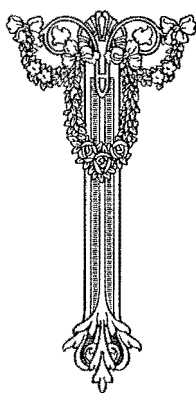


**PROCEEDINGS**  
OF  
**The Third Annual Convention**  
OF  
**The Norwegian Synod of the**  
**American Ev. Luth. Church**



Held at  
**Minneapolis, Minnesota**  
**1920**

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# THE ORGANIZATION AND ITS MEMBERS OF THE SYNOD

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The Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church held its Third Annual Convention in Fairview Lutheran Church, Rev. Chr. Anderson's charge, Minneapolis, Minn., June 4th to June 10th, 1920.

Rev. M. K. Bleken, Lawler, Iowa, preached the opening sermon on the text, Matth. 11:28-30.

## OPENING SERMON.

*Rev. M. K. Bleken.*

Dearly beloved in the Lord! Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ! Amen.

We have come here, a small group of men and women, from various parts of the country for the purpose of holding a church convention. The aim of our meeting is to be built up in Him, Christ Jesus, and to be established in the faith (Col. 2:7), and take counsel together concerning those things that pertain to our position and our work. We are not regarded as being of much account, it is true, but we ought not to seek after those things that count in the eyes of the world, neither will our meeting attract much attention, a thing which we do not deplore, since we have in mind only that which is pleasing to our Master.

Because our conscience has been bound by the Word of God, we have not been able to join the many who have united into a larger church body, but we will, as far as we are able, by the grace of God, continue the old Norwegian Synod and maintain its principles in doctrine and practice, because they are in agreement with the Word of God and the confessions of our Lutheran Church. This, we believe, we owe our God, our fathers who have labored, sacrificed, suffered and fought for those principles; this we believe, we owe ourselves and our fellowmen,

especially our own countrymen. This is the heritage, received from our fathers, that we feel in duty bound to preserve and transmit to others no matter what the cost. For it is not a matter of supreme importance to gather all those of Norwegian parentage into one great church organization, with utter disregard for the foundation upon which such an organization is built, but to do what is in our power that there may be one church body—large or small—among our countrymen, which is faithful to the scriptural and confessional principles of the Lutheran church. This is of paramount importance. This we have tried to do. But because we have tried to do this, because we would not yield and follow the others, we have called down upon ourselves the contumely and scorn of our adversaries, and many of us have had to suffer on that account. We have labored and we have been heavy laden. And we must beware lest we imagine that we shall have much else to expect in the future if we remain faithful.

Do we, then, come here as a discouraged lot—to bewail our position, because we have suffered, have been reviled, have not been able to get the recognition of the majority and because many even among those who consider themselves as our friends predict a dark future for us and the cause for which we stand? Far from it! But consolation and encouragement we may well need all of us. This we look for not among men, but where we are sure of finding what we seek, namely in the Word of God.

Let me, therefore, at the opening of our convention read such a word of encouragement and draw a lesson therefrom. May God by His Holy Spirit help us to take it to heart! Amen.

Matt. 11:28-30.

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

That which has taken place in our church these last years has called us to an earnest selfexamination: to search our own personal Christianity, our knowledge of sin, our faith in salva-

tion by grace alone, our obedience to and trust in the Word of God. We have asked ourselves: Do not we also share the guilt for what has transpired? Have we not been unfaithful many a time in our calling as watchmen on the walls of Zion? How much guilt have we not found! And our faith in the grace of God? How weak and feeble! And how little of the fruits of faith we have to show! And what of our obedience to the Word and our trust in its power and efficacy? Have we not been compelled to confess that we have been full of unbelief and hardness of heart to believe what Moses and the prophets have said? Under the stress of this sense of guilt we have labored and we have been heavy laden.

But we have not taken thought only for our own personal Christianity; we have been joined together with brethren in the faith in congregations and in a union of congregations into a church body that had for its object the proclamation of the Word of God in its truth and purity and the defense of the truth against all error. We had loved our church for the very reason that it took a firm stand and did not enter into compromises. Both friend and foe knew its standpoint. For this church also we had labored and sacrificed. Then the ties that had bound us together began to loosen, and the church body that we had loved was about to be destroyed. It was determined that it should be overthrown. The foundation on which it was built and the principles according to which it had worked were to be substituted for others that were more in harmony with the spirit of the times. Did not this move cause pain? Did it not cause keen sorrow, that we had to part with so many and that we could not walk together as before? We were in doubt, faint-hearted and discouraged. We labored and we were heavy laden. We turned hither and thither to seek counsel and guidance. And where did we find it at last? In Him who said: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden!"

And where did we find Him? Where did He meet us? In His Word, as it is written: "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above).

Or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the

word of faith which we preach." (Rom. 10:6-8). The Savior himself is in this word, there we find Him, there He speaks to us. When our sins have weighed heavily upon us and we have sought His face, have come to Him in His word, He has said to us: "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." (Ps. 34:18). "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Es. 57:15). This He does through the holy gospel which tells us that all our sins are blotted out by the blood of Jesus, and that His grace is sufficient for us. In the grace of God which is in Christ Jesus, we have found rest and peace. This has not failed; He has kept His promise. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

In Jesus I find rest and peace  
 The world is full of sorrow;  
 His wounds are my abiding place;  
 Let the unknown to-morrow  
 Bring what it may,  
 There I can stay,  
 My faith finds all I need to-day,  
 I will not trouble borrow.

And is not this the most important for each one of us? Of what should we, then, be afraid? Whom should we fear when we have free access to Him who so kindly invites us and has given us such precious promises? What, furthermore, has our Lord said when we have come to Him and sought His counsel in regard to our work as members of congregations and stewards of the mysteries of God, in regard to our work together in a church body? Has He said that if we are many, then we are right, but if we are few, then our cause is wrong? Or, if we are of no reputation in the eyes of the world, then we cannot accomplish anything, then we have no influence for good, but if we are looked up to, are honored and have a name among men, then we are able to accomplish great things and the future is ours? Where is that written? On the contrary it is written:

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6). And let us mark well the following passages: "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" (Joh. 8:31). "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Joh. 14:23. 24). These words are plain enough. If we take them to heart, we shall not ask whether we are few or many, if our future in the eyes of the world is bright or dark; but the great question will be: Do we rest in, continue in, and follow the words of our Savior? Of this we must be certain, that we obey His Word and speak as the oracles of God. If we do, then we have His promises that our labor shall not be in vain. For it is written again: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee" (Tim. 4:16). Considering this, it matters very little what men may predict about the future.

*"Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."* When we come to Him in His word, and accept this word as our sole guide, we have taken upon us His yoke. Then He has become our Master and leader, and we have become His disciples and followers and learn of Him. And we shall not want any other master or teacher, but will say with Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (Joh. 6:68. 69.) If we follow His guidance, we shall not go astray.

What master and lord would it be better to serve than Him? Those who teach doctrines of men become easily tyrants that oppress the conscience. If they get the power, they are overbearing, unmerciful and hard masters. Our Savior is meek and lowly in heart. We read how He received publicans and sinners and ate with them, how He received all the afflicted and oppressed, how He acted toward His disciples: patiently suffered their many infirmities, forgave their sins, did not become tired of them; but instructed them with all meekness and longsuffer-



ing. This shows how He is disposed toward all His disciples at all times, may He grant us grace to be likeminded with Him that we may be meek and lowly in heart in all our relations, withal firm in our adherence to His Word!

But must not those who thus come to Him, and follow His word, and learn of Him, suffer many tribulations? Yes, certainly! When we read in our text about His yoke and His burden, we are reminded of this. He has many times spoken about the afflictions that His disciples shall suffer in the world, and the nearer the end the worse will these afflictions become. The disciples shall suffer for His name's sake, because they will not deny Him and be ashamed of Him and His Word. "In the world ye shall have tribulation. Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice. Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." It cannot be otherwise. In view of this, how is it that He can say, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light?" The old Adam in us must die, the evil nature must be suppressed and our own will broken. The support that we are apt to lean on, must be taken away, that we may learn to trust in God alone. The cross and tribulations are necessary that this may be effected. On this account Christ puts upon His children a yoke, not because He wishes them evil but because He loves them and wishes them well. Therefore, the apostle James writes: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (1:2. 3.) And St. Paul: "But we glory in tribulations also: Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Rom. 5:3-5). Thus we see that we have no reason to be discouraged or fainthearted, but that we on the contrary ought to rejoice on account of the tribulations that we have experienced and with boldness meet those that our master may have in store for us.

*"And my burden is light."* It is not light for the old Adam in us, which shall die, but it is light for the new man that shall come forth and rise; for He that lays on us the burden gives us willingness and strength to carry it: *"And ye shall find rest unto your souls."* That is His promise. We do not seek the

things of this world, honor, fame, money and goods, peace and an easy life, but we seek rest for our souls, peace with God through the forgiveness of sins, a faithful guide, a patient teacher, something firm to lean on, something that will remain when all other things change and pass away. We find it all in Him who has said: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden." And all that He has to give is included in the promise: "And ye shall find rest unto your souls." Firmly believing on Him, let us hold that fast which we have, faithfully continue our labors and with a brave heart meet what God would have us meet. Then God will grant us rest and peace here and hereafter.

