and consubstantiation, and spoke only of the Sacramental Union (*unio sacramentalis*). It was not transubstantiation, for the bread remained bread. Nor was it consubstantiation, because it was neither a case of two spatial things being joined, nor their being joined in a permanent union. Christ's Body was not present in the spatial sense that it was confined to the Host, for the glorified Christ has been made to sit ". . . at God's right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion . . ." (Eph. 1:20f). Furthermore, since Christ is present in the Bread and Wine only for the duration of the Sacrament, one cannot speak of a consubstantiation, which would imply a permanent union. Hence the only proper term, in the light of Scripture, is "Sacramental Union."

This concept is described as follows in the Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord VII: "For as in Christ two distinct and untransformed natures are indivisibly united, so in the Holy Supper the two essences, the natural bread and the true, natural body of Christ, are present together here on earth in the ordered action of the sacrament, though the union of the body and blood of Christ with the bread and wine is not a personal union, like that of the two natures in Christ, but a sacramental union . . ." (S.D. VII, 37).

2. *Holy Communion is the oral eating and drinking of Christ's Body and Blood.*

If the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present in the consecrated Bread and Wine, then the communicant, in eating

the Bread and Wine, simultaneously eats the Body and Blood of Christ. This point has aroused tremendous opposition from Reformed theologians. In his biography of Melanchthon, Clyde Manschreck over-emphasizes the divergency between Melanchthon and Luther. When Melanchthon was sent to meet with the Reformed theologians before the Wittenberg Concord of 1536, Luther sent him instructions. Manschreck says that in his letter, Luther said that Christ's flesh "... is actually torn with the teeth and eaten..."³ However, this phrase is not genuine, but is a later addition to what Luther really wrote. Nevertheless, Luther insisted on the oral eating and drinking as the inevitable consequence of the Sacramental Union. Hermann Sasse correctly quotes Luther's advice to Melanchthon in these words: "Our opinion is that the body is in such a way with or in the bread that it is truly received with the bread. Whatever the bread suffers or does is also true of the body. Thus it is rightly said of the Body of Christ that it is carried, given, received, eaten, when the bread is carried, given, received, eaten. That is the meaning of 'This is my Body.'"⁴

3. *Holy Communion bestows Christ's Body and Blood also on those who are unbelievers or otherwise unworthy, who receive it unto judgment.*

If the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present in the Sacrament, as is taught in I Corinthians 11:23-25, then it would follow that all those who take the Bread and Wine receive also the Body and Blood of Christ, even though they do it in ignorance or unbelief. This is actually taught in verses 27-29. Paul continues: "As often as you eat this Bread and drink this Chalice, you do proclaim the Lord's death till he come again. Therefore whoever eats this Bread or drinks this Chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the Bread and drink of the Chalice. For he who eats and drinks, not discerning the Body, eats and drinks judgment to himself."

The idea that a person could be harmed by receiving the Lord's Body in the Sacrament has been most unpalatable to those who do not believe in the Real Presence. Typically, Reformed theologians have tended to interpret "the Body" in verse 29 as the church. However, such an interpretation does not fit the context, and has been rejected by most leading interpreters. No less a scholar than Ernst Kaesemann says bluntly: "To me, it does not seem possible to connect *to sōma* (the Body) with anything other than the sacramental element in the Lord's Supper."⁵ Kaesemann also writes: "In a strict analogy, the Bread and Chalice, and Body and Blood of the

Lord, correspond with each other. These are clearly identical, but yet in a mysterious way for which no one can account. And still if one does not account these two as identical, one conducts himself, '*anaxiōs*', which means not exactly 'unworthily' but literally 'unfittingly'."⁶

Hence, Kaesemann continues, whoever attends the Sacrament, "... not discerning the Lord's Body . . .," joins the foes of Christ who failed to discern that he was the Son of God, and nailed him to the Cross. "Such a one however is guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, which can hardly be understood other than to mean: guilty of the death of Jesus. The appearance of Christ offers only two possibilities—either with the congregation to proclaim the death of Jesus, or with the world to bring this death to pass. And to overlook this appearance means to become guilty with the world in the death of Jesus In the Sacrament, that which will be revealed on the Day of Judgment already comes into the present, in a certain sense."

II. Hindrances to Communion Fellowship.

A. Reformed Theology

Recently, Helmut Gollwitzer of Germany has issued a passionate plea for intercommunion between Lutheran and Reformed congregations. He blames the lack of unity among the churches on the fact that they have not communed together, and claims that if the various denominations would commune together, they would soon be united in doctrine also. If unity could be reached in such a way, this would of course, be the path of follow. But impatience will not accomplish this purpose. A crash program of communing with the Reformed would not really bring us closer together, but would likely only result in the destruction of the Sacrament. For the Reformed do not look upon the Sacrament in the same way that we do. (In fact, Luther said that since they reject the clear word of Scripture and institution of it, they really do not have the Sacrament at all, but mere bread and wine, even as they say.) At any rate, Gollwitzer seems to think that altar and church fellowship are matters about which men are free to make their own arrangements. We read in I Corinthians 11:17-22 how the Corinthians had attempted to make it their own supper. Paul tells them bluntly that what they are observing is not the Lord's Supper and then, referring back to Christ's institution, that they must again have the Lord's Supper, not the Christians' supper.

B. Lutheranism in America

In the history of Lutheranism in America, Communion fellowship has been a greater problem than elsewhere. During the early part of the nineteenth century, loose Communion practices threatened the dissolution of the Lutheran Church. Samuel Schmucker advocated unionistic practices within the General Synod, which led to a split and the later formation of the General Council. But even within the General Council, which was the most confessionally-minded of the major bodies in the eastern states, there was a lack of uniformity of doctrine and practice.

In the synods that developed further west, stricter practices were the rule. For many years, the former Iowa Synod cooperated with the General Council. Observers were sent to their conventions, money was contributed towards foreign missions of the General Council, a joint German hymnal, the *Kirchenbuch*, was produced, and there was a general move toward unity. But this was disrupted by loose practices within the General Council. At its convention in Akron, Ohio, in 1872, the Council attempted to bring forth a statement that would convince the Iowa Synod that it was really confessional in its fellowship practices, but there was much opposition. Finally this declaration, the Akron Rule (often confused with the Galesburg Rule) was promulgated:

1. The Rule is: Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran pastors only, and Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only.
2. Any exceptions are to be only a matter of special privilege, and no a matter of "rights."
3. In all matters relating to such exceptions, the pastor must decide in accordance with these ground rules according to his best conscience.⁸

Paragraphs 2 and 3 were not acceptable to Iowa. Hence three years later the General Council, meeting at Galesburg, issued a statement omitting Paragraphs 2 and 3. But although the Galesburg convention gave greater prominence to Scripture and the Confessions, the less confessional group saw to it that the objectionable paragraphs from the Akron Rule were still sustained. The political compromising that took place is clear. Hence the Iowa Synod was not willing to accept either the Akron Rule or the Galesburg Rule. As a leader from Iowa, Pastor Johannes Deindoerfer, expressed it: "Since the parts regarding exceptions and special privileges were allowed to remain in force, the back door had been left open for lax practices on the part of the less confessionally-minded party in

the General Council.”⁹ History proves time and again that doctrinal laxity leads not to unity but to further division!

In preparation for the forming of the American Lutheran Conference in 1930, a group of propositions called the “Minneapolis Theses” was drawn up. In Article III, Section 2, the Minneapolis Theses rejected “all unionism and syncretism,” and affirmed the rule, “Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran pastors only, and Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only.”¹⁰ But this rule appears to have been made ineffective in the *United Testimony on Faith and Life*, 1952, where exceptions again are brought in. In other words, the specifically Galesburg decision was once again suspended to make room for the unionistic Akron Rule!

There seems to be a steady erosion in American Lutheranism regarding the sanctity of Communion fellowship. In the “Model Constitution” prepared for congregations in 1962, the ALC suggested that Communion participation was “. . . open to confirmed members of this and other Lutheran congregations . . .” (By-Law 1). In 1965, the College of District Presidents approved changing the phrase “. . . and other Lutheran congregations . . .” to read, “. . . and to individual members of other congregations . . .” So By-Law 1 now reads: “Participation in Holy Communion shall be open to confirmed members of this congregation and to individual members of other congregations who accept the Lutheran teaching in regard to Holy Communion as set forth in Paragraph 2” Paragraph 2 then states that worthy participation requires sincere repentance, faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour, the earnest desire to amend one’s sinful life, and the acceptance of the Scriptural teaching of the Real Presence of Christ with his Body and Blood in the Sacrament.

Now, one might ask, what more could be wished than that a prospective communicant should show these marks of worthy participation, and especially the last—accept the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ with his Body and Blood in the Sacrament? Unfortunately, history proves that words alone do not really solve a thing. When Luther and Zwingli debated on the Sacrament at Marburg in 1529, they were unable to reach an agreement because Zwingli insisted that Christ according to his human nature was confined to heaven since the Ascension, and therefore could not truly be present in the Sacrament. And yet a year later, when Bucer tried to bring together the Lutheran and Reformed groups, Zwingli cheerfully agreed to Bucer’s formula on what was called the “Real Presence.” As Theodore Kolde relates it: “Zwingli was ready to acknowledge the presence of the Body of Christ in the Lord’s Supper, only

not in a natural or bodily manner. Thereby, through further clarification, it was seen that he really had not changed his position. But also, upon Bucer's insistence, he conceded this formula: 'The true Body of Christ is truly presented.' " Therefore, the repeating of theological cliches proves nothing.

C. Reasons for Close Communion.

Attendance at Communion in Lutheran churches, in normal situations, should be limited to confirmed Lutherans for the following reasons.

1. Holy Communion is the act of a group of people who share a oneness in Jesus Christ. This oneness embraces their faith in Christ and their convictions concerning the Sacrament. It is disturbed by the presence of an outsider who does not share that faith. This is why the Ancient Church dismissed all non-members before the celebration of the Eucharist.

2. Reverence for the Sacrament requires that the Body and Blood of the Lord not be distributed indiscriminately. It is both a matter of shielding the Sacrament from abuse, and also of preserving the integrity of the congregation. The congregation has been entrusted with the Means of Grace. From the time of the Ancient Church, this has meant that the Sacrament has been distributed only to those who have qualified themselves.

3. Attending the Lord's Supper, at least for Lutherans, is an act of confession. Going to a Lutheran altar is telling others that one believes the Real Presence as taught by the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Where members of denominations questioning the Real Presence are admitted to the Sacrament, it suggests that perhaps their doctrine is just as valid as ours. Concern for confessional honesty and integrity demands that certain principles be set up and followed to decide who shall be admitted to the Lord's Table.

4. Close Communion is called for by our concern for the welfare of those who participate. As was said previously, the Evangelical Lutheran Church is committed to the teaching that the Body and Blood of Christ are distributed to all who receive the Bread and Wine. Those who do not discern the Lord's Body in the Sacrament "... eat and drink judgment to themselves ..." The Church has a heavy responsibility at this point. Christian love requires that none be admitted to the Communion Table until they have been properly instructed in how to prepare themselves.

5. The whole parish education system of the Church is built around the assumption that instruction is needed prior to communing. This system would be jeopardized if Open Communion were practiced. Furthermore, our practice of Close

Communion is not at all exclusive. It is not that we are forbidding people to come. All that we ask is that if they are sincere about wanting to attend the Sacrament, they accept instruction and confess their agreement with it. Everyone in the community is invited to come provided he is willing to qualify himself.

I once served a congregation where Open Communion had previously been practiced. After I became pastor, I tried to take the Lutheran position and, of course, there were conflicts. But I stood my ground. In one case a family that had communed for years without joining the congregation was offended. So I went to their home to explain our position. I told them, "This hurts me as much as it does you. I don't like to see you unable to come to Communion. But I feel that the teaching of the Church is right." They agreed to come to my Adult Class. If they had never come to this class, they likely would never have joined the Church. They did, and became loyal members of the Church. Afterwards they could not tell how glad they were that they had enrolled. They became enthusiastic supporters, urging others to attend the Pastor's Class. Where this matter is handled in a kind and tactful way, I am convinced that it will work out.

III. Communion as the Fellowship of God's People.

A. They are One Bread!

In the Sacrament, not only do we have Communion with the Crucified, Risen, and Ascended Lord, but also with one another in the Church. This is brought out especially in I Corinthians 10:16-17: "The Cup of Blessing which we consecrate, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ? Because there is one Bread, we who are many are one body, for we are all receivers of that one Bread." Some have wondered why Paul here reverses the usual order, and mentions the Chalice before the Host. The reason is that he is using the one Bread as an illustration of the oneness that Christian believers have through their fellowship in the Body of Christ.

The Greek church father, John Chrysostom, makes this comment: "For what is the bread? The body of Christ. What do they become who partake of it? The body of Christ: not many bodies but one body. Many grains are made into one bread so that the grains appear no more at all, though they are still there. In their joined state their diversity is no longer discernible. In the same way we are also bound up with one another and with Christ. You are not nourished from one body and the

next man from a different body, but all from one and the same body. For this reason he adds, 'We have all partaken of one bread. If of one and the same bread, then we are all become the same thing.'"¹²

B. The Proclamation of Christ's Death

"As often as you eat this Bread and drink from this Chalice, you do proclaim the Lord's death till he come again" (I Cor. 11:26). The task of the Church, standing between the Lord's first and second coming, is to proclaim Christ's death. In the practical task of the Church, we speak of stewardship and evangelism. We receive strength for this work in the Blessed Sacrament, which has been given to sustain Christ's people till he come again. Christ is coming again. And every time that we commune, we are confessing our faith in this Christ who once died, but is risen, and will return to judge the quick and the dead. And, as Kaesemann suggests, the command to do this in memory of Christ means not only to partake of the Sacrament again and again, but faithfully to proclaim the Gospel till Christ comes at the end. At that time, the Lord's Supper will be changed into the Great Supper of heaven.

Hence, everytime that we, God's People, gather in fellowship at the Communion Table, we are united with one another. But the fellowship in which we are united transcends that of the particular church to which we belong, and unites us with members of all churches which practice the Sacrament according to its institution. Furthermore, time is no barrier. We are united with God's people in the communion of saints who have gone before us and are in the presence of Christ. This fact is brought out in the Sanctus, where we join the believers on Palm Sunday with those of all time. And our fellowship is expressed best of all in the Communion Preface for Ascension Day which marks the high-point of our liturgy:

It is truly meet, right, and salutary, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God:

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who, after his Resurrection, appeared openly to all his disciples, and in their sight was taken up into heaven, that he might make us partakers of his divine Nature.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of thy glory; Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord;
Hosanna in the highest.

FOOTNOTES

1. Werner Elert, *Morphologie des Luthertums* (Muenchen: Beck, 1952), p. 364; *The Structure of Lutheranism*, Walter A. Hansen, trans. (St. Louis: Concordia, 1962), p. 415.
2. Ernst Kaesemann, *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960), p. 33.
3. Clyde Leonard Manschreck, *Melanchton, the Quiet Reformer* (New York: Abingdon, 1958), p. 233.
4. Hermann Sasse, *This is My Body* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1959), p. 307.
5. Kaesemann, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
8. Christian Otto Kraushaar, *Veraussungsformen der Lutherischen Kirche Amerikas* (Guetersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1911), p. 473.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 238.
10. *Handbook of The American Lutheran Church*, Edition of 1967, p. 146.
11. PR 21, pp. 387f.
12. Werner Elert, *Eucharist and Church Fellowship in the First Four Centuries*, N.E. Nagel, trans. (St. Louis: Concordia, 1966), p. 28.

An Invitation to Ishmael

C. George Fry

In recent years there has been a considerable interest in Biblical prophecy concerning Israel. Great international gatherings have been held in places as diverse as Los Angeles and Jerusalem to discuss this issue. Much controversy—and some insight—have been generated regarding the relationship of post-biblical Jewish history to the promises recorded in the Old Testament. Concurrently, there has been a considerable interest in Biblical prophecy concerning the New Israel, the Church. Conferences on this topic have been convened in cities as distant as Philadelphia and Adelaide. Much heat—and some light—have been generated regarding the relationship of post-apostolic Christian history to the promises recorded in the New Testament. But it has surprised me, that while there has been much interest in what God's Word has to say about Abraham's heirs through Isaac—the Jews and the Christians—there has been virtually no concern for what the Scriptures say about the Patriarch's progeny through Ishmael. This is a sad situation. It has led to a very dangerous ignorance in the Church, for Ishmael is prominent in the plans of God.

If nothing else, this should be evident from his name. Dr. Martin Luther, preaching on the Genesis text that recites the covenant made with Ishmael, observed:

The name 'Ishmael' is very meaningful, for it means 'God hears.' Of that name Hagar's descendants, no doubt, were very proud. Abraham's sons Isaac and Jacob did not receive such beautiful names.¹

As Stephen was the man with the angelic face (Acts 6:15), so Ishmael was the patriarch with the heavenly name. Ishmael is not merely the man whose name is a promise, he is the person whose name keeps recurring in the Bible. His initial homeland, Arabia, is mentioned in twenty-five books of the Old Testament, five books of the New. References to the Ishmaelites are made by Moses, David, the Chronicler, and the authors of Judges and Job. Much is said concerning Ishmael in the Christian Scriptures.

An important point made by both Testaments is the amazing parallelism between Israel and Ishmael. There were twelve tribes of Israel; there were twelve tribes of Ishmael (Gen.17:20; Gen.25:12-18). Both were promised a land, one Palestine, the other Arabia. Both claimed physical descent from Abraham, one through his first wife, Sarah, the other through his second spouse, Hagar. Both demanded preeminence in the house of

Abraham—Israel, for being mothered by Abraham's free-born and first wife; Ishmael, because he was the first-born, the elder son of the family. Both share the rite of circumcision, given by God to their father Abraham. For both this is a physical token of their covenant with God. Both use the same name for God, *El* or *Elohim* in Hebrew, *Allah* in Arabic. Both are strict monotheists. Both stand under the protection of God. Both receive promises from God. Both have fathered new world religions. That is the crucial point for us. Martin Luther, was the first Protestant commentator to see the significance of Ishmael for modern man. Preaching on one of the Abrahamic texts in Genesis, Father Luther said: "Today the descendants of Ishmael are one with the Turks. . . . They live in the deep darkness and blasphemy of Islam."² Ishmael, for us, is Islam.

For that reason it behooves us as Christians to study very carefully the original passage in Genesis that explains just precisely what it is that God promised Abraham concerning Ishmael and his heirs. (Gen.17:18-21).

And Abraham said to God, 'Oh that Ishmael might live in thy sight!' God said, 'No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I will bless him and make him fruitful; and multiply him exceedingly; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year.'

From this text we Christians can determine exactly what it is that God has promised the children of Ishmael. Having done that, we can ascertain our duty toward them. There are six promises made in this text.

1. One promise is demographical. The heirs of Ishmael shall be numerous. This promise is repeated at least twice in Genesis, that Ishmael would have "a seed that could not be numbered for multitude" (cf. Gen.16:10, Gen.21:18). Ishmael is the physical father of the Arabs. No one is sure how many people speak Arabic today. Professor Sydney S. Culbert of the University of Washington estimated that at least 121 million people use Arabic as their native language. That means that Arabic is now a major world-language, alongside Spanish, Russian, Chinese, French, and English. Observers predict that it will soon be the sixth official language of the United Nations.

Ishmael is also the spiritual father of the Muslims. No one is sure how many people on planet earth are Muslim. A rough rule

of thumb is that one of every seven inhabitants of our planet is a Muslim. That means there are at least 600 million Muslims, and some authorities place the figure even higher, at about 800 million believers. Islam is second in size only to Christianity. Islam is larger than any one branch of Christianity. There are more Muslims than Roman Catholics, there are twice as many Muslims as Protestants, and there are about six times as many Muslims as Orthodox Christians. Or, to put it yet another way, one out of every three people living in the non-Communist world is a Muslim.

The Lord has kept his promise to Ishmael's mother, that "I will so greatly multiply your descendants that they cannot be numbered for multitude" (Gen.16:10). Ishmael means "God hears." Behold him, and marvel at the way in which the Lord Jehovah honors his promises.

2. A second promise was geographical. The heirs of Ishmael shall be "a great nation," or "a large state." The initial home of the Ishmaelites was Arabia, a land that

. . . embraces an area about the same size as that of the United States east of the Mississippi River plus Texas and California. The southern shore facing the Indian Ocean from Aden to Muscat is as far as from New Orleans to Boston; on the west, the Red Sea is as wide as Lake Erie is long, and the distance from Aden to Port Said is nearly the same as from New York to Denver.³

From their original patrimony, the Arabs have moved

. . . far and wide; they have ascended more than a hundred thrones; and have established their colonies, their language, their religion from the Senegal to the Indus, and from the Euphrates to the islands of the Indian Ocean.⁴

The Arab Empire stretches from Mauritania to Mesopotamia, from Georgia to Nigeria.

The Lord has delivered into Ishmael's hands the Middle East, the "land in the center," the meeting place of three continents—Europe, Asia, and Africa; of three races, white, yellow, and black; of three great centers of civilization, Europe, India, and China; of three economic systems, Capitalism, Communism, and Socialism; and the crossroads of world commerce from the Atlantic and Indian Oceans through the narrow passages of Gibraltar, Malta, and Suez.

The Lord has delivered into Ishmael's hands the Middle Earth, for the Islamic Empire stretches further than the Arab world, to girdle the earth at its equator. For two thousand miles across North Africa, then through Southwest Asia, then over Persia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, then on to Bangladesh,

the Philippines, and the islands of Indonesia the world of Islam extends, finally leapfrogging the Pacific and starting up once more in the Republic of Guyana on the northern slopes of South America. When we remember, as Paul admonishes us, that God has "determined allotted periods and the boundaries" of men's habitations (Acts 17:26), then we cannot fail but be impressed in the manner in which the Lord has honored his promise to make of Ishmael "a great nation."

3. Yet another promise is political. The heirs of Ishmael shall be powerful in the earth. Liberty is the source of political power. Of all the peoples of the Middle East, only the Arabs have never been conquered. Armies came and went, but the Arabs remained independent. Alexander and Julius Caesar, Justinian and Genghis Khan, Napoleon and Hitler, Churchill and Eisenhower, all sent mighty armies and armadas into the region, but not one of them subdued Arabia. God has honored Ishmael, the son of a slave, by guaranteeing his offspring freedom.

But others have lost their liberty to the Arabs! As Ishmael was an archer, fearful in battle, so his heirs have been successful in war. Today there are at least twenty-one Arab countries and about forty-three Muslim states. That is a very impressive commonwealth of nations.

Thrice in history God has allowed the heirs of Ishmael to build empires. Once was in the Middle Ages, when the Lord raised up three Arab Empires - the Caliphate, the Umayyads, and the Abbasids - to chasen a corrupt Christendom. Another occasion was during the Renaissance and Reformation, when there was a Muslim Renascence, and three mighty non-Arab Empires appeared - that of the Turks, the Persians, and the Moghuls, controlling all the territory between Vienna and Delhi. Now, in our own times, a third Muslim awakening is at hand, as the children of Ishmael set once more upon the task of building an empire.

4. Still another promise is economical. The heirs of Ishmael shall be rich. In the past that was true because they were the great merchants of the earth. After all, it was the Ishmaelites who carried Joseph off to Egypt in order to sell him into slavery (Gen.37:25). They traded many commodities, from antiquity to the present. Living in the Middle East, they were the middle-men of the earth.

In our own times the Arabs are moving once more from poverty to prosperity. Through a strange quirk of history, the West invented the very means of Arab enrichment, the gasoline engine. As Charles Issawi, the Lebanese historian remarked, "where there are Muslims, there is oil." The Arab world

literally floats on oil, and the land that God promised Ishmael is, in fact, a gigantic bank. The wealthiest nations of the world are no longer the United States and Canada, but instead Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the Persian Gulf tribalities. They have the earth's highest standard of living, and not even West Germany and Japan can match the Arab East in income. Even after the vast amounts of petroleum have been consumed, the Arabs will remain financially powerful, for they will be the economic masters of the earth. Within a quarter century they will have bought out the industrial world. Few of us in the West realize what a massive transfer of the earth's wealth is under way. It is already too late to stop it, let alone reverse it. The pendulum of pecuniary power has swung back to the East. "I will bless him," said the Lord of Ishmael. The epic of Ishmael reminds us dramatically that the Lord keeps his promises.

5. Yet another promise is psychological. The heirs of Ishmael shall retain their identity. Throughout history, they will be distinct and unique. The other nations of the ancient East—the Phoenicians, the Phrygians, the Akkadians, the Babylonians, the Hittites, the Romans—and we could continue the list indefinitely—have disappeared. But the children of Ishmael endure. Bishop Newton once observed:

It was somewhat wonderful, and not to be seen by human sagacity, that a man's whole posterity should so nearly resemble him, and retain the same inclinations, the same habits, and the same customs, throughout all ages! These are the only people besides the Jews who have subsisted as a distinct people from the beginning. . . .⁵

An amazing continuity is part of the Lord's answer to Abraham's prayer, "Oh that Ishmael might live in thy sight!"

What is Ishmael's character? Literally the book of Genesis describes Ishmael as "a wild ass of a man." S. R. Driver explored the analogy, remarking that "the wild ass is a wayward, intractable creature, whose home is the prairie . . ."⁶ In Job (39:5-7) the further explanation is given of the one

. . . whose bonds God hath loosed, whose home he hath made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings; he scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth (he) the crying of the driver; the range of the mountains is his picture.

That portrait penned in antiquity is almost identical to that offered in two studies of the Arab personality published last autumn. The Arab, like Abraham his father, is a rugged individualist, a loner, a pilgrim, a pioneer, a brave denizen of the wilderness, a natural-born puritan, courageous, brave, given to generous hospitality, greatly gifted, filled with poetic

imagination, possessed of amazing intellectual insight, but who, like the rest of us, is filled with the fatal flaw of pride. The Arab predicament is the universal human dilemma, that of self-justification.

6. This trait shows us in the last promise concerning Ishmael, that he is a theological man. Ishmael, like Abraham his father, is religious. Today Ishmael's heirs, the Muslims, are very pious men. They pray five times daily. They give great sums of money to help the poor. They fast at least one month each year. By the hundreds of thousands they make a long and dangerous pilgrimage to their holy city. They honor the prophets, including Moses, David, and Jesus. They respect the Scriptures, especially the Pentateuch, the Psalter, and the Gospel. But while they are religious, they are not spiritual, for in their pride they have forgotten one crucial respect in which they differ from the Jews and the heirs of the promises made to them: the covenant of grace.

The Lord said, "But I will establish my covenant with Isaac." Or, as Jesus said twenty centuries later, "salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22). That truth has been too much for Ishmael to accept. No wonder, for even Abraham was staggered at the thought. The patriarch had prayed, "Oh that Ishmael might live in thy sight!" (Gen.17-18). By that he meant not merely earthly prosperity, as Calvin indicated, but also spiritual priority, as Luther pointed out. Abraham hoped that the Messiah would be born of the house of Ishmael, not the line of Isaac. But "God said, 'No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him. . . .'" (Gen. 17:19). Ishmael was promised much—power, wealth, empire—but he was not to produce the Savior. That has been too much for Ishmael's pride to accept.

In the seventh century after Jesus there appeared in the East a man named Muhammad. He said he was descended directly from Abraham through Ishmael by way of Kedar and the Kurayish. Muhammad went on to say that Ishmael was "a messenger and a prophet" (Surah 29:55), who was offered up by his father Abraham on Mt. Moriah, who then aided the Patriarch in the construction of the House of God at Mecca, who at his death was buried, with Hagar his mother, in the Holy Kaaba in Arabia. Muhammad then identified the well of Zemzem near Mecca as the place where God had raised a fountain for Hagar and promised her that salvation would come through the House of Ishmael. Then Muhammad informed his countrymen that the Jews and Christians had garbled the revelation of God, but that in these last days the Lord Allah had sent an infallible Word to earth in the *Quran*. This book

taught the truth about Jesus, who was born of the Virgin Mary, worked great miracles, spoke beautiful words, and was saved from death by Judas Iscariot. Having escaped the cross, Jesus ascended to heaven, promising the Comforter, Muhammad, who would "guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13). And what was "all the truth"? Salvation by the Law.

Pride caused Ishmael's error, the heresy of Islam. It is the same sin we can recognize in ourselves. For the natural man despises the Gospel, for it is an offense to our reason, a shame to our sophistication, an insult to our deeds. Yes, pride must be crucified, if we are to receive salvation—by grace alone. In a providential way Paul, the Apostle, has given us the invitation we can offer to Ishmael. In the fourth chapter of Galatians he specifically talks about Hagar, and he compares her to Mt. Sinai in Arabia, "in slavery with her children." But then he proceeds to speak of Isaac and the children of promise, and exclaims that we are saved not by law, but by love, and that we are summoned not to slavery, but to liberty. Grace, amazing grace—that is my invitation to you, and that is our invitation to the lost sheep of the House of Ishmael with the hope, that one day, Christ's Great Day, all the children of Abraham shall come to salvation, and our Lord's desire will be reality, as "many" come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt.8:11).

FOOTNOTES

1. Martin Luther, *Luther's Commentary on Genesis*, translated by J. Theodore Mueller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), I, p. 284.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 311.
3. Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, second edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 3.
4. Patrick Fairbairn, "Ishmael," *Fairbairn's Imperial Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, edited by Patrick Fairbairn (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1957), III, pp. 172-173.
5. Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments with a Commentary and Critical Notes* (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, n.d.), I, p. 116.
6. S. R. Driver, "Ishmael," *A Dictionary of the Bible*, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), II, p. 503.

Man Made in the Image of God and Its Relationship to the First Promise

David P. Scaer

PART I: CREATION AND IMAGE

From a literary point of view, the first chapter of Genesis shows a consistent pattern in describing the creative activities of God. Each of the days in creation is described as beginning with the speaking of God, "And God said." From the third through the sixth days, the creative activity concludes with God's own pronouncement, "And God saw that it was good." The creation of man is markedly different from the previous creative acts of God. A literary difference is indicated by "then God said" to introduce man's creation.

The Book of Genesis is structured into sections, with each section entitled "generations" (cf. 2:4, 5:1). In this procedure used throughout Genesis, the most important information is given last and serves as a connecting link to the next section, where it is discussed in greater detail. The creation of man (1:26-30) is part of Genesis' introduction (1:1-2:3) and is the connecting link between the introduction and the first section—the book of the generation of heaven and earth which is the story of man's creation, fall, and penalty (2:4-4:26).

Thus from a literary point of view, the creation of man (1:26-30) is the most important part of the first chapter for the following three reasons:

1. Man's creation is introduced by the different "then God said," alerting the reader to a different type of creative activity.
2. Man's creation is a result of the deliberations of God. The same is not said about the previous creative acts.
3. As the final part in the introductory material, it thus is assigned the most important position.

The reference to man's being created in the image of God (v. 26) is the first item in the section describing man's creation (1:26-30). Therefore what is meant by the image of God will be determined not only by this section (1:26-30), but also by the previous section (1:1-25), which provides the only information about God up to this point in the narrative. Man's similarity to

God is underscored by saying that man is made in both the image and likeness of God. Two words, image and likeness, are used to express the same phenomenon so that the importance of the divine-human similarity will certainly not be lost by the reader. We should repeat here that the literary arrangement of the introduction (1:1-2:3) also serves to indicate the importance of the material handled here. Man's creation is the most important.

The image of God simply means that the object bears a resemblance to God. For example, the mirror does not have its value in itself but in what it reflects. The statue has its worth because of the person it represents. Man therefore has his worth not because of himself, but because he in some way reflects God. The coin with Caesar's image has its value from Caesar. The previous section, 1:1-25, might not provide us with an all-embracing theology, but it is the only knowledge given about God prior to man's actual creation. What it says about God will determine to some extent the concept of God's image. We might be amazed what this brief section actually says about God. God has an existence prior to and separate from the creation (v.1). He is Spirit (v.2). He is a speaking and planning God (vv. 3, 6, 9, 14, 24). He is a creating God and in His creative activity He is orderly. He is a moral God because He recognizes creative activity as good (v. 12). Somehow this information about God will be reflected in an image, likeness, reflection, or picture of God.

The concept of dominion (v. 26, 28) is the prominent one in the image of God given to man. Let it be said here that the traditional Roman Catholic concept of separating God's act of creating man from the giving of the image of God does not have support in the text. With such a concept, man can be a man without the image or, as Catholics call it, the *donum superadditum*. With such a view, evolutionary ideas about the origin of man have been forcibly incorporated into Christian doctrine. The creation of man (v. 26) is accomplished in such a way by God that man's creation *ipso facto* involves man's being made in God's image without an additional separate divine activity. Man's creation is not so much a result of God's external verbal activity. The rest of the creation remains at arm's length from God through the creative word. Man's creation proceeds directly out of the thinking processes of God. Jumping ahead of ourselves, man thinks as God thinks. This is certainly not a one-for-one equation, but it can still be said that there is something intellectual about both man and God. Man is the child of God's mind.

Traditionally Lutherans have shied away from limiting God's image in man to the concept of dominion. Schleiermacher, who

was no friend of Lutheran Orthodoxy, limited the concept of image to dominion, but more in the sense of man's being engaged in the science of animal husbandry. He was probably following the eighteenth century Rationalists. The text does define image first as dominion, however, not in the sense of mere animal husbandry, though this is certainly not excluded. Dominion is not only to be explained by a forward reference to lordship over creation, but also by a backward reference to God's creative activity. Up to this point in the narrative, God has been chiefly described as the creative God. This is obvious in vv. 2-25. Man is not the creator, but he is the object of the divine creativity. Nevertheless, the dominion given to man points to his participation in the extension of the divine creative activity. Not only does man exercise a kind of lordship over the beasts which God has created, but vegetation exists also for man's benefit.

As an aside, a remark could be made about the first and perhaps chief doctrine of the Reformed that it is the chief aim of man to serve the glory of God. The thrust is theocentric. There could hardly be any quarrel with the truthfulness of such a dictum, but this section of Genesis reflects more an anthropomorphic view, in that man is made to share in something of God from which the rest of the creation is excluded. If creation is subservient to God, as creator, in the primary sense, then the creation is also subservient to man, as God's representative, in the secondary sense. Jesus' parables of the king or owner who entrusts the care of his goods to stewards and then goes away might reflect the situation of man in Genesis 1. As God's steward, agent, representative, manager with a kind of power of attorney, man makes decisions for God within the jurisdiction prescribed to him by God, i.e., the creation.

This dominion possessed by man includes recognizing that the obligation to God inherent in the image is given by God and what man rules in God's stead is good. Man will plan, speak, and organize like God. Such a concept of the image of God in man is not incarnation, but allows for the possibility. Without the image, there could be no incarnation.

PART II: MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

Genesis 2:4-24 is a commentary on what it means to be made in the image of God in respect to the first persons, Adam and Eve. Man's identity with the rest of the creation results from his earthly origins (2:7). This cannot be part of the image of God. Nowhere are we told that the world or the dust of the ground is made like God. This is not to say that all that God

made does not reflect Him. Just as the handiwork of man reflects the man who made it, so the entire creation reflects God (Psalm 19:1-4). However, creation is not made in the image of God. Therefore man's origin from the earth does not belong to his being made in the image of God. His origin from heaven does (2:4).

Man's image is from God Himself. God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." God's breathing activity is related to the concept of God as "Spirit" (1:2). God's Spirit moved over the face of the waters; but with man He involves Himself intimately. Because man results from God's Spirit's activities, he can share God's view of things. He is capable of an understanding of eternity in the sense that he knows that there is an existence before his own creation. Solomon reflecting on death muses about this (Ecclesiastes 2:11).

PART III: MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE IMAGE

In both accounts of the creation, there is a reference to God's moral goodness. The final day of creation concludes with the verdict that everything was "very good" (1:31) and the more detailed description of man's creation closes with a section on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:9). Man is therefore like God in that he is intellectually aware of good and evil, but of course at this point man has experience only of the good but not the evil. This ability to distinguish between good and evil also belongs to man's being like God, made in His image.

Genesis 2:15-17 contains the command which is later broken by Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. The significant word is in v. 16, "command." It is used most frequently in the Old Testament and then in the New Testament to suggest the order of a monarch, i.e., an injunction which no one dares to disregard. The category of Law-Gospel, as used in Lutheran theology, is most inappropriate at this point to define "command." Command is a category for describing a word of God, regardless of its content, whether "Law," Gospel, or whatever. The word "command" defines the relationship between God and man. Man is made in the image of God, but this likeness in no way suggests or permits equality with God. There is no suggestion of interchangeability between the positions of God and man, as there is no interchangeability between a father and his son. (Cf. Genesis 5:1-3.) God as the creator has the superior position and because of the superior position, God has the right to determine the relationship between Himself and the man. This is hardly a master-slave relationship as it was taught in the parallel Babylonian Epic. Rather it is a position of honor to the man

because only man is capable of receiving the command of God. To the rest of creation God spoke *fiats* and these *fiats* were accomplished simply because God spoke them. The response of the rest of the creation is purely automatic. Man's response is not automatic. God's command to man assumes that the one hearing the command is capable on his own of responding. This is the basis of man's morality which the rest of the creation does not share. Before the fall, man was a "Pelagian." The ability of the man to respond to God was internally present. It did not have to be added to man in the sense that it was not already part of his own creation. As mentioned above, Roman Catholics regard the image of God as a kind of grace, a *donum superadditum*, added after the original creation. This is a kind of creative grace that is without textual support.

The word command presumes a responding subject totally unlike the inanimate, brute, and vegetable creation who do what they do because they have to. Man is not mechanically automated. Man has free will as evidenced by the first part of the command. "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden" (v. 16). Whatever the rest of the creation does, it does because it *must* do it. The celestial bodies have their celestial destinies prescribed for them, and from their divinely ordained path they cannot waiver. Seasons and days are regulated. Man is not told, "You *must* eat," but "You *may* freely eat." Man can pick and choose. This is a free will within the boundaries prescribed by God. Man is placed in the garden for his own advantage (2:15) and the trees in the garden are a kind of *dona superaddita* for man (2:16). Man's holiness and perfection are complemented by the special garden prepared by God for him where he exercises a free will within certain restrictions. An absolute free will is theologically and philosophically impossible for God or man. For example, God has no freedom to deny Himself.

The negative part of the command comes with the words, "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat." In this case we notice the absence of the word "freely." Man had a free will to pick and choose among those choices determined by God to be acceptable, but the free will does not extend over the unacceptable choice of picking evil. To do so is to pervert the words of the divine command. Eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is a choice not allowed. The option is not within the bounds assigned the free will. It is fenced in by the words "you shall not." In the representation of the Law by Moses, the Decalogue, it would be this negative prohibition "you shall not" which would receive the heavy stress. In the state of estrangement from God, man faces only a tree of its kind or species. All organic or magical thoughts of

the tree's fruit have no place. It is not poisonous in a physical sense. The good and evil character of the tree is determined by God's command. Similar would be Luther's description of Baptism, where the command and the word of God and not the water in and of itself are decisive. In attaching His word or command to the tree, God for Himself is making a commitment from which He cannot, does not, and will not want to release Himself. To put it bluntly, God does not and cannot go back on His word. The same applies to His word about the tree of life (3:22), where God does not change the character prescribed to the tree, but prevents man from getting to the tree. The sin of the man would find its focus not in the tree itself but in the breaking of God's command attached permanently to the tree. To break the command of God by eating the forbidden fruit is disobeying God's word and affronting God Himself.

The penalty of death only accentuates the seriousness of the prohibition, "for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." Some point out that Adam did not die the very day that he ate the fruit. But he did die on that day. Death is a process terminating in a return to the dust. In a similar sense, all creation is constantly dying. All is deteriorating until it loses its identifiable form. While Genesis 3:19 helps us to determine what death is, there are sufficient hints already in Genesis 2. Man can have an intellectual concept of death. Man is described as "a living being" resulting from the "breath of life" (v. 7). At this time Adam had not seen the death of his son, Abel, but he did have some idea of death as being the opposite of life. Whatever process brought him into existence could be reversed. The breath would leave him. The body would return to the dust. And he could no longer be called "a living being." (Cf. Ecclesiastes 12:7.)

The concept of the free will was not hypothetical but a reality for Adam. He names the animals and determines that there are no fit partners for him.

PART IV: THE FALL AS A MISUSE OF THE IMAGE

Genesis 3 contains the accounts of breaking the command and the curses (vv. 1-7); the section on the fall into sin centers on the problem of having eaten of the forbidden tree. First, however, several preliminary steps must be taken. The Serpent initiates the conversation with an interrogative sentence (3:1) and not an indicative or imperative one. The question is a deliberate attempt of the Serpent to reinterpret the command (2:16f.) in such a way as to protect the questions from the accusation of lying. Because the questions are not statements of facts, they cannot be lies. The question of the Serpent is not one asking for

information but one testing the ability of the woman to understand. It is the question of a lawyer. Satan is rightly called the Accuser, the Prosecutor. There is no evidence that God ever spoke to the woman directly; what she did know of the command she presumably knew through her husband. In regard to the image of God, we did not touch on the male and female relationship. This relationship is part of the image of God (1:27) and as Karl Barth has suggested possibly reflects the plural personality of God. Both sexes share the image of God, but not the responsibility of acting as religious representative (2:15-17). This task clearly belongs to man and not the woman. Therefore Eve's conversation with the serpent on religious matters was itself an unallowable alteration of the male-female relationship as it was established within the image of God. (Paul does not fail to see this in I Tim. 2:13f.)

The Serpent's repetition of 2:16 is, of course, inaccurate, not only in form but also in content. What is significant is that the offer of God to eat of all the trees is combined with the limited prohibition against the tree's forbidden fruit to form a prohibition against all trees. It comes out like this, "You shall not eat of any tree of the garden." God's near universal blessing is turned into a universal prohibition by Satan. It can be remembered that Paul calls forbidding marriage the doctrine of devils. Eating from the trees of the garden, as marriage, is permitted by God. Satan makes God's gifts for our free use appear as unallowable to man. The woman partially corrects the Serpent's confusion of the free gift and prohibition. Her additional correction also has no divine command. First the word "freely" is omitted and the phrase "neither shall you touch it" is added. The woman has begun no longer to look upon herself as a free agent in God's creation, but rather as a servant or slave upon whom a harsh master has put unreasonable restrictions. She views God not as benefactor but as taskmaster. The response of Satan (vv. 4f.) that they would not die and that they would be like God is a typical Satanic mixture of lie and truth. They would die, contrary to the Serpent's promise, and they would know good and evil like God, according to the Serpent's promise. Satan lies by perverting the truth.

It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss the question of what it means to know good and evil. As mentioned above, Adam had an intellectual knowledge of good and evil shortly after his creation (2:9, 17); otherwise the divine command would have just been so many words without meaning. The Serpent promises Eve a knowledge of good and evil (3:5), and she receives it (3:22). There is something more here than just an intellectual awareness. Perhaps the meaning of knowing good and evil that would best fit all cases would be to take the word "know" in the sense of knowing

something intimately in such a way that one's own being is involved or affected. God knows evil in the sense that His creation is threatened by it. Man knows evil in the sense that his existence is affected by it. Satan has experienced both good and evil.

The narrative gives little detail about the woman's eating the fruit and giving it to Adam to eat (vv. 6-7). It can be noted that Eve commits her sin without Adam's consent or knowledge. Urged by Eve, Adam then sins. There is no record of any dialogue between the two at this point, but that there was some discussion is quite evident from 3:17.

In the first confrontation after the fall between God and man (3:8-13), God continues to address man as the responsible religious representative. Regardless of the previous experiences, this right is not taken from him. God initiates the conversation by calling out for Adam. Adam replies that he is naked. God suggests to Adam that he would only know that he was naked if he had broken the command. God through a series of questions directs Adam's gaze to the real cause of Adam's fear, which is not his nakedness, but his transgression of the command of God. Adam's sin can be looked at in two ways: 1. He dared to disregard God's word, the command, regardless of its content. 2. He then disregarded the content. In this case the content was a Law. (Might we not say that he offended against God's word both in regard to its *forma* and *materia*?)

Verses 12-14 show the perverted results of sin, the worst of which is man's total inability to say, "I AM THE SINNER." Adam blames the woman and ultimately God who created the woman. The woman blames the Serpent. "The devil made me do it." Man does not see his personal guilt and responsibility. He sees only a predicament for which outside divine (God) and satanic (Serpent) forces are responsible. Neither Adam nor Eve acknowledge personal responsibility.

At this point we must relate the concepts of the image of God and sin together. As previously explained, the image of God involves standing in God's place as His representative in the world. It involves moral obligations. It also presupposes free will and its exercise within certain prescribed boundaries. What then is the exact nature of sin in regard to the image of God? While the woman's speaking with the Serpent, her taking the fruit, Adam's listening to her, and his subsequent eating of the fruit are all involved (3:1-6), they are merely symptomatic of sin's essence itself. These events point to the more serious problem. The basic sin involves a misuse and misdirection of the image of God in man. To state it another way, man exchanges creation as an object of his free will for God. Man exercises his free will over against divine things and not over

the earthly things for which the free will was made and for which it was sufficient. Man may *freely eat* of the trees of the garden, but he *may not freely* disregard the command of God. Free will operates within the conditions of the command. It is not to function in such a way as to question the legitimacy of the command. Around the words of God is the wall "you shall not." Sin is not a totally new intervention as foreign object from the outside, but it is a false combination of things which in their right order would be legitimate.

As is evident from the conversation between Eve and the Serpent, both of them construct prohibitions limiting the legitimate exercise of the free will. Satan says *all* trees are off-limits, and Eve rejoins that the one special tree cannot be touched. They are forbidding with the divine sanction of "you shall not" what God has not only freely allowed but has also created for man's benefit. This is true legalism. Satan and Eve are the first legalists, speaking and commanding where God has not spoken or commanded. The other side of the perversion is the removing of "you shall not" where God has clearly put "you shall not." Eve goes from being a "legalist" to a "libertine," first making laws in God's stead and then removing God's legitimate restrictions.

Sin has its origin right within the image of God in man. It is a disastrous misarrangement within man. It is Adam's failure to understand what the image of God in man really is. The Serpent's promise, "You will be like God, knowing good and evil" (3:5), was promising them something which in a certain sense they already had and something which they could in another sense never have. Man was already like God, because this is what it means to be made in God's image. However, Eve is led to believe through the Serpent's influence that being like God means some type of equality with God. As a reflection or image is dependent on the object it reflects or images, so man for his image is dependent on God. Because of the image of God, man was given the highest place in the created world. It was this innate superiority that man used against God, who is always the superior One.

PART V: THE CURSE AS A RESTRUCTURING OF THE IMAGE

There are three parts to the resulting curses, those directed against (a.) the Serpent, (b.) the woman, (c.) the man. This is the order that Adam and Eve have suggested in explaining their immoral actions (3:12f). It is noteworthy that the "blessing" in v. 15 consists entirely in a curse on the Serpent. To show the strength of Genesis 3:15, it might be best to look first at the curses on the woman and the man.

The woman's curse is a burdensome dependence. From the time of her creation she was dependent on the male (2:22); now her dependence on him becomes a burden. Where there is no suggestion of distress in Genesis 2, there definitely is in Genesis 3:16. She brings forth children, as originally planned, but now in pain. She stays with her husband under his guidance as originally planned (2:24), but now his authority over her is liable, through sinful abuse, to bring her added problems. Noting the curse on her in contrast to the curse on the man, her curse centers in her relationship with her husband and children, but the man's curses do not focus on her. Adam is indicted for three sins. Eve was indicted for no sins. He is found guilty of listening to his wife, eating the fruit, and breaking the divine command (3:17). He must work as originally planned (2:15), but it will hardly be pleasurable (3:17-19). Where previously he enjoyed the delicacies of the trees freely given by God, he must now work for bread, the common food. The ultimate curse is death, which has been explained above. As the responsible religious representative, the man hears the three charges against him and receives the sentence of death. He is the indictable one. The curses on the man and woman are in reality a restructuring or reordering of their original creation in God's image. Nothing new is created in the curses. Basically the condition of blessing is turned into one of being cursed. They perform the tasks originally assigned, but under different conditions.

The section which the church has called the *Protoevangelium*, the first Gospel, or Promise, does not appear in either of the sections directed to the man or the woman. The *Protoevangelium* is part of the curse on the serpent. First comes a curse on the serpent (3:14) which is similar to the physical curses that fall on the man and woman for collaborating with the Serpent against God. Perhaps it is difficult to grade the severity of curses. The strongest curse, that of the crushed head, is reserved for Satan. Regardless of Adam's moral responsibilities in this matter, the Serpent is first cursed and cursed the most severely. The blow to him is positively fatal. The woman's curse seems comparatively to be the least severe. Of course, the *Protoevangelium* is addressed also to Israel and the church, because it is recorded for us in the Old Testament. What perhaps is frequently overlooked is that the original words are not intended only as comfort for Adam and Eve! They are a rebuke to the Serpent. Each of the three curses are so structured that each of the three schemers cannot escape the penalty intended for each. There can be no sense of *Schadenfreude* here. The curse on the Serpent must be carefully studied.

The theological coziness (3:1-6) between the Serpent and the woman is replaced by hate, a profound hatred that will last for generations. The first reference to the seed (v. 15) is best taken in a collective or corporate sense. The arrangement of the remainder of the Book of Genesis is the story of Eve's seed, its success in surviving in the face of what seem to be unsurmountable odds. In this scheme, Abraham becomes the prominent seed-bearer and much of his life is devoted to the perpetuation of the promise through his seed. Consider also the salvation of the seed in and out of Egypt. The Serpent has met with success (3:6f.) and he will not be without more success in the future (6:5f.). Ultimately God will reverse the losses of the woman's seed by crushing Satan's head (3:15).

PART VI: THE CURSE AND THE FUTURE VICTORY

It cannot be doubted that Adam and Eve would breathe a sigh of relief that all was not lost and that something was redeemable. But to take the meaning of the promise from this aspect alone would not catch the primary intent of 3:15. Man's succumbing to Satan's successful attempt to turn God's image into a weapon against God is first of all an affront to God. All sins are against the First Commandment, including the sin of Genesis 3. Man is to be restored not for man's sake alone, but to vindicate God's own honor. For God's failure to vindicate His own honor would be a divine tacit recognition of the lordship of Satan over this world. The Serpent would become permanently enthroned as "the god of this world," to use a Pauline phrase. Creation is the only visible work of God, as far as we know, and not to take redemptive remedial action would amount to divine, unconditional surrender to Satan. It would have been a divine certification of a diabolical *status quo* on this earth. Left untouched, the world situation would have amounted to a recognition of a *de facto* Manichaeism with a Good God in heaven and an evil god, Satan, on earth. The Good God would have reigned in the realm of the "spirit" and the evil god in the realm of the "world."

God's statement to the Serpent is a curse on the Serpent, and God's own announcement of His own future victory. Note that it is God who established with clarity the boundaries between the woman and the Serpent. "I will put enmity between you and the woman." Also note that the proclamation is made to the Serpent and not to the woman. The conflict will be prolonged in succeeding generations, "and between your seed and her seed." The woman does live long enough to see Satan win one battle when her son Cain kills Abel, another son (4:8).

She also lives long enough to see a glimmer of potential victory in her son Seth and his son Enosh (4:25f).

More will be said about Eve's interpretation of the curse on Satan and her own role in this. Genesis 3:15 is a classical case of the Jewish concept of corporate personality. The phrase, "I will put enmity between you and the woman" refers to only two individuals, the Serpent and the woman. The phrase, "and between your seed and her seed," refers to two separate and recognizable groups of people. The seed of the Serpent are those who carry out his desires and are like him in his opposition to God. In several cases above, it has been shown that Satan's group acts and thinks as he does in Genesis 3:1-6. This group urges the breaking of the divine commands and substitutes their own laws for God's. Thus Satan is enthroned as god for them. If the Pope is the Antichrist for Lutherans, Satan is "Antigod" in Genesis and the rest of the Old Testament. Baal is the most prominent form of the Antigod in the Old Testament.

In the third part, "he shall bruise (crush) your head, and you shall bruise his heel," the corporate-group concept reverts to the singular. Here collective personality takes the form of one person as representative of the group. He, the Seed, incorporates the group into himself. This point needs careful clarification.

The 'you' in "you shall bruise his heel" refers to the Serpent. According to 3:14, the curse is directed specifically against the Serpent; it would be strange exegesis to give any other interpretation to the word "you" at this point. However, in each of the three parts, Satan's enemy is described differently. First, his enmity is with "the woman". Second, the enmity is between Satan's seed and the woman's seed in a collective sense as explained above. Third, a mini-victory is promised to the Serpent, not to his seed, by the words "and you shall bruise his heel." A great victory is promised to one person by the words, "he shall bruise (crush) your head." Note the order: first the woman, then her descendants collectively, and finally one individual, "he."

The "he" is an earthly being that has his origin from her. That this "he" comes as a result of a special promise of God is clear because God predicts or promises that one of her sons, in some sense, will be the Conqueror of Satan. We have alluded to this point above and we will discuss it below. The Conqueror promised does not appear as a *novum* from heaven, but he comes from her first and then from her seed in the collective sense. After Genesis 12, the seed is representative of Israel in a collective sense, and therefore Israel has collective Messianic

identity and purpose. But in Genesis 3, the tone is not nationalistically restricted to Israel, but is universal in the sense of being for all men. Sarah, Rebekah, Leah, and Rachel are the "mothers" of Israel, but Eve is the universal mother. "The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living" (3:19). The one who eventually conquers Satan is not the representative of Israel in a narrowly understood nationalistic sense, but the representative of all men understood collectively. "He," the Seed, gathers all men into himself in his conflict and victory over Satan. Here in Genesis 3:15 is the picture of a universal Savior and restoration. Already in Genesis 3:15 there is mention of a man who conquers Satan in behalf of all men by an ultimate and irreversible act. No details are given of how the final battle or contest is won, but given is the fact that it is won decisively.

It must be mentioned here again that the victory belongs to God and not to man, though man benefits from the victory. The battle is fought by man but it is fought for God's honor. Below, this thought will be developed further. At this point some attention must be given to the imagery used. According to v. 14, the Serpent has been reduced to maneuvering on his belly; he has no other posture from which to attack. He can only attack man on the foot or near the foot, e.g., the heel. Man in combating Satan used that extremity closest to the ground, i.e., the foot or heel. Snake handlers know that the only safe way to pick up a poisonous snake is from behind the head on the neck. A snake picked up from any other part is capable of striking a blow at a more vital part of the human body. In 3:15 the blow to the Serpent is made directly to the head. The Serpent is to receive a mortal wound from which there is no recovery. The man is struck at the heel and may be mortally wounded but not necessarily so. The man attacked by the snake is in real, not in apparent or imagined, danger of death. The man, whose heel crushes the serpent's head, actually risks his life. His life hangs in the balances. There is victory for the man, but there is the cost of his life, at least to some extent. The Serpent is mortally wounded; the Seed is critically wounded.

All the curses (3:14-19) must now, however, be taken together as a whole. They are properly called a curse and not a blessing. A casual counting indicates that there are at least sixteen statements here that can be classified as divine curses. These divine curses are a response to breaking the command (3:1-7). God is pictured, first of all, as a just God who has set down the commandment and its penalty (2:17) and has no other choice but to carry out the sentence of death on the breakers of

the commandment. God cannot deny Himself, His word, or His justice. God cannot overlook sin, i.e., breaking of His command. God would break His own command if He set the death penalty aside (2:17). The Lawgiver would become the Lawbreaker. God Himself would become Satanic. Impossible! The promise of the Serpent's defeat (3:15) does not set aside the divine justice which requires death for the man (3:19). Death as a penalty must be carried out. According to 3:15 God will risk one man in death in order to conquer the Serpent at last. Eve, for one (4:1), does see the curse on the Serpent as an expression of God's love and concern for her; but in the first sense, as stated above, the curse on the Serpent and the victory of the Seed is a vindication of God Himself.

PART VII: THE CURSED IMAGE AND ITS RESTORATION

This moves us into a discussion of the God's image in man after the fall. Luther held that the image was lost, as he identified the image of God with God's righteousness which was again restored in Christ. Luther's concept of divine righteousness is certainly part of the image of God, as has been pointed out in connection with man's ability to know God's goodness directly. The image includes morality, the freedom to occupy oneself with good choices and the prohibition to stay away from the one evil choice, eating the forbidden fruit.

Later Lutheran theologians took a broader view of the image of God. They reflected a much wider definition which does greater justice to Genesis 1 and 2. No one will quarrel with Luther that man lost God's righteousness, but one must state that not everything involved in the image of God was lost. The woman still bears children albeit in pain, and man subdues nature, albeit with less than total success. In fact, the curse of 3:16-19, is a readjustment of the image of God in man in the fallen condition. According to Genesis 5:1-3, as God made man in His image, Adam procreates Seth in his image. It is passed down in its readjusted form. The image of God in man no longer functions in relationship to God because of the curse, but functions only over against the creation, with its terrible penalizing restrictions. The image after the fall is not identical with the original image, because the basic ingredient which permeated the image, the attachment to God, has been sundered. This image in its shattered condition still distinguishes man from the beast (cf. Jas. 3:9.) He can under certain conditions call upon God (4:26).

Is it possible to connect the thought of man's being made in the image of God with the Conqueror of the Serpent? The writer

of Genesis did believe that Eve's progeny would have the image, at least in some way (5:1-3). The Conqueror is part of Eve's progeny in an eminent way (3:15). The first parents failed to use the image of God as it was intended by God. This has been explained above. The image was perverted and used for choosing the evil or the Evil One and not the good or God. The image was made as a means of listening to God. Adam and Eve used it for listening to the Serpent. The Conqueror in 3:15, in vanquishing the Serpent, recognizes the Serpent for what he really is, the Evil One, i.e., the one who is unalterably opposed to God. The Serpent's language identifies him as God's opponent. The Conquering Seed has the image of God in at least the sense that God had originally intended for Adam and Eve; and, unlike the man and woman, he does use the image for what it was intended, i.e., choosing God and not the Evil One. He not only knows how to choose the good and reject the evil, but he knows that the Evil One, the Serpent, must be conquered for the sake of God, if not for the sake of man. The Conquering Seed possesses the image in a superior sense because he alone is capable of conquering the Serpent. The curse (3:14-19) is just that, a curse, but it does have a glimmer of hope. The Old Testament can be described as the curse in action, but the light of the promise shines through. There is much more curse in the Old Testament than promise, but where the promise does shine through, it shines with sufficient brightness that men, at least some men, are attracted to it and accept it.

It was for the one glimmer of hope and not the curse that Eve grasped when she bore her first son. After being driven from the garden, she looked for the fulfillment of the promise and not of the curse. This is a perfectly natural response. Overenthusiastic optimism is part of man's perversion (cf. the Tower of Babel). It might safely be said that the period of time right after leaving the garden was one of unbounded messianic anticipation. Eve's unfounded messianic enthusiasm expressed itself at the birth of her first son, "I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord." It will hardly do to explain this verse as the expression of a primitive woman who thought that God directly intervened at all births. If such were the case, a later redactor from a more sophisticated period in Israel's history would have most certainly removed this embarrassment. Her hope was in direct response to the curse on the Serpent. She looked for immediate deliverance and identified her son as the deliverer. These messianic hopes of deliverance were extinguished. The alleged conqueror sent by God for her turned out to belong to Satan's seed (4:2-16). This, of course, would

not be the first case of messianic misidentification in the Old Testament. Genesis 5 is the account of how God through Eve's son Seth would bring his own promise to fulfillment. A more sober Eve learns that the line, descent, and direction of the Seed (3:15) will be determined by God at His pleasure. The God who was Creator and the Giver of the image (Genesis 1 and 2) will also decide the time for the appearance of the final Conqueror. Like many others, she is forced by God to redirect her messianic hopes. "God has appointed for me another child instead of Abel, for Cain slew him" (4:24). An overly optimistic messianism is replaced by a more patient one that waits for God's time and while waiting directs itself to God by listening to God in subjection.

"To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time men began to call upon the name of the Lord" (4:25). This subjection to God, calling upon Him for help, stands in stark contrast to Adam and Eve wilfully deciding to use the image of God, not in listening to God, but listening to the Serpent and offending God. In calling upon the name of the Lord, a slight reconstruction of that original image has begun; it is a sign of the total future reconstruction and restoration in the son of Seth and Enosh, the Conqueror of the Serpent. We know who this Conqueror is. Jesus! "God saves."

Theses on Woman Suffrage in the Church

Douglas Judisch

In 1956 the Committee on Woman's Suffrage concluded its thorough report to the Synod at St. Paul with these words: "We believe that Scripture fully sanctions the basic polity set up in our church, and we foresee only evil results in any change of the polity under which our church has been so signally blessed for more than a century."¹ In 1969, nevertheless, the Synod at Denver changed that basic polity by allowing women to exercise the franchise in congregational or synodical assemblies,² and the evil results foreseen have ensued in many places. The Synod has already experienced female presidents of congregations and female vicars.³ The Denver resolution (2-17) was a strange one. It commends two contradictory studies on the question of woman's suffrage, one of which, the 1956 report mentioned above, obviously undermines the resolution itself. It further negates itself by permitting congregations to alter their polity with respect to woman's place in the church, *provided* that such alteration not allow women to "exercise authority over men."⁴ Such a sweeping proviso, however, eliminates woman suffrage in congregational and synodical assemblies, since voting is obviously an exercise of authority (except in the pseudo-elections of Communist countries) and since congregational and synodical assemblies, equally obviously, exercise authority over men. (It may be noted, by the way, that Denver Resolution 2-17 is in no way a doctrinal resolution requiring some special form of dissent, since it leaves the practice of woman suffrage as an option.)⁵ The author must admit, to be sure, that he favoured the resolution concerned at the convention in Denver, considering woman suffrage a necessary concession to the spirit of the times. His witness of the evil results of this arrangement, however, has driven him back to a thorough study of the matter in the light of the Word of God. The time has come for others in the Synod to reconsider their stance in the same light.