May God's blessings be upon us for Jesus' sake! Amen.

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Rev. Chr. Anderson extended greetings of welcome to pastors, representatives, and guests and expressed the hope that the Convention would be rich in spiritual blessings.

Rev. B. Harstad, the President of the Synod, thanked Rev. Anderson for the invitation and the good wishes, and called the Convention to order. He appointed a temporary committee on credentials consisting of Rev. H. A. Preus, Rev. A. J. Torgerson, and Mr. T. C. Satra, and the Convention adjourned until 2 P. M.

The afternoon session was opened with devotional exercises led by Rev. B. Harstad. The secretary read the names of the standing members of the Synod, and the secretary of the committee on credentials read his report. The President declared that the Third Annual Convention of the Norwegian Synod was opened in the name of the Triune God and invoked the blessings of the Lord upon its deliberations.

#### *Standing Members.*

Chr. Anderson, M. K. Bleken, G. A. Gullixson, L. S. Guttebo, E. Hanson, B. Harstad, J. Hendricks, H. Ingebritson, G. O. Lillegaard, J. A. Molstad, H. M. Olsen, H. A. Preus, J. A. Torgerson, L. P. Jensen, C. N. Peterson, J. J. Strand, J. E. Thoen, M. Fr. Wiese, P. A. Widvey, S. C. Ylvisaker, T. C. Satra, O. P. Tveden.

*Representatives.*

Chr. Anderson's Charge, Fairview Congregation: Thomas Heller, Albert Hanson.

2 G. A. Gullixson's Charge, St. Paul Congr.: Martin Gundersen, Erik Furuholmen.

3 E. Hanson's Charge, Center Congr.: Ole Thorson, K. J. Holstad.

4 E. Hanson's Charge, Scarville Congr.: E. K. Juveland.

5 B. Harstad's Charge, Parkland Congr.: T. C. Satra, Martin Pederson.

6 E. Hanson's Charge, Vor Frelzers Congr.: J. G. Sime, Vegger Gulbrandson.

7 J. Hendricks's Charge, Evanger Congr.: Knute Opheim, Ole Strom.

8 L. S. Guttebo's Charge, Vestre Koshkon. Congr.: Andrew Rein, Sam Teisberg.

9 J. Hendrick's Charge, Chester Congr.: Grunde Grundeson, J. E. Thoen.

10 H. Ingebritson's Charge, Lime Creek Congr.: John Forde, Martin Ludvig.

11 H. Ingebritson's Charge, Lake Mills Congr.: Ole Heglie, L. E. Ludvig.

12 J. Hendricks's Charge, Bethania Congr.: P. G. Tjernagel, L. E. Henderson.

13 J. Hendricks's Charge, Hartland Congr.: S. O. Nygaard, J. Thomas.

14 J. Hendricks's Charge, Milnor Congr.: John Mikkelson.

15 J. A. Molstad's Charge, St. Markus Congr.: Theo. Olson, Nikolai Nielsen.

16 H. M. Olsen's Charge, Our Saviors Congr.: Erik Onstad, E. N. Edwards.

17 H. A. Preus's Charge, St. Luke Congr.: O. C. Hovland, John Olsen.

- 18 J. A. Torgerson's Charge, Somber Congr.: K. L. Hagen, H. S. Hansen.
- 19 J. A. Torgerson's Charge, Shell Rock Congr.: Jens Spilde.
- 20 J. A. Torgerson's Charge, Joice Congr.: H. Hammers, A. T. Huso.
- 21 Zion Ev. Luth. Congr., Marshfield, Ore., E. G. Mellem.

*Delegates.*

Richland Congr., Thornton, Ia.: H. P. Petersen and Søren Petersen.

*Advisory members.*

E. B. Ellingson, Parkland, Wash.; B. Knutson, Nicollet congr.; Ole O. Vaala, Little Turkey congr.; Oscar Pederson, Fairview congr.; Ole K. Singelstad, Simon Stene, E. K. Tysen, N. Singelstad, H. H. Rasmussen, P. J. Dahle, Lime Creek; O. K. Teisberg, Stoughton, Wis.; Nils Larson, Deerfield, Wis.; Knute Teisberg, Elsworth, Wis.; Christ Crogen, Soldiers Grove, Wis.; H. Quamme, Mt. Sterling, Wis.; B. Knutson, St. Peter, Minn.; A. I. Martinson, Scarville, Ia.; B. M. Holt, Barnesville, Minn.; Rev. H. J. Strand, Rev. J. A. Thorson, Rev. E. Mortenson, St. Paul, Minn.; Rev. H. W. Prange, Minneapolis, Minn.; Rev. M. Thorson, River Falls, Wis.; Rev. F. L. Oberschulte, St. Paul, Minn.; Rev. C. Bramscher, Detroit, Minn.; Rev. E. A. Schuett, Crookston, Minn.; Rev. F. J. Seltz, St. Paul, Minn.; Rev. O. M. Gullerud, Princeton, Minn.; O. A. Thorson, East Grand Forks, Minn.

*Excuses.*

Late arrival: Rev. P. A. Widvey. Left before close: J. J. Strand, G. A. Gullixson, O. M. Gullerud. Absence: O. C. Hovland and J. E. Olsen, St. Luke's, Chicago, Ill.

*Guests and Visitors.*

Victor Overn, Mrs. Hans Gulbrandson, Mrs. A. G. H. Overn, Olga, Luella and Annette Overn, Albert Lea, Minn.; Mrs. O. P. Tveden, Buxton, N. D.; Mrs. O. C. Grande, Cottenwood, Minn.; H. A. Halvorson, Hanna Ottesen, Decorah, Ia.; Mrs. J. A. Moldstad, Mrs. Geo. O. Lillegaard, Chicago, Ill.; Mr. and

Mrs. T. Ellingson, Albert Ellingson, Fairbault, Minn.; Ottis Storby, Lake Mills, Ia.; Elmer Storby, Leland, Ia.; Elmer Stensrud, Bennet Ludvig, Mrs. P. J. Dahle, Inga Ludvig, Inger and Josie Honsey, Mrs. H. Ingebritson, Nilsine Ludvig, Edna Johnson, Ingeborg and Sarah Stone, Anna Tyssen, and Mrs. O. K. Singelstad, Lime Creek, Ia.; Trine Samuelson, Menomonie, Wis.; Mrs. T. C. Satra, Parkland, Wash.; Mr. and Mrs. A. Abrahamson, Princeton, Minn.; Mr. and Mrs. L. Madson, Laura and Mary Madsen, Aslak Anderson, M. Brynteson, N. Nilson, Helga Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Johnson, Bertha Anderson, Mrs. O. M. Gullerud, Mrs. O. Viste, Martin Viste, Princeton, Minn.; S. Sanderson, Ruthton, Minn.; A. C. Hoyord, Scandinavia, Wis.; H. Sande, Mrs. S. S. Hanson, Annie and Caroline Anderson, Ingeborg Hanson, Mrs. E. K. Juveland, Mrs. Emil Hanson, Scarville, Ia.; Thos. Joitil, Alex Hauglie, Stoughton, Wis.; Mrs. K. L. Hagen, Maria and Kaia Hagen, Mrs. Dina Torgerson, Mrs. Ida Levorson, Esther and Geneva Mellem, G. A. Lee, Mrs. A. L. Nostrum, Laura Ingebritson, Mrs. Mathilde Ingebritson, Edna Hopperstad, Agnes and Dagny Torgerson, Pastor Torgerson's congregation; N. P. Ode, Westburg, Minn.

*Congregations admitted as members.*

1 Our Saviors Congregation, Madison, Wis.;<sup>2</sup> Chester Congregation, Oklee, Minn.;<sup>3</sup> Evanger Norw. Ev. Luth. Congregation, Fertile, Minn.;<sup>4</sup> Hartland Congregation, Hartland, Minn.; Bethania Congregation, Story City, Ia.;<sup>5</sup> The West Koshkonong Church, Wis.

The following congregations have adopted the constitution of the Synod: Fairview Congr., Minneapolis; St. Paul's Congr., Chicago; St. Mark's Congr., Chicago; Parkland Congr., Parkland, Wash.; The West Koshkonong Church, Apr. 18, 1920; St. Luke's, Chicago, May 9, 1920.

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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Venerable Synod!

Grace and peace in the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

We deem it a great blessing and a source of enjoyment to be permitted once more to gather together for mutual devotion, counsel and encouragement from the word of God. We need not labor now under the constant dread of something being brought up, against which we must protest or which we can consent to only with doubting hearts. We all agree in abiding sincerely by the truths of the gospel and in speaking only as the oracles of God.