1. Woman suffrage in the church is contrary to Genesis 2 and the Order of Creation established by God.
 - a. Woman was created from man and for man and is, therefore, by nature subordinate to man,⁶ vv. 18-23:
"Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man

should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.' So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Woman suffrage, on the contrary, gives woman an authority equal to man and so overthrows the natural order. By the "natural order" or the "Order of Creation" is meant the relationship in which the various creatures of God stand to each other on the basis of their creation by Him, while the "Order of Redemption" refers to the relationship in which the various creatures of God stand to each other on the basis of their redemption by Him, that is, within the Church of Christ. Note that one's position in the Order of Creation is not abolished by incorporation into Christ and His church; rather one's position in the Order of Creation is thereby hallowed as one's position in the Order of Redemption. Thus, in I Corinthians 7:7-20, Paul urges Jews not to try to become Gentiles and Gentiles not to try to become Jews, but rather that "every one lead the life which the Lord has assigned to him, and in which God has called him" (v. 17) and that "every one should remain in the state in which he was called" (v. 20). Our Lord Himself, indeed, directs His followers to the original pattern of the natural order as a pure expression of God's will and the ideal form of Christian conduct; in Matthew 19:3-8 Christ warns His disciples against divorce on the grounds that "in the beginning it was not so." The Order of Creation, then, so far from being alien to the church, ought to be more manifest there than anywhere else. For this reason one must reject the exegesis of those who use Galatians 3:28 to show that woman possesses an authority equal to man in the church. This notion confuses spiritual unity with identity of roles. Children, after all, are one with adults in Christ Jesus, but it does not follow that children have an authority equal to adults in the church.

- b. Woman was created as an assistant (*‘ezer*) to man and by nature, therefore, possesses less authority than man, vv. 18, 20: “Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’ . . . The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him.” Woman suffrage, on the contrary, again gives woman an authority equal to man and so overthrows the natural order. Some may object that the word *‘ezer* is also applied to God (e.g., Ps. 70:5, “Thou art my help and my deliverer; O Lord, do not tarry!”). No one would argue that God possesses less authority than man because He is called man’s helper, and so some might question why we argue in this manner with respect to woman. We must observe, however, that woman, unlike God, is not man’s assistant by a simple act of her will; although, of course, the Christian woman delights in her position. The point here is that woman was *created* as man’s assistant *par excellence*; assisting man is her special role in the scheme of the universe. Thus, although the Lord is the Christian’s shield (Ps. 28:7) and is not under the Christian’s authority, yet a metal plate which is specifically made as a shield for a Christian is under his authority. So too one who is specifically made as a helper for man is under his authority.
2. Woman suffrage in the church is contrary to Genesis 3 and the Order of Creation established by God.
- a. Woman fell into sin when Satan deceived her into seeking a place in the natural order higher than that allocated to her by God, and man yielded himself to sin when he acceded to woman’s exercise of authority over him, vv. 6, 17: “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. . . . And to Adam God said, ‘Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, “You shall not eat of it,” cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.’ ” Woman suffrage, on the other hand, allows woman to exercise authority over man, thus overthrowing the natural order. For any vote which determines or is capable of determining a certain course of action is, by nature, an exercise of authority; suffrage in

any group implies the exercise of authority unless the vote granted to a person is purely advisory. A woman exercises authority over men every time that her vote contributes to the passage or defeat of some measure on which some men voted the opposite way. A woman likewise exercises authority over men every time that her vote contributes to the passage or defeat of a measure which requires action to be carried out by men who act as the executive personnel of the group in question. A congregational assembly in almost every measure adopted prescribes some course of action to be taken by the pastor, male teachers, or officers of the congregation (e.g., holding a certain number of services each week, purchasing equipment, etc.), so that a woman, by voting in the assembly, continually exercises authority over men.

- b. The Order of Creation established by God is that the husband is to rule over the wife, v.16: "Yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." Woman suffrage, on the other hand, gives the wife an authority equal to the husband and so overthrows the natural order. Some might object that this rule of the husband over the wife is not part of the Order of Creation because it comes into existence only as part of God's curse on mankind in response to the fall into sin. Such is not the case, however. The subordination of woman to man in general and of the wife to the husband in particular existed even in paradise. The reason that it is mentioned in the curse on the woman is this: Her special role of assistant to man formerly brought only blissful satisfaction to woman, but now sin would render even it liable to abuse, problems, and pain. It is the same with woman's other main role in life, the raising of children. Woman would have borne children in paradise, but now she would do so in pain because of her sin (3:16a). It is the same with man's work too. He was created to work (2:15), but now, by virtue of his sin and God's curse, his work would be difficult, burdensome, and of itself futile (3:17-19).
3. Woman suffrage in the church is contrary to Isaiah 3. It is as shameful for woman to rule over man as for children to oppress adults, v. 12: "My people—children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, your leaders mislead you, and confuse the course of your paths." Woman suffrage, on the contrary, allows woman to rule over man.

4. Woman suffrage in the church is contrary to I Corinthians 11 and the Orders of Creation and Redemption established by God.
 - a. Man is the head (*kephalē*) of woman just as Christ is the head of man, v.3: "But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God." Therefore, just as it would be reprehensible to give man an authority equal to Christ, so is it reprehensible to give woman an authority equal to man (as woman suffrage does). Some might wonder how the apostle can call God the head of Christ and so give the Father greater authority than the Son. The reason is that Paul is referring to Christ according His human nature; compare chapter 15:28. Some have objected to the citation of I Corinthians 11 as proof of the proper relationship between man and woman in the church. Their rationale is that even the most conservative pastors and churches now apparently allow women to worship without veils (or hats), even though Paul demands in this chapter that women wear them as a sign of man's authority over woman. If Paul's command as to the sign of male authority is dispensable, argue the objectors, then so too is his assertion of male authority itself. This reasoning is, however, quite unsound. In the first place, even the most conservative pastors and congregations can stray from some points of God's Word, but that does not give us a free hand to throw out other points, especially more important ones. Secondly, the word "veil" occurs in the English translations of I Corinthians 11, but not in the original Greek. The covering with which Paul tells a woman to cover herself in worship as a sign of male authority is defined in verse 15 as her hair.
 - b. Paul reiterates thesis 1a, namely, that woman was created from man and for man, vv. 8-9: "For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man." The same conclusion follows as was enunciated at thesis 1a, namely, that woman is by nature subordinate to man.
5. Woman suffrage in the church is contrary to I Corinthians 14.
 - a. Woman ought to be subject to man (*hupotassesthai*) in the churches, vv. 33b-34: "As in all the churches of the saints, . . . the women should be subordinate, as even the law says." Woman suffrage, on the contrary, gives

woman an authority equal to man in the churches. Now, some students of Scripture refer the word *ecclēsiai* ("churches") in this verse to all congregational assemblies, whether they be convened for the purpose of worship or for the purpose of business. For in Acts 15:22, certainly, the word *ecclēsia* is used to denote an assembly convoked for the purpose of deliberation and decision, rather than worship. In this case, the application of the verse to the question of woman suffrage would be direct. Other students, however, refer the word *ecclēsiai* to congregational assemblies in the apostolic church at which both worship and business were conducted, on the grounds that the New Testament authors do not distinguish between various kinds of assemblies of the church and that Paul uses similar terminology for a meeting at which business is conducted, I Corinthians 5:4, and for one at which worship is conducted, I Corinthians 14:26. In this case, the application of verse 34 to the question of woman suffrage would still be a direct one, even if churches now hold separate meetings for the purposes of worship and business respectively. Perhaps most exegetes, however, prefer a third option, that the direct reference of the word *ecclēsiai* is to those meetings of the church in particular which are convened for the purposes of worship, since Paul is mainly discussing the proper conduct of worship in this chapter. In this case, verse 34 still applies to the question of woman suffrage in an indirect, nevertheless very real, sense. For if woman must be subject to man in worship assemblies, she must also be subject to him in such assemblies as determine the nature, time, place, leadership, conduct, and other circumstances of such worship assemblies. Paul, indeed, is here commanding the Corinthians to follow in the practice of woman's subjection the established custom of the other Christian churches, vv. 33, 36. And it is clear from Acts 1:16, where Peter uses the word *andres* (a word used only of males), that when in what we should call "business matters" the earliest New Testament church took action, only the men voted. Like the other verses cited in these theses, then, the verse under discussion, whether directly or indirectly, precludes woman from voting in any ecclesiastical institution possessing authority over men—worship assemblies, congregational business assemblies, synodical assemblies and commissions, etc.

- b. Woman is forbidden even to speak (*lalein*) in the churches, vv. 33b-35: "As in all the churches of the saints,

the women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church." Thus, it follows *a minori ad maius* that woman is also forbidden to vote in the churches, since then, as now, suffrage in a certain group constituted a greater degree of authority than the mere right to speak. Evidently even the immature Corinthian congregation did not go to the extreme of instituting woman suffrage. But if it be shameful for a woman to speak in the churches, v. 35, how much more shameful it is for her to vote there. Note that the verb *lalein* embraces all forms of individual verbal expression—preaching, reading a Scripture lesson, leading a prayer, conducting the liturgy, giving a testimony, etc.—but does not include corporate participation in liturgy and singing. This stricture, moreover, for the same reasons as enunciated above, applies to all ecclesiastical institutions possessing authority over men—worship assemblies, congregational business assemblies, synodical assemblies and commissions, etc.—but not to women's organizations, classes for children, etc.⁷ Note also that the Apostle describes the principle of the silent submissiveness of women in the churches as a command of the Lord, v. 37; part and parcel of the Word of God, v. 36; and a clear statement of the law, that is, the Old Testament, v. 34.

6. Woman suffrage in the church is contrary to Ephesians 5 and the Order of Redemption.
 - a. The wife ought to be subject (*hupotassesthai*) to the husband in everything, just as the church is subject to Christ her Lord, vv. 22, 24: "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. . . As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands." Therefore, just as it would be reprehensible to give the church an authority equal to Christ, so it is reprehensible to give the wife an authority equal to the husband (as woman suffrage does).
 - b. The husband is the head (*kephalē*) of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, v. 23: "For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Saviour." The same conclusion follows as in thesis 6a, namely, that just as it would be reprehensible to give the church an authority

equal to Christ, so it is reprehensible to give the wife an authority equal to the husband (as woman suffrage does).

7. Woman suffrage in the church is contrary to Colossians 3 and the Order of Redemption: The wife ought to be subject (*hupotassesthai*) to the husband, v. 18: "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord." Woman suffrage, on the contrary, again gives the wife an authority equal to the husband. Note that the Apostle describes the principle enunciated here as "fitting in the Lord"; it definitely obtains within the Order of Redemption.
8. Woman suffrage in the church is contrary to I Timothy 2 and the Order of Creation.
 - a. Woman ought to remain in silence (*en hēsuchia*) in the church, vv. 11, 12: "Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent." The same conclusion follows as in thesis 5b, namely, that woman is also forbidden to vote in all ecclesiastical institutions possessing authority over men. The raising of children, on the other hand, including their education in the church, is the special province of woman, 2:15.
 - b. Woman must not be permitted to exercise authority (*authentēin*) over man, v. 12: "I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men"; whereas woman suffrage does, in fact, give woman an authority over man. (Refer back to thesis 2a for elaboration of this point.) Note that the verb *authentēin* in this passage, contrary to some translations, applies not merely to certain forms of the exercise of authority—such as abuse of authority, domineering, lording it over someone—but to *any* exercise of authority. Any restriction of the full connotation of the word in this passage is devoid of exegetical warrant. Woman's exercise of authority over man cannot be abused; it is already an abuse in and of itself.
 - c. Paul reiterates thesis 1a, namely, that woman was created from man and for man, v. 13: "For Adam was formed first, then Eve." The same conclusion follows as was previously enunciated, namely, that woman is by nature subordinate to man.
 - d. Paul reiterates thesis 2a, namely, that woman fell into sin when Satan deceived her into seeking a place in the natural order higher than that allocated to her by God, and man yielded himself to sin when he acceded to woman's exercise of authority over him, v. 14: "And

Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor."

9. Woman suffrage in the church is contrary to Titus 2. Paul reiterates thesis 7, namely, that the wife ought to be subject (*hupotassesthai*) to the husband, v. 4-5: "And so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be sensible, chaste, domestic, kind, and submissive to their husbands, that the Word of God may not be discredited." Note that women who are not submissive discredit the Word of God.
10. Woman suffrage in the church is contrary to 1 Peter 3.
 - a. Peter reiterates thesis 7, namely, that the wife ought to be subject (*hupotassesthai*) to the husband, vv. 1, 5: "Likewise you wives, be submissive to your husbands, so that some, though they do not obey the word, may be won without a word by the behaviour of their wives. . . So once the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves and were submissive to their husbands."
 - b. The wife ought to obey the husband and consider him lord, following the example of Sarah and the other holy women of the Old Testament Church, vv. 5, 6: "So once the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves and were submissive to their husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are now her children if you do right and let nothing terrify you." Woman suffrage, on the contrary, again gives the wife an authority equal to the husband.

In conclusion, woman suffrage in the church is contrary to at least ten clear testimonies of the Word of God and to the Order of Creation established by God from the beginning and hallowed as the Order of Redemption by the atoning blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For woman was created from man and for man, as an assistant to man, to live under man's authority; and she is redeemed to fulfill this same role as fully as is possible in a world corrupted by sin. Man sins, therefore, when he gives woman an authority equal to or over him, and the woman who assumes such a role denies what she really is by nature and by grace. The correct understanding of the respective responsibilities of the two sexes in the church is not a doctrine necessary to salvation, but it is a doctrine of great import to the body of Christ. Men and women who try to fill roles of their own invention, misunderstanding or ignoring the roles assigned to them by God, cannot expect to experience as full a manifestation of the Holy Spirit in their midst as if

they were satisfied to be what they are. Wanting to make themselves what God has not made them, they waste much spiritual energy by attempting to swim against the stream. Quite understandably, then, the warming rays of the Divine Countenance beam more abundantly on those men and women who see themselves as they really are in the mirror of God's Word and see clearly their distinct roles in God's Orders of Creation and Redemption. Wanting to be ever more fully what God has made them, they are at peace with themselves and with the God who created and redeemed them.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Proceedings of the Forty-Third Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod* (St. Louis, 1956), p. 569.
2. *Proceedings of the Forty-Eighth Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod* (St. Louis, 1969), pp. 88-89.
3. Cf. Judicius, "Women in Authority," *THE SPRINGFIELDER*, XL, pp. 136-137.
4. *Proceedings of the Forty-Eighth Regular Convention*, p. 88.
5. *Ibid.* We may also note that the later Resolution 2-27 states that the Synod "has not found it necessary to disavow any of its doctrinal statements and does not today." *Proceedings of the Forty-Eighth Regular Convention*, p. 91. Resolution 2-17, however, presumably abrogates the pertinent Resolutions of the Synod at St. Louis in 1938, at Houston in 1953, and at St. Paul in 1956. The Synod at Denver, therefore, clearly did not consider Resolution 2-17 a doctrinal one.
6. The word "subordinate" here in no way suggests inferiority. It is important to understand that these theses use the word "subordinate" in the strict sense only, that is, "lesser in rank." The author rejects any idea that woman is morally or spiritually inferior to man. Nor does he mean to imply that woman is intellectually or physically inferior. There is no question, indeed, that some women are morally, spiritually, intellectually, and physically superior to some men, but this is not the point under consideration. To illustrate with an analogy from military life, a certain colonel may be more virtuous, more intelligent, and more fit than his commanding general; yet he is still subordinate to the general.
7. Congregational officers ought, however, to announce ahead of time matters of business which are due to appear on the agenda of congregational assemblies in order to allow women to express their feelings to their husbands, fathers, brothers, elders, or pastors. For it is especially important in this individualistic day that the church foster the proper view of each family as a distinct unit represented by its men—whether they be the husbands, fathers, brothers, sons, brothers-in-law, or sons-in-laws of the women and children of the family. If a woman has no male relative to relay her ideas to the voters' assembly, then it is the duty of the pastor and elders to act as her brothers in Christ by representing her views to the other men in the family of God. And women who wish to present a formal case on a certain measure to a voters' assembly possess the privilege of doing so in writing. Indeed, congregational and synodical assemblies and commissions should be readier to seek out the counsel of such women as are especially qualified to advise them on the particular questions with which they deal; woman can provide such expert counsel to an authoritative ecclesiastical group, once again, either in writing or through an individual member of the group.

Theological Observer

DELANEY'S DEFENCE OF THE ILCW

According to the March 7, 1977, *Christian News* (pp. 1, 16), the Rev. E. Theodore Delaney, sometime Executive Secretary of the Synod's Commission on Worship, has taken issue with certain objections to the work of the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship stated in an article entitled "The Deepening Liturgical Crisis" in the January 1977 *Concordia Theological Quarterly*. Many Missourians were surprised and saddened to read Pastor Delaney's response. We had previously assumed that all the Missourian members of the ILCW had steadfastly but unsuccessfully opposed the doctrinal deviations of the other participants (ALC and LCA). The representatives of Synod have, after all, been outnumbered two-to-one on the Commission and so, we believed, were consistently outvoted. Surely Pastor Delaney has struggled gallantly, like the other Missourian representatives, for what remnants of orthodoxy remain in the ILCW products. How sad it is, then, to see this man defending the false teachings of the ILCW. We pray that Pastor Delaney may yet realize the spiritual dangers of his misplaced loyalty to a heterodox institution. His remarks have, indeed, made more apparent than ever the deep rift between authentic Lutheranism and the religion of the ILCW.

(1) E.T. Delaney asserts that various articles published recently in the journals of the two seminaries on the work of the ILCW are "based upon lack of knowledge or an inaccurate information." Such articles would include Carl Bornmann, "The Twenty-Seventh Institute of Liturgical Studies," *The Springfielder*, XXXIX, pp. 40-43; Lowell C. Green, "Between Luther and the 'Now' Generation: Some Thoughts About 'Contemporary Worship' As Advanced by the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship," *ibid.*, pp. 81-87; and David P. Scaer, "The Great Thanksgiving of the ILCW," *ibid.*, XL, pp. 36-41. Delaney also charges that Bornmann, Green, Scaer, and other critics of the ILCW at no time attempted "to ascertain actual data or accurate and complete information, choosing rather to present *argumenta ad hominem*..."

Response: In actuality, Bornmann, Green, Scaer, and the others consistently quote from the primary sources—the members and products of the ILCW. They never resort to *argumenta ad hominem* by attacking the personal integrity of the members of the ILCW. Delaney and other adherents of the ILCW would do well to show the same consideration to their critics.

(2) Delaney accuses a critic of the ILCW of a "sin against veracity" and again of "unconscionable perfidy."

Response: In the first place, it is scarcely a "sin against veracity," despite Delaney's charge, to say that the products of the ILCW reject what they call "a narrowly defined orthodoxy," since the ILCW explicitly states its avoidance of such orthodoxy in *Contemporary Worship* 6 (p. 12). Secondly, even if someone had said something incorrect about the theology of the ILCW, Delaney would have been more charitable to assert that the man was in error (whether historical or doctrinal) than to charge him with deliberate deception. The critics of the ILCW have treated its proponents as sincere men, even though differing from them on important points of doctrine and practice. All Christians are surely entitled to the same treatment.

(3) Delaney defends the ILCW commemoration of the unitarian Albert Schweitzer on the grounds that "much of what Schweitzer has written is in agreement with traditional Protestant Christianity."

Response: Albert Schweitzer was a great thinker (as well as a great humanitarian) and, like all great thinkers (Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, etc.) taught

many of the same truths as Christianity (especially in the realm of morality). This fact does not, however, make the commemoration of a unitarian appropriate in the Lutheran Church. For faith in the Holy Trinity is an essential doctrine of Christianity (Matt. 28:19; Athanasian Creed; Augustana I).

(4) Delaney likewise sees no problem in the ILCW commemoration of the Spanish mystics, Juan de la Cruz and Theresa de Avila.

Response: Juan de la Cruz and Theresa de Avila were two of the most radical enthusiasts of all time, seeking union with Christ through their ecstatic experiences (Charles G. Herbermann, etc., eds., *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, New York, 1913, VIII, pp. 480-1; XIV, pp. 515-6). Such people are scarcely suitable candidates for commemoration in the Lutheran Church. For union with Christ comes only through the Word of God and Sacraments (Rom. 10:7; Titus 3:5; 1 Cor. 10:16; Smalcald Articles III, 8:10).

(5) Delaney defends the ILCW commemoration of the late Pope John XXIII, asking if it is not "the system of the papacy, rather than the person of the pope, which the Lutheran Confessions hold to be the antichrist?"

Response: Firstly, it is true that no man is born the antichrist; but once he assumes the office of pope, he is rightly called the antichrist. It is, therefore, correct to say that the ILCW has proposed a festival of the antichrist. Secondly, it is for his actions as pope that the ILCW commemorates John XXIII (CW 6, p. 40). Thirdly, one completely misunderstands the doctrine of the antichrist if one implies that an exemplary Christian could hold the office of pope, serving as "the man of lawlessness" and "the son of perdition" (2 Thess. 2:3, 7). (See Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, tr. W.W.F. Albrecht, Concordia Publishing House, 1953, III, pp. 468-469). Fourthly, Pope John XXIII personally taught the doctrine of salvation by works both before and after his election to papacy. Thus his commemoration is clearly inappropriate to the Lutheran Church.

(6) Delaney defends the failure of the ILCW to distinguish on principle between the official Jewish canon of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, even arguing that the Apology asserts the canonicity of 2 Maccabees "in unmistakable terms" and "seemingly" that of Tobit.

Response: None of the apocryphal books meet the criterion of canonicity in Old Testament times, authorship by a duly authenticated prophet of God. The Lord Jesus and His apostles, therefore, set their imprimatur only upon the official Jewish canon from which the Apocrypha was and is absent (e.g., Matt. 23:2-3; Rom. 3:2; Acts 23:6-10; 26:5). Dr. Luther, consequently, though he included the apocryphal books as an appendix to his German translation of the Old Testament, emphatically distinguishes in his prefaces to these books between the Apocrypha and the Old Testament Scriptures. The Lutheran dogmatists followed suit. Martin Chemnitz, for example, the principal author of the Formula of Concord, argues against the canonicity of the Apocrypha in his masterful *Examination of the Council of Trent* (VI, 19-20, etc.). Thus, despite Delaney's assertion, the Confessions nowhere imply that Tobit is canonical—a book in which charming illustrations of Christian piety are intermixed with the silliest expressions of superstition. The angel Raphael, for example, instructs Tobias to burn the heart and liver of a fish in his bridal bedroom in order to drive off the demon who, in love with the beautiful Sarah, has slain her previous seven bridegrooms (Tobit 6:15-17). Melancthon merely argues that Tobit, contrary to the Romanist claims, can be interpreted in such a way as to avoid the teaching of works-righteousness (Apology III, 156-158).

As far as 2 Maccabees is concerned, Melancthon does state, to be sure, that "no testimony concerning the praying of the dead is extant in the Scriptures, except the dream taken from the Second Book of Maccabees, 15, 14" (Apology XXI, 9). His language shows, however, that he mentions 2 Mac-

cabees in a purely incidental manner, rather than citing it by way of doctrinal proof. Indeed, he does not treat its testimony as determinative on the point in question, as he would have done in the case of any canonical book. It is obvious, then, that when he extends the word "Scriptures" to include 2 Maccabees, Melancthon is speaking *sugchōrētichōs*—that is, employing the name claimed by others for a thing without necessarily admitting the validity of the claim. So it is that the prophets often speak of the images of the heathen as "gods" without implying that these images really were gods, and we often refer to the Roman Church as the "Catholic Church" without admitting its traditional claims to be a universal church. No true Lutheran, after all, could accept as canonical a book which teaches that the living may atone for the sins of the dead by praying and offering sacrifices for them (2 Macc. 12:39-45).

(7) Delaney adopts the ILCW concept of marriage, which abolishes the vow of obedience on the part of the wife. Indeed, he describes a critic's desire to retain this vow as "wistfulness."

Response: The wife's obedience is an essential aspect of the Scriptural relationship of husband and wife—and an aspect in which pious Christian women still rejoice and find fulfillment. The following passages should suffice for any impartial reader—Genesis 2:18-23; 3:6, 17; Isaiah 3:12; 1 Corinthians 11:3, 8-9; 14:34-35; Ephesians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 2:11-14; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1-6. Modern man's abnegation of authority to woman is an attack upon the Order of Creation, the pattern of relationships which God established from the beginning between His various creatures. Nor is this natural pattern something foreign to the church, since one's position in it is hallowed by his incorporation into Christ and His Church (as is shown by the New Testament passages cited above). Thus, the Order of Creation, translated into the Christ-grounded Order of Redemption, ought to be more apparent in the church than anywhere else in this sin-corrupted world.

(8) Delaney approves the view of the ILCW that all people are brothers regardless of their state of grace. He cites as confirmation of this concept Matthew 25:31-36 and "the many other passages in which our Lord sets forth his social consciousness instructions."

Response: In Matthew 25:40 the word "brethren" means what it generally means in the New Testament, namely, Christians. One of the principal rules of proper interpretation, after all, is that a word is used in its most common sense unless there is good reason to depart from the meaning. The word is often used, of course, in a more physical sense, of close relatives (e.g. Matt. 12:46), but the ILCW hymn is obviously not using the term with this latter meaning. Delaney and the ILCW clearly imply a spiritual kinship among all men when they sing (CW 1, hymn 4):

God made all Mankind brothers
Wherever they may be;
One destiny unites us—
Man, woman, slave or free.
No tyrant can defeat us,
No nation strike us down
Who will to live as brothers
The whole wide world around.
My brothers are all others
Forever hand in hand;
Where sounds the call to freedom,
There is my native land.
My brother's fears are my fears—
Black, yellow, white or brown—
My brother's tears are my tears
The whole wide world around.

No such kinship exists, however, between Christians and non-Christians. Only those who have received Christ Jesus through faith are children of God (John 1:12), and so only they can be brethren one of another. Our Lord teaches that we are to regard the impenitent sinner, not as a brother, but as a heathen and publican (Matt. 18:15-17). Christians love non-Christians, of course, and seek to promote their spiritual and material welfare (especially by proclaiming the Gospel of Christ to them), but they cannot consider them brethren.

The ILCW hymn is an expression, not of Christianity, but of secular humanism. There is no common "destiny" uniting Christians and non-Christians. Christians are on their way to heaven; non-Christians are on their way to hell (Mark 16:16). No "tyrant can defeat" the Church of Christ. No nation can strike it down (Matt. 16:18). But this assurance by no means extends to the rest of mankind; unbelievers are the slaves of Satan and his representatives (e.g., Rev. 13:1-8). Nor can men "will to live as brothers"; spiritual sonship, and hence brotherhood, derives solely from the will of God (John 1:13). Christians do not stand forever hand in hand" with non-Christians; they are already separate and this separation will become much more obvious on Judgment Day (Matt. 25:46). The native land of the Christian is heaven, not "where sounds the call to freedom" (Phil. 3:20; Heb. 11:13-16). The fears of the believer are not those of the unbeliever, nor are their tears the same. The tears of the non-Christian are symptomatic of his rejection of God and therefore endure to eternity (Matt. 24:51). The tears of the Christian are evidence of his incorporation into Christ and will pass away with this world (Matt. 5:4; Rev. 21:4).

(9) Delaney defends the explanation of the Trinity recently provided by *The Lutheran*, the official organ of the Lutheran Church in America.

Response: This explicit defence *The Lutheran's* position by a member of the ILCW makes the disappearance of many Trinitarian references in the ILCW literature all the more worrisome. Since Delaney contends that the *The Lutheran* item, when taken as a whole, is an acceptable explication of the doctrine of the Trinity, we shall quote the complete entry in the "My Question Is" column of the June 2, 1976, issue (p. 29):

Q. What's the Trinity?

A. Christians believe in one God, who has revealed himself in three ways, sometimes called the three "persons" of God. We believe that God is the heavenly Father, who created and sustains everything. We believe that God is the Son who came down to earth as Jesus Christ to atone for the sins of the world. We believe that God is the Holy Spirit, at work today in our lives and in the world. These three "persons" are known as the Holy Trinity, but they are of one substance.

If this is not modal monarchianism, what is? Delaney specifically defends as legitimate the *tertium comparationis*, as he calls it, in this explanation of the Trinity. It is the point of comparison, however, which is completely wrong; the Persons of the Holy Trinity are not ways in which God has revealed Himself. The three distinct Persons of the Godhead exist from eternity in and of themselves, quite apart from their revelation of themselves to men. Thus, the Augsburg Confession (I) employs the word "person" as the fathers used it, "to signify, not a part or quality in another, but that which subsists of itself."

In conclusion, then, the arguments which Pastor Delaney has recently advanced in defence of the products of the ILCW are of considerable significance. For they reveal more plainly than ever the yawning chasm which separates orthodox Lutheranism from the theology of the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship. The endeavors of the ILCW were from the start founded upon woefully unsound presuppositions—the validity of higher criticism and the so-called ecumenical movement. The inevitable result is a

multitude of deviations from orthodox doctrine by the Commission. The Synod can no longer in good conscience leave in such alien hands the future destiny of the liturgy and hymnody which has always exerted such a profound influence on the popular theology of the Lutheran Church.

Judicius

PREUS OF MISSOURI

Anyone expecting new and startling revelations from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* religion editor James E. Adams' *Preus of Missouri* and the *Great Lutheran Civil War* (Harper and Row, New York) will be disappointed. For several years rumors of a grand expose floated about, but anyone fearing revelations of secrets can relax for the moment. Adams' style is more sensational than his revelations. *Preus of Missouri* is not the kind of book that gets a review in a theological journal, but since the subject of the book was a member of the Fort Wayne (Springfield) faculty and served as president of this institution, an exception is in order. This journal, under its older name *Springfielder*, also receives mention.

Adams has a ready-made market in the readers of *Christian News*, *Missouri in Perspective*, and *Christianity Today*. Since President J. A. O. Preus has also touched bases in the Little Norwegian Synod and the American Lutheran Church, the potential readership is boundless. Anyone who considers himself a true blue, born-and-bred Missourian and anyone who carries a chip on his shoulder against the conservative synod will buy, borrow, or steal this book. The Preus biography has arrived right on time, moreover, three months before the Dallas Convention.

Adams' style is hard-hitting, direct, terse, and to the point. Each page reads like an editorial for the morning paper. If Adams was not identified as the author, Jack Anderson might be a good guess. At first glance, some of the language sounds unnecessarily offensive—"Lutheran infighter and conservative commando," "snarl of a teamster boss," "seemingly arrogant and brittle postures of John Tietjen"—but Adams is writing for the newspaper audience and is not the court biographer. A newspaper writer wants to create history just as much as he wants to write it. After a few pages, one accepts Adams as is, sits back, and enjoys. A lot of territory has to be covered and many stones turned over, so the writer jacks a few of them up and puts a dab of color on the less illustrious ones.

Adams' production is no whitewash for anyone involved. A quick glance will soon reveal that *Preus of Missouri* was not put together by the public relations staff of any group connected in any way with the Missouri Synod controversy. In spite of Adams' short, punctuated, explosive style, he does exercise restraint and in many cases lays to rest unsubstantiated rumors. As a researcher Adams seems to have done some jobs better than others. He knows what the president of the Missouri Synod said on the first day of kindergarten, but does not really go behind the scenes on the Jungkuntz matter at St. Louis, Wolbrecht's losing the position of executive director, and the St. Louis seminary strike of 1974. Adams seems to be content to give a description but not an analysis. It is the difference between a painting and a statue or between a two and three dimensional movie. The book lacks depth; motives are simply not explored. Adams is, however, no biographer, historian, or theologian, but a newspaper writer. The research of President Preus's youth, college, university, seminary life, and pastorate is done more intricately than his work in the Missouri Synod. The investigation of the crucial years in 1973-1975 tends to be so superficial that this reviewer is tempted to suggest that the writer relied on his own news reports in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* for evidence.

Perhaps Adams is being faulted too quickly. His purpose was to write about President Preus and not the Missouri Synod controversy. On the jacket cover *Preus of Missouri* stands out in such bold red letters that the rest of the title in smaller white print *And The Great Lutheran Civil War* is lost in the shadows. This is not to suggest that a member of the Missouri Synod could have done a better job, but the events of these last years should be examined from other avenues. Theological-political biographies of Alfred Feuerbringer and John H. Tietjen should command audiences of the same size as Adams has commandeered for Preus.

Preus of Missouri, understood from the author's point of view, can be appreciated not as untainted original source material but rather as a literary piece of art produced by the writer as he viewed the St. Louis countryside. Those who understand the exegetical sciences of *Gemeindetheologie*, form criticism, and redaction criticism will be able to sympathize with the way in which Adam viewed his task. Dr. J. A. O. Preus had been catapulted faster than anyone previously into positions of influence and power in the Missouri Synod. A sequence of events soon pushed him into national prominence. Books simply have to be written on people of such fame, and the mantle fell naturally on the religious editor of the prestigious Nobel prize-winning newspaper whose headquarters were in the same city as the Missouri Synod's. Still unknown is whether he had an inner call or if the community employed him to collect the traditions. But at the first layer of tradition it is quite obvious that the anti-Preus bias with which Adams began his research had nearly dissipated when the final production was ready for the press. Adams' rush to beat Dallas might have been the reason not to push the shovel any deeper into the excavation site, but he does bring things right up to 1977.

Most newspapermen forget that they belong to the fourth estate, journalists, and not the third estate, the clergy. Maybe editorial writers like Adams believe that their position on the editorial page gives them the best of two worlds. Adams is not totally an outsider. He has his own credo and law. He cannot resist preaching. Adams' faith fits within the AELC or ELIM framework. "Christ is God's only absolute gift to the church and the world. His other gifts are relative and are inspired and inerrant only in a metaphorical sense" (p. 237). If the editor (the German word is *Redaktor*) had the same starting point as Preus's opponents, the real miracle is that he has any critical views of Preus's opponents. Adams, who feels more at home with Semtex theology, is harder on that group than on Preus.

One item, however, which should be cleared up in Adams' account is that he endorses Tietjen's charge that Preus lied on the Ehlen dismissal (p. 176). Adams' account is muddled here. Adams states that Preus had agreed to a one year contract for Ehlen, an agreement which Tietjen claims that Preus broke—a claim which Adams has turned into a charge against Preus (p. 234). The decision in the Ehlen matter, however, was made by the Board of Higher Education and not Preus. Adams' one source close to that situation, moreover, said that Preus never made the promise. This mistake on the part of Adams is not so serious, but what is serious is that he renders a moral judgment against Preus on the basis of it. Overly Freudian, furthermore, is Adams' attempt to play junior psychologist in seeing the Missouri Synod president's career as set against the backdrop of his father's successful career as governor. That kind of stuff should have gone out of style by now.

Adams has turned over many leaves in the Missouri Synod history, but many more still are left unturned. He seems never to have grasped the desire of conservatives to have a truly confessional church. Failure for conservative theology is the final prediction. He is not unlike the crowds who are amazed at the miracles and preaching of Jesus, but have no way of comprehending the mystery that is present. None of the major figures of Missouri Synod leave the

scene unscathed except for *Christian News* editor Herman Otten (pp. 130-1). Maybe the exception represents one fighting journalist's respect for a comrade-in-arms. *Missouri in Perspective*, on the other hand, comes off as a "moderate muckraker" (p. 200). Adams is the first to jump into the water, but the last chapter has not been written.

dps

THE CHARISMATIC THREAT

One prominent Missouri Synod theologian has identified three types of charismatics: first, the Spirit-driven fanatics of the Reformation period, like Thomas Müntzer; second, those who belong to churches which are overtly 'Pentecostal'; third, those who are open to the sovereign working of the Holy Spirit. The first two types are not real problems for the Lutheran Church today. Sixteenth-century iconoclasts are not roving around looking for statues and windows to break in our churches. Members of avowed Pentecostal groups are not applying for membership in our churches. The third type of charismatic deserves further attention. Persons in this group do not like to identify themselves with persons they sometimes call "hardcore Pentecostals." Also they do not join denominations limited to those who have some type of Pentecostal experience. Charismatics of the third type are trans-denominational. The Missouri Synod seems to be seeing the light at the end of the tunnel in regard to the conservative-liberal controversy. But before we get to the end of the tunnel, the charismatic issue, as understood in this third sense, looms ever larger.

Central to this particular type of charismatic thinking is the idea that the Holy Spirit is sovereign and works anywhere and anytime He pleases. At face value such phraseology seems pious enough. But to speak about the sovereign working of the Holy Spirit is not as acceptable as it sounds at first. Let us consider some of the following points. First, God-Father, Son and Holy Spirit is not free to act contrary to His own nature. God cannot annihilate Himself. He cannot offend against His own justice. The list could be expanded. Absolute freedom is a philosophical hypothesis that exists neither for God nor man. The Holy Spirit has a given place within the Trinity and no freedom to assume the place or functions of the Father and the Son. Secondly, the Spirit as He operates in the world does not have absolute freedom. Since the Spirit comes forth from the Son, the Spirit must testify about the Son and from what the Son gives Him, just as the Son receives His message from the Father. The Holy Spirit has taken the words spoken by Jesus to His disciples and has preserved them in the inerrant written words of the apostles. The Holy Spirit does not have a sovereignty that permits Him to go and give messages which He has not received from the Son. So-called testimonials which testify to God's working in the lives of Christians have none of the markings of the Spirit's work. It is regrettable that some Christians have been led to believe that such testimonials come from the Holy Spirit. To summarize, the Holy Spirit works within the boundaries of the Deity and speaks words prescribed by the Son, just as the Son speaks words prescribed by the Father. These words of the Father and the Son are conveyed to the church by the words of the Holy Spirit which compose the Bible. Lutherans have always understood this fact and have denied a special work of the Holy Spirit outside of the apostolic word. Lutherans object to a special giving of the Holy Spirit in the priestly ordination of the Roman Church and to the Calvinistic idea that the Holy Spirit works alongside of the apostolic word and not through it.

The tendency has always existed among Christians to postulate a working of the Holy Spirit outside of the words of the prophets and apostles. What some have called the sovereign working of the Holy Spirit is not more than an

amputation of the Holy Spirit's working from the words of Jesus. To amputate the Spirit from the words of Jesus by postulating an independent and sovereign working of the Spirit results in an amputation of the Spirit from the Trinity—at least, a temporary suspension.

Many Christians are now allowing for special workings of the Holy Spirit. They fear that if they do not approve of such autonomous actions, they would be putting a straight-jacket on the Holy Spirit. Before Lutherans adopt such a false posture, they should realize that the Spirit always works through the Word and is Himself no fanatic. Those who object to these special manifestations are not putting the Spirit in a box, but they are understanding the Holy Spirit according to terms which He Himself has set down in the Bible. The Holy Spirit can neither contradict Himself nor act contrary to His essence. Just as He comes from the Son and receives His place within the Trinity from the Son, so He also testifies of the Son.

The Christological controversies occupied the attention of the church's first millennium. The church is now in the middle of the controversies of the Holy Spirit. The liberal denial of the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God is a controversy concerning the Holy Spirit. Essential to the charismatic misunderstanding is the separation of the Spirit from the apostolic word. Rationalism already in the eighteenth century began their separation by denying the Spirit's inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. They thus began treating these writings as ordinary writings. The Spirit and the Word were divorced. Missouri Synod moderates associate the Spirit's working with coming to faith and not with the actual words of Scripture themselves. Their position belongs to the heritage of eighteenth-century Rationalism. Also influential for moderates is Karl Barth with his concept of the sovereign God who can use the Bible to bring someone to faith, but who is free and independent of that word.

While liberal theologians seem to be at the opposite side of the spectrum from charismatics, these two groups share at least one philosophical premise in common. Liberal theology divorces the Spirit from the Word or Scripture and the charismatics theology attaches the Spirit to persons outside of the Word. After the liberal theologian separates the Spirit from the Word he begins looking for a working of the Spirit outside of the Word, generally in the Christian community. The charismatic as he sees the Spirit working in himself and others begins relying less on the Scriptures for the Holy Spirit. The liberal theologian first divorces the Spirit from the Word and then finds another locale for the Spirit's activity. With the charismatic the process is reversed. Liberal theologians and charismatics are ships sailing from two different ports, but their path through the sea is the same, and each travels to the other's port of embarkation.

Symptomatic of the current misunderstanding of the Holy Spirit for both liberal theologians and charismatics is the ordination of women. The liberal theologians simply do not find the Scriptural prohibitions binding. St. Paul's words are not commands of the Spirit but only words intended for one culture and limited by that culture. For the charismatic the Spirit is more vital in the lives of people than He is in the letters of the Scriptures. The sovereign Spirit is not limited by sexual distinctions and can speak through a woman just as He can through a male. The twentieth century is not the first time that the denial of the inspiration of the Scriptures, the charismatic movement, and the ordination of women have all appeared simultaneously. All these problems appeared in the Corinthian congregation in the first century. Some were rising up and questioning St. Paul's apostolic authority. Some were allegedly filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. Some women were taking charge of the church services. The parallel to the twentieth century is striking.

Dr. Harry Huth has frequently remarked that the Lutheran Reformation had

a fourth *sola, solo verbo*, the word alone. Of course, the *solo verbo* is contained in the *sola scriptura*, but this fact has not impressed itself upon those who consider themselves charismatics in the "third sense" mentioned above. The Missouri Synod and the Norwegian Synod in the nineteenth century objected to the Haugeans who held that some could be exempted from formal study of the Bible and theology and be received into the ministry. The objection was well-founded. Confessional Lutherans in the twentieth century should be careful not to give any recognition to those who come as special messengers of the Holy Spirit. Such messengers follow not in the steps of Paul and Luther but in the steps of Montanus and Thomas Muntzer.

dps

"THE ONE ANOINTING OF JESUS: ANOTHER APPLICATION OF THE FORM-CRITICAL METHOD"

Under this title an article by Professor Robert Holst of Christ College, Irvine, California, appears in the September 1976 issue of the *Journal of Biblical Literature* (Vol. 95, pp. 435-446). The JBL is both prestigious and influential, and we have noted past contributions to it by Missouri Synod clergymen. The Reverend Jack Kingsbury, for example, once provided a very interesting study showing that the terminology of Matthew 28:16-20 is typically Matthaean and the positing of a later redactor for these verses is simply unnecessary. Our comments about the present contribution are regrettably less favorable for reasons both of conclusion and method. Holst supports the thesis that all four Gospel accounts refer to one incident which has been further elaborated by each of the evangelists. The original story according to Holst's reconstruction is as follows (p. 446):

Jesus came to Bethany to the house of Simon the leper. And a woman bringing an alabaster jar of myrrh, valuable nard *pistikes*, anointed the feet of Jesus with the myrrh and with her tears and wiped them with her hair. Certain men reclining there said, "Why was this myrrh not sold for three hundred denarii and (the money) given to the poor?" But Jesus said, "Leave (plural) her alone. The poor you always have with you; (love?) you do not always have."

Holst sees Mathew 26:6-13, Mark 14:3-9, Luke 7:36-38, and John 12:1-8 as developments of the above historical reconstruction of the original incident. It would have been helpful if he had listed these pericopes. The reader has to search for the references. One is immediately aware of obvious differences in the parts of the body of Jesus which are anointed. In the Synoptics it is the head and in John it is the feet. In John the incident happens in the household of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. The others speak about Simon's house. Anyone working with anything resembling the doctrine of inerrancy is going to raise red flags all over the place. What is not said frequently enough is that the principles with which this kind of form criticism operates are philosophical and not literary. Here are some of the principles listed by Holst as the basis upon which he builds his arguments: (1) John was written independently of the Synoptics. (2) Mark was the earliest of the four Gospels (but, of course!). (3) "The addition of names to a tradition is a well-known form-critical axiom." (4) "The principle of multiple attestation . . ." is also introduced (pp. 437-9).

Yet all of these form-critical axioms are dubious. (1) All the Gospels could have been written independently of one another and still share in the oral words of Jesus, the dominical tradition. This common hold on the tradition, and not any theories of mutual alliance, is the best explanation of the similarities of the Synoptic gospels. In addition, John may very well have known the Synoptics. (2)

The assumption of Marcan priority is largely based on the literary principle that the shorter the work, the older it is. But in many pericopes, Mark has a version longer than Matthew. Could we not argue, moreover, that shorter versions are abridgements of the longer, more complex ones. Arguments from the longer and shorter versions cancel each other out and, therefore, for the sake of literary honesty they should be dropped. (I for one hold that the complexity of the Matthaean material indicates a closeness to Jesus which Mark and Luke did not have. This is no startling revelation, of course, since the ancient church always taught this fact.) (3) The principle of adding names to stories as they develop must first be proved by more than a bland assertion. In any event, there seems to be something morally detestable about putting names into a story that were not originally there. The history of Judas is sad enough without making him the villain in this story too, if it were not so. (4) if the principle of multiple attestation is really viable, much of Luke's Gosepl, including his account of the Christmas story, is thrown into doubt. Many conservative Lutherans are going to take legitimate exception to Holst's conclusions. I think he should re-examine his principles. They are not literary principles but philosophical conjectures which happen to be blessed by overuse. Their general acceptance militates against the reliability of the principle of multiple attestation.

dps

DISMEMBERING THE PASTORAL OFFICE

A number of congregations in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod are adopting a type of church constitution which effectually dismembers the pastoral office. Pastoral responsibilities are placed side by side with certain lay responsibilities and then distributed among congregational boards. One such constitution reads as follows:

"B. Administrative Boards

Responsibility and authority for the daily administration of congregational affairs shall be delegated to the following boards:

- (1) A Board of Lay Ministry
- (2) A Board of Evangelism
- (3) A Board of Christian Education
- (4) A Board of Young People's Work
- (5) A Board of Stewardship
- (6) A Board of Church Properties
- (7) A Board of Parish Fellowship
- (8) A Board of Public Relations

One member of each Administrative Board shall serve as the Director of that Board."

The terminology used here, e.g., directors, boards, public relations, etc., seems an attempt to apply methods and procedures of modern business to the church. There can be no quarrel with words, but the church does have its own terminology developed through the years. From the viewpoint of efficiency, can one or eight different boards really be entrusted with the daily administration of anything, including congregational affairs? Most organizations place policy-making decisions into the hands of boards and administrative decisions into the hands of one person. The above model seems intrinsically clumsy. Concern for this type of church organization is that certain responsibilities of the pastoral office are given to boards. According to this type of model, the pastor is *ex officio* member of all boards and may attend them at his discretion. The pastor thus becomes a religious consultant to the congregation and not what his title suggests, Christ's representative in His church and a carer of souls (*Seelsorger*, to use the German term).

The administration of finances belongs properly enough to

the congregation. The apostles handed over such matters to the congregation, which appointed seven deacons to represent it (Acts 6:1-6). But such matters as supervision of the spiritual affairs of the congregation, including personal pastoral care, evangelism, Christian education, preaching, and catechetical instruction, belong to the pastoral office. Christ holds the pastor responsible for these obligations. The pastor may be assisted by others in the congregation, but the ultimate responsibility lies with the pastor. He, and no board, will be held accountable by Christ on the Last Day (James 3:1).

The adoption of congregational constitutions like the one quoted above cannot be considered as a matter of indifference. Rather it points to a growing lack of awareness of the uniqueness and the divine necessity of the pastoral office. The pastoral office was instituted by God and held by the prophets, Jesus, and the apostles. Its duties, functions, and responsibility are set down by God in the Holy Scripture. The term "pastor" suggests the one appointed by God to feed and care for His flock. Of course, the pastor also belongs to God's flock, but the pastor stands in God's stead as leader of the flock. The new model of constitution relegates the pastor to the role of a professional sheep.

The church, since the very beginning, has operated with various types of church government. But any type of polity that dismantles the pastoral office by keeping the position but giving its responsibilities to others is unacceptable. Christ has established this office and He is the One who determines its functions and responsibilities.

dps

Homiletical Studies

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: Luke 9:18-25

The time of Christ's passion is rapidly approaching, and Jesus is training His twelve against the day of His departure. V. 19: In response to His question, people generally felt that Christ was either John the Baptist (the view of Herod, Mt 14:2); or Elijah (Jn 1:21; Mal 4:5); or Jeremiah (2 Macc 2:4-8). People find in Jesus only the precursor of the Messiah, not the Messiah Himself. Today many people laud Jesus only as a great teacher or a great moral example but are unwilling to acknowledge that He is the Son of God. V. 20: Peter responds to the second question. He says that Christ, the Son of Man, is both Son of God and the Christ. He is God's Son, of the same nature and essence as God. The true God is the living God as opposed to the idols of the Gentiles. V. 21: "Tell no man," lest the populace in their spiritual blindness try to make Him an earthly King (Jn 6:14-15). V. 22: "Son of man" —alone of His kind who should represent the world before God to undo the sin of the first Adam, Ro 5:17-19. "The Son of man must" —because of the divine plan. This "must" mastered Christ's life. "Elders, chief priests, scribes," this group constituted the Jewish council. Jesus asserts with equal assurance both His death and His victorious resurrection. V.23: "Deny Himself" —a person needs to deny selfish gratification, particularly the notion that he can be his own saviour. "The cross"—this is the cross of persecution for Christ's sake. V.24: "Save his life" means to live only to satisfy selfish desires. "Lose his life" means to live a life of selfless service to Christ and His Kingdom as the fruit of a living faith. One has to lose his life to find it. How enigmatic. How true.

You Have to Lose Your Life to Save It

- I. True in the experience of Christ.
 - A. He is the Christ of God.
 - 1. Popular notions were wrong.
 - 2. He is the Christ of God.
 - a. The promised Messiah for whom Israel waited, Gen 3:15; Is 7:14; 9:6; Gen 12:3.
 - b. God Himself sent Christ into the world, Jn 3:16.
 - B. He attained a great victory through suffering.
 - 1. He died for the sins of the world, Phil 2:5-8; Jn 10:11.
 - 2. His resurrection proclaimed His victory over sin and death, 1 Cor 15:55-57.
- Christ lost His life to save it. Today we worship Him as our Savior and Lord.
- II. We, too, must lose our life to save it.
 - A. The man who wants to save his life will lose it.
 - 1. He lives to secure only things of this life, Lk 16:19 ff.
 - 2. He relies on his own works for salvation, Lk 18:18 ff.
 - 3. Hence, he loses his life, Lk 9:25.
 - B. The one who loses his life will save it.
 - 1. He denies himself as savior and looks only to Christ, Mk 16:16; Ac 16:31.
 - 2. He takes up his cross, being willing to suffer for Christ, Mt 5:11-12.
 - 3. He brings forth the fruit of faith by following Christ.
 - a. Crucifying his flesh, Ro 6:6; Gal 6:14.
 - b. Bringing forth fruits of righteousness, Ps 1; Eph 2:10; Mt 5:13-16.
- One has to lose his life to find it. How true. How challenging.

THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: Luke 9:51-62

Verse 51: This was not Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem, but one which would settle His fate as far as the Jews were concerned. "Received up": This points to the ascension, with the passion and resurrection intervening. V. 52: The Samaritans were a racially mixed people who accepted only the Pentateuch. There was little love lost between Jews and Samaritans, Jn. 4:9. The Samaritans refused Jesus lodging. V.54: "As Elias did": Cf. 1 Kgs 1:10. This is a doubtful reading. James and John, sons of thunder, had to learn the full lesson of humility. Christ was bent not on destroying, but on saving souls. The Christian church does not use force in bringing the Gospel to people. V. 56: "The Son of man is come": This is a doubtful reading. V.57: Here are three would-be disciples. They evidence inconsiderate impulse, conflicting duties, and the divided mind. True discipleship implies denial of self and all earthly ties for the sake of the Kingdom. The first man did not count the cost of discipleship. V. 58: "The foxes": If that is the Savior's lot, the disciple can expect no more. V. 59: Jesus asks the scribe to become His disciple. "Let the dead bury the dead": Let those whose occupation it is, bury the dead. The need of preaching the gospel must take precedence over family duties. V.61: This man wants to take care of something he is personally interested in before following Christ. "Bid farewell": Better translated, "Let me first set in order my affairs at home." V.62: "No man having put his hand to the plow": He who would plow straight furrows must not look back. Following Jesus requires a firm intention and a steady eye. A person must devote his entire life to discipleship.

Introduction: Life demands dedication, the student to his studies, the businessman to his business, the housewife to her important work of child-rearing. Discipleship, too, demands dedication.

Discipleship Demands Dedication

I. Exemplified by Jesus.

- A. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem.
 1. The Samaritans refused him lodging.
 2. James and John want them destroyed.
- B. Jesus rebukes the disciples.
 1. Jesus loved even His enemies.
 - a. Instances: He wept over Jerusalem; He called Judas His friend; 1 Pt. 2:23.
 - b. He loved the whole world of sinners.
 - a) All have sinned, Ro 3:12.
 - b) All deserve eternal death, Ro 5:17.
 2. He showed His dedication to His work by going to Jerusalem to die.
 - a. He took our guilt, Is 53:6
 - b. He suffered our punishment, Is 53:4-5.

From the purpose of saving the world Jesus did not falter. Never has anyone lived so dedicated a life.

II. Christ looks for dedication in us.

- A. Don't be rash.
 1. The first man evidently had not counted the cost.
2. Jesus reminded him of the cost, v 58.
 - a. Foxes and birds fared better than Jesus.
 - b. Christ has not promised Christians a bed of roses, Mt 10:22; Mk 8:34.

It takes dedication to be a Christian.

- B. Don't let important things keep you from the most important.
 1. To bury a father is important.
 2. Preaching the Kingdom is more important.

Be dedicated. Some people always have something to do before being a disciple, Ps. 95:7. Christians sometimes major in minors.

C. Don't let worldly things keep you from following Christ.

1. This man wanted to say goodbye to his family and to set his family affairs in order.
2. The temptation faces some to let their family keep them from following Christ, Mt. 19:5; Mt. 10:37.
3. Some let personal interest keep them from dedicated discipleship, 2 Tim. 4:10.
4. Jesus says: "Don't look back because you can't plow a straight furrow that way," Mt 6:24; 1 Jn 2:15.

The measure of a man is that to which he is dedicated. Put Christ first in your life, Mt 22:37; Mt 6:33.

HJE

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: LUKE 10:1-9, 16

"After this" (v 1) refers to the incidents in the preceding chapter. "The Lord appointed seventy others," in addition to the twelve disciples who had already been sent on a similar mission (Mt. 9:1-6). "I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves" (v 3), a picture of the risks Christian preachers take, for they are seemingly weak and defenseless. Yet they are not to worry about their livelihood but to work with a joyous abandon (v 4a), nor are they to dally in aimless conversation with individuals they meet (v 4b). "Peace be to this house!" is more than a common salutation (v 5). It is an offer of divine peace, as is evident from v.6 which describes the peace spoken of as resting upon a son of peace. "And remain in the same house" (v 7) indicates that one house and family were to be selected as the center of the work. The missionaries were also to eat whatever was set before them without fussing about clean or unclean foods (vs 7-8). To attest to the fact that they had been sent by the Lord with an offer of divine peace they also healed the sick (v 9). God saw that this miraculous power was needed in those early days of the church. They themselves hardly believed in their possession of such power even after Christ had announced the gift to them (v 17). The reception accorded their message reflects the attitude of the hearers toward Christ Himself (v 16).

Our problem is that we sometimes wish and perhaps even expect God's kingdom to come near us through something more spectacular than human beings and the words they speak. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would see pastors and their message as an altogether adequate way of bringing God's kingdom to men. Introductory thought: Since we associate God's kingdom (God's grace, presence, and rule in our hearts) with something superhuman—God Himself, and divine goodness and strength, we tend to think that God's kingdom ought to come near us in ways that transcend the ordinary. But Jesus reaffirms the down-to-earthness of God's kingdom by pointing to

God's Way of Bringing His Kingdom Near

- I. Through men He sends in answer to prayer.
- II. Through words He gives these men to speak.

I.

A. It is the Lord who sends laborers into the harvest (vs 1,2b; Jn 3:15, Eph 4:11).

1. He wants us to pray for pastors, and He promises to answer such prayers.
2. He works through individual Christians to recruit men for the pastoral office, and He works through Christian congregations to call men into that office.

B. The Lord is able to send the right kind of laborers.

1. Men who know that God will provide for their daily needs (v 4a).
2. Men who are not unappreciative of what Christians give to support them (v 7; 1 Cor 10:27).
3. Men who have a sense of urgency because the time is short (v 4b).

Is there a shortage of pastors? Pray the Lord of the harvest that He would send them. That is God's way of bringing His kingdom near. The primary task of the men God sends is to speak the word He has given them.

II.

A. These words point to a unique peace (v 5b).

1. With God through His Messiah (Lk 2:14; Jn 14:27).
2. Flowing from the forgiveness of sins (Jn 20:21).

B. These words offer peace.

1. All who receive the Word of God in faith have peace with God (sons of peace, v 6a), for to hear with a believing heart the Word of God spoken by the pastor is to hear Christ Himself (v 16a).
2. All who reject God's words in unbelief lack peace with God, for they thereby reject Christ (v 16b).

a. The rejection of God's offer of peace brings dire consequences (context, vs 12,14-15).

b. Men can spurn the kingdom, and many do.

The word spoken by men seems so ordinary, so common. But if that word has its basis in God's written Word, Holy Scripture, it is God's effective way of bringing His kingdom near. God continues to bring His kingdom near through men and the words they speak—which shows how near God wants to be to us and how real He wants His kingdom to be.

GA

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: LUKE 10:25-37

"Lawyer" (v 25) refers to a scribe or expert in the Law of Moses. "He stood up," probably to attract Christ's attention. His reason for testing Jesus was possibly to convict Him of some unorthodox statement that would injure His reputation as a teacher. Jesus cleverly turned the tables on His cross-examiner (v 26) by showing that the lawyer already knew the answer to his question. The answer was drawn from Dt 6:5 and Lv 19:18, correct as far as the words went (v 28). But no one can do what the Law requires toward God and man. Yet inability to keep the Law for eternal life does not mean there is to be no effort to keep it. Implicit in Jesus' words (v 28) is the idea that love is not merely to be theorized about but practiced. Now the lawyer, probably embarrassed and perplexed, tried to show he had acted in good faith by putting another question, "And who is my neighbor?" (v 29)? Where am I to draw the line? The parable which followed was not to answer the man's question but to show him that it was the wrong question. The right question is not, "Whom am I to regard as neighbor?" but, "To whom can I be one?" The right answer to that question is, "to anyone in need of my help."

The distance from Jerusalem to Jericho (v 30) was seventeen miles of dangerous, rocky road. Two pillars of the Jewish church, a priest and a Levite (one of the minor clergy), come along but do not help. They might have thought the man was dead, and they knew their duties in the temple prevented them from defiling themselves by touching a corpse (Nu 19:11). Or they might have been afraid that the robbers were still hiding nearby and would attack them (vs 31-32). The hero of the tale is the Samaritan, a half-breed heretic who took one look at the man and was moved to pity (v 33), extravagant in his solicitude and love (vs 34-35). When Jesus asks the final question (v 36), the lawyer gives the only possible answer, but even then cannot bring himself

to name the hated Samaritan. The lawyer had asked, "How can I love my neighbor if I don't know who he is?" The point of the parable is that one's neighbor may well be the man we least expect. Love knows no bounds of race, space, or character.

The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would actually love their fellow men in deed as well as in word. The problem is that the hearers do not always make love a practical matter. The means to the goal is the love Jesus showed very practically to redeem and renew us. Introductory thought: The Samaritan loved in a practical way, but how practical is it for us? Can we "go and do" what he did? Is it not beyond us? Not if we remember the love Jesus showed us by keeping the Law and dying for us. He has put His love (*agapē*) in us so that we can "go and do likewise." For us who are in Christ,

Love is a Practical Matter

I. Extended to all who need help.

II. Ready to do anything that needs to be done.

I.

A. With no restrictions based on race.

1. The lawyer excluded hated Samaritans from those to be helped.
2. Many today exclude other races from the neighbor concept—Jews and Arabs in Middle East, discrimination against minorities in the U.S. How much racial prejudice is there among us?
3. Love does not ask, "Are they like us?" but goes out to all regardless of ethnic background.

B. With no restrictions based on acquaintance.

1. People in Christ's day tended to limit their love to friends and acquaintances.
2. It is hard even today to think of people in other countries as neighbors.
3. Yet people we do not know may have just as great a claim on our love as friends and acquaintances. (The Samaritan did not know the injured man personally.)

C. With no restrictions based on character.

1. The lawyer and others like him are ready to love good people, but not publicans and sinners.
2. Likewise today we are ready to love people who are upright, thankful for what we do for them, and who will love us in return.
3. But love must be extended also to the reprobates and outcasts of society.

Love is a practical matter. It cannot be narrowly restricted. How very practical love is can be seen in Jesus, who loved you and me and every sinner enough to redeem and renew us. Now we can extend love to all.

II.

A. Without excuses.

1. We do not know why the priest and the Levite were so callous, but they no doubt could have offered excuses.
 - a. They might have been late for the temple service.
 - b. They might have feared defilement.
 - c. They might have feared being attacked by the robbers.
2. We can usually rationalize our way out of helping someone.
 - a. No time.
 - b. No money.
 - c. "It won't do any good anyway."

B. With specific aid.

1. The Samaritan gave the kind of help that was needed.
2. We can give concrete help.
 - a. Help someone find a job.
 - b. Give food and clothing.