Because of the circumstances under which we labor, we miss so many to-day with whom we were wont to assemble in former years. This fact oppresses our hearts and fills us with sadness and regret; for we are certainly made to feel the lack of all those things, which to-day are considered so necessary for the successful accomplishment of any great task. We are only a handful, lacking in prestige and in the advantages of being honored by many. We have no property, nor do we receive any consideration from the world. On the contrary, we are continually made to feel that the hands of all are turned against us, and that our hands are turned against them. Before we are aware of it, thoughts and questions steal upon us, of how we may become stronger in numbers and in the estimation of men, and how we may avoid all controversies.

My dear friends, this is a serious matter. Is it the flesh or is it the spirit that fosters such ideas? Every one needs to make up his mind clearly on this question. If we are negligent in this respect, we may easily be caught in secret snares. When we must admit that we are by nature just as vain and sensitive as other human beings, that we enjoy to live at ease, and that we value as highly as others the company of good friends, influence and a good reputation among men, then it is to be feared that it is the old Adam who suggests such thoughts as these, in order to draw our hearts from the Lord. Right here we must be on

our guard, watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation. This applies not only to us as pastors, but to all fellow believers as well. Even more than Moses, do we require the assistance of our brethren to stand by our side and support our arms. Exod. 17, 12.

It is well that we are familiar with the revealed articles of faith, and that we have the courage to defend them. But this is not sufficient. Much more is required. In order to be well equipped as firm and resolute witnesses in these peculiar times, it is necessary to know, from whence our aid must come as well as, where we must not seek it, even though this may be contrary to our human reason. We learn this from our Lord's instructions to His disciples just before He departed from them. Let us take warning from the actions of the Apostles before the day of Pentecost.

They all had agreed with Peter in making this confession: "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." John 6, 68. 69. And yet they cherished erroneous ideas of the Kingdom of God. Neither did they believe the Resurrection of Christ, even though Peter had bitterly deplored the denial of his Savior. Humanly speaking, they were in number and prestige as destitute as we are.

But how did the disciples gain a better knowledge and greater courage? This the Holy Spirit has shown us in the Gospel to St. John Chapters 14—16. In these chapters we find our Saviour's painstaking instruction and His answers to our many doubts and questions. He promises to furnish all that they need. He strengthens and animates the irresolute disciples to go out into the world with the gospel of the Kingdom. Let us diligently meditate upon this last instruction and heart to heart talk of our Lord with His disciples. It is the Royal speech of the heavenly Majesty to His ambassadors. Here they receive information both in regard to the source, from which they must seek guidance for their work, and in regard to the preparation necessary, in order to become true witnesses as well as to be able to endure the inevitable consequences of their testimony, namely cross and persecution from the world at large.

The Lord had often given them instruction regarding His Kingdom and the importance of His work of salvation. And yet, though they believed on Him, they were still, even after His resurrection, grooping about in spiritual darkness, entertaining false ideas about the nature of His Kingdom, and dreaming of temporal power of honor. At one of the last manifestations of the Lord, just before He ascended into heaven, they asked this question: "Lord wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" The question shows that they even now expected a restoration of a temporal kingdom, in which they might enjoy many advantages, very much as we now may dream of better prospects for the future. But the Lord rejects their question. However, He gives promise of help, though this help will be of quite a different nature from what they had expected. He says: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Acts 1, 6—8.

After the last Supper, in the night in which He was betrayed, the Lord spoke at length to His disciples, and — to use the words of Luther — "showed upon them abundantly all that sincere and sublime consolation, which all Christians now possess, and which every one should seek, when in grief and distress. . . . But this is not written (John Ch. 14—16,) for their sakes, but for ours, in order that we may learn to apply this consolation to ourselves in present and future needs, and in order that every baptized Christian, who has resigned himself into the hands of Christ, may learn to submit patiently to such tribulation, knowing for certain that he also shall experience fears and anxieties which will render him faint-hearted and despondent, whether this be caused by one or more kinds of enmity and opposition."

Let us listen to a portion of this glorious instruction. Among many other beautiful things the Lord speaks as follows: "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye



know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave you, my peace I give unto you... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast out as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hateth you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which precededeth from

the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I have told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

Here the Lord teaches us many glorious things, both about the essence of the Triune God, and about His presence with and dwelling in all those who actually keep His words. He has certainly not omitted anything, which His disciples needed to know, and from which they may gather help and support.

He promises to give them the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. But this Comforter is not to bring any new revelation. He is to testify of Christ and glorify Him by bringing to their remembrance and explaining to them that which Christ had spoken, while He was still with them. We find nothing in these words,

which in any manner would indicate, that there should be any co-operation between the world and the Kingdom of Christ. Neither did St. Paul receive any such instruction from the Lord. He rather warns against such an idea, when he writes to the Corinthians: "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." 1 Cor. 1, 21.

Imagine for one moment the idea of James in Jerusalem, together with the Scribes and Pharisees, instituting a drive for funds to be used for the purpose of reconstructing the kingdom of Israel! Or of the apostles delegating Peter to establish headquarters in Rome, from which he, in conjunction with the government of the great empire, might reform the world! How sad, that many Christians of today are misled into countenancing things similar to this!

The Lord's promise of sending the Comforter was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was revealed in the form of tongues of fire, which came upon each of the apostles assembled. The Spirit served them by bringing to their remembrance all that the Lord had spoken to them, and, moreover, by giving them the very words, which they were to speak and write. For the Apostle says: "Now we have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not with words which human wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." 1 Cor. 2, 12, 13.

And the Lord has promised that not one jot or one tittle of this revelation shall ever pass away. Matt. 5, 18. Thus, according to the will of God and the working of the Spirit, the Scriptures teach us with infallible divine words the whole counsel of God unto our salvation. By this word alone we must abide. We should not seek any other help and consolation than this — to be *one* with our Savior in spirit and in truth, and to be content in this union, which is maintained by the working of the Spirit through the means of Grace.

But are we then actually well content in this alone, that we know that we are in the presence of God and enjoy His grace,

without seeking any assistance from our own conduct or that of other men? If we are, then we will not only, through faith and confidence in the word of God, work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, but we will also testify with strength and courage, as living witnesses, to the truth so that no one can justly say, on the day of reckoning, that we in any point have concealed or suppressed the truth for the sake of obtaining peace and of gaining the friendship of men. This we must do in order to be saved, whether anyone will follow us or not.

But it is by no means pleasant to take up such a position. We therefore confess: "To dissent from the agreement of so many nations, and to be called schismatics is a serious matter. But divine authority commands all not to be allies and defenders of impiety and unjust cruelty." (Schmalcald Articles 346. Jacobs', Book of Concord.) Thus we must stand, in order to preserve the prize which has been graciously entrusted to us.

Many tell us, that we may well retain our faith and doctrine, according to our hearts desire, if we will only associate with them peacefully and in brotherly love. They ask us, if it is not possible that we may be mistaken, or if we imagine, that we have a monopoly upon the truth etc.

To this we answer: "The Lord says to us, as well as to all those who wish to be guided by His Spirit alone: 'Ye also shall bear witness;' i. e. proclaim the truth in the same manner, as the Holy Spirit declares it in the Scriptures." It is not only possible, that we may be mistaken, but in many things, it is an accomplished fact, that we do err. But for this very reason, is it so exceedingly important that we hold fast so scrupulously to every word of Scripture, because God alone does not err. We ask therefore in turn: "Why do you not live with us peacefully and in brotherly love, confessing the same truths with us now, as you did formerly?"

The light of the word of God must be kept unobscured by human inventions. Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Therefore does the Lord add this warning: "Beware of false prophets." Matt. 7, 14. 15.

Uncertainty, lukewarmness and liberalism are dangerous, because in their wake follow several injurious things. He who does not lay the greatest stress on man's spiritual life in faith, on heartfelt enjoyment of God's unbounded grace and gifts, on forgiveness of sins, on life and salvation by faith without the deeds of the law, will not feel any special desire to be deeply concerned with the doctrine of God's essence, attributes, grace or means of grace, but he puts most stress on co-operation in externals. Conventions and discussions are occupied mostly with practical things, man's own undertakings, often very common worldly enterprises, that are sometimes praised as Christian works of charity. Definite expounding of scriptural doctrines is frequently not desired, because that would cause trouble and show disagreement in doctrine. Is such church-work anything else than popular worship of strange gods?

A tendency of this kind makes the church worldly, especially when it is accompanied by a desire to seek the help of the world, whether it be the help of science, of great men, of popular opinion, or of the state.

That such a tendency brings great harm, we ought to have learned by this time, both from the history of the church and of the world in our day. The one suffers from scepticism or doubt and gross rationalism, while the other has accepted the doctrines of socialism, anarchism and bolshevism. Under such circumstances brotherly admonition and exhortation are neglected by pastors and the members of the church.

Our synod has long since set forth the principles of church discipline according to the word and will of God. May they soon again be made effective among us in word and deed!