- c. Give money to bring medicine and the Gospel Word.
- d. Speak words of comfort and encouragement.
- C. With generosity.
 - 1. The Samaritan did not skimp in the help he gave.
 - 2. Love is extravagant in the giving of time, the sharing of self, the bestowing of gifts (widow's mite, Mk 12:41-44).

Conclusion: Jesus offered no excuses to escape the cross, but generously came through with the specific help we needed to be His own. That is why we can now stand ready to do whatever needs to be done to help our neighbor. That is why love can be for us such a practical matter.

GA

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: LUKE 10:38-42

"Now as they went on their way" (v 38): Jesus was on His way to the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem in the December that preceded His crucifixion. The village He now entered was Bethany, where Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus lived. Martha is clearly the mistress of the house (v 38) and is probably the older sister. Her sister Mary sat right in front of the feet of Jesus and listened to His talk (v 39). Martha was distracted or cumbered (v 40), drawn round with anxiety and therefore distracted in mind and in looks. She burst in upon Jesus and reproached Him for monopolizing Mary to her (Martha's) own inconvenience. She felt Jesus was the key to Mary's giving her a hand. Jesus' response (v 41) indicates that Martha was not only inwardly anxious but outwardly agitated. But Martha need not have been so troubled, for Jesus was satisfied with only a little in the way of physical nourishment. What He was more interested in, and what both sisters needed most, was spiritual sustenance. Therefore, the best dish on the table was spiritual food, the Word of Jesus. That good portion Mary had chosen (v 42) and it would not be taken from her. Jesus pointedly took Mary's side.

The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would give the Word of Christ priority in their lives. The problem is one of misplaced emphases. Introductory thought: Both Martha and Mary believed in Jesus, loved Him, and wished to serve Him. Yet Jesus reproved Martha for her poor choice and commended Mary for her good choice. We are in danger of making poor choices in our Christian life. Our text reminds us that the best choice we can possibly make is to sit at Jesus' feet.

Our Good Portion is at Jesus' Feet

I. That is a matter of deliberate choice.

II. That choice is truly rewarding.

I.

A. Martha chose to serve, which was not wrong in itself.

- 1. It was good that she was hospitable and wanted dinner to go well.
- 2. Likewise it is good when Christians today choose to serve at tables, in offices, on committees raising funds, and equipping the building.
- 3. But if, at the same time, the Word is neglected the emphasis has been misplaced.
 - a. The result is often a ruffled temper and anxiety (v 40).
 - b. We need to be reprovved for being so troubled about peripheral things as to scold and expect the Lord to take sides in a family misunderstanding.

One can deliberately choose not to sit at Jesus' feet.

B. Mary chose to hear the Word.

- 1. She too wanted to serve Jesus, but to do so would have meant not hearing Him.

2. Choosing the good portion is a matter of setting up priorities.
 - a. Nearly everything in life involves a choice.
 - b. A human being by nature can never make the right choice in spiritual matters because he is spiritually blind and an enemy of God. We did not choose Jesus; He chose us (Jn 15:16).
 - c. Jesus chose us as His own in Holy Baptism and we were born again. Now as Christians we have important choices to make, and we are able to make them.
3. We can deliberately choose to listen to the Word of Jesus in church, to invite Jesus into our home, and to establish a family altar.

II.

- A. Rewarding because through His Word we know Jesus.
 1. We learn of His love for us.
 2. We are given salvation in Him.
- B. Rewarding because that portion will not be taken away from us.
 1. We may be deprived of earthly treasures and pleasures.
 2. But we will never lose Jesus and eternal life.
- C. Rewarding because we receive strength to serve.
 1. Listening to the Word will not make us less useless.
 2. Through the Word we are enabled to serve the Lord better in all that we do.

There are many temptations to make the choice Martha did. But why open ourselves to distraction? The good portion is at Jesus' feet.

GA

THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: Luke 11:1-13

In direct response to the request by the disciples that He teach them to pray, Jesus gives them the Lord's Prayer. The small divergencies between the form of the Lord's Prayer here and that in Matthew are an indication that the essential point is not an exact repetition of the words. In the pericope which includes the Lord's Prayer and the parable of the "Friend at Midnight" the emphasis is placed upon relationship. God is identified as "father." The disciple does not come to someone out of whom gifts have to be unwillingly extracted, but to a father who delights to supply his children's needs.

Since the whole family slept in one room, it was a great imposition to disturb the householder, because it involved disturbing and rousing the whole family. Not only did the midnight visitor disturb, he knocked on with "shameless persistence" until the householder acquiesced in the requests of the determined borrower. To the petitions of disciples Jesus gives the definite promise that their prayers will be heard and draws attention to the best gift of all, the Holy Spirit.

We recall that, whenever preaching upon a parable, the preacher must take hold of the point of comparison and let his treatment of the parable be governed by it. "If you being evil know how to give good gifts, how much more so will the Heavenly Father supply all His children's needs."

The Father's Promised Willingness to Hear Prayer

- I. We give to those who ask us.
 - A. Those who presume upon the right of friendship.
 - B. Those who presume upon the right of kinship.
 - C. Even though evil we give good gifts (needs are met for whatever reasons or motives).
- II. More so will our Heavenly Father give to those who ask Him.
 - A. For He has revealed Himself to us as Father. By faith in the redemptive act of Christ we are adopted into God's family as His children.

- B. For Christ directs us to pray.
 - 1. To the Father.
 - 2. Persistently (with "shameful persistence").
 - 3. Confidently.
- C. Christ directs us to the promise.
 - 1. The promise of good things. We are led to rely upon the Father for all needs of body and soul (the petitions).
 - 2. The Holy Spirit as the great gift of the Father.

NHM

THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: Luke 12:13-21

In the incident which forms the introduction to the "Parable of the Rich Fool," Jesus warns against "every form of covetousness," the greedy desire to have more. For Jesus, knowing what is at the root of the brother's unreasonable request, takes opportunity of warning all against this prevalent and subtle sin. Jesus makes the point that life depends for its value upon the use we make of our possessions and for its prolongation upon the will of God. The parable illustrates both of these points.

We note first the repeated use of the pronoun "my"—"my fruits," "my barn," "my goods," "my soul." This man never sees beyond himself. Furthermore he never sees beyond this world. All his plans are made on the basis of life in this world. Jesus calls this man "senseless," "without reason," "without reflection or intelligence." He is without reason, because this night his soul is to be demanded of him. To whom will his possessions belong then? He has said, "my fruits," "my goods." Now he is to be dispossessed at once. Life does not consist in having possessions, but in having a right relationship with God.

In What Does Your Life Consist?

- I. Does it consist in the abundance of your possessions?
 - A. God calls such a person with such a life foolish.
 - 1. For such a man never sees beyond himself.
 - a. He fails to thank God.
 - b. He fails to accomplish anything good with his possessions.
 - 2. For he never looks beyond this world.
 - a. He neglects the truth that death might come at anytime.
 - b. He will be immediately dispossessed.
 - c. He is oblivious to the fact that after death his possessions can render him no service.
 - B. Jesus warns us to beware of covetousness.
 - 1. This is a subtle and prevalent sin.
 - 2. We often try to find meaning in life, security, contentment, happiness in the abundance of things.
 - 3. To do so makes us senseless.
- II. Or does it consist in being rich toward God?
 - A. Christ became poor in order to make us rich.
 - B. We are rich toward God when we can see beyond ourselves.
 - 1. Recognizing God's claim on us.
 - 2. Using our possessions in accordance with His will.
 - C. We are rich toward God when we look beyond the world.
 - 1. Perceiving the transient characteristic of life.
 - 2. Perceiving the limitations of earthly goods.
 - 3. Rejoicing in the assurance of our eternal destiny.

NHM

THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: Luke 12:32-40

The little flock about whom Jesus speaks certainly refers to the disciples. The little flock of believers has no reason to fear, for God in His good pleasure has decided to give it the kingdom. Because by God's grace they have been drawn into the kingdom, the lives of the disciples are to be marked by certain factors: (1) a loose attachment to worldly goods so that they are ready to part with them (fear of poverty must never interfere with benevolence; almsgiving is not merely giving what we can spare); (2) a commitment to almsgiving (this kind of concern is good not merely for the receiver, but also for the giver, that his heart be freed from covetousness); (3) an otherworldliness (by doing good disciples are laying up for themselves treasures in heaven; their hearts will be directed heavenward where their treasure is).

As introduction to the parable we note in verse thirty-five the emphatic position of the second person pronouns which indicate that "whatever others may do, this is to be your attitude." The word translated "watch" has attached to it the dimension of alertness. The lives of the disciples are to be characterized by such alertness since they do not know in what kind of hour, whether a near one or a remote one, the Lord is to return. How necessary it is that His servants be ready to greet Him when He returns (v 38) at a time when He will be least expected (v 40).

Be Ready for the Son of Man

- I. The Son of man is coming.
 - A. At the least expected time.
 1. Like a thief in the night (cf. I Thess. 5:2).
 2. At a time known only by the Father.
 - B. He comes to be a blessing.
 1. Those who are ready are called blessed.
 2. The Father's will is to give to them the kingdom.
 - a. The great "fear not" of Christmas and Easter recurs here.
 - b. Now is salvation closer than when we first believed.
- II. Be ready for His coming.
 - A. Be like servants waiting for their master to come home.
 - B. Be full of faith, your lamps burning brightly. True joys are to be found in Christ.
 - C. This treasure is not subject to decay or corruption.

NHM

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: LUKE 12:49-53

The text deals with the most difficult kind of hostility, suffered by many in their own households. In this day when liquor, drugs, illicit sex have become such a temptation even for weak Christians, quarreling, divisions, and even divorce are bound to become more and more prevalent. In many instances there are innocent parties in such homes. Refusal to recognize this fact is heartlessly to condemn all Christians just because all are sinners.

We must keep in mind that the Spirit is able to and constantly does enable millions of sinners who are Christian husbands and wives or Christian parents and children to live together in peace and harmony. So also in divided homes one person may, as far as that is possible, be seeking to live at peace, and yet constantly be suffering because of the contentiousness or evil life of another.

These faithful Christians in our congregations need the help and understanding of their fellow Christians. They especially need the comfort and assurance of God's love, who daily forgives their sins and does not hold them accountable for the divisions that exist in their households.

A real help is the fact that even the sinless Christ suffered at the hands of

his own people, who finally brought Him to death. But His death was not martyrdom. The baptism with which he would be baptized was the suffering of hell for the salvation of all who believe in Him. This saving Christ is concerned about divisions. He tells us that they will be suffered by many of His children—more often than not because they are His children. The warning that we can give those who cause such suffering is that the day will come when Christ will burn up the chaff and take His wheat into the garner. The help we can give all of our members is that God promises to help all who look to Him in faith to be able to pray together and stay together. Many members, without such counsel, will keep their problems to themselves, only to see them growing out of bounds. Help them to seek help. Christ has restored peace in thousands of homes where at least one Christian came to Him for help. Should not the whole congregation be on their side?

Take the Problems in Your Home to Christ

- I. He knows their cause.
 - A. He does not condemn the "innocent."
 - B. He has strong words of warning for the guilty.
- II. He has promised a solution for all who turn to Him.
 - A. He earned peace through His own suffering at the hands of sinners.
 - B. He promises this peace to all who look to Him in faith.
 - C. He looks to the church to give His peace to those who suffer division in their homes.
 - D. He is the source of the peace enjoyed in countless Christian homes, for which we give Him praise.

MJS

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: LUKE 13:22-30

Here is a clear prophecy that the saving word of Jesus, which He so clearly proclaimed during His earthly ministry (text), will be preached to the ends of the earth. And many will go in with the Lord to sit at the table in the kingdom of God. But the day will come when the door will be shut and people outside will be pounding on the door as others once pounded on the door of Noah's ark. But the door will remain shut. Those outside will be people with whom we ate and drank, people of our neighborhood, our city, our country, and every other country on earth.

What can we do about it? Christ says: Strive to enter the narrow door yourselves (He is that door). Keep on urging others to do so with whatever means God gives you to spread His Word. Be sure to speak clearly about the wonderful banquet that God has prepared for us and what folly it is to turn down His invitation.

Heed Christ's Invitation to Sit at His Table

- I. What a privilege this will be.
 - A. Think of the meal Christ has prepared.
 - B. Think of the guests who will be there.
- II. What folly, then, to turn down the invitation.
 - A. Those who do so will realize too late what a mistake they have made.
 - B. But it will also be too late to do anything about it (the door will remain shut).
- III. What an opportunity God gives you right now to say, "I am coming, Lord."
 - A. He Himself has prepared the meal.
 - B. He Himself opens the door for you.
 - C. He Himself makes you the worthy guest.

MJS

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: Luke 14:1, 7-14.

V.1: Meals on the Sabbath were often luxurious and costly. Only cold dishes were permitted. "They watched Him": explains the reason for the invitation. Jesus had just bitterly denounced the Pharisees, cf. Lk 11:39-52. In this pericope Jesus talks about seeking the lowest places at these feasts and about who ought to be the guests. V.7: "Chief rooms": The first places, places of respect and honor. How the Lord—the very essence of whose teaching is self-surrender and self-sacrifice—must have been disturbed by the self-seeking pride of the Pharisees. V.11: This is a rule in Christ's Kingdom. He who takes pride in his own work and merit shall be abased by being excluded from the Kingdom. He who humbles himself, acknowledging his own unworthiness and trusting alone in Christ, will be exalted by God's grace, Lk. 18:14; Mt 23:12. V.12: This remark occurred some time later in the feast. Those attending the feast were from the upper ranks of Jewish society. "Not thy friends": Jesus did not mean to forbid our entertaining of those we love. He meant simply that in view of the life to come, you can do better, Neh 8:10. "Lest they also bid thee": This is manifestly a selfish motive. This section of the pericope is a lesson in selfless service. The law required service to the poor, Dt 14:28, 29; 16:11; 26:11-13. V. 14: Where there is no love, faith is missing. Hence, no recompense on the last day. The recompense is one of grace. God gives rewards to those who seek no rewards.

Introduction: Our competitive life encourages self-seeking: Grades in school, scrambling for a promotion, building a better mousetrap. But self-seeking can be self-destructive.

Guard Against Self-Seeking

I. Seek the lowest place.

A. The Pharisees in their pride were concerned about their position.

1. They scrambled for the place of honor at the table.
2. In their pride they exalted themselves before God.
3. Therefore they were abased, by the world and by God.

B. True humility seeks the lowest place.

1. Jesus is our great exemplar, Phil 2:7.
 - a. He took upon Himself the form of a servant.
 - b. Therefore God also highly exalted Him, Phil 2:9.
2. We have so much to humble us.
 - a. We daily sin, Ps 51.
 - b. Therefore in repentance and faith we come to God as beggars, Lk 18:13; 15:18.
3. God exalts us.
 - a. He gives us the righteousness Christ won, Ro 4:5.
 - b. He gives us everlasting life, Jn 10:27-28.

What we are we are by grace. That should keep us humble, Phil 2:3.

II. Be concerned about the poor.

A. The self-seeker caters to his friends.

1. He shows them favors.
2. He hopes for favors in return.

B. The humble person.

1. Loves his friends for their sake, Mt 5:44.
2. Is concerned also about the poor, Mt 5:42; 7:12.
3. He shall be recompensed, Lk 6:38.

Lord, help us to seek, not self, but the righteousness of Christ; help us not to use people, but to serve them.

HJE

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: Luke 14:28-33

V.25: The great multitudes were made up of friends and enemies. In the shadow of His own Cross, Jesus demanded total self-renunciation as the cost of discipleship, a real taking up of the cross. All rival masters or interests must be put away so that the love of the great Master may be supreme: love to one's relatives, life itself, and temporary possessions. A follower of Christ must bear the cross of Christ. V.26: "And hate not": No love of relatives must come into competition with the love of God. Everything must be sacrificed to the cause of discipleship, Mt 10:34-36. By acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah and Redeemer, His disciples would excite the bitterest enmity in the minds of their own family. They would be obliged to act as if they hated them. They would have to act as if they hated their own life, for they would be removed from all comforts and enjoyments. But a person must choose between love for family and love to Him who loves us and gave Himself for us. V. 27 "His own cross": The cross of ridicule and martyrdom for the sake of Christ. Vv. 28-30: A builder goes over his plans carefully, he purchases his materials. The exact cost of the project is computed before he begins to build. The imagery was not unfamiliar to Jesus' hearers. Many tried to imitate the pomp of the Herodian palaces, only to find that they did not have the resources to complete the structures. In the end, the builders became a laughing stock. Vv. 31-32: A ruler, planning to take the offensive, first determines whether he has sufficient military strength to carry out his plan. If the matter seems doubtful, he will prefer to enter into negotiations with the enemy to find conditions of peace. The simile talks about the warfare every Christian must wage against the devil, the world, and the flesh.

Introduction: Everything costs. It costs to become a professional person, to maintain good health, to keep a home happy. Whoever thought it costs to be a Christian! Jesus says it does.

Count the Cost of Discipleship

- I. Don't be a rash disciple.
 - A. The foolish tower-builder began to build without knowing whether he could complete the project.
 - B. The king will not go to war with insufficient troops, lest he is forced to sue for peace.
 - C. Don't enlist as a disciple without counting the cost.
 1. Some followed Jesus only for the loaves and fishes.
 2. Some now follow Jesus for selfish reasons.
 - a. For business or social advantages, Mt 13:22.
 - b. But in time of temptation they fall away, Mt 24:12.
 - c. Jesus asks: "Will you also go away?" Jn 6:67-68.
- Christ wants steadfast disciples, 1 Cor 16:13; Mt 24:13.
- II. Consider the demands of discipleship.
 - A. Hate your family.
 1. Family is a gift of God, a place where love should reign, Eph 5:6.
 2. If a choice must be made, choose Christ.
 - a. Acceptance of Christ at times produces hostility in the family, Mt. 10:34-35.
 - b. The call to discipleship demands a higher loyalty than that to family, Mt 10:37.
 3. Choose Christ over family because Christ gives you a better family, Rom. 8:17; Eph 1:5.
 - Therefore, cling to Christ, even over family, Eph 5:11.
 - B. Forsake all you have, v 33.
 1. Our possessions are gifts of God for our good, Jas 1:17.

2. Possessions can prove a stumbling block to discipleship, 2 Tim 2:4; 1 Tim 6:10; Mt 19:21; Mt 9:24.
3. Choose Christ over riches, Mt 6:24, because God gives you abiding riches.
 - a. The forgiveness of sins, 1 Jn 1:7.
 - b. The assurance of the abiding love of God, Rom 8; Ps 73:23-25.
 - c. The hope of heaven, 2 Tim 4:8.

Therefore, forsake all and follow the disciples, Lk 5:11; and St. Paul, Phil 3:7.

C. Hate your life.

1. Life is a gift which we seek to preserve and enjoy.
2. Hate the sin that arises in your life, Jas 1:14; 1 Jn 2:15.
3. The time may come when you must decide between your life and Christ.
 - a. Christ predicts that persecutions will come, Mt 10:22.
 - b. There is a danger to choosing life instead of Christ, Mt 10:33; Mt 25:46.
 - c. Christ encourages us to take up the cross, Heb 12:1-3; Lk 6:22-23; Mt 5:10-12; Ac 4:20.
4. Choose Christ over life because Christ gives you real life.
 - a. He gives you life in fellowship with God now, 1 Jn 1:3; Gal 2:20; 2 Cor 4:6, Jn 15:5.
 - b. He gives life eternal, Jn 11:25; Rev. 2:10; Mt 24:13.

Garibaldi said: "He who loves liberty more than life, let him follow me." Jesus says: "He who loves me more than family, possessions, and life itself, let him follow me." God, help us always to choose Christ over family, possessions, and life itself.

HJE

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: Luke 15:1-10

V.1: Luke 15 is the golden center of the Gospel, revealing the love of the Savior for the lost. "Publicans and sinners": Taxgatherers and sinners about whom no one cared, much less the Pharisees, who regarded them as hopelessly lost. Christ's words, full of stern rebuke, but also of hope, found the lost. The publicans and sinners came to hear Him, not simply to witness His miracles. V.2: The Pharisees, who took pride in their holiness, and scribes, learned doctors of the Law, were indignant. They cried: "He not only receives sinners; He eats with them." V.3: The three parables are Christ's defense of His action. All have the same point of comparison: The joy in heaven over the repentant sinner. V.4: "Wilderness": Wide, uncultivated plains which fringe portions of Palestine. Vv. 5-6: The diligent search, the tender care, and the subsequent joy represent Christ's activities with publicans and sinners. Luther: "We can neither help nor counsel ourselves to come to the quietness and peace of conscience, into escape from the devil, death, and hell, unless Christ Himself gets us and calls us to Him through His Word. And even if we come to Him and are in faith, we are not able to keep ourselves therein" (St. L., vol. 11, p. 1268). "He calls His friends": He looks for sympathy of feeling from His friends. Christ did not find that among the scribes and Pharisees. V.7: What He looks for in vain on earth, Christ finds in heaven. The ninety-nine just persons who had no repentance are the Pharisees who mistakenly imagine that they need not repent, Mt 9:12-13. Luther says that the ninety-nine are the little flock of Christendom. Others refer the ninety-nine to the angels. V.8: A poor woman is presented to whom the loss of a single coin is a serious loss. God misses each lost soul and seeks its restoration. The worth of a single soul exceeds that of the whole world, Mt 16:26; Mk 8:37; Ja 5:20. Vv. 9-10: God Himself with His angels rejoice over the sinner found and saved.

Introduction: "This man receives sinners and eats with them." These words, meant to be a stinging jibe, were really a compliment. We rejoice and take comfort in the fact that Jesus is a friend of sinners.

This Man Receives Sinners and Eats With Them

I. He seeks the lost.

A. In the parables.

1. Sheep get lost; in that condition they are the prey of wild animals.
2. A woman loses a coin, something precious to her.

B. In real life.

1. Publicans and sinners were lost.
 - a. They lived in sin, and everyone knew it.
 - b. They faced eternal death, the wages of sin.
2. The Pharisees.
 - a. Their sin was pride, evidenced in their smugness and disdain for sinners and for Jesus, Lk. 18:10ff.
 - b. They were in the same lost condition as the publicans, Mt 23.

We face the twin dangers of going astray either by toying with sin or by sinful pride. We need to live in daily repentance over both.

II. Jesus seeks the lost.

A. He came to seek and save that which was lost.

1. The shepherd leaves the ninety-nine and seeks the one; the woman looks for the lost coin.
2. Jesus came into the world to save.
 - a. He could have left the world of sinners to their doom, Mt 25:41.
 - b. But He loved so much, Jn 3:14-17.
 - a) He came to fulfill God's Law for us.
 - b) He came to pay the world's debt of sin, Gal 4:4-5; Mt 20:28; Eph 5:25-27.

B. Through His Word He seeks the lost.

1. Through the Law.
 - a. He reveals sin, Rom 3:10-13.
 - b. Man's inability to save himself, Gal 3:24.
2. Through the Gospel.
 - a. He invites, Mt 11:28.
 - b. The Holy Spirit converts, 2 Cor 4:6.
 - c. He gives us His righteousness, Ro 1:16-17.
 - d. He makes us sons and heirs, 1 Jn 3:1-2; 1 Pet 1:3-5.

How good that Jesus has found us. Let no one think that he is beyond the reach of Christ's love.

C. He continues to seek the lost through us, Jn 10:16.

1. Two-thirds of the world is still in darkness.
2. At times fellow church members become delinquent.
3. We are to seek the lost.

- a. We have the command, Mt 28:18-20.
- b. We have the means: the Law and the Gospel.
- c. We have the promise of the Spirit, Jn 16:8.

Let us learn of Jesus to be the friends of sinners, both the manifest sinners and the Pharisees.

III. He rejoices over the saved sinners.

A. There is joy when a lost sheep is found or when a coin is found.

B. The Pharisees did not rejoice.

1. They held publicans and sinners in disdain.
2. Church members may be tempted to deal that way with a fallen but penitent member, cf. Lk 15:25-32.

C. There is joy in heaven.

1. Because the whole purpose of God's mission of love is fulfilled, Jn 17:24.
2. Because every person is precious to God.
 - a. He is saved from death, Mt 16:26.
 - b. He is saved for life, Mt 25:34; Jn 10:10.

Let us join the angels praising God both for our own salvation and for the progress of the Gospel in the world.

HJE

THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: Luke 16:1-13

Any difficulties encountered in interpreting this parable stem from the mistaken attempt by the interpreter to make every detail in the parable mean something definite. Putting aside all details of the parable as mere setting, we center on the *tertium* provided by Jesus Himself. He indicates that "if Christians were as sagacious and persevering in using wealth to promote their welfare in the next world as worldly men are in using it to promote their interest here, the Kingdom of God would be more flourishing than it is" (Plummer). It should be noted that the steward provides for his future by means of goods which are not his own, but merely entrusted to his care. The wealth with which a Christian operates is similarly not his own but that which he holds in trust from God. Verse 13 forms a conclusion to Jesus' comment on the parable and places it into the proper context for a fitting application to the people of God. It is morally impossible to have two masters and to give undivided service. Mammon signifies that in which one trusts, a "diety" devotion to whom is "covetousness which is idolatry" (1 Cor. 3:5) and renders true worship and service to God impossible.

God or Mammon?

I. What happens when Mammon takes over?

- A. Mammon becomes enthroned as diety.
 1. The word "mammon" signifies that in which we trust.
 2. It makes trust in God impossible.
- B. Mammon becomes the master, demanding to be served.
 1. It enlists our time, energy, and skills.
 2. It monopolizes them all.
 3. Serving Mammon is really serving self.
- C. Mammon becomes the source of hope.
 1. It offers promise of temporal and eternal happiness.
 2. It makes promises it cannot keep.
 3. We are left without hope, without God in the world.

II. Let God be God in our lives.

- A. God is the source of all that we are and have.
 1. It is He who made us and not we ourselves.
 2. It is He who saved and redeemed us when we foolishly turned our backs on Him.
 3. He alone is worthy of trust.
- B. God is the One whom we are to serve.
 1. What we have is a trust from Him.
 2. We are to be faithful stewards.
 3. We too shall be called to give an account.
- C. God has given certain hope.
 1. He has promised blessing for time and eternity.
 2. His promises are true.
 3. Our eternal destiny is assured.

NHM

THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: Luke 16:19-31

Whether you consider this account a parable or an illustrative story, the narrative spells out the Pharisee's selfish use of his riches, a selfishness that left Lazarus at his door without bestowing on him anything from his abundance. Here is indeed a study in contrasts. Every phrase in the text adds something to the luxury in which Dives lived. His habitual attire is comparable in quality to the robes of the High Priests. In terms of diet, he fares sumptuously every day. In contrast, Lazarus is cast down carelessly by his bearers and left at the gate, ulcerated, eagerly expecting but not receiving what he desires. Dives is a picture of indolent self-indulgence, Lazarus a picture of lonely, suffering need.

After death the situation is reversed. It is self-evident that riches or lack of them is not the determining factor in determining the eternal destinies of these two men. Rather the sin of Dives is that in a case of obvious need he does nothing. He fails to respond to the situation of Lazarus. He thinks it perfectly natural and inevitable that Lazarus should lie in pain and hunger while he wallows in luxury. The plea of ignorance is met by a response similar to that given to those who plead ignorance in the account of our Saviour's separation of the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31-46). Dives had and his brothers still have Moses and the prophets. Rejecting these, they would also be unresponsive to one who came from the dead. In the Greek there is an interesting and significant interplay in the use of the pronouns touching on "from the dead." The preacher may want to investigate further.

A Startling Contrast That Summons to Repentance

- I. The contrast between Dives and Lazarus.
 - A. During their lifetimes.
 1. Dives is a picture of self-indulgence.
 2. Lazarus is a picture of pain, hunger, and misery.
 - B. After their deaths.
 1. Dives is in torment, begging for a drop of water.
 2. Lazarus is in the bliss and contentment of Abraham's bosom.
 - C. In terms of the faith.
 1. Lazarus is saved by grace. The covenant made was of promise.
 2. Dives has no true faith.
 - a. He fails to respond to the word.
 - b. Faith without works is dead; Dives fails to respond to obvious need.
 - c. Dives is condemned for what he fails to do.
 - d. He does not hear Moses and the prophets.
- II. A summons to repent.
 - A. Repentance means "change." (Note the difference between "persuaded" and "repent," vs 30-31).
 - B. Through the Word we stand condemned.
 1. We have failed to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind.
 2. We have each failed to love his neighbor as himself.
 3. We have failed to "do what is right, love mercy, and live humbly with our God" (Mic 6:8).
 - C. Through the Word we also have the testimony of the One who arose from the dead.
 1. Brought new life.
 2. Empowered us to love one another and to use our gifts in a God-pleasing way.
 3. Identifies the basis of judgment.
 - a. Whoever has this world's goods and sees his brother in need, etc. (1 Jn 3:17ff).

- b. Ignorance is no excuse (cf. Matt 25:31-46).
- c. True faith shows itself in one's works in response to God's will and the brother's needs.

NHM

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: LUKE 17:1-10

In vs. 1-2 there may be an allusion to the rich man spoken of in the immediately preceding parable who by his selfishness and worldliness dishonored God's name and offended believers whose faith was still weak and wavering. Better that such an offender's life be cut short, even by a horrible death, than that he entrap others so that they too end up in hell. Christians are in danger of offending by treating others self-righteously and judging them harshly (v 3). The Christian is to rebuke a sinning brother, to speak directly to him about his sin, and to forgive him as often as he indicates that he has repented. Any self-congratulation the apostles may have engaged in had now received a severe blow, and they felt their own weakness deeply. They also felt that a stronger faith would enable them to judge others more gently. They turned to the right source for an increase of faith (v 5). The Lord reminds them (v 6) that the amount of faith is not so important as the exercise of the faith they already have. Even a small faith enables the Christian to carry out his duty toward fellow Christians. Faith is instrumental, for through faith the power of Christ becomes effective in the believer's life. Good works flow from faith. But these good works should not make Christians proud and lead them to expect recognition from others and from God. Faith is a gift of God, and so are the good deeds that spring from it. When Christians succeed in forgiving and in not giving offense, that is only by the grace of God. Why should they expect God to thank them? He does not owe us anything. Besides, our good works are still imperfect, and in doing them we are only doing our duty as God's servants (vs 7-10).

The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would recognize that when they do good they are only doing their duty. The problem is that the hearers often expect both God and men to praise them for the good they do. Introductory thought: The word "duty" has a dull, moralistic sound. We feel more comfortable with words like grace and love. Nor is "duty" a popular word. It refers to obligation, and many think they have no obligation to anyone. What Jesus says about duty in our text will help us in

Getting the Right Perspective on Duty

I. We are unworthy servants.

A. Have we not sometimes caused offense?

1. By living selfishly, without regard for the needs of those around us.
2. By living immoderately (in the use of alcoholic beverages, money, language).

Little ones (weak Christians) may thereby have been led astray—a serious matter (v 2). To cause offense is to be an unworthy servant.