Another fruit of this radical fault is this that people vie with each other in gathering in many into the congregation, as if it were the main object to have many people register their names in the external organization and contribute money to it. Even Lutheran congregations receive as members of the church persons who belong to societies that worship other gods and not Christ. They accept them in the vain opinion that they thereby shall be made disciples of Christ, while among earnest Christians the act of receiving a person as a member of the church

signifies a mutual recognition of faith and principles. Before admission into the church, the applicant should be thoroughly instructed with regard to the confession, the object and means of the congregation, so that both parties may know whether or not they can work well together for the maintenance and enjoyment of the blessings of the word and sacraments. No one should be tempted to halt between two opinions. 1 King. 18, 21.

Our synod has also witnessed a good confession against the ungodly secret societies. This testimony we should reaffirm, and let us thank God because our stand in this matter is so well known that we are hardly ever requested to conduct services together with those who teach falsely. We will stand by Mr. B. M. Holt in his testimony against secret societies, and we hope that he, in our sainted Rev. O. T. Lee's place, will serve us with reliable information on this vital question.

Unionistic, wordly church policy often plays a sad part in the calling of ministers. Then the question is not so much whether the candidate can rightly divide the word of truth and deliver plain, instructive sermons, that aim at the heart, without shooting above the mark. But the question is mostly: is he a gifted speaker, who can associate with all kinds of people, without offending anyone; will he accept a call on trial or for a certain length of time, or a call that may be terminated at a few months' notice on the part of congregation or pastor, etc.? In all such cases the calling of a pastor is degraded to a more or less clever church-political business affair, without the earnest supplication that the Lord would show whom he had chosen, Acts 2, 24. The unction of the Spirit is needed if a pastor shall venture, like Peter on that first Pentecost, to speak about the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" and wield the twoedged sword of the Lord, that the unbeliever may be pricked in his heart, while the troubled and believing hearts get strength and encouragement. Then he will also like Peter dare to say to his kinsmen and friends: you have by unbelief and wickedness crucified the Lord Jesus Christ. Repent, every one of you, and receive by faith the forgiveness of sins in His name.

Another seemingly insignificant matter you will permit me to call your attention to. According to my opinion it is commendable that there in a congregation exists a Ladies' Aid, a

Young People's Society and a church choir; also that the Sunday School teachers regularly meet their pastor for consultation, for he is responsible for the feeding of the lambs also. But when there exists a Young Men's Society, a Young Girls' Society, and a Men's Society, and each one of these has its different purpose and time of meeting, then it is a grave question, whether or not there is danger of dividing up and scattering the interest and efficiency of the working members in such a manner that the unity in the bond of peace is not strengthened, but rather weakened by varying objects and interests, that sometimes may come in conflict with each other. When to this is added the fact that the minister, as a rule, is expected to attend and aid each of them, then I must ask: is it possible for him to do all this? If he tries to help them all, when shall he find time and strength to study his Bible and articles of faith, as his ministerial promise demands, and to prepare his sermons, funeral addresses, and visit the sick? Will not such a course soon ruin the pastor, or his sermons, or both? Will sensible Lutheran congregations endorse such un-Lutheran tendencies in the church work?

I think the object of the Ladies' Aid is edification and entertainment; and the object of the young people is to develop home talent and provide entertainment and appropriate sociability in the presence of at least some of the parents. If any of these societies receive outsiders as members and institute lecture courses with non-Lutheran lecturers, then questionable things may easily be brought up that do not gather but scatter the flock of the divinely called and therefore responsible shepherd.

Dear friends, let us all, young and old, be on guard against all kinds of dangers. There is an old Roman axiom, which is said to be the motto of Satan, namely this: "divide et impera," i. e. "divide, scatter and rule". The Lord graciously preserve us from such a calamity.

In our little synod there are several things, that should fill us with joy and for which we will thank God.

To my knowledge the pastors and congregations have during these years labored earnestly, diligently and in harmony. The good seed has been sown in the hearts of many, and it shall not return void, but shall accomplish that for which it was sent.

One of the most encouraging things that I can imagine, is this that our Albert Lea congregation has resolved to establish next fall an American Lutheran parochial school. The Lord bless and prosper this great enterprize and keep the congregation from becoming tired. Such an undertaking is the most important mission that can be imagined. Would to God that many churches soon could follow this encouraging example. If we do not do it, a great and serious responsibility will rest upon us. For we cannot excuse ourselves by saying that we have no means. We are so fortunate that we need not be anxiously concerned about building seminaries and colleges. Well equipped institutions of both kinds we have easy access to through the kindness of our German Lutheran brethern. Our college is now Concordia College at St. Paul. At this institution our professor, Dr. S. C. Ylvisaker, has this last year successfully labored among many students. He will bring his report on this matter. Orthodox seminaries and normal schools are also open to us as if they were our own.

But we must also see to it that our young people who desire a higher education do not need to attend Christless High Schools. In many respects the conditions there are horrible and more dangerous than we now believe. For the purpose of establishing really Lutheran High Schools we will in my opinion do best in joining "The National Lutheran Education Association". More information may be brought concerning this, if the Synod so desires.

In this way we can with comparative ease devote our efforts to the establishment of good parochial schools, and we are not compelled to leave it to the state to bring up our children without a single word of God. The Lord has commanded us to bring them up in the nature and admonishment of the Lord. Eph. 6, 4.

Our "Evang. Luth. Tidende and Sentinal" has, to my mind, solved its problems well and it is large enough. I do not believe, that a weekly should be looked upon as a book of devotion. For this purpose the Bible, the Catechism and the hymnbook should be used. A church paper should contain choice articles on doctrine and on the defense of the truth, as well as instruction con-



cerning dangerous tendencies of the times, besides reports of our work.

It is well that we have made a start toward a book concern. But even here we must walk on a narrow path. For we cannot offer bad books or the like for sale, even though money could most quickly be made by such business. As we must beware of false prophets, so also we must avoid bad books and other useless things. It is earnestly to be desired, that we could all work diligently to accomplish this that every family in our churches procure a family library and use it daily. This should at least consist of the Altenburger Testament, the Book of Concord and Luther's Smaller Catechism, one of Luther's postils and our hymnbook, besides the books of instruction for our children. We would accomplish a great service to the church if our book concern, together with Concordia Publishing House, could publish the Altenburger Testament in English and get the above mentioned collection circulated and read. In my opinion, no other book of family devotion can be compared with that Testament. There we have the text, helps to understand and apply it, together with beautiful little prayers. Do not other devotional books for the family provide too little text and too much talk?

It is also encouraging to perceive how many earnest people there are who wish to abide by the truth and stand firm on the principles such as they were confessed and practised in the Norwegian Synod. Such people seek our help. We are then placed in a difficult position where we may easily stumble.

According to God's word, 1 Pet. 3, 15, we must be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us, but we must not become busybodies in other men's matters. 1 Pet. 4, 15. In cases where our help is asked, we seek to find out, for what reason complaints are made against the conditions in their church. If we find that the complaints concern only immaterial things of a personal and selfish nature, that do not wound a conscience bound by the word of God, then we advise not to cause trouble on such account. But if anyone complains for reasons that cause trouble of conscience, such a person is advised to endeavor earnestly from love of God and the church, to have the congregation repent of the sinful and offensive thing, whether this concerns doctrine or public

practice. If repeated admonition of pastor or congregation or both is without avail, then we with a good conscience advise to withdraw from such a church, in order not to be an accomplice or to be responsible with the others for the evil things. When this has been done, then we serve that person with the means of grace. This is not acting as a busybody in other men's matters, but simply professing the truth and giving reason of the hope that is in us. 1 Pet. 3, 15.

If churches are closed against us and distribution of property by arbitration is denied us, let us rather lose all than file a complaint in court. Let it go. Or shall we, besides losing our part of the property, spend precious time and money on a court case, that very likely will only bring new disappointment?

We must never forget, that we with our faith and confession have human reason and all that is considered great in the world against us. Let us therefore take to heart the following words of Dr. Martin Luther: "In this manner faith must be exercised, be tempered and hardened, even be drawn through the fire as the gold. For faith, that precious gift and treasure of God, must break forth and become sure to me, to God, to all angles, devils and the whole world, that it is right. Now then, with my confession I must bring upon me the devil death and the whole world, kings and princes, popes and bishops, priests and monks. for by faith all that is rejected, which human reason can invent or ever has invented unto salvation; and all the mockery of the world must be denounced and faith alone praised as the true treasure. This the world cannot tolerate, but breaks in, murders and kills and declares, it is better that one die than that the whole people should be destroyed, as Caiaphas, the High Priest, says, Joh. 11, 50. Thus the confession must break forth, that God alone is the savior. This confession destroys us then, as the Lord goes on to say: "they shall exclude you from the synagogues and kill you." The cross must not be portrayed otherwise than it is done here, for this is its true color. It is a golden cross when we are persecuted and killed by contempt in such a manner that they that persecute us gain applause, praise, right and honor on their side, while we on our side have only shame, dishonor and blame in the eyes of the world which in this manner would defend the honor of God, so that all the world says

that we receive our just deserts, and that God, the Scriptures and all angles are against us. Here, no one must complain or demand any right, but to be condemned and brought out of the way in disgrace. Thus also the most dishonorable and ignominious death was inflicted on Christ. He was hanged between two thieves and robbers; he was considered a chief criminal, and it was said in scorn: he called himself the son of God, let Him deliver him now if He will. There God and all angles must be against him. In a similar manner he speaks to us here: they shall kill you, not outright, but with dishonor, so that the world will say that they did God a service. Now this is a hard thing, to remain steadfast still and confess that God is gracious and a savior against the world, against falsehood and fraud. Very well! Let it be as hard and painful as it will, the truth must be confessed, if we would fare well." May God grant us His grace.

Respectfully,

*B. Harstad.*

## DOCTRINAL PAPERS

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### DIFFERENCES AND CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

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In answer to the question: "How does God show men the way to salvation?" we have been instructed to say: "By His Word." That is a correct answer according to the Scriptures. That agrees with the teaching of Jesus, who refers the brothers of Dives and all of their contemporaries to the Old Testament Scriptures: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." Luke 16, 29. That is the teaching of the prophets. Isaiah 34, 16: "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his Spirit it hath gathered them." Psalm 119, 195: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 19, 8: "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." That is also the teaching of the apostles. 2 Timothy 3, 14—17: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Peter 1, 19—21: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

It is of the utmost importance that we uphold this truth. In all things pertaining to our faith and life there is but one author-

ity to which we dare bow, and that is the infallible Word of God. All other writings, such as the public confessions, theological works, collections of sermons and devotional books, may be of great help and importance, but they must all be subordinated to the Holy Scriptures. That has been the position of the Lutheran Church, and that, by the grace of God, is still our position. In the Formula of Concord, Part I, Paragraph 1, we confess: "We believe, teach and confess that the only rule and standard according to which at once all dogmas and teachers should be esteemed and judged are nothing else than the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament, as it is written Ps. 119, 105 'Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.'" And St. Paul (Gal. 1:8): "Though an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, let him be accursed." Other writings, of ancient or modern teachers, whatever reputation they may have, should not be regarded as of equal authority with the Holy Scriptures, but should altogether be subordinated to them, and should not be received other or further than as witnesses, in what manner and what places, since the time of the apostles, the doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved."

This is clear and self-evident. And yet there are only a comparative few who accept the Scriptures as the sole and sufficient authority in religion. The Papists place the opinions, declarations and decrees of the church fathers, councils and popes on the same level with, if not above, the Word of God. The Reformed churches recognize the human reason as a rule and standard of faith along with the Word of God. And even the Lutheran Church does not stand unitedly upon this important doctrine. Also there the inspiration of the Scriptures is at times repudiated, and the moral consciousness set up as a coordinate rule and standard.

That has always been and is today an unmistakable sign of decadence. Whenever the church recognizes other rules and standards besides the Word of God, it opens the way for error, corruption, and demoralization in doctrine as well as in life. That is what happened under the papacy and at the time when rationalism held sway in the church, and that, it seems, is about to happen again in our day. There is no lack of churchly inter-

est of a certain sort. There is much enthusiasm for the external affairs of the church; much speaking, writing and conferring about the great world aims, tasks and policies of the church; must zeal for the outward union of all churches. But notwithstanding all this restless zeal and activity, there is no real interest in and concern for the one thing needful—the glory of God, the preservation of His revealed truth, the rightful and diligent use of the means of grace, and temporal and eternal salvation of immortal souls. Christian faith is set aside as unimportant and unnecessary. Unitarians, Universalists, Jews and “friendly citizens” of no faith are welcomed with open arms. Faith in the life hereafter, in other words, the doctrine of heaven and hell, is openly scouted. It is no longer the mission of the church to preach the Gospel to every creature. “The first stress of the socially aroused Church,” declare the leaders, “falls naturally on the economic life and the abolishment of poverty.” “Its object should be to promote applied religion, not a theoretical religion. This would involve its sympathetic interest in all of the great problems of human life, in social and moral problems. The Church should throw herself into the modern crusade for health, and make it an expression of reverence for personality. The moral and spiritual power of the Church involves responsibility to help fashion the State after the divine ideal.” (Lehre and Wehre, April, 1920). With one word, the Church should be, and is being, secularized, or transformed into a kingdom of this world.

Who will deny that we are living in an age of apostacy? Dr. F. Pieper characterizes the “Interchurch World Movement” as a “Protestant mystery of iniquity” (Prostantantisches Geheimnis der Bosheit). And a Reformed church leader expresses himself in precisely the same way: “Another Babylon, more portentous, more mysteriously potent for evil, more daring in blasphemy, more impotent of power to reach up into heaven, is looming large on the horizon, and the Church moves on to its predicted apostacy.” (Lehre und Wehre, same issue).

We are reminded of the solemn question of Jesus: “When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?” Assuredly, it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. The admonition of Jesus comes to us at this time with added em-

phasis: "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (Rev. 3, 11).

"Hold fast the form of sound words!" 2 Tim. 1, 13. "Contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the *saints*!" 1 Cor. 16, 13. These admonitions were heeded by our sainted fathers in the Norwegian Synod. They earnestly sought to put them into practice. Therefore our Synod was for a time like "a city that is set on a hill." That we are still in possession of the pure Word and unadulterated sacraments we owe, under God, to the loyal adherence of our fathers to the Scriptures as the only rule and standard of their faith. And that is also what we must by the grace of God do, if we are to preserve our own Christianity and help to make our Church a light and a city of refuge for our generation and the generations to come.

But that is not all. We must adhere to the revealed Word as the sole and sufficient authority in all matters of Christian faith and life. We must cling tenaciously to every scriptural truth, the smallest as well as the greatest; we must honestly and without reservation accept, defend, preach and teach the entire, unshorn, unadulterated truth of God's Word. But more is required of us. We must distinguish correctly between the two chief doctrines of Scripture, the Law and the Gospel; we must teach and preach both the Law and the Gospel aright. Where that is not done, the Bible is a closed book, the way of salvation is blocked and made inaccessible, and bars are let down for all manner of errors and evils in doctrine, life and church polity. If we will take the trouble to go through the history of the Church, we shall find that here we have the beginning of every controversy and the root or source of every false doctrine and unscriptural tendency. Name, if you can, a single false teacher, from the Judaizing Galatians down to the newest religious enthusiast or fakir of our day, who has distinguished rightly between the Law and the Gospel. The misuse or intermixture of the Law and the Gospel has been the chief cause of all great departures from the truth of the Scriptures, by whatever name they have become known: Arianism, Pelagianism, Catholicism, Antinomism, Calvinism, Armenianism, Rationalism, Pietism, or Synergism. This was the chief cause of the controversy on the doctrine of Election in our own Lutheran Church. And this,

without a doubt, is the chief cause of all the indifferentism, unionism and worldliness which are menacing the Church of Christ today. The bane of Christian faith and life in the Church and in the individual soul is this fatal confusion or mixture of the Law and the Gospel, whereby these salutary doctrines of God are vitiated and rendered useless, if not actually harmful and destructive.

But this also points the way to meet the danger and remove the evil. How has God through all these centuries preserved His truth for us? By raising up witnesses for His truth, who have had a clear and correct understanding of the differences and correspondences between the Law and the Gospel. Foremost among these we would place Anthanasius, Augustine and Luther; and in more recent times, we would also include especially the name of Dr. C. F. W. Walther and the names of the truthloving pioneer preachers and theologians of our own Norwegian Synod. A clear and firm grasp of the character, use and purpose of the Law and the Gospel, and faithfulness and efficiency in the practical Christian application of these fundamental doctrines was the special equipment or qualification of these men. That made them mighty warriors in the kingdom of God. Thus it is that the truth has been preserved and error rejected in the confessions of the true church. And in the same way God will preserve the Church from the inroads of error and corruption in our generation. The admonition to Timothy (2 Tim. 2, 15): "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," is intended also for us who now fill the ranks of the Christian ministry. And to all of us, laymen and ministers, Christ speaks the encouraging words: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." Joh. 5, 39.

But the Spirit of God himself must enlighten and qualify us for this task. Even the apostles had to confess, 2 Cor. 3, 5, 6: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit." How much more we! To distinguish correctly between the Law and the Gospel and rightly divide the



Word of truth is a task that far exceeds our powers. Acknowledging therefore the great difficulty of our problem and our own inability to solve it, but imploring at the same time the gracious aid of God and relying upon the enlightenment of His Spirit, we will now enter upon the discussion of this important and timely subject: Differences and Correspondences between the Law and the Gospel.

## 1.

The Holy Scriptures may be divided into two fundamentally different and yet not incompatible doctrines, the Law and the Gospel.

## 2.

The purpose of God is attained only when we as Christians and as ministers of the Gospel learn to distinguish rightly between these two doctrines.

## 3.

The purpose of God is hindered:

a) when Christ is made out to be a law-giver, and the Gospel in this way is changed into a law;

b) when the Law is weakened or corrupted by the admixture of the Gospel; or the Gospel is impaired and corrupted by the admixture of the Law.

c) when terrified sinners are threatened with the law, or secure and impenitent sinners offered the comfort of the Gospel;

d) when the Gospel is not given the first place in the preaching and instruction of the church.