B. Have we not sometimes refused to deal lovingly with a sinning brother?

1. Failing to rebuke him personally for a sin we see him committing.
2. Failing to forgive him as often as he repents.

When we see our tendency at times to deal harshly and self-righteously with the sinning brother, we must confess our unworthiness. To know that we have not always done our duty is to have the right perspective on duty. But how, the disciples wondered, sensing their unworthiness, can anyone do his duty toward a fellow believer? They sensed that the fulfillment of duty was related to faith. Indeed,

II. Faith makes the doing of our duty possible for us.

A. We need only to exercise the faith we have.

1. What matters is not the amount of faith, or even faith itself as though we were now obligated to get faith in order to do our duty. Rather, faith is instrumental.
2. Faith joins us to Christ so that through faith we receive Christ's power. Thus even a little faith can do great things (v 6).
3. Wherever there is faith in Christ, there will be loving dealing of Christians with one another.

B. We should not expect praise for doing our duty.

1. Jesus gives faith and increases it (v 5).
2. He does not owe us a thing; it is by His grace alone that we have faith and are able to do our duty.

Concluding thought: The right perspective on duty is to realize that we are unworthy servants. We have left undone what we should have done, and even when we have done our duty, seemingly very well, perfection has escaped us. But the right perspective on duty is also this, that we know that with God all things are possible. Through the faith He gives us He enables us to do our duty and by His grace accepts the good that we do.

GA

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: LUKE 17:11-19

On His first journey through Samaria Jesus had done no miracles (Jn 4:1ff.). Yet word of His healings had spread also to Samaria and thus the lepers had heard of Him. Standing at a distance, as required by the Mosaic Law, they called to Jesus for help (v 13). Jesus responded by telling them to go and show themselves to the priests whose responsibility it was to examine persons suspected of having leprosy and to determine whether they were so afflicted or were healthy (Lv 13:34). The command was a test of the lepers' trust in Jesus, for they were to act as if they were well. They went without questioning Jesus and on the way were healed. No doubt all of them rejoiced over what had happened, but only one felt thankful enough to return to Jesus (v 15). He felt a greater responsibility than that of showing himself immediately to the priests. He praised God in a loud voice, fell down at Jesus' feet, and expressed his heartfelt thanks (v 16). The fact that the man was a Samaritan indicates that the other nine must have been Jews. Here again was an indication that the chosen people, by and large, failed to grasp the real meaning of Christ's miracles and did not believe in Him as the Messiah. Jesus' question (v 17) reveals His disappointment with the behavior of the nine. His comment about the foreigner alone returning to give thanks implies the unbelief and with it the thanklessness of Israel. The faith of the Samaritan had grown, for he not only believed in the power of Jesus to heal but saw Jesus as one through whom God was working (v 19).

The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would express their faith by thanking God. Introductory thought: Have you ever helped someone who showed no appreciation? You were doubtless disappointed. Jesus had a similar experience. Ten men were miraculously healed, but only one returned to give thanks. Jesus' question reveals His disappointment:

Where are the Nine?

I. This question points to the common failure to give thanks.

II. This question reminds us there is reason to give thanks.

I.

A. The nine who did not return to give thanks had faith enough for prayer but not for praise.

1. They looked to Jesus for help (v 13).
2. They obeyed Jesus' word without question (v. 14).
3. They were glad to be healed but felt little gratitude to the healer.
- B. Today many ask God for help but fail to thank Him for help received.
 1. Even those who have had little to do with God may turn to God for help in a calamity, only to forget Him when the danger has passed.
 2. We often find ourselves doing more asking than thanking. Even when things are going well we often forget to give thanks.

Where are the nine? Then, and now, this question points to the common failure to give thanks. There is much more petition than praise.

II.

- A. Jesus healed all ten from an incurable disease (v 14).
 1. The Samaritan understood better than the others the meaning of the healing.
 2. He looked beyond the healing to the healer (vs 15-16).
 3. He grasped the greatness of Jesus (v 19).
- B. Although Jesus has not healed us from leprosy, He has done something infinitely greater.
 1. As the Christ of God He died for us to deliver us from sin, Satan, and hell, and then rose from the dead to prove He had done it.
 2. He creates and sustains faith in us by Word and Sacraments.
 3. Are we so familiar with what Jesus has done that we take it for granted?

Concluding thought: Where are the nine? This question reminds us that there is reason to give thanks. Jesus helped all ten of the lepers. He has helped all of us through His death and resurrection. What we are as redeemed people we owe solely to His power and mercy. O give thanks unto the Lord!

GA

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: LUKE 18:1-8a

The point of this parable lies in the contrast between the callous judge and the loving God. If even this judge could be moved to act by the widow's persistence, how much more will God answer His people's prayers for vindication. The scene is a court of law, with the plaintiff a poor widow whose opponent has refused to settle a lawful debt. She keeps coming before the judge asking for justice against her oppressor. But the judge is swayed neither by religious principle nor by public opinion. At first he does nothing. Why should he bother with a widow who has no money or influence? But the next day she is back again bothering him, and this goes on day after day. Her pestering becomes so tiresome to the judge that, though he cares neither about God nor man, he relents and gives her justice just to be rid of her. God, however, is not a dour, ungracious deity who has to be badgered into compliance. He is a loving God. If persistence brought results even with the godless judge, how much more will God, whose only motive is love, hear and answer the insistent cries of His children.

The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would persist in prayer. Introductory thought: Jesus never defined prayer. He gave His disciples a pattern prayer, and in the parables He told them to expect great things from God in prayer. In the text He talks about prayer by arguing from contraries and points out that persistence brings results. He is telling us:

Never Give up Praying

- I. Because we can never wear God out.
- II. Because God has promised to vindicate His own.

I.

- A. God is not at all like the judge in the parable.
 - 1. The judge was callous and cynical and gave in to the widow only because her unrelenting pressure got on his nerves (vs 2,4-5).
 - 2. God is just and holy and responds to the pleas of His dear children because He loves them.
 - 3. We do not have to browbeat God into submission.
- B. God likes His children to be persistent in prayer.
 - 1. He is radically different from the godless judge in that He loves to listen to the continual prayers of His own (Mt. 7:7; 15:21-28).
 - 2. What a pity, then, to use God only on a "standby" basis, like the oxygen mask over an airplane seat. What a mistake to give up praying when no answer seems forthcoming.
 - 3. Prayer needs to be a way of life living in constant awareness of God's presence and love, keeping in touch with God not only on a special occasion but in the midst of daily routine, keeping the channel of communication open always. We can never wear God out with our prayers.

II.

- A. God will attend to our cause without delay (vs 7b-8a).
 - 1. To us the answer may seem to be delayed.
 - 2. But God has His own time and way.
- B. He will make it come out right for us.
 - 1. He knows our needs better than we ourselves.
 - 2. In his wisdom and love He will give us what is best and direct matters for our good (Ro 8:28). Since God gave His own Son for us, He will surely give us all other good things (Ro 8:32).
- C. Prayer is "the great two-handed engine at our doors" (Milton)—Durer's picture of two tense hands, palms together, lifted in prayer. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of" (Tennyson). God will vindicate his own.

Concluding thought: Persistence pays off. Keep knocking. Never give up.

GA

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: LUKE 18:9-14

In the text we hear a pharisee saying, "I have done what Moses commanded. In fact, I did more than Moses commanded. So I am safe. Right?" But Jesus says: "No, You are all wrong. In my sight—and do not forget that I will be the judge on the last day—you are not justified. That means I must send you to hell."

The law has a very important place in our lives. The Lord tells us and all of His children in His Holy Law not to be extortioners, not to be unjust, nor adulterers. He tells us in His Holy Law to be liberal in giving. He urges us in His Law to come to His "temple." But He makes it very clear that He expects and is pleased with these works only when they are performed by those whom He has already chosen and loved and brought to salvation. They are then proofs of His saving power in their lives.

The pharisee said: "My works are my own. See how much better I am than others." But his unbelief, his refusal to accept Jesus as the Savior, caused God to look at all of his deeds as filthy in His sight. How different it was with the publican. Publicans were outcasts—the people whom the Jews had to excommunicate because they turned their backs on their own people, and thus on God Himself. There is no proof that the publicans as a class lived in open sin and shame, that they were adulterers, slanderers, rebellious people. Their great sin—which is the greatest sin—is that they were unbelievers. They had un-

doubtedly been circumcised as infants, had gone to the temple and the synagogue as children. But they sold their heritage for a lucrative position with the Romans, proving that they had left the Lord.

Then Jesus came preaching repentance and salvation, as John the Baptist had done before Him. Jesus showed that He cared about publicans and sinners. He was their way back to the waiting arms of the Heavenly Father. And many of them repented. They said with the publican in Jesus' story: God be merciful to me, a sinner. That was all they did. And even this they did only through the power of the Holy Spirit, who led them to contrition and faith in Jesus. He led them back to their merciful Father and sent them to their homes justified. Did they then, having been justified, love Him and serve Him? Of course they did. But their works came as fruits of faith, as with Paul and Moses and believers of all times.

What is Important for us Who are Saved is That Works are Put into Their Proper Place

- I. The pharisee and all work-righteous people with him think they can be saved by their works.
 - A. They feel they are able of themselves to please God.
 - B. But God condemns all of their works.
 1. They are a denial of His saving work.
 2. They are therefore filthy rags in His sight.
- II. The publicans and all who trust in Christ plead only for mercy.
 - A. They recognize their unworthiness before God.
 - B. They see their hope and salvation in Christ alone.
 - C. They recognize that whatever good they do is itself a gift of God, a fruit of faith.
- III. It is important that we learn our lesson well.
 - A. Do not look for any part of your salvation in your works.
 - B. Look for all of your salvation in your merciful God.
 1. He saved you in Christ.
 2. He has brought you to faith in Him through His Word.
 - C. Then keep on studying His Holy Word.
 1. His law will remind you of works that are pleasing to Him.
 2. His gospel will give you strength to do these works in love to God and to people everywhere.

MJS

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: LUKE 19:1-10

Are students the only ones who, planning to write a sermon on this text, would liken their hearers to Zacchaeus? Having described Zacchaeus' sin they want to apply it to their hearers by saying, "We also need to hear the Lord calling to us." The unfortunate thing about it is that many hearers would find nothing wrong with such preaching. They would admit, "We have sinned. We need to turn to Christ as Zacchaeus did." But they seem to ignore the fact that after Zacchaeus' conversion he was not at all the same as he was before. After salvation had come to his house, his attitude toward others was completely different. He was now anxious to keep the law. He showed love for the poor. He sought to right the wrongs of the past. He showed love and gratitude to God. We have the right to expect the same of our hearers, regardless of how short or how long a time they have been with Christ. They are not unbelievers. So they will not live as unbelievers. But they still will sin daily and need daily to come to the Lord for forgiveness and strength to live the Christian life.

Christ sought and found Zacchaeus. He also did that for us. But for us that may have been long ago. Now some will need to be helped to show some of the

first love that Zacchaeus showed. They are not all as happy as Zacchaeus was when Christ came to his home. They are not all the good stewards that he showed himself to be. They are not all as full of love as they might be. Thank God, that is not true of all. Some pastors forget that at least some of their members have shown evidences of Christ's enabling power in their lives for a long, long time. Some have not lost their first love. It has grown with their faith, as a fruit of it, because Christ is daily a guest and host in their house. If the faith of some has not grown, they need more of the gospel that Jesus brought to Zacchaeus.

This text also deals with wealth. Some would say Zacchaeus was wealthy because as chief of the publicans he was also the worst thief in the organization. But if he had been, he could not have restored four-fold. He was rich because he had a very lucrative position in a very well-to-do area of the "Holy Land." His fault lay in the fact that his job automatically excluded him from the family of God. But that certainly is not the case with all who are rich. Some people have the idea that wealth always suggests unfairness in dealing with others. "Down with all administrators. Down with all executives." Some may secretly hope they might get a few more of the rich to give half of their wealth to the poor, thinking of themselves as the recipients.

Christ was on his way to Jerusalem to die. Jesus, on His last journey through Jericho, facing death in Jerusalem, still took time to save a sinner from hell.

Our Greatest Opportunities to Save People May Seemingly Come by Chance

- I. The place may seem so.
 - A. Jericho certainly gave little promise of success.
 - B. Who, years ago, would have chosen some of our very promising mission fields?
- II. The time may seem so.
 - A. With so great a task before Him, Christ still gave precious moments to one lost soul.
 - B. We, too, will be challenged to respond to the moment God gives.
- III. The response itself may seem so.
 - A. Zacchaeus just seemed to be ready for Christ when He came.
 - B. We, too, will often come upon people who just seem to be waiting for us.
- IV. Yet, behind all of what may seem to be chance our gracious Lord is saving sinners, preparing them for the day of judgment.
 - A. They may not be waiting for us.
 - B. Are we seeking them out?

MJS

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: LUKE 23:35-43

The kingdom of Christ is not of this world. It is a kingdom of grace, God's unmerited love, which required His death for all sinners, that in Him they might be the children of God, with grace to serve Him in His kingdom. That is why He as king would not come down from the cross. To save others, He could not "save" Himself. To make them free, He had to be nailed to the cross. To give them life, He had to die.

The life He gave earned a release from eternal death for all who trust in Him. People would still have to go through physical death. For the malefactor on the cross it was even a death of torture. He had said to His disciples a year and a half before, "Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul." This was the comfort He was able to give to the repentant malefactor: "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." The malefactor would

still die and that in pain, but for him death would then be a glorious relief from all pain and suffering. It would still be the punishment for him. Christ would soon die the death for sin; for Him it would be punishment—the wrath of God heaped upon him for the sins of the world. But through death He would go into paradise to be with the Father and the malefactor would follow soon after.

What is important for us is that Christ died for all, to be the King of kings and Lord of lords, extending His kingdom through the preaching of the message of the cross, a message prophesied already in the Garden of Eden, which He was now fulfilling. To bring all of this clearly into focus for the last Sunday in the church year, keep in mind that Christ often called Himself the Son of Man with reference to Daniel 7:13-14, which shows Him as the Son of Man judging the world. This Son of Man came to earth to seek and to save that which was lost. Only then would He also become the judge. See Romans 8:31ff where Paul points out that no one can accuse us because Christ died for us and in Him we are justified.

**Look to Christ's Cross if You Fear
the Day of Judgement**

- I. On the cross Christ earned the right to be king and judge of all.
 - A. He refused to use His power as king to free Himself.
 - B. His power lay in His death with which He conquered Satan.
- II. On the cross He prepared the way for sinners fearlessly to stand before Him as the judge.
 - A. Unbelievers want freedom from pain and punishment, freedom to live in their sins, but they will die in their sins.
 - B. Believers can rejoice in freedom from sin and death, freedom to serve the Lord.
- III. On the cross He received the acclaim of the repentant thief.
 - A. That is an acclaim which we are able to give Him now.
 - B. That is an acclaim which we want all others to give Him with us.
 - C. That is an acclaim which we will all be able to give Him perfectly in glory.

MJS

Book Reviews

STUDIES IN PROVERBS. WISE WORDS IN A WICKED WORLD. By Charles W. Turner. BMH Books, Winona Lake, Indiana, 1976. 133 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

This is not a commentary on the Book of Proverbs, but, as the title indicates, a series of studies on Proverbs. Proverbs is a book concerning which not too much material is available for Bible classes and personal devotional study. The author, who is Executive Editor and General Manager of the Brethren Missionary Company of Winona Lake and the 1975-76 moderator of the National Fellowship of Brethren Churches, has produced an excellent study of this book.

Of the thirteen chapters which comprise this volume, one is introductory and one of the nature of a conclusion. The other eleven treat different topics as they are discussed in the thirty-one chapters of Proverbs and passages from other parts of the Bible pertaining to the important ethical matters concerned. Each chapter has been provided with "suggested background devotional reading." The arrangement of the book into thirteen chapters suggests it might serve as a quarter's work for Sunday School classes. Turner accepts the traditional position that most of the book of Proverbs comes from the pen of Solomon, being edited during the time of Hezekiah. Because Proverbs is a part of the Old Testament canon, the author places it in a different class than the proverbial collections of the ancient Near East and elsewhere. This would be a book worth placing into the congregational library.

Raymond F. Surburg

CREATION CONTINUES. By Fritz Kunkel. Word Books, Waco Texas, 1973. 281 pages. Paper. \$5.95.

This book was written by a psychologist who uses the Gospel of Matthew as a base for his theories. His theory is that creation continues in each of us to this day. Each one's task is that of becoming an individual. This task of becoming has been charted for us in the Gospel of Matthew. The dynamic reader will identify himself with the large cast of persons in this Gospel. His theory is stated on page 65 and we summarize it: Individualism is inescapable. The transition from feudalistic to individual consciousness reached its highest peak at the time of the Reformation. In feudalism the individual exists for the group. Since then the individual exists for his own sake. But this can lead to all sorts of vices, especially egocentricity. What is the way out? Individuation, mature individualism. One form is offered in Christianity. "There is a form of individualism, of self-reliance and independence, which allows the individual to become responsible for himself and for the group also. Individual freedom and collective responsibility coincide." He uses the Gospel of Matthew to exemplify this theory.

The reviewer is no psychologist and therefore is in no position to assess this theory. His only interest lies in Kunkel's handling of Matthew. What is his view of Matthew? "We are not here concerned with the question whether Jesus actually did and said what Matthew recorded. We will try to understand the impact of Jesus' personality on his disciples, through them on Matthew and his students, and through Matthew on ourselves" (p. 11). What of Jesus? "Jesus wanted to be baptised, and this means he wished to confess his sins"

(p. 46). "Thanks to the Phoenician woman, he [Jesus] has completely outgrown his own racial prejudice" (p. 182). "At Caesarea Jesus was to Peter, so to speak, a window through which the latter could see into eternity . . . But this does not yet make him a god; it only shows what true initiation can achieve" (p. 193). What did Jesus do? "Jesus had to 'forsake' his disciples to teach them self-reliance and independence. Matthew did not know that he would forsake his later readers at the very point where he tells them how the disciples were left alone. It is a superhuman and therefore unconscious accomplishment" (p. 274). What of Easter? "Easter, rebirth, the new phase of creation, is either a convincing inner experience which changes our character and our life, or it is nothing at all. We do not need the empty grave. To us every grave is empty, every corpse is darkness. But darker than all this is our own failure. We know what love is, but we do not love; we only want to be loved" (p. 276). What of the kingdom? "To keep our hopes from evaporating into idealistic dreams or emotional revivalism, we need clear understanding, definite evidence in the outer world, and unmistakable experiences within ourselves. Our situation is almost the same as that of Matthew's students. We understand and occasionally feel, that a new phase of creation, the kingdom of heaven is waiting for us. It wants to come to life within every individual. That is the 'coming of the Son of man.'" (p. 142). "The original essence of man-woman relationship, to be 'one flesh', has become a remote ideal. To reach it would mean to reach the kingdom of heaven" (p. 210). What of man's will? "We are always left with our own free will, to decide on our own account how to interpret and how to fulfill the will of God" (p. 52). "The imperative 'enter' (Matt. 7:13-14) presupposes our capacity for choosing between the two ways." (p. 109). "We have enough freedom to take small steps which lead into a little more freedom, then larger steps which lead into a frightening degree of freedom, and finally huge steps which lead up into the blinding light of a superindividual consciousness" (p. 110). What of God's righteousness? "The expression 'seeking God's righteousness' is the keyword. We already know that in Matthew's language it does not signify that stable and unchanging quality of virtuousness which we do or do not possess. We cannot learn 'righteousness' as we learn spelling and arithmetic, so that it becomes a quality of our minds. Jesus uses the word in a different sense. It is dynamic now and indicates ceaseless change, endeavor, and growth. It refers to our evolution from higher to ever higher levels of being, and implies the hardship, dangers, and trepidations of traveling, experimenting, and discovering" (p. 104). The book is permeated by religious enthusiasm and inner experience: "This new light, as we shall see, can appear within every man, freeing him from the past, endowing him with new creative power and guiding him toward a higher and more spiritual life" (p. 43). "We shall discover the best of all teachers, the voice of guidance, within our own heart" (p. 178). "But each Christian, if he deserves this name, must find this boulder [new consciousness] within himself" (p. 188). So far as theology is concerned Kunkel describes himself when he writes: "We are truly, all of us, dumb, as far as spiritual language is concerned. All our writing and preaching is useless and perhaps harmful, going around in circles on the egocentric level. If our eyes would see, we should at least recognize our spiritual muteness and stop our emotional or intellectual verbosity" (p. 132). The exegesis, of course, is often very bad. The Gospel of Matthew is studied from a Bultmannian, rationalistic point of view.

Harold H. Buls

ACTS: THE EXPANDING CHURCH. By Everett F. Harrison. Moody Press, Chicago, 1975. 419 pages. \$7.95.

Everett F. Harrison, Professor Emeritus of New Testament at Fuller

Theological Seminary, has produced a scholarly new commentary on the book of Acts with thirteen pages of bibliography and references to the primary and secondary literature. Harrison rightly sees the commission of the Risen Lord in 1:8 as a key to the structure of the narrative; Acts proceeds along the same line of progress as indicated in that verse, the evangelization of Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria, and the remotest parts of the earth (p. 11). He defends the unified Lucan authorship of the book, even though he does not seem to regard the external evidence with as much deference as is due it (p. 14). The Fuller professor sensibly dates Acts in the second year of Paul's first Roman imprisonment and notes that the accuracy of the geographical notes and of the titles of Roman officials necessarily point to an author contemporary with the events narrated. Harrison contends for the historical reliability of Acts, including its speeches, and cites the professional historians, such as A.N. Sherwin-White, in support of that position (p. 25). The note on the value of Acts for the modern church is worth citing (p. 31):

Acts is especially pertinent to the present day, for the Church in our time is faced with somewhat the same conditions as confronted the infant Christian community. In the Western world Christians are becoming more and more a minority in the population and are subject to pressures because of unwillingness to conform to some features of modern secular life. Less and less is the Church able to claim government patronage or protection.

The commentary is divided into three main sections on the basis of the key passage noted above, Acts 1:8.

One might quibble, however, with some of the positions taken by Harrison. The reviewer sees no reason, for example, why the purpose in writing which Luke states at the beginning of his Gospel should not obtain for Acts as well, which is simply the second volume of the one work (p. 16). Nor are we ready to assume that the three years of Galatians 1:18 should be added to the fourteen years of Galatians 2:1 to make seventeen years between Paul's conversion and the visit to Jerusalem recorded in the latter verse (pp. 23,30). We prefer to assume that the fourteen includes the first three years, because in this way all the difficulties of identifying the Jerusalem visits of Galatians 2 and Acts 11 vanish away, thus simplifying the chronology of Paul's career. The reviewer would seriously question, moreover, whether there was ever a time "when there was little attempt at regulation or the fixing of a standard text" (p. 29). The divergent Western text of Acts is better explained as the earliest commentary on the book; an ancient editor attempted to annotate the original text on the basis of extra information available to him concerning the various personalities and events. More vigorous exception must be taken to Harrison's inadequate view of baptism (p. 63; cf. pp. 51, 176):

It would be a mistake to conclude that the Spirit was automatically bestowed because people submitted to baptism. This rite was administered in response to repentance, which includes faith (Ac 2:41,44). Baptism is a means of making confession of allegiance to Christ (Ro 10:9-10). It is clear from Acts 8:15-16 that water baptism was not in itself the key to receiving the Spirit. Repentance and a believing heart provided the necessary preparation. One might insist that Acts 1:5 does not make room for water baptism at all. This was true in the case of the apostles, but they were a special class.

Also troublesome is Harrison's description of the "speaking in tongues" of Acts 10:46 and 19:6 as "ecstatic utterance" (pp. 52, 289), when there is no

reason in the text to distinguish it from the phenomenon of Acts 2, utterance in cognitive languages unlearned by the speakers.

Judicius

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW. By Wm. Hendriksen. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1973. Cloth. 1015 pages. \$14.95.

This commentary is recommended with some reservations. The commentary is Calvinistic and the reviewer is Lutheran. There are bound to be differences. The commentary has three things in its favor. First, it is very scholarly. No stone is left unturned. The very size of the book tells us something. The author is a very erudite man who evidently does his work conscientiously and painstakingly. He has thoroughly digested an unbelievable amount of material and has written his commentary very simply and well. The commentary can be used by pastor and layman alike. In addition to the fact that this is a verse by verse commentary, it affords good, detailed descriptions such as that of Herod the Great, pp. 156-166, and the traditions of the elders among the Jews, pp. 609-611. Hendriksen's "Introduction to the Gospels," pp. 3-76, brings one right up to date on the various views of the Gospels. His "Introduction to the Gospel of Matthew," pp. 79-99, is very good. Secondly, Hendriksen comes to grips with the rationalistic approach to Scripture practiced by the pseudo-Lutherans in Germany during the last 150 years. He parts ways with all these negative critics from Wrede to Bultmann. Thirdly, his view of the Scriptures is very conservative. Mary is of Davidic descent. The Virgin Birth took place just as Scripture says. Is. 7:14 goes straight as an arrow to its fulfillment in Matthew. He believes implicitly in prophecy and fulfillment, including Gen. 3:15. Jonah truly lived and did that which is described in the Old Testament. There were *two* temple cleansings, not one.

But Hendriksen is a Calvinist, and the fact is quite apparent in this volume. He believes in a limited atonement, ". . .there is indeed a love of God that is not shared by all" (p. 315). The real test comes on Matt. 20:28: "The Son of man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom in the place of many." With reference to this passage Hendriksen says: "There are passages, however, which, taken out of their context, seem to teach that Jesus came to this earth in order to pay the ransom for every individual living on earth in the past, and future. As soon as these passages are interpreted in the light of their contexts it immediately appears that this is not the meaning" (p. 750). And with reference to Matt. 26:28: "Jesus says that his blood is poured out 'for MANY,' not for all." It is plain that Scripture does not qualify the word "many" as does Hendriksen.

A theologian's view of the atonement is bound to affect his view of conversion. And that is apparent in this volume. The difference is found in man. By the way, it is on this point that Hendriksen agrees with Bultmann. Here Hendriksen commends Bultmann: "The statement that true faith is an attitude and activity in which the entire personality is involved, that it is accordingly a complete self-surrender resulting from a decision, reminds one of Josh. 24:15 and of the words of Jesus recorded in Mark 12:29-31" (p. 71). Other examples of synergism are these: "Salvation is not only BY grace and THROUGH faith, it is also ACCORDING to works" (p. 293). "Now it is true that the kingdom and its righteousness are gifts, graciously bestowed. They are HIS kingdom and HIS righteousness. They are, however, also objects of continuing, diligent search; of ceaseless, strenuous effort to obtain" (p. 354). Many other examples could be cited.

This, of course, goes hand in hand with Hendriksen's view of Scripture. It is not a means of grace as Lutherans maintain. With reference to the Parable of

the Hidden Treasure (p. 576), we read this: "All extraneous ideas - for example, that in this parable the field indicates Scripture - should be dropped. When God leads the sinner to the discovery that causes him to shout for joy he employs all kinds of ways and methods." But is not that discovery always *Sola Scriptura*? What other way can there possibly be? Hendriksen's view smacks of religious enthusiasm. On page 231 Hendriksen includes "Living a life for the benefit of others to the glory of God" along with Scripture and the sacraments as a means of grace.

And where there is not the proper stress on the Word, there synergism crops up. Some have called the Parable of the Sower the mother of parables. It is surely a testing ground for the exegete. Note these observations by Hendriksen: "...the result of the hearing of the gospel always and everywhere depends on the condition of heart of those to whom it is addressed. The character of the hearer determines the effect of the word upon him." This statement is quoted approvingly from W. M. Taylor (p. 559).

Hendriksen's treatment of baptism and the Lord's Supper is typical Calvinism. Again and again baptism is referred to as mere symbol. But no one can call Christ's reference to the baptism of John in Matt. 21:25 a mere "symbol." It is as if Christ is putting the same question to Hendriksen which He put to His contemporaries: "The baptism of John, where did it come from, from heaven or from men?" At this point, like Jesus' contemporaries, Hendriksen refuses to give the very answer which Scripture requires. His treatment of the Lord's Supper (p. 909) is just another attempt at symbolism.

And then there is the Calvinistic view of the person of Christ. Hendriksen's treatment of the Transfiguration makes that plain. Despite what is said in 2 Pet. 1:16-17 so plainly, the author cannot get himself to go along with Lenski: "The whole body of Jesus for a brief time was allowed to shine with the light and refulgence of its heavenly divinity." By the way, Hendriksen has healthy respect for Lenski, lists him in his special bibliography, and often quotes him. But it is easy to see the true difference between Lutheranism and Calvinism by observing Hendriksen's objections to Lenski. To return to the person of Christ, we read this in this commentary on Matt. 27:46: "But how could God forsake God? The answer must be that God the Father deserted his Son's human nature, and even this in a limited, though very real and agonizing, sense" (p. 971). The Calvinistic view of the person of Christ waters down the Gospel until little is left. The author of this commentary is to be admired for his untiring and careful work. The book is worth the price, but the Lutheran reader will notice the problems mentioned above.

Harold H. Buls

THE FOURTH EVANGELIST AND HIS GOSPEL: An Examination of Contemporary Scholarship. By Robert Kysar. Augsburg, Minneapolis, 1975. Paper. 296 pages. \$4.95.

This volume is a survey of the critical work done on the Gospel of John since 1963. It is quite obvious that Kysar has done his work very carefully and in a fair manner. Though the book affords no topical index, the table of contents gives the reader quick access to the subject which he is looking for. The entire book is divided into three parts: "The Evangelist and His Tradition," "The Evangelist and His Situation," "The Evangelist and His Thought." Each of these parts is followed by a summary. And the entire volume ends with a ten page summary and five pages entitled "The Vital Questions Remaining."

The six major accomplishments of recent years, summarized in ten pages at the close of the book, are as follows:

A. The efforts of critical study have shown quite decisively that the fourth

- gospel incorporates a body of traditional material and was composed over a period of years in what might have been a rather complex process.
- B. Contemporary Johannine criticism has confirmed that the gospel is a community's document.
 - C. It is the accomplishment of current Johannine scholarship that the evidence for the syncretistic, heterodox Jewish milieu of the gospel has become irresistible.
 - D. That the dialogue between the church and the synagogue comprises the major element in the concrete situation of the fourth evangelist appears to be the emerging consensus of critics.
 - E. Research on the religious thought of the gospel demonstrates that it is an innovative and sophisticated mode of Christian thought radically christocentric in all its expressions.
 - F. Finally, the recent criticism of the gospel attests fully to the fact that the Johannine community is a distinctive form of early Christian life and thought.