## I.

*The Holy Scriptures may be divided into two fundamentally different though not incompatible doctrines, the Law and the Gospel.*

To the unenlightened mind the Bible is a sealed book. No other book seems so dark, perplexing and self-contradictory. On all sides there is apparent disagreement, not only in matters of secondary importance, but in the all-important question as to how a sinner may be saved. Here all men are declared free

from the guilt and punishment of sin; there they are all held to be subject to the guilt and punishment of sin. Here man is said to be justified by faith alone; there the deeds of the law are represented as necessary. Here all men are offered life and salvation by grace alone; there they are required to do something for their own salvation. No wonder that the natural unenlightened man ridicules the idea that the Bible is inspired by God. And yet we know that all Scripture is inspired by God; that "the holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." And so we know too that there can be no real disagreement between the different parts or doctrines of the Bible. All apparent self-contradictions disappear as soon as we learn of the Spirit of truth to distinguish aright between the two chief doctrines of Scripture, the Law and the Gospel.

"The Law teaches us how we are to be, what we ought to do, and what we ought not to do." "The Gospel teaches us what God of His grace in Jesus Christ has done, and still does to save us." Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism, questions 14 and 15.

At first glance it appears as though these two doctrines had nothing in common; but upon closer inspection we find that there are certain respects in which they are alike.

1. They are both a part of God's Word; both doctrines are divine. Dent. 10, 4. 1 Thes. 2, 13.

2. They are both equally necessary: without the law we could not understand or accept the Gospel; and without the Gospel the law would not help us, but would only condemn us. Gal. 3, 21-24.

3. They are both of universal application: both concern all men. Rom. 3, 22b-24.

4. They are both holy and perfect: both are for this life and the life to come: both aim to promote the salvation of sinners here and hereafter, with this difference only, that no man can be saved by the law, but every man must be made ready for the saving Gospel by the law, and every believer must derive strength from the Gospel to obey the law, insofar as this is possible. Rom. 7, 12. Gal. 3, 21. 22. Phil. 4, 13.

These are the most important points of similarity between the law and the Gospel. And now, what are the differences? Let me point them out in accordance with the plan worked out by Dr. Waltham in his excellent lectures on the Law and the Gospel:

The Law and the Gospel are different: 1. with regard to the manner in which God has revealed them to men; 2. with regard to their content; 3. with regard to the promises they make; 4. with regard to the threats of the one; and the absence of threats in the other; 5. with regard to their effects; and 6. with regard to the persons to whom they should be preached.

In the first place, then, the law and the Gospel are different with respect to the manner in which God has revealed them. Man knows the law by nature, for already at creation God inscribed the law in his heart. This inscription of the law in the human heart has by reason of sin lost some of its original clearness and legibility, but is not altogether effaced. For this reason even the ungodliest man is startled in his conscience by the preaching of the law, and must acknowledge God to be right when He judgeth. Ps. 51, 4.

It is different with the Gospel. The Gospel is a message, tidings, a revelation, a proclamation of God's plan of salvation, conceived by Him in eternity, and carried into effect by Him in time. The Gospel is a mystery of God, which no man can know by his unaided reason, but only by supernatural divine revelation. Therefore the Gospel is not only foreign, but it is down-right foolishness to the natural man. 1 Cor. 1, 18.

Romans 2, 14, 15 may be taken as a proof-text for what has been said about the law: "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." The moral law is stamped upon the heart and conscience. It is not, like the Gospel, a product of supernatural revelation. God gave the law a second time on the two tables of stone, only for the purpose of restoring the obscure inscription in the heart.

Romans 16, 25. 26 confirms what we have said about the Gospel: "Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my Gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever." The Gospel is called a "mystery", "kept secret", "but now made manifest", "for the obedience of faith."

This is an important difference. All religions have the moral law, but only the Christian religion has the Gospel. If men did not have the moral law engraved upon their hearts, they would not listen to the preaching of the law. But now we can convict them of sin. Therefore we must confidently and cheerfully preach the law. It is thus, and thus only, that the sinner may by the grace of God repent and believe the Gospel.

In the next place, the law and the Gospel differ with regard to their content. The law tells us what we should do and not do, and what the condition of our hearts should be. The Gospel says not a word about these things, but tells us only what God has done and still does for us. The law speaks of our deeds; the Gospel only of the deeds of God. Ten times the Decalog warns: "Thou shalt, thou shalt not!" The Gospel, on the other hand, demands nothing of us. It merely announces: "Al is ready; the table is set; come, eat and drink, and still your hunger without money and without price. The Gospel does not command: it only offers and invites.

Gal. 3, 12: "The law is not of faith; but the man that doeth them shall live in them." The law knows nothing of repentance and forgiveness of sins. The law does not say: "Repent, be converted, mend your ways, and you shall receive pardon, life and salvation." No, not a word of it. The law commands and demands only: grace, mercy, love, reconciliation, pardon, are words not found in the vocabulary of the law. The Gospel, on the contrary, never commands or demands, but always offers, gives and confers.

Joh. 1, 17: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 5, 19: "God was in Christ,

reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." The Gospel consists of nothing but grace and truth. It is a "Word of reconciliation"; it offers us peace with God.

In the third place, the law and the Gospel differ with regard to their respective promises. The law promises the very same thing as the Gospel, namely, eternal life. But there is an important difference, the law promises conditionally; the Gospel unconditionally. The law says: "Do this and that; love God with all thy soul, heart, and mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself; be pure, holy, perfect, without sin, and thou shalt live." The promise of the law is therefore not a matter of congratulation, but of utter discouragement; for no one is able to fulfill the condition, and hence, according to the law, no one is able to attain life and salvation.—How comforting, on the other hand, is the promise of the Gospel! It is unconditional. The Gospel promises us life and salvation by grace alone, without any merit or worthiness in us. The Gospel exacts nothing: it offers and invites only, saying: "Come, accept life and salvation as a pure and simple gift of God's grace!"

Leviticus 18, 5: "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgements: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord."

Luke 10, 26f. To the lawyer's question: "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered: "What is written in the law? How readest thou?" And when the lawyer replied: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself," Jesus said: "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live!" Jesus declares here that he who really keeps the law shall thereby attain eternal life. But this is a condition which can not but plunge every honestly seeking soul into the darkest despair.

The Gospel, on the other hand, offers life and salvation without any condition whatever. Mark. 16, 15, 16: "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Here nothing is said about what we must do or not do. We are merely invited to accept, to believe the Gospel.

Rom. 3, 23, 24: "There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Eph. 2, 8, 9: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

Again, a wide difference between the law and the Gospel. The former says: "Earn your salvation, and you shall have it." The latter says: "Jesus has already purchased life and salvation for you; believe this, accept this and put your trust in this, and you shall have eternal life. A precious difference! It is the knowledge of this difference that gives the Christian the courage to sing: "Who shall the Lord's elect condemn? 'Tis God who justifies their souls; And mercy, like a mighty stream, O'er all their sins divinely rolls."

In the fourth place, the law and the Gospel differ with regard to the threats of the one and the absence of threats in the other. The law menaces all men with the wrath of God, temporal and eternal punishment, because they are all sinners. The Gospel has never a word of threat to utter.

Deut. 27, 26: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen." The law pronounces a curse not only upon him who grossly sins against several or all of the commandments, but also against him who offends in one point only. Therefore St. Paul draws the significant conclusion from this passage: "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. 3, 19.

Such threats are entirely foreign to the Gospel. Jesus Himself tells us wherein His Gospel consists: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it is written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach de-

liverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.' And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Jesus wishes to say: "Behold, that is my doctrine; I bring no new law, and no threats, but glad tidings with comfort and help for all." This is also St. Paul's conception of the Gospel, 1 Tim. 1, 15: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." No menace, no threats; only glorious assurances and promises, even for the greatest sinner!

In the fifth place, the law and the Gospel differ with respect to their effects.

The effects of the law are:

1. that it, indeed, points out, what we must do to please God, but leaves us powerless to do this, only stimulating the more our natural desire to do evil and disinclination to do good;

2. that it, indeed, lays bare, the guilt and distress of sin; but offers no escape therefrom;

3. that it, indeed, works contrition and repentance for sin, and fear of God's wrath, death and the judgement; but gives no comfort, and only leaves the unhappy creature to perish in his sins.

Rom. 3, 20: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for the law is the knowledge of sin."

Rom. 7, 7-9: "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Lust is sin, though the world does not regard it as sin. "I can't help it," says the worldly man; "I am so constituted." He seeks to justify himself: "I have committed no sin; I have not committed

theft, murder, or adultery." He does not realize that his heart is totally depraved and turned away from God. But let the law come with its stern prohibitions and threats against hatred, lust, envy, impurity and covetousness, and sin is immediately revived; the worldly man begins to realize the great power, guilt, and damnable-ness of sin. But that is all. The law brings no comfort, no ray of hope. It merely says: "Do this, and thou shalt live." With the law, therefore, as our only refuge, we should all miserably perish. 2 Cor. 3, 6: "The letter killeth".

The effects of the law are seen from the impression made upon Israel, when God spoke the commandments from Mt. Sinai. Exodus 20, 19: "And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die." The effects are seen in the attitude of the rich young man, Luke 18, 22, 23. He wanted to stand or fall by the law. Then Jesus said to him: "Yet lackest thou one thing: seli all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." What was the effect? "And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich." The statement Christ makes in the next two verses about the great difficulty with which the rich are saved shows how futile it is to seek salvation in the law.

The effects of the Gospel, on the other hand, are:

1. that it, indeed, requires faith, but itself produces this faith;
2. that it does not punish sin; but takes away the remorse and terror of sin, and fills the heart of the sinner with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost;
3. that it demands nothing, neither a good and pure heart, nor a changed life, nor good works; but by its own inherent power changes the heart, imparts to the sinner the desire and power to love God above all things and his neighbors as himself, and thoroughly furnishes him unto all good works.

Rom. 1, 16: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Eph. 2, 8-10: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is a gift of God; not of works, lest any



man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works," Saved by grace through faith. Faith is necessary, but faith contributes nothing toward our salvation, else we should not be saved through grace. It is right and scriptural to pray as we do in our confessional prayer: "Through the faith which is given and increased in my heart by the Holy Spirit, forgive me all my sins."

Gal. 3, 2: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" The new life was wrought in the Galatians only by the "hearing of faith", the Gospel.

Acts 16, 23-34: To the question of the terrified and trembling prisonkeeper: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul replied: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." And in the same moment faith was granted him; for we read: "And he was baptized, he and all his, straightway, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his House.

Rom. 8, 2-4: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Here the law and the Gospel are contrasted, so far as their effects are concerned, and a clearer, briefer, and more complete statement of the difference could not be given.

The law and the Gospel are different, in the sixth place, with reference to the persons to whom they should be preached. The law, and nothing but the law, should be preached to secure and impenitent sinners; on the other hand, the Gospel, and the Gospel alone, should be preached to terrified and penitent sinners.

1 Tim. 1, 8-10: "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-

stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine." Hence the law and not the Gospel should be preached to impenitent sinners.

Isa. 61, 1-3: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good things unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, and oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Here we are told in equally clear language that only the Gospel and not the law should be preached to bruised, broken-hearted and penitent sinners.

## II.

*The purpose of God is attained only when we as Christians and ministers of the Gospel learn to distinguish rightly between the law and the Gospel.*

It we have now seen wherein the differences and correspondences of the law and the Gospel consist, it behooves us to learn how to distinguish correctly between them, so that we do not misuse, misapply, or corrupt them, and thus hinder God in the work which He desires to perform through them.

According to the Scriptures, then, it is God's purpose with the law to punish sin, work repentance, prepare the heart to receive the Gospel in faith, and, finally, to show the children of God how they must manifest their faith in a new and holy life. God's purpose with the Gospel, according to the Scriptures, is not to punish sin, but to comfort the sinner, create and preserve the new life in his heart, impart peace and joy to him and the desire and power to love and serve God and his neighbor according to the precepts of the law, and, at least, to grant him eternal salvation through faith in Christ.

But God's purpose with the law and the Gospel can and will be attained only when we both as Christians and as pastors learn to distinguish rightly between them and to use and apply them in the manner prescribed by God. That this is a duty which

rests not only on pastors, but on every Christian, is self-evident; but it may also be inferred from the many exhortations addressed in the word of God to all Christians. Christ says; Joh. 5, 29: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." Of the Christians at Berea we are told, Acts 17, 11: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." And to the Galatians St. Paul writes, Gal. 3, 1-3: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" As ministers cannot preach and teach rightly, without distinguishing correctly between the law and the Gospel, so lay-Christians cannot believe rightly, without distinguishing properly between these two fundamental doctrines. By misapplying or corrupting the law and the Gospel many a Christian has suffered the shipwreck of his faith.

But it is still more urgent for pastors to learn to distinguish properly between the law and the Gospel; for with them it is not only a question of saving their own souls, but they watch over the souls committed to their care, "as they that must give account." Hebr. 13, 17. On this point the Scriptures bear no uncertain testimony. In his second pastoral letter to Timothy St. Paul writes (2 Tim. 2, 15): "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." The apostle describes a true minister of the Gospel. He must be a man who is able rightly to divide the word of truth. It is not enough that he knows and expounds every doctrine correctly according to the Scriptures. He must also preach every doctrine at the right time and place, to the right persons, and in the proper relation to every other doctrine. He does not rightly divide the word of truth, if he preaches the law exclusively, or the Gospel exclusively. Neither does he divide the word of truth rightly, if he intermingles the law and the Gospel. In this way he would offer his hearers deadly poison instead of pure, nourishing food.

The same truth is taught by the Savior, Matt. 13, 52: "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." In scriptural usage the term "new" often denotes the new Covenant, or the Gospel, and the "old", the Old Covenant, or the law. (Comp: Isi. 42, 9; 181. 42, 9 and Solomons Song 7, 13). That is also Luther's view. The "treasure" is the word of God, the law and the Gospel: "For in these twain is embodied the entire divine wisdom." He only is a true scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven who brings forth out of his treasure both the law and the Gospel, but as something totally different, just as the new is different from the old.

A similar statement is found in Luke 12, 40, 43.: "And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom the Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing." Another characterization of a true minister of the Gospel. As a wise and faithful head of a family gives the right food at the right time to each member of his household, so a faithful pastor sees to it that each of his hearers is given the proper food at the right time: careless, indifferent, secure and hardened sinners the harsh demands, threats and punishment of the law; terrified and penitent sinners the friendly assurance and help of the Gospel.

Ezek. 13, 18-22: "And say, Woe to them that sew pillows to all armholes, and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature to hunt souls! Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come unto you? And will ye pollute me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to my people that hear your lies? Wherefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against your pillows, wherewith ye there hunt the souls to make them fly; and I will tear them from your arms, and will let the souls go, even the souls that ye hunt to make them fly. Your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand to be hunted; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. Because with lies ye have made the heart

of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life." This is an earnest word to all pastors and teachers of the church, that they should rightly divide the Word of truth: preach the law, and nothing but the law, to all impenitent, rebellious, self-righteous sinners; but, on the other hand, comfort, heal, and raise up all anxious, sad and heart-broken sinners by the preaching of the blessed Gospel. Here nothing less than the life of the soul is at stake, our hearers' and our own, for God will require from our hands the souls of those that perish through our negligence or unfaithfulness in the preaching of the law and the Gospel

Zeck. 11, 7: "And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock." It is the Messiah who speaks. He describes his flock. There are two kinds of sheep: "the flock of slaughter" and the "poor of the flock"; disobedient, impenitent, rebellious sinners, and frightened, crushed and penitent sinners. The two staves, "Beauty" and "Bands" are the Gospel and the law. The Lord does not use these indiscriminately, but each in its proper place; the staff "Beauty" for "the poor of the flock", and the staff "Bands" for "the flock of the slaughter". When He called us to watch and feed His lambs and sheep, He placed in our keeping the same shepherd staves; and now we must use them in the same way as He. When we do, we shall be true ministers, "approved unto the Lord, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

But there we shall not get far with our own wisdom. "Who is sufficient for these things?" exclaims the apostle Paul, 2 Cor. 2, 16. And Luther makes the same confession. In his Table-talks, W. xx11, 655, he says: "There is no man on earth who can distinguish correctly between the law and the Gospel. We imagine that we can, but lack much; only the Holy Ghost knows the art. Also I supposed that I could do it, because I had written so long and so much; but, in truth, when I am put to the test, I see how far I fall short." And in another place, W. 1, 415, he writes: "He who knows this art, the art of dividing aright the law and the Gospel, let him take the seat of honor and be called

a doctor of the Holy Scriptures. For without the Holy Ghost it is impossible to strike the difference. I discover it in myself, see it also every day in others, how difficult it is to keep the teachings of the law and the Gospel apart. The Holy Ghost must be the master and teacher here, otherwise no man on earth would be able to understand or teach."

This we too must know and acknowledge. The Holy Ghost must be our master and teacher. He must teach us the sublime and difficult art to distinguish aright between the law and the Gospel, first as Christians and next as ministers of the Gospel.

We have already seen how comparatively easy it is for the law to speak to men, because God has engraved it upon their hearts. When the law says: "This you must do; this you must not do; thus you must be at heart, pure, holy, without evil lusts, hatred, envy, greed, the natural, unconverted man replies: "Yes, that is right: thus I should conduct myself; thus I should be in heart, mind, and character." But there the matter ends. The law gives man no desire or power to fulfill the law. The law only works wrath, Rom. 4, 15. The law revives, awakens sin, Rom. 7, 8. The law does not take away the hardness of the heart or the rebelliousness of the will. "The carnal mind is", and continues to be, "enmity toward God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8, 7. The law saves and delivers no one from sin. It leaves man to perish in his sins; either hardening his heart, so that he gives himself up to a still more abandoned life of sin, or loses himself as completely in self-righteousness and pharisaism, or it plunges him headlong into misbelief, dejection and despair. The law will never attain its divine purpose, work repentance in the heart, and prepare it for the Gospel of salvation, unless the Holy Ghost performs his work through the law upon the sinner's heart.