It is very obvious, of course, that these are the conclusions of men who do not begin with truly Lutheran presuppositions. That the Gospel of John is, in very truth, the inspired Word of God, written by the Apostle John, is an idea foreign to this survey. That does not detract from the work which Kysar has done. He has taken an objective look at what has been written since 1963. But he goes along with the ideas listed above. On page 195 Kysar chides Cadman thus: "It would appear in many ways to border upon a meditation for faith rather than a scholarly study, for one is sometimes led to think that Cadman is really more concerned to ask how the gospel can be understood in a meaningful way for the believer today than with the question of the original meaning and intent of the evangelist." And on page 199 he criticizes Feuillet's "mystery of the incarnation" thus: "However that may be, the critical study of Johannine thought must beware of appealing to the category of the inexplicable, lest the hard work of analysis be left undone." In Feuillet's defense we would hasten to add that the work of many scholars is so dreary and uncertain simply because they try to grasp and explain the inexplicable in inspiration and the person, word, and work of Jesus. But if one wants to have a survey and summary of recent Johannine scholarship, here is the book.

Harold H. Buls

THE GOSPEL OF MARK. By Wm. Hendriksen. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1975. 700 pages. Cloth. \$14.95.

In spite of its Calvinism, this is a commentary worth buying. On the one hand, the author is a firm believer in the infallible Word of God, verbally inspired. On the other hand, the commentary is very thorough and up-to-date. The fly-leaf states: "You will be enthusiastically pleased and satisfied with this commentary!" That is true, except for the Calvinism. No stone is left unturned. How Hendriksen is able to write so many New Testament Commentaries is hard to understand. If only some conservative Lutheran would serve Lutheranism as well! Not only do we have a good verse by verse commentary but also sectional introductions and summaries. Frequently one finds excellent descriptions such as that of the Herodian Temple, pages 446-452. The theories of literary, form, and redaction criticism are met head on. Wherever it is possible to harmonize the Gospels, Hendriksen does so ably. For example, the rejection of Jesus at Nazareth, which he considers the same incident in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, is carefully dealt with.

Hendriksen is a firm believer in prophecy and fulfillment. Somewhere he briefly considers Gen. 3:15 as the first Messianic prophecy. On Mark 10:45 (page 415) he states: "He is 'the Son of man,' the fulfillment of the prophecy

of Dan. 7:14." He is constantly referring to Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ, especially in the Passion Account. And he accepts miracles for exactly what they are. Wherever the Kingdom is mentioned, Hendriksen takes pains to explain. It is clear that he wants nothing to do with the so-called "delayed parousia" theory. It is refreshing to read this: "I therefore fully agree with Prof. Schultze when he writes, 'I venture to suggest that demon possession was a phenomenon limited almost exclusively (if not entirely) to the period of special divine manifestations during the period in which the New Testament church was born!'" (page 65).

However, the Lutheran reader must be warned that this is a Calvinistic commentary. The author believes in limited atonement. On Mark 10:45 (page 415) we read this: "This 'in the place of many' is very important. Not in the place of all but of many." With reference to 14:25 (page 575): "Jesus says that his blood is poured out 'for many', not for all." He distinguishes between the proposition that God loves the elect in a particular way and the proposition that there is a love of God which extends beyond the sum-total of the elect. See page 297.

Secondly, as we would expect, baptism is considered a mere rite though Hendriksen will grant that "it is also true that by means of baptism conversion is powerfully stimulated" (p. 37). (See also pp. 40, 385, and 467). Hendriksen does not accept Mark 16:9-20 as authentic. That is his right on the basis of careful study. But with reference to verse 16 he says: "The emphasis in verse 16 of the ending is not on baptism but on the exercise of faith, exactly as in Matthew; cf. also John 3:16, 18, 36." He makes it clear on pages 573-574 that he accepts the symbolical view of the Lord's Supper.

Thirdly, a strain of synergism runs through the whole book. "Now a person's willingness to surrender himself to Jesus depends upon how he views him; in other words, faith always implies doctrine" (p. 17). With reference to the parable of the Sower, particularly verse 20 of Mark 4, "These people hear because they want to hear." And on page 156, "The character of the hearer determines the effect of the word upon him." And on page 462, "Though in the teaching not only of Paul (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8; Titus 3:5) but certainly also of Christ (Matt. 5:1-6; 18:27; Luke 18:13; John 3:3,5) salvation rests not on human accomplishments but solely on the grace and mercy of God, this does not mean that there is nothing to do for those who receive it. They must believe. Included in this faith is the eagerness to forgive." Is it not amazing that he can list passages *only* for monergism? On page 330 Hendriksen makes a distinction between conversion and regeneration. Lutherans understand the first table of the Law as essentially trust and confidence in the promises of God. Calvinists do not; note page 493 on this point.

Fourthly, one would expect to find the word "sovereignty" in a Calvinistic commentary. It is frequently used in this volume. One example is this sentence (page 400): "Whatever detracts from the sovereignty of God in the salvation of men stands condemned." Lutherans would use the word "grace" here.

Finally, Hendriksen's Calvinism surfaces again and again with reference to the person of Christ. On Mark 15:34 he says: "The question has been asked, 'But how could God forsake God?' The answer must be that God the Father deserted HIS SON'S HUMAN NATURE, and even this in a limited, though very real and agonizing, sense" (Emphasis ours). And, earlier in the volume (page 45) we read: "That even Jesus, the Sinless One, could be tempted is a mystery incapable of being made perfectly clear. All we can say about it is that this temptation pertains, of course, to Christ's HUMAN nature, since GOD cannot be tempted (James 1:13)" (Emphases Hendriksen's). This idea, of course, is a misconception of the person of Christ and His State of Humiliation.

STUDIES IN PHILIPPIANS. By David L. Hocking. BMH Books, Winona Lake, Indiana, 1975. 166 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

Here is a commentary on Philippians from which both pastor and layman can learn much. It has two good things. First, it is absolutely free from the presuppositions of the higher critical method. The author, without saying it, believes that the Bible is the Word of God in its truest sense. Secondly, the author has done his homework carefully.

Philippians 2:5-11, the passage which deals with the humiliation and exaltation of Christ, is a test for any exegete. Hocking has done well on this passage. He lets Scripture speak for itself. It is clear that our author is a monergist. This may be seen on page 12: "It is God who opens hearts! When people respond to our message and witness, do not forget that it is because God is working in them and causing this response." Here is a brief but lucid comment on 2:12, a passage which must be explained with care: "He (God) expects us to 'work out' what He 'works in' us." His summary of the Bible is this (p. 103): "Both in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament the Bible teaches salvation by faith in the Messiah for what He has done for us." He lets the context define that difficult word "perfect" or "mature" in 3:15: "Maturity is described by Paul as forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto the things ahead." That the author knows his grammar is proved with two examples. With reference to 2:1 (p. 58) he makes this observation: "There are four different ways to interpret the word 'if', which in Greek will be clearly indicated by the word used and the moods of the verbs used." He then proceeds to interpret this particular "if" correctly. With reference to 3:20 (p. 130) he says: "In Greek, the words 'God' and 'Savior' are connected grammatically as equals. The definite article 'the' appears before 'God' but not before 'Savior'. Yes, it is Jesus, our God and Savior, whom we are anticipating from heaven!"

Nonetheless there are errors which should be pointed out. With reference to 2:12, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," the author interprets the word "salvation" as "unity of the believers." That is a startling interpretation and is surely incorrect. With reference to 2:17, "I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith," Hocking says this: "Even if there is no future reward for him at the day of Christ, he still felt it was worth it to minister to their lives." That is eisegesis, not exegesis. Paul is not even implying that there might not be a heavenly reward. These words of Paul simply show that he is willing to suffer the worst if he can minister to the Philippians. On page 91 we find this statement: "The words 'had mercy on him' (Epaphroditus) are in the aorist tense meaning that it was at a moment of time that God displayed mercy. We take that to mean the moment of his healing from this serious illness." Not every aorist verb denotes momentary action. We do not know whether momentary action is meant here. On pages 100-101 Old Testament circumcision is described as an empty ritual. After quoting Rom. 4:9-13, Hocking says: "However, the simplest thing we can see is that circumcision was not a requirement in the case of Abraham as to his being declared righteous by God. That was based on faith alone." Paul calls circumcision "a seal of the righteousness of faith." It was a requirement bound up with righteousness by faith, not by merit or works. Hocking shows his true attitude toward baptism when he says: "Many people today who claim to be religious and who claim the name of 'Christian' do nothing more than glory in their church membership, baptism, works, rituals, religious activities, and the like" (p. 102). Baptism is surely not a work of man or a ritual. It is a means of grace. With reference to Paul's words at 3:8, "that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him," Hocking observes: "The expression 'be found in Him' and 'gain' seem to point to the second coming of Christ or at least our going to be with Christ at death." This

violates the context, which reads, "not having a righteousness of my own from the Law." One can hardly support millennialism from Philippians but Hocking betrays himself with an afterthought relative to 3:11: "The first resurrection occurs 1,000 years or more before that resurrection of the wicked dead (Rev. 20:4-6)."

With reference to 3:21 we find this most perplexing paragraph: "The qualities of Christ's body that make it perform as it does will be found in our bodies. Presumably that means that we will not be limited in going through walls as He did or traveling at great speeds and distances throughout the universe. There is no way that we can know exactly what our capacities will be like, but they will be greatly increased from what we know now. The physical properties of our bodies will be changed like Christ's physical body, and our outward appearance will be changed even though we will not look like Jesus Christ in appearance." Perhaps two observations ought be made: first, the author is going too far in trying to understand what "glorified body" means; secondly, he violates what Lutherans know as the communication of attributes in Christ.

With reference to 4:7 Hocking says: "All believers have this kind of peace the moment they trust in Jesus Christ as their Saviour. After that occurs, we must go on to discover the 'peace' that is a part of the fruit of the Spirit (cf. Gal. 5:22) and the quality that controls and stabilizes our minds and hearts." Even though one grants that Gal. 5:22 is found in a context of sanctification, still it should be realized that Gal. 5:22 is talking about that which Christ bestows. Very simply put, Hocking is mixing Law and Gospel. A requirement is made in addition to faith.

This review has criticized Hocking's commentary in a number of places, but it remains a good book. If a book is recommended, the reviewer owes it to readers to point out the pitfalls.

Harold H. Buls

LETTERS FROM PAUL: An Exegetical Translation. By Boyce W. Blackwelder. 1971. Warner Press, Anderson, Indiana. Cloth. 160 pages. No price.

The author states his aim in the preface in these words: "I have sought to make the present work a translation, not a paraphrase. However, in some instances an interpretive or paraphrastic rendering was necessary in order to express what seemed to be the connotation of the original." As his text the author used Nestle's *Novum Testamentum Graece*, Merk's *Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine*, and the United Bible Societies' *The Greek New Testament*. Many fine things can be said about this translation of the Pauline Corpus. For example, Blackwelder clearly understands the forensic righteousness of the Gospel: "We conclude that a man is declared righteous by faith, quite apart from any works of law" (Rom. 3:28). He punctuates Rom. 9:5 so as to maintain the deity of Christ: "...the Christ who is over all, God blessed forever." In a footnote to Rom. 11:26 he explains Israel as Spiritual Israel, and notes that, in this epistle Paul uses the word Israel in a dual sense. In I Corinthians 12 and 14 the Greek word *glossa* is rendered foreign language, not ecstatic tongue. It is remarkable how much clearer these chapters are with this translation of this word. II Cor. 1:20 reads thus: "For all the promises of God find their fulfillment in Him (Christ)." The translation is a pleasing and inviting one. Note Eph. 4:26: "Make sure the setting sun does not find you resentful." And Phil. 2:6: "Although from the beginning he had the nature of God, he did not consider his equality with God as something to be exploited for himself, but laid it aside in the sense that he assumed the nature of a servant when he became like men." And 3:19: "Their god is bodily appetites.

They are even proud of their immoral practices. Their thoughts are habitually upon earthly things."

However, it must be pointed out that both baptism and the Lord's Supper are given the symbolic interpretation. For example, "Or do you not realize that as many of us as were baptized (as a public declaration of dedication) to Christ Jesus were baptized to picture his death?" (Rom. 6:3); "... they were all submerged in relation to Moses" (I Cor. 10:2).

Finally, we note the following passages which fail, more or less, to give the meaning of the original: "For by such action, you may induce him to repent" (Rom. 12:20). In I Cor. 7:36-38 *parthenos* is rendered "virgin daughter," not "virgin fiancée." Incidentally, Beck in his translation of this passage renders the word "girl" in the sense of "betrothed girlfriend." In I Cor. 8 and 9 "weak" conscience is rendered "oversensitive." I Cor. 14:34 is rendered: "They are not permitted to disturb the decorum of worship." I Cor. 15:29 reads: "If there is no resurrection, what shall those achieve who are being baptized because of (the influence of) the dead?" In Col. 2:18 we read this: "Let no one defraud you of your prize, even if he seeks to do so by an air of humility and BY ADVOCATING THE MEDIATION OF ANGELS." At the conclusion of the epistle the word "grace" is rendered "gracious care." Note, for example, I Thess. 5:28: "The gracious care of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!" And, finally, in II Tim. 2:15 we read: "... cutting a straight course by handling properly the word of truth." But, in general, the translation is commendable. It is good to read a new translation if for no other reason than to force one to think on what the text really says.

Harold H. Buls

EPOCHS IN THE LIFE OF THE APOSTLE JOHN. By A.T. Robertson. Reprint. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1974. 253 pages. Paper. Bibliography (not current). \$2.95.

This is the fourth in the Epochs series (Jesus, Paul, Peter, John) which A.T. Robertson produced between 1906 and 1930. The first problem which any student of John must deal with is the authorship of the Gospel, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse. Were they written by the same man? And was this man the Apostle John? Robertson gives a long list of the scholars in his day who thought that the case against John had been settled once and for all (p. 37). But, after much study, here is how Robertson felt: "We shall meanwhile assume that John the Apostle wrote the Fourth Gospel, the Johannine Epistles, and the Apocalypse." He was not fooled by those who twisted the words of Papias, reported by Eusebius, demanding two Johns, not one. He followed Irenaeus who identified John the elder, the disciple of the Lord with the Apostle John. Again and again he makes statements like this: "The Johannine authorship of Gospel, Epistles, and Apocalypse, is accepted here as proven. There are difficulties, to be sure, as in all historical problems, but the balance of evidence both external and internal, is, in my judgment, decidedly in favour of the Johannine authorship of them all. Ancient testimony is practically unanimous in attributing to the Apostle John the First Epistle" (p. 110). On page 156 he gives an impressive list of scholars who accept the Johannine authorship of the Gospel of John. There are scholars who claim that the Passover in John cannot be reconciled with that of the Synoptics. Robertson rejects their position (p. 58). He allows for John 21:24 being penned by the elders of Ephesus before the Gospel was sent out (p. 107). That jolts a little. Again and again Robertson discusses Cerinthian and Docetic Gnosticism and how John did battle with these devastating heresies (pp. 113, 114, 115, 136, 144). How did Robertson understand the term "antichrist"? In the Epistles of John antichrist "includes more than Cerinthianism and describes

to-day those who seek to rob Jesus of His deity" (p. 129). In Revelation "John is picturing the titanic struggle between the kingdom of Christ and the world power of Rome. Under different forms through the ages this conflict is repeated" (p. 210). In keeping with the Johannine authorship of the Gospel goes the unity of the book (p. 153). Furthermore, Robertson firmly believed that "the Fourth Gospel was written to give matter that supplemented the accounts in the Synoptics" (p. 159). He agrees with Howard (p. 167) who wrote: "The Fourth Evangelist proclaimed to the Christian world of his time that the eternal Logos, the living and active Word of God, had become incarnate in Jesus. The Christian religion, the perfect revelation of God, was rooted in history." Robertson's interpretation of the Apocalypse is summed up in this quote: "Mine is that the book was written in the Domitianic persecution, to put cheer and courage in the hearts of the Christians of that time. Rome was pictured as Babylon and the conflict with Satan's world-power was presented in bold outline, with the certainty of the final triumph of Christ" (p. 213). And for the modern Christian: "This wonderful book has a place for Christians who have to meet public or private trials, particularly persecutions, at the hands of the state or even from fellow Christians" (p. 236). But he was no millennialist: "Those who take the thousand years literally overlook the fact that the Apocalypse is a book of symbols and that it is perilous to insist on that point, either in favour of the post- or the pre-millennial view" (p. 234). Much can be gained from this book and it is therefore recommended.

Harold H. Buls

THE NEW TESTAMENT ENVIRONMENT. By Eduard Lohse. Translated by John E. Steely. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 296 pages. \$12.95, cloth. \$6.95, paper.

Eduard Lohse, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover and formerly professor of New Testament in the Universities of Göttingen and Kiel, published his *Umwelt des Neuen Testaments* in 1971. It is now available in English in another competent translation by John Steely, professor of historical theology at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina. Lohse divides his work into two main parts, Judaism in New Testament times and the Hellenistic-Roman world. These are, of course, the two main aspects of the environment of Jesus and the apostolic church. In the first section the bishop deals with political history of the Jews, religious and intellectual movements (with special attention to the Qumran community and apocalyptic thought), and social and religious practices. In this last chapter Lohse emphasizes the centrality of the Law in all shades of Jewish thought at the time of Christ. The second main part of the book treats of the political, social, religious, and intellectual aspects of the Hellenistic-Roman environment of the New Testament. A special chapter is dedicated to what is probably the most difficult major aspect of that environment, Gnosticism. The volume concludes with several useful maps, tables, bibliographies, and indices.

The reviewer cannot commend all Lohse's sentiments without qualification. He describes as erroneous, for example, Mark's reference to "Phillip" as the first husband of Herodias (6:17; see Lohse, p. 44). Likewise, he assigns the book of Daniel to the time of the Maccabean rebellion (p. 25). The "prophecies" of the book up to 11:39, he asserts, are actually written after the events narrated, and the first genuine prediction (11:40-45) went awry (pp. 66-67). Nevertheless, the book is in general a handy introduction to the times of Christ and His apostles. Lohse shows how both the Jews and Greeks of our Lord's day were looking eagerly for salvation—but in the wrong places (e.g., pp. 278-279).

Judicius

EVANGELICAL IN SEARCH OF IDENTITY. By Carl F.H. Henry. Word Books, Publishers, 1976. Cloth. 96 pages. \$3.95.

Books by leading evangelical opinion-maker Dr. Carl F.H. Henry, editor-at-large for *Christianity Today* and lecturer-at-large for World Vision International, are always thought-provoking. This book is no exception. Early in his ministry he set about to unify disparate Christian groups and scholars with the purpose of making a tremendous impact upon America and the world. Henry's *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (1948) is held to have had a potent effect on American evangelicals by forcing them to rethink their reactionary withdrawal and renew their influence on society. Since 1948 Henry has made contributions in certain major respects and been a leader in the promotion of evangelical thought.

Some of the visions which Henry has for evangelicalism have not been realized. Twenty-five years ago evangelicalism was like a caged lion ready to be released from his captivity, but the power Henry believes it could have released, it failed to release. Because the lion could not decide which way to go, he is now in danger of losing the potential he once had to make an impact upon society. The book offers an analysis of what happened in the last twenty-five or so years and suggests where the movement went wrong. Factors that have hindered the evangelical movement are described and suggestions for reinvigoration of modern evangelicalism are given. Two of the major issues that appear to divide evangelicals, according to Henry, are the questions of social concerns and the infallibility of Scripture. Those evangelicals who believe that the inerrancy of the Scripture is an important doctrine are not going to agree with Henry's assessment of the errancy/inerrancy debate, upon which Harold Lindsell has focused in his *The Battle for the Bible*.

Raymond F. Surburg

A LINGUISTIC KEY TO THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT, Volume 1. Fritz Rienecker. Translated and revised by Cleon L. Rogers, Jr. Zondervan Publishing House, 1976. 345 pp. Cloth. \$14.95.

This volume is one of 18 books planned as a series called "Companion Texts for New Testament Studies." Fritz Rienecker's *Sprachlicher Schlüssel zum Griechischen Neuen Testament*, a help which has gone through a number of editions and revisions, has been extremely helpful for many students of the Greek New Testament. On August 15, 1965, Rienecker died, leaving behind a rich heritage of writings which Biblical students still use with great profit. Rienecker had planned to supplement his *Schlüssel* with two other books; one was to cover theological concepts of the Scriptures and the other was to provide historical background explaining the New Testament world. Death made impossible the actualization of this plan.

The translation and revision by Cleon Rogers of Seeheim, Germany, attempts to achieve these objectives of Rienecker not only by giving explanations of grammatical forms, but also by including numerous new references to other books containing the type of background material Rienecker planned to issue separately. Rogers informs the reader about Volume I, Matthew to Acts as follows:

The revision includes a wider range of references to grammatical works, commentaries, journal articles, and historical works, and these are especially adapted to the English reader. The citation of a work does not mean that the theological position of its author is endorsed, but

only that the particular quote was deemed valuable in reference to its historical or grammatical insight.

Featured in the Rienecker-Rogers book is the grammatical identification of words. The Greek word is given along with information concerning its voice, tense, case, or mood. The user will find discussions of the more important words in the Gospels and Acts. Readers will be better able to understand words because they are defined according to context, and readers will thus be enabled to comprehend better the original intention of the New Testament text essential for sound interpretation. Volume 2 will treat Romans through Revelation and is tentatively scheduled for publication in 1977.

Raymond F. Surburg

LUTHER'S WORKS, VOLUME XVIII. LECTURES ON THE MINOR PROPHETS I, HOSEA-MALACHI. Edited by Hilton C. Oswald. Translated by Richard J. Dinda. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1975. Cloth. xii and 436 pages, indexes. \$11.50.

The first thirty volumes of the fifty-five volume American Edition of Luther's works contain Luther's expositions on various books of Holy Scripture. Volumes 18, 19, 20 reproduce the Twelve Minor Prophets. Nine Minor Prophets are the subject of this eighteenth volume. Since Luther's own manuscripts were not available, the translation in the American Edition is based on the Altenburg, Zwickau, and Wittenberg manuscripts.

Oswald Hilton claims that by the time Luther delivered these lectures, he had reached a new level of independence and maturity as an exegete. He no longer follows, but more often rejects, the thought of commentators like Jerome and Lyra. He feels more free than before to fault the Vulgate on the basis of references to the original Hebrew text. Thus he frees himself of patristic and scholastic shackles, and the fourfold interpretation hardly comes in for mention any longer. The prophets think and speak in the direction of the New Testament (p. xii).

Luther's basic principle of interpretation for the Minor Prophets is stated thus: "In their preaching the prophets relate everything to the coming of Christ" (p. 67). In these prophetic writings Luther calls attention to the fact that both the Assyrian captivity (pp. 5, 17, 24, 26, 45, 48, 56, 57, 146, 168, 181, 183, 244, 250-251) and the Babylonian are foretold in the Minor Prophets (16, 89, 194, 199, 201, 216, 243, 320, 333, 334, 337, 341, 344, 348, 353, 364). Concerning the famous passage in Micah 4:1-4, found also in Isaiah 2:2-4, Luther believes that Isaiah took it from Micah, who was older than Isaiah. This passage, in the Reformer's estimation, speaks about the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Obadiah Luther considers a contemporary of Jeremiah and thus does not make this prophetic book the earliest among the Minor Prophets as some conservative scholars do. The latter section of Obadiah (verses 16-21), Luther believes, speaks of the time of Christ and the Apostles. Joel 2:28-32 is for Luther a prophecy of the Day of Pentecost. In this connection Luther asserts: "You see, it is the custom of the prophets that when they have declared that prophecy for which they have been sent, they put aside what has taken place after the revelation of their prophecy and immediately go on to prophecy about Christ. Although all were sent to announce some temporal punishment, yet they would always connect something about Christ to it too (pp. 105-106). The Old Testament prophets proclaim the Gospel, which also includes justification by faith. He finds evidence for the Trinity in the plural of the Hebrew word *adonim*. Of the latter word for God, he writes: "This is the way it appears in

the Hebrew. It indicates the mystery of the Holy Trinity and it is used for the sake of reverence, because God is Lord of all lords," (p. 394).

As these lectures from Hosea to Malachi are read, one will find that the Wittenberg Reformer emphasizes the dual message of law and promise, wrath and mercy. After the calamities which will come on both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, there will come a better day when the Church of Jesus Christ will be established.

Raymond F. Surburg

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION, INTERLINEAR GREEK-ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT. THE NESTLE GREEK TEXT WITH A LITERAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION. By Reverend Alfred Marshall. With a Forward by Canon J.B. Phillips. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 1027 pages. Cloth. \$10.95.

In 1958 Samuel Bagster and Sons Limited of London published *The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, The Nestle Greek Text with a Literal English Translation* (Second Edition) by Reverend Alfred Marshall, D. Litt., with a foreword by the Reverend Prebendary J.B. Phillips together with a marginal text of the Authorized Version of the King James. Now 18 years later Zondervan Publishing House is taking over the various Bibles and Biblical helps of the British company and publishing these reference books of Samuel Bagster together with some other titles. Biblical students ought to be grateful to the Grand Rapids publishing corporation for making available some excellent helps for the study of the Bible in the original languages of both the Old and New Testaments.

Instead of using the King James Version as the marginal text Zondervan has employed a recent translation known as *The New International Version*. The Greek text of the 1958 and 1976 editions is the 21st edition of the Nestle text, for which Marshall has given the interlinear translation. *The New International Version of the New Testament*, first published in 1973, is a completely new translation made by scholars who used a Greek text which was eclectic and not that of Nestle. Where manuscripts differ the translating scholars made a choice of reading which they were convinced was in harmony with sound principles of textual criticism. There were places where the translators were uncertain as to what constituted the original text; such places are noted in the footnotes.

In the foreword Canon J.B. Phillips makes a statement that is worth repeating: "Naturally, to any Christian these are the most important documents in the world. If we believe with our adult minds that we live on a planet visited by God Himself in human form, the record of His life and teaching and that of the movement which He began are of supreme importance to the entire human race. Anything therefore which makes the significance and relevance of the Personal Visit clearer to the reader is to be welcomed with open arms" (p. i). Regarding Marshall's translation efforts Phillips declares: "Dr. Marshall has obviously done this work of putting the nearest English equivalents to the Greek words with great care and skill and his work should prove of the highest value to any student of the New Testament."

Marshall has prefaced his translation with a 14-page introduction in which he not only explains some peculiarities of Greek construction of which the ordinary reader might not be aware, but also gives rules which he followed in his translation activity. Marshall's "Notes on Particular Passages" should be read and studied. Phillips, no mean translator himself, speaks in high praise of the book under review: "In all, I have the greatest pleasure in recommending this book. It is timely because of the great contemporary interest in the New

Testament. And it is profoundly interesting because we have here combined in the most intimate fashion the results of a great deal of textual research and the interpretation of a scholar thoroughly familiar with the New Testament Greek" (p. iii).

Raymond F. Surburg

EPOCHS IN THE LIFE OF PAUL. By A.T. Robertson. Reprint, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1974. 337 pages. Index. Bibliography (not current).

So well was the volume on the life of Jesus received that Robertson published this one on the life of Paul. It is more scholarly than the first. It is well documented. He accepted the historicity of the Pauline corpus and believed that even the Pastorals are truly Pauline. He saw no contradiction between the hearing of Acts 9:7 and Acts 22:9 (p. 42). It was the historic Jesus of Nazareth who conversed with Paul on the road to Damascus (p. 47). "No one has the right to say that Saul had no knowledge of the historical Jesus" (p. 89). Robertson's synergism comes out in his discussion of Paul's conversion: "He surrenders on the spot and at discretion. There is no reserve" (p. 48). And Robertson was a Baptist when it came to baptism: "The use of 'wash away thy sins,' in Acts 22:16, in connection with 'baptize', cannot properly be insisted on as teaching baptismal salvation, since the Oriental symbolism often put the symbol to the forefront in descriptions when, as a matter of fact, the experience preceded the symbol in order of time" (p. 55). But Robertson could do battle with the negative higher critics: "The attempt has boldly been made to eliminate Paul's Epistles entirely along with the Acts of the Apostles. It is now possible to say positively that this attempt has failed. On the other hand, the majority of modern critics accept as genuine more Epistles of Paul than Baur did" (p. 64). The controversy between the followers of Ramsay and Lightfoot concerning the North and South Galatian Theories was fresh in the days when Robertson wrote this book. But he was not convinced of the South Galatian Theory. (See pages 111, 125, 144, 145, 201). Robertson in no way doubted Luke as an exact historian: "He brings a literary quality to the study of original Christianity, in the case of both Jesus and the disciples, that is extremely valuable. He is, in truth, the first church historian as Paul is the first Christian theologian" (p. 147). In his description of ancient seafaring, Acts 27, Luke is compared with Thucydides in grasp and power (p. 264). Robertson's brief discussions of the various epistles and his description of the character of the Apostle Paul are worth reading. The book is heartily recommended.

Harold H. Buls

WHOLLY HOLY. By Herb Brokering. Arts and Graphics by Charley Rosengren. Thirty-third Yearbook. Lutheran Education Association, River Forest, Illinois, 1976. 96 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

The Thirty-third Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association is quite different from all previous ones published. One thing may be said for certain about the last yearbooks published by the Lutheran Education Association: they represent first-hand evidence for the attempt by educators in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to change the whole philosophy of Lutheran Education as represented in earlier volumes of this series of yearbooks, as may especially be seen by comparing the 1959 yearbook on *The Lutheran Philosophy of Education*. (Or one may compare Jahsmann's *Whats Lutheran in Education?*)

Many of the readers of this book will wonder what this book is all about. The author opens his preface with these warning words:

This book is not for everyone. Some may find it conflicting with their own history of formal learning; not all will find it important to see learning in these twelve particular elements. Some may welcome the playful, childlike, humane, simplistic tone of the text. What will seem profane to one may be profound to another. What may seem secular to some may be sacred to others. What is trite to one is true to another.

The author has organized his book around the following twelve terms or concepts: serendipity, story, analogy, inquisitive, relate, scribble, space, time, ordering, symbols, history, and whole. For Brokering these constitute "a complete spectrum of imaginative learning. As these elements are experienced learning becomes more particular, extraordinary, joyful, holy. The specific becomes universal, the ordinary more wonderful, the physical more spiritual, the abstract more concrete, the profane more sacred, the old more new, and the whole more holy. There is an entire world in each of the chapters; there is a deep inner connection between any of these chapters" (p. 4). Each one of the twelve chapters is said to hold a rhythm. The theme of a chapter is presented by the use of a parable, a theoretical framework, a case story, and practical exercises.

Rich Bimler has written a two-page piece "about the book," designed to help the reader to understand what this yearbook is all about. He states: "Perhaps this book will raise more questions than answers. If so, the author would say: Amen!" Again Bimler informs the reader: "*Wholly Holy* presents a theory of language development which gets at the meanings of objects, images, and words. It views learning as the process of knowing; it treats learning as humane, physical, experiential. It sees learning happening in the same way to tiny tots, traying grandmas, and proud parents. And it sees that any kind of information is subject matter for the Church. Christ has bridged the gap between the secular and the sacred" (p. 3).

This reviewer disagrees with the way in which the author interprets the words used in the title of this book. The word "holy" is a word, if one examines the Biblical usage, which is applied first to God, who in His essence is holiness, and then by inference to those objects and persons dedicated to the Triune God. Life itself is not holy, because it is tainted with sin and some aspects are altogether sinful. The Bible distinguishes very clearly between the secular and the holy. The secular never becomes holy. The fact that the Word of God (a phrase studiously avoided by our author) says that Christians should do all to the glory of God does not permit designating all of life as holy. The church has a primary goal given it which is clearly stated in Matthew 28:20, namely, to evangelize the world by baptizing people and teaching them to observe all things commanded by Christ. This goal does not come through in this yearbook. Likewise, brokering uses the word "Gospel" very loosely and incorrectly. He shuns the expression "Word of God" and applies to the Bible the vague word "message."

There are many assertions which the author makes that must be challenged because they conflict with sound Biblical hermeneutics and pedagogy. He says, for example: "All the language of the church is a language of symbols. In all of it we are pointed to God. The immediate meaning of our words is not the ultimate meaning." What does that do for the certainty of Biblical teachings? Apply that to the command, "Take eat this is my body; take drink this is my blood!" Are these words just symbolical? What about the REAL PRESENCE? The same criticism could be made of other assertions in this book which flow from a philosophy of religious education not consonant with sound Biblical theology.

Raymond F. Surburg

EPOCHS IN THE LIFE OF JESUS. By A.T. Robertson. Reprint. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1974. 192 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

This is the first in a series of four reprints by Baker in the "A.T. Robertson Library." The remaining three volumes are about Paul, Peter, and John. EPOCHS IN THE LIFE OF JESUS were originally delivered as popular lectures at a summer camp in July 1906. The eight chapters dwell on eight periods in the life of Jesus. Robertson's attitude toward Jesus and Scripture comes to the surface early in the volume: "We drop out of sight as wilfully blind those who deny that Jesus ever thought that he was the Messiah, who even say that the Old Testament does not predict a Messiah" (p. 8). Robertson was adamant on the historicity of the Scriptures, the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ. Missouri Synod clergymen who had Dr. Arndt as a teacher remember that he was an admirer of Robertson. As one reads this one remembers Arndt quoting Robertson again and again. Arndt followed Robertson in considering John 5:1 as a reference to the Passover. Robertson saw no conflict between John and the Synoptics. Of course, Robertson was a loyal Baptist when it came to baptism. "Those that repented he (John the Baptist) immersed in the Jordan" (p. 15). "It was the coming of the Holy Spirit that constituted the anointing of Jesus, and not the baptism" (p. 18). That is true in itself but it reveals Robertson's view of baptism. Nor can one accept everything else that Robertson says. He allows for "the pressure of devilish suggestion on the mind of Jesus" as opposed to an objective visitation in the temptation (p. 19). He accuses the Pharisees in Luke 11 of having committed the unpardonable sin (p. 79). Jesus does not say they have committed the sin but rather warns them against it. Concerning the transfiguration Robertson says: "The miracle consists not in the glory, but in the presence of Moses and Elijah" (p. 112). But, by and large, much can be learned from this volume. Here are examples: "It is not forethought that Jesus here condemns, but anxiety. It is not work, but worry that wears out the machinery of life" (p. 68). "He will not turn back even to stay with a father till he die. This is what the expression 'Bury my father' means" (117). "'I am the light of the world' (John 8:12), he said, It is an astonishing saying, if one is not prepared to go to the full length of the deity of Christ, indeed otherwise an impossible saying" (p. 123). Concerning Luke 14-16, "We may thank the Pharisees for one thing. They furnished the occasion for the most marvellous parables in all the world" (p. 131). Concerning the resurrection narratives, "If one says that this is the after-reflection and theological interpretation of the disciples, one must recall the fact that the narratives tell unhesitatingly their own blunders, shortsightedness, lack of faith, difficulty of belief in the resurrection of Jesus" (p. 170). Though this book was written just seventy years ago this month it is easily worth the price.

Harold H. Buls

STUDES IN PAUL'S TECHNIQUE AND THEOLOGY. By Anthony Tyrrell Hanson. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1974. 329 pages. \$8.95.

The author, who is professor of theology at the University of Hull, first provides exegetical studies of Colossians 2:13-15; Romans 15:3 and other passages dealing with the reproach of the Messiah; the references to Abraham in Romans and Galatians; Romans 9:6-13; Galatians 4:21-5:1; Romans 11; and Romans 12:9-13:10 (in which Paul's use of rabbinic material comes to the fore). It is largely on the basis of the points made in these exegetical studies that Hanson then proceeds to write in a more general way about Paul's theology and method of

Old Testament interpretation. Hanson is a difficult writer, because one rarely knows where he is going. The reader does, however, often arrive in this meandering way at some very interesting corner of Hanson's mind where one bumps into a valuable exegetical insight, which can be fitted into one's own system of thought. We have always appreciated, moreover, the careful manner in which Hanson (in this book and his preceding ones), himself a critical scholar, distinguishes between critical theology and the theology of the New Testament itself. Consider this example of his self-awareness (pp. 234-235):

The view of inspiration held by the writers of the New Testament is one which we cannot accept today. As we have seen, attempts have been made to rehabilitate New Testament (or at least Pauline) views of inspiration. It has been suggested that Paul held a more flexible, open, charismatic view of inspirations than did those who were under the influence of Greek notions of divine inspiration, whoever we may put into this category. And it is true that various approaches to inspiration can be found inside the New Testament itself. As we have seen, Paul did not have exactly the same view of inspiration as did the author of 1 Peter. And he in his turn must be distinguished in this respect from the author of 2 Peter. But when all necessary distinctions have been made, every writer of the New Testament is far more like every other writer of the New Testament, and like every rabbi whose opinions have come down to us, as far as the question of inspiration is concerned, than he is like any modern scholar. We do not have the conception, as did all the ancient interpreters of Scripture, of one Spirit carefully directing and co-ordinating God's revelation in Scripture: so that it does not really matter as far as Paul is concerned whether a given utterance is attributed to Moses, or David, or Isaiah, or directly to the Holy Spirit. All is of equal value and authority. The whole conception of the inspiration of Scripture is one which suffers from considerable obscurity among modern scholars and there is a great deal of diversity of opinion. But nobody except the most extremely conservative evangelicals would espouse a conception of inspiration such as Paul held.

We must admit, however, to the existence of a number of points at which we cannot concur in Hanson's presentation of Pauline thought. The Hull professor, for instance, assumes that the apostle shows no knowledge of the tradition of Christ's virgin birth and, indeed, is inclined to think that Paul would have found no difficulty in assigning Christ a human father (pp. 89-90). It seems to us, contrariwise, that Paul, not only knew of the virgin birth from the *proto-evangelium*, Isaiah 7:14, the testimony of the earlier apostles, and Matthew's gospel (published, we feel, around 45 A.D.), but also refers to this doctrine in Galatians 4:4.

Judicius

THE MAKING OF A CHRISTIAN LEADER. By Ted W. Engstrom. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 214 pp. Cloth. \$6.95.

Effective leadership is a rare commodity, indeed. Good leaders are scarce and almost desperately sought after. And great leaders appear on the scene so infrequently that their effect upon people and movements cannot help but be as powerful as they are pervasive. *Time* featured a lengthy study on leaders and leadership phenomena in its July 15, 1974, issue, and published a sequel to that edition which coincided with the 1976 national elections. This subject is

of keen interest to members of the business world and to the institutions which turn out specialists in management and business leadership. Ted Engstrom, who has authored an examination of the issues from a Christian leader's viewpoint, has added his name to the list of those who have investigated and analyzed leaders of all kinds and the phenomena related to leadership. He has served as the Executive Vice-President of World Vision International and as President of Youth for Christ International.

The central purpose of Engstrom's work is to help the Christian leader get a clear idea of what he wants to be as a leader, and what he wants to *do* as a leader at the congregational level. The parish pastor will welcome this volume, inasmuch as there is a dearth of material which specifically addresses itself to this area of church life. While the target audience is congregational lay leadership personnel, there is a wealth of material that is directly applicable to pastoral responsibilities. There is a determined and successful attempt throughout this volume to keep in touch with Scriptural wisdom, admonition, and counsel. That is evidenced by its careful analysis of the characteristics of various Biblical leaders. Of those studied Nehemiah emerges as one of the Old Testament's most striking figures. If it can be said that leadership is, at bottom, the influencing of behavior, we find in Nehemiah an apt example of the leader. A too hasty coverage of the Pauline epistles is a bit disappointing, but that is not a serious detraction from an otherwise sensitive examination of the Bible's many references to leadership and leaders.

The book does not examine the rather extensive literature available from such recognized authorities as Likert, Bennis, Schein, Boulding, Argyris, or Blake. And that is a serious oversight. The consequence is that the reader is necessarily thrown back upon the gleanings of one man's experience. We nonetheless commend this book for use at the parish level. The "care and feeding" of Christian leaders in congregations has been too long neglected and this book takes a meaningful step in that direction.

Warren N. Wilbert

A GUIDE TO BIBLICAL PREACHING. By James W. Cox. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 142 pages. \$6.50.

Cox, who comes out of a Southern Baptist tradition, is professor of preaching at Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, KY. He writes as one who has had broad experience in the pastoral ministry. He identifies well with the Lutheran ideals of sound textual preaching using a good pericopic system. In this rather compact, short volume the author issues a summons to return to solid Biblical exposition and preaching. Cox is not content merely with exhortation but furnishes good advice as to the "how" of the sermon craft. In brief, succinct paragraphs he handles such topics as selection of text and interpreting the text (here the reader will find invaluable the fourteen questions that should be asked when working with a text, keeping in mind the needs of the hearer). There is an excellent chapter on various types of sermons with examples of outlines, with both type and outline flowing from and faithful to the Biblical text. The chapters on sentence structure and word use are also helpful. Of particular value is the section that deals with how to develop a point in fleshing out the outline.

In short, the preacher who feels that his technique has slipped, his skills dulled, and his sermon preparation become somewhat slovenly, will find this book of great benefit to sharpen those skills and up-grade his technique. One would, however, have appreciated a discussion of how to handle law and gospel in a sermon. On this point the book is glaringly deficient.

Norbert H. Mueller

I BELIEVE: A Study of the Three Universal or Ecumenical Creeds. By Bjarne W. Teigen. Lutheran Synod Book Company, Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota. 25 pages. \$1.00

Without frills, but with salient details accounted for, this pilot effort tells the story of the three ecumenical creeds. It launches a five-year study program under the auspices of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the "Small Norwegian Synod," Missouri's erstwhile (till 1963) partner in the Synodical Conference. Future studies in the series, covering the whole Book of Concord, are scheduled as follows: on the Formula of Concord, 1977; Smalcald Articles, 1978; the Small and Large Catechisms, 1979; and the Augsburg Confession and Apology, 1980. The format clearly has the average reader in mind, especially group study in the churches. The pages are folder-sized, double-column, punched, and obviously intended for insertion into a three-ring folder cover. Discussion questions for each of the eight chapters appear in an appendix.

Prof. Teigen taught the Confessions for many years before his recent retirement as president of Bethany Lutheran College and Seminary. In a lively, readable style he explains that these three creeds are the church's "fixed formulas summarizing the essential articles of the Christian faith," especially those which in early Christian history have been "under attack within the external church." Included are discussions of the historical background, content, and meaning of each creed. Select photographs of persons and places are added to make the workbook more attractive to the reader. There is much to commend in this initial study by Teigen; it augurs well for the rest of the series as a useful tool for discussion classes.

E.F. Klug

THE WALK, CONVERSATION AND CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. By Alexander Whyte. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1975. 340 pages. Cloth. No price listed.

This is a book of 35 sermons delivered by a Scottish Divine in a series of evening services at the beginning of this century. The sermons were originally published in Edinburgh in 1905. As one would expect from the title of the book most of the sermons are based on texts from the Gospels. These are a few of the impressions which the book leaves on a person: First, Whyte was a Calvinist who knew his Bible most thoroughly, both in the vernacular and in the original languages. He truly believed that the Bible is the Word of God and must be taken seriously. Secondly, this man must have been a very studious person. He constantly quotes authors both ancient and modern. Thirdly, he was interested in his parishioners and truly fed them when he preached. And, finally, his constant and main theme was the sinfulness of man and the grace of God in Christ. The book revives one's drooping faith and restores his confidence in the preaching of the Word. This man must have had a very vivid imagination. For example, in his sermon entitled "About Thirty Years of Age," the author speaks about the sorrows which Jesus must have experienced in his own home: "Does it not look to you as if His four brothers had all gone away to homes of their own by this time, and had left their widowed mother and her unmarried daughters dependent on her eldest son? Yes." (p. 79). He must have been a man who meditated much on Scripture and how Jesus read the Old Testament. Without denying the divinity of Jesus this preacher talks in one sermon about how Jesus must have found Himself in the Scriptures when he read Ps. 16 and Is. 53. It must be granted that sometimes he goes too far. For example, in his sermon entitled "Not Yet Fifty Years

Old," he reasons that when his enemies said, "You are not yet fifty years old," Jesus looked older than he actually was. That is an unwarranted conclusion and is not the point of the passage. But, by and large, these sermons will make you think about the Word and what it means for you. This preacher had a great gift of preaching the Gospel to the sorrowing sinner. It is a good book.

Harold H. Buls

ADULT EDUCATION. By Henry J. Boettcher. Vantage Press, New York, 1975. 151 pages. Cloth. \$4.50.

The name of Henry J. Boettcher ranks high in any list of twentieth-century contributors to Christian education. One of "Springfield's Venerable Fathers" this vital and still productive octogenarian retains a challenging, forthright, and Biblically-based viewpoint in addressing issues and problems in Christian education. His latest work, *Adult Education in the Parish*, still another evidence of his unflagging zeal and passion for excellence in education that is Christian, finds him characteristically engaged in probing soft-spots in parish activities. The nine major chapters of the book are really not so much inquiries into possibilities in adult Christian education as they are outlines for the study of topics that are of interest to adults of various ages. Consequently, one cannot expect that a preeminently "how-to" book will lay a thorough-going foundation for adult education. Although there are a few opening statements with regard to the discipline of adult continuing education, they are not documented with the same thoroughness as the theological thrust of the volume. But the author's goal, after all, is to get the congregation's adults back into the Word!

An outstanding chapter is "Marriage, Parenthood, Children, Youth, Parents: Philosophy and Study Guide." The author leads us through the four sections which comprise each chapter: (a) a section on orientation and scope of the unit; (b) the Bible readings which serve as the basis for the study; (c) a cursory statement on what others have said about the topic; and (d) an action section, which brings the central issues of the unit into sharp focus as adults apply what they have learned.

Warren N. Wilbert

THE ACT OF MARRIAGE. By Kim and Beverly LaHaye. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1976. Paper. 294 pages. \$2.95.

Marriages often perish for want of knowledge. This volume talks about sexual love in an informative, forthright, and chaste manner. "The art of mutually enjoyable love-making is not difficult to learn, but neither is it automatic. No one is a good lover by nature. . . . Yet no one need settle for a lifetime of sexual frustration."

The authors discuss not only the anatomy of man and woman, but also the psychological aspects of the sexual relationship of marriage. To a man, love-making satisfies his sex drive, fulfills his manhood, enhances his love for his wife, and reduces friction in the home. To a woman love-making fulfills her womanhood, reassures her of her husband's love, satisfies her sex drive, relaxes her nervous system, and gives her the ultimate experience.

The authors contend that the basis for frigidity in women and impotence in men is basically psychological. Frigid wives are often beset by ignorance, resentment, guilt, fear, and choleric dominance. Behind impotence in men often lie loss of vital energy, anger, fear, guilt, mental pressure, or feminine dominance. "Doctors, ministers, psychiatrists, and especially formerly impotent men believe that most impotence exists in the head—not in the glands" (p. 176).

The author is quite correct when he says that the missing dimension in too many marriages is the spiritual. A sex survey report of 3,377 people gives the reader an idea of attitudes towards sex and sexual mores of those who participated in the survey.

Henry J. Eggold

THIS FELLOW JESUS. By Louis Cassels. Warner Press, Anderson, Indiana, 1973. Paper. \$.95. 93 pages.

The author of this little book is a wire-service reporter writing for young people today. He writes as a journalist and what he has written is very readable. He considers the Gospels as true history and wants nothing to do with Bultmannian methods and doubt. He believes that what he reads in the Gospels truly happened. That is to his credit. The author has a winsome way and is sympathetic to a culture that has been filled with lies by so-called theologians who simply will not accept the historicity of the Biblical books and also deny the supernatural.

But we quote two paragraphs from the final pages of this book: "Throughout the world, people of all ages, and particularly the young, are rediscovering Jesus and claiming him as their guide to life. Best of all, they do not stop with reading and hearing *about* Jesus. They insist on getting to know him personally. And of course, that is just as possible today as it has been for all ages since the day of Pentecost. Through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, Jesus still dwells among men and women as guide, friend, and companion. There are many ways in which you can encounter him—or rather, become aware of the fact that he's always been beside you, waiting for you to recognize him and admit him into your life.

"Awareness of Jesus may develop through loving service to others . . . through the companionship of others who know him. . . through reading about him in the Bible and other books. . . through participation in the public worship and sacraments of the church. . . and especially, through prayer."

But if Cassels reads the remainder of this review he will likely classify the reviewer as an ossified theologian. Cassels has not led the young to Jesus through this book. Jesus himself said: "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Paul put it this way: "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." And Jesus said, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost," and again, "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many."

That is not to say that the author never says anything about what God, in Christ, has done for us. On pages 36-39, where he discusses love and the parable of the Prodigal Son, he speaks much of the love and forgiveness of God. But, according to Cassels, Jesus merely came to tell the good news. He says very little about the fact that Jesus gave Himself as a payment for our sins.

It must be said to Cassel's credit that he advises young people sanely about marriage, working within the establishment, and not falling into the trap of self-righteousness of which they accuse their elders. But Jesus is the incarnate Son of God. He is the God-man. Why? To save mankind from the guilt and power of sin, death, and the power of the devil. That message comes to us through the Word of God which works faith in the heart of the lost and condemned sinner. Faith is the work of God the Holy Spirit in man's heart. Jesus performed miracles primarily to prove that He was truly what He claimed to be.

Many individual items in this book could be criticized but we shall conclude by limiting ourselves to only one. On pages 39-43 Cassels discusses the parable

of the Good Samaritan. He rants and raves at the priest and the Levite. And thus he has missed the whole point. It is quite obvious from the context that Jesus spoke this parable to the lawyer to bring him to a true knowledge of himself. All men, including the reviewer and Cassels, are mirrored in the priest and the Levite. The lawyer was self-righteous. He was not a Christian. The parable should cause all of us to say: "Lord I have a loveless heart. I am a sinner. But I know and believe that you are my Savior. Forgive me." And He does. It is true, of course, that in this parable, as a secondary purpose, the Good Samaritan is a model of how men should love each other. But Jesus is always first and foremost the Savior of sinners: the reviewer, Mr. Cassels, the priest, the Levite.

Harold H. Buls

THE POWER OF THE KINGDOM. By W. A. Poovey. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1974. Paper. \$2.95.

The author states his purpose in the introduction: "This book is not a verse by verse commentary but rather a series of reflections on significant passages in the Gospel According to Matthew. These passages are grouped under five headings—the events of Jesus' life, his parables, the people he met, his miracles, and his teachings."

The book is well written. Poovey must be a lively preacher who can hold people's interest. The book contains many good things: "Jesus is the fulfillment of all that had been written before" (p. 14). "They worshiped Jesus and declared: 'Truly, you are the Son of God.' And this reaction is a key to all the miracles performed by Christ" (p. 103). In the first paragraph of Matthew 5:13-16 he asks this question: "Why are you saved? Why does God save anybody?" And his illustrations are often good. "You can't live on enthusiasm any more than you can live on cotton candy, no matter how good it may taste" (p. 19). "Perfection is the impossible dream for man. Try as we will, we fall short. We are like the book that was printed, claiming to contain no typographical error but the printer misspelled a word in his boast about perfection" (p. 111).

But one wonders at other things in the book. These days a reviewer must ask the writer what is his attitude toward the Word. Poovey tells us: "The gospels are missionary treatises, propaganda tracts, teaching aids to tell the church about the good news Jesus brought to man" (p. 7). With reference to Pentecost this: "Luke adds the words: 'Some, however, laughed it off. 'They have been drinking too much new wine,' they said' (Luke [sic] 2:13 Jerusalem Bible)" (p. 93). This sounds like the modern view of scripture.

Secondly, we have clear examples of synergism in this book. "We too can have the power of the kingdom but only if we are willing to yield our life to Jesus Christ" (p. 8). "God can change even the world's meanest man, if he will only give God a chance" (p. 44). "Like the other disciples, Matthew had to let loose if he would be part of Jesus' kingdom" (p. 60).

Thirdly, the reader will find traces of millennialism in this book. One example ought to suffice: "The healings of Jesus then are a taste of that kind of world. For a few moments people caught a glimpse of what life will be like when God takes complete charge of his earth. The healings performed by Jesus were an indication that the flaws in human society could be mended and that God intended to mend them" (p. 83).

And there are other assertions in this book which are just plain contrary to Scripture. "The first Palm Sunday was a failure. It was a Dead End Sunday" (p. 20). Jesus in Gethsemane, pp. 24-26, is pictured primarily as an example. The crucifixion of Jesus, pp. 27-29, is depicted as an example of love. On page 82 the fall of man is described as a "flaw." On page 121 the reader is told: "So

we love God by loving our fellow men." When the reviewer laid the book down he came to the conclusion that the book is not truly Lutheran. Despite the occasional insights which the book might give, it cannot be recommended.

Harold H. Buls

PREACHING FOR THE PEOPLE. By Lowell O. Erdahl. Abingdon, Nashville, 1976. Cloth. 127 pages. \$5.95.

This volume is a cleverly contrived dialogue between listener and preacher, written by one who listened as assistant professor of preaching at Luther Seminary and who is now senior pastor of University Lutheran Church of Hope, Minneapolis. He talks about the why, the what, and the how of preaching. Regarding the why of preaching, the hearer says: "I look for resources to live from and purposes to live for" (p. 11). Hence, the preacher seeks to affirm the listener's yearning for life by centering his message, not on man's goodness and activity, but on God's mercy and power.

The what of preaching is God's yes, God's no, and God's go. Says the hearer: "Don't just tell me to decide to be a better person or even to decide for Christ. Proclaim God's yes to me. Affirm the grace which makes faith, hope and love possible" (p. 22). Hence, we must preach the gospel. But the hearer complains: "You sometimes talk about the gospel without proclaiming the gospel" (p. 46). Therefore, we must remember that sermons are to be more than lectures about grace; they are to be means of grace in our lives. When preaching grace, we should avoid two evils: (1.) cheap grace ("I love to sin, and God loves to forgive"); (2.) conditional grace ("God will be gracious, if you repent"). Preach God's no. The law must be preached as confrontation so that the hearer will not live in a world of self-deception. The law knocks the props from under our idols. Preach God's go, sending men to the work they have been created to do. "Being loved not only obligates but enables us to love" (p. 44).

To the question, "How shall I preach?" Erdahl responds: Preach vital sermons characterized by clarity; use a direct, no-nonsense delivery; make the Biblical witness relevant. Erdahl's thoughts on Law and Gospel, pages 39-43, are excellent. I recommend the book as one that will give the preacher new zest for preaching.

Henry J. Eggold

SYMBOLS OF THE CHURCH. By David W. Thompson. Drawings by Lucille Van Deusen. Whittemore Associates, Needham Heights, Massachusetts. 64 pages. Paper.

This is one of a series of booklets published by Whittemore Associates that are especially good for lay people. This booklet contains drawings and descriptions of some of the important symbols of the Old and New Testaments. It also has symbols of birds, animals, and insects; symbols of the Trinity and each Person of the Godhead; symbols employed in the early church; symbols of the cross, the church, the holy apostles, the four evangelists, and the saints; symbols of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, and Easter. This little volume also contains symbols of contemporary design, variations of the cross, symbols used by Jesus in the Gospels, and symbols of the Christian soldier. It concludes with symbols of the sower and seed. An index enhances the usefulness of this informative booklet. It could be employed as a reference booklet in religious educational courses.

Raymond F. Surburg

Books Received

- COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS. By Martin Luther. Translated by J. Theodore Mueller. Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, 1976. 223 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.
- LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM WITH AN AMERICAN TRANSLATION TEXT. Leader Publishing Co., New Haven, Missouri, 1971. 229 pages. Cloth. \$2.95 for a single copy; \$2.54 each for 1-10 copies; \$1.95 each for 11 copies.
- SALVATION TOMORROW. By Stephen Neill. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 150 pages. Paper. \$3.95.
- THE FIRE OF LITTLE JIM. By William E. Hulme. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 158 pages. Paper. \$3.95.
- THINKING AND ACTING BIBLICALLY. By Charles F. Kemp. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 111 pages. Paper. \$3.50.
- A GUIDE TO BIBLICAL PREACHING. By James W. Cox. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 142 pages. Cloth. \$6.50.
- GOD, REVELATION AND AUTHORITY, Volume I. By Carl F.H. Henry. Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1976. 438 pages. Cloth. \$12.95.
- GOD, REVELATION AND AUTHORITY, Volume II. By Carl F.H. Henry. Word Books, Waco Texas, 1976. 373 pages. Cloth. \$12.95.
- THE SECRET SELF. By Orlo Strunk, Jr. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 110 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.
- WITH CHRIST IN THE SCHOOL OF DISCIPLE BUILDING. By Carl Wilson. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 336 pages. Paper. \$5.95.
- CHYTRAEUS ON SACRIFICE. By John Warwick Montgomery. Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis, 1962. 151 pages. Paper.
- PROPHECY. By Patrick Fairbairn. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 530 pages. Cloth. \$12.95.
- A SHORT HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH. By Harry R. Boer. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1976. 184 pages. Paper. \$2.95.
- FREEDOM AND GRACE. By J.R. Lucas. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1976. 138 pages. Cloth. \$7.95.
- THE CHURCH. By G.C. Berkouwer. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1976. 438 pages. Cloth. \$9.95.
- THE ART OF MANAGEMENT FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERS. By T.W. Engstrom and Edward R. Dayton. Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1976. 285 pages. Cloth. \$6.95.
- PROTESTANTS IN RUSSIA. By J.H. Hebly, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1976. 192 pages. Paper. \$3.95.
- RELIGIOUS INQUIRY. By Samuel Southard. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 127 pages. Paper. \$3.95.
- LOVE SPEAKS ITS VOICE. By Martha Whitmore Hickman. Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1976. 123 pages. Cloth. \$5.95.
- TOMORROW'S CHURCH. By John H. Westerhoff. Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1976. 130 pages. Cloth. \$5.95.
- JONATHAN EDWARDS THE YOUNGER: 1745-1801. By Robert L. Ferm. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1976. 214 pages. Cloth. \$7.95.
- BIBLICAL BACKGROUNDS OF THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT. By Georgia Harkness and Charles F. Kraft. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 208 pages. Cloth. \$7.95.
- CAPTAIN DUCKY. By S. Lawrence Johnson. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 125 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

- SOREN KIERKEGAARD. By Elmer H. Duncan. Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1976. 155 pages. Cloth. \$6.95.
- JESUS IS VICTOR! By Donald G. Bloesch. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 176 pages. Paper. \$5.95.
- INTRODUCTION TO PURITAN THEOLOGY. By Edward Hindson. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 282 pages. Cloth. \$8.95.
- THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH. By D. Douglas Bannerman. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 589 pages. Cloth.
- THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. By Henry Barclay Swete. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 417 pages. Cloth.
- LETTERS OF JOHN NEWTON. By John Newton. The Banner of Truth, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 1976. 191 pages. Paper. \$1.95.
- EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY. By A.A. Hodge. The Banner of Truth, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 1976. 402 pages. Paper. \$3.95.
- A PROFILE OF CHRISTIAN MATURITY. By Gene Getz. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1973. 185 pages. Paper. \$1.95.
- SINGLE AND HUMAN. By Ada Lum. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1976. 81 pages. \$1.95.
- BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT. By Lehman Strauss. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 125 pages. \$1.50.
- GO FREE. The meaning of justification. By Robert M. Horn. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1976. 128 pages. Paper. \$2.25.
- LOVE YOURSELF: Self-acceptance and Depression. By Walter Trobisch. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1976. 154 pages. Paper. \$1.50.
- THE COST OF COMMITMENT. By John White. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1976. 89 pages. Paper. \$1.95.
- LONELINESS: Understanding and Dealing With It. By Harvey H. Potthoff. Parthenon Press, Nashville, 1976. 125 pages. Cloth. \$5.95.
- THANK GOD I'M OK: The gospel According to T.A. By Richard A. Batey. Parthenon Press, Nashville, 1976. 112 pages. Paper. \$2.95.
- GETTING ALONG IN YOUR FAMILY. By Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. Abingdon, Nashville, 1976. 112 pages. Cloth. \$5.50.
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- IS THAT THE TRUTH, PASTOR? By Merle Lebahn. Vantage Press, New York, 1976. 50 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.
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- TO HEAL AND TO REVEAL: The Prophetic Vocation According to Luke. By Paul S. Minear. The Seabury Press, New York, 1976. 179 pages. Cloth. \$8.95.
- ROMANS: The Final Perseverance of the Saints. By D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 457 pages. Cloth. \$9.95.
- THE SERMON IN PERSPECTIVE: A Study of Communication and Charisma. By James Earl Massey. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 116 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.
- I BELIEVE IN REVELATION. By Leon Morris. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1976. 159 pages. Paper. \$2.95.
- CHRIST: OUR PATTERN AND PLAN. By John C. Whitcomb. BMH Books, Winona Lake, 1976. 16 pages. Paper. 50¢.

- THE BLESSED HOPE AND THE TRIBULATION. By John F. Walvoord. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 159 pages. Paper. \$2.95.
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- PREACHING WITHOUT NOTES. By Clarence E. Macartney. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 186 pages. Paper. \$2.95.
- POWER IN PREACHING. By W. E. Sangster. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 107 pages. Paper. \$1.95.
- THE CASE AGAINST TM IN THE SCHOOLS. By John E. Patton. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 100 pages. Paper. \$1.45.
- TM WANTS YOU: A Christian Response to Transcendental Meditation. By David Haddon and Vail Hamilton. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 203 pages. Paper. \$1.95.
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- THE DAY THE KING'S SON DIED: How to Be Born Again. By Clinton White. Cathedral Hill Publishing House, Lancaster, 1970. 26 pages. Paper. 25¢.
- ECUMENICAL AND PASTORAL DIRECTIVES IN CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE. By Massachusetts Commission on Christian Unity. Whittemore Associates, Needham Heights, Massachusetts.
- EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS AND THE GOSPEL. By Vernon Grounds. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 105 pages. Paper.

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- POET AND PEASANT. A literary-cultural approach to the parables in Luke. By Kenneth E. Bailey. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1976. 235 pages. Cloth. \$8.95.