But it is far more difficult for the Gospel to speak to men, because the Gospel is not, like the law, written in their hearts, but is a divine revelation. Yes, so foreign and unintelligible is the Gospel to the natural man, that it is a stumblingblock and foolishness to him. 1 Cor. 1, 23. And not that alone; even the children of God at times are greatly distressed and afflicted, because they are not able to grasp and appropriate the full comfort and help of the Gospel. This was true of David. We see how

hard it was for him to gain peace for his soul after his conversion and restoration, from his many penitential psalms, in which he pours out his distress to God and implores His forgiveness. David's experience has been the experience of countless Christians. It was also Luther's experience. Every one who is acquainted with the life of Luther, knows how long and hard he had to battle before he was able by the grace of God to make the comfort of the Gospel his own. For this reason there is no one since the days of the apostles who can speak of these things with such deep understanding as Luther. He says, W. VIII, 1792, : "In affliction you will discover that the Gospel is a rare guest in the conscience, while the law is a daily companion. For by nature reason knows the law. Therefore, when your conscience is terrified at sin, revealed and made exceeding great by the law, you should say: There is a time for dying and a time for living, a time to hear the law, and a time to ignore the law, a time to hear the Gospel, and a time not to hear and not to give heed to the Gospel. Now let the law be gone and the Gospel be ushered in; for it is time to hear the Gospel and not the law. But you have done no good, but grossly sinned. That I acknowledge, but I have forgiveness through Christ, for whose sake all my sins are forgiven.' — But when the conscience is not at war, and the duties of your calling must be performed, then, whether you are a minister of the Gospel, or a magistrate, or a husband, or a teacher or a pupil, it is time not to hear the Gospel, but the law, for you must be faithful in your calling." Luther writes further in his exposition of Psalm 131, W. IV, 2881, : "Some imagine that they understand these things perfectly well, but you must beware of such presumption, and reflect that you are the disciples of the Word. For Satan is such a master, that he is easily able to conceal the difference and impose upon us the law in the place of the Gospel, or the Gospel in the place of the law. How often does it not happen to people who are in the death-struggle, that their conscience seizes upon certain Scripture-passages, which in reality belong to the law, and thus miss altogether the comfort of the Gospel. As, for example, Matt. 19, 17: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Likewise Matt. 7, 21: "Not every that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter in to the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my

Father which is in heaven." Through these and similar passages of Scripture the heart is often so confused, that it does not see anything except what it has done or should have done; in other words, what God forbids and demands. When the heart looks at this it forgets everything that Christ has done, and all that God promises to do through Christ. Therefore let no one be so presumptuous as to believe that he has attained perfection in these matters."

It is a most difficult matter to distinguish correctly between the law and the Gospel; so difficult in fact, that none can do it, unless he learns it of the Holy Ghost. "No man can say that 'Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost', 1 Cor. 12, 3. But by the aid of the Holy Ghost it is possible. "And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." 1 Joh. 3, 19, 20. Our own heart condemns us. That is natural, for the law speaks a language which is easy to understand, and our conscience is on the side of the law. And the more we are in earnest, the more our hearts will condemn us. But the Spirit of God has opened to us the truth of the Gospel. He has taught us that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth", Rom. 10, 4. And we cling to this truth, even though it be with a weak and fatering faith, so that we must say: "I believe, Lord, help my unbelief!" The Spirit has taught us the difference between the law and the Gospel. And this difference we turn to our own advantage. With the apostle John we say: "God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things; He has pronounced another sentence; He has befriended and acquitted us in His own dear Son, Christ Jesus." But it is a difficult art. We shall never master it as long as we live. There will be moments when we do not see clearly the difference between the law and the Gospel, moments when the law will crowd out the Gospel — moments of distress and affliction. But at such times when law tries to terrorize us, we must straightway seek refuge in the Gospel.

It is this art, then, the art of distinguishing aright between the law and the Gospel, that we must all learn, both laity and clergy. Gods purpose with us as individuals is not attained before we have learned this art in the School of the Holy Spirit.



Only in this way can we become the children of God and be saved. And the children of God we must all be, also we ministers; for how can we instruct others in this difference, if we do not know it ourselves; and how can we make the proper use of the law and the Gospel and cause them to do their God-appointed work in the hearts of our hearers, if we have not experienced their divine effects in our own hearts? We ministers need to be regenerated Christians. Our hearts must be the workshop of the Holy Ghost. In this way, and in this way only, shall we become approved workmen of God, that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.

Dr. Walther says on this subject in his excellent book, *Ge-  
setz und Evangelium*", pp. 49 and 50, "If any one desires to be  
a true *"dokimus"*, (a tried and approved workman before God)  
he must first be a Christian. He may perhaps be able to dis-  
course correctly on all dogmas, but that is not enough. He must  
also know how to portion out to all the souls in his congregation  
just what each of them needs. That is possible when the pastor  
is able to discern accurately the condition of every soul. But  
that is extremely difficult, just as diagnosis is one of the most  
difficult tasks of the physician. It is not enough that you use  
the living, keen-cutting Word of God. You may easily kill the  
soul with this sharp sword, if you do not give what is required.  
Therefore a pastor must be able to determine whether he is deal-  
ing with a hypocrite, or a true Christian; one who is spiritually  
dead, or one who is awakened out of spiritual sleep; one who is  
afflicted by the devil and his own flesh, or one who through his  
own wickedness is caught in the toils of satan. For this reason  
a pastor who knows no experience may so easily mistake a hypo-  
cite for a true Christian. Our preaching must be of such kind  
that our hearers are at once ready to say: "That is intended for  
you! He has described the hypocrite precisely as you are." Or  
the pastor has described the afflicted in such a way that the lat-  
ter must say: "That is my condition." Also the penitent must  
soon conclude: "That comfort is for me; I must make it my  
own." The terrified sinner must be ready to exclaim: "O, what  
sweet comfort! That is for me." Yes, also the impenitent  
must feel constrained to say within himself: "There is no deny-  
ing it: that is an exact picture of me." The pastor must know

the art of painting the inner life of his hearers. It is not enough simply to present the abstract truths. One may be orthodox; one may be fully instructed in Scriptural truth, but if he does not himself hold the right relation toward God, has not settled his own account with God, has not himself arrived at certainty as to whether his own sins are forgiven, how can he preach a truly Christian sermon? The heathen maxim: *'Pectus disertum facit'*, 'the heart makes eloquent', is applicable also here. Indeed, only in the school of the Spirit, only in affliction, is it possible to distinguish rightly between the law and the Gospel. Therefore the people are so eager to read the sermons of Luther. — It is also indeed a joy to read Luther's sermons. You find yourself on every page. At first he frightens you terribly, so that you are on the point of losing both sight and hearing; at first he hurls you down into the abyss, but hardly has he done that before he is saying: 'Do you believe that?' 'Yes!' 'Good, then come up to a place of safety again!' There are crashes of tunder and flashes of lightning; but immediately thereafter, the soft sighing of the Gospel breezes. It is impossible to resist; one must say: 'That is good, nourishing daily bread; that is the proper food for my soul!' Luther does not direct one to take a long roundabout way; he does not give many lessons as to how to find the way out; but when he has brought his hearers to the point where they see that they are poor sinners, he says to them: 'Listen, the grace of Christ is greater than all the sin of the world!' He preaches the law and the Gospel side by side, so that the law, illuminated by the Gospel, becomes far more terrible, and the Gospel, illuminated by the law, becomes far sweeter and more comforting. This we must learn from our dear father Luther. Then people will hear also us. It will interest them. They will know that at this time the pastor seeks to help them out of their trouble and distress, so that they may leave the church with peace and joy in their hearts."

This art of preaching Luther certainly learned in the school of the Holy Spirit; and we must learn the same art there. Like him we must throw ourselves with heart and soul into the study of the Scriptures and learn all of its precious truths. Like him we must not shrink back from a little exertion; we must not insist too much upon i eight hour day. Like him we must work

out our own salvation with fear and trembling. Like him we must battle our way to greater knowledge, understanding and efficiency through earnest and untiring prayer to God. And it will not be in vain. In this way also we shall become better Christians and better preachers; for, as the apostle Paul says: "Such trust have we though Christ to God-ward; not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves; but our efficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit."

### III.

*The purpose of God is hindered:*

A) *when Christ is made out to be a new law-giver, and the Gospel in this way is changed into a law;*

B) *when the law is weakened or corrupted by the admixture of the Gospel; or the Gospel is impaired and corrupted by the admixture of the law;*

C) *when terrified and penitent sinners are threatened with the law, or secure and impenitent sinners are offered the comfort of the Gospel;*

D) *when the Gospel is not given the first place in the preaching and instruction of the church.*

### A.

"The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost", Luke 19, 10. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation,, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief," 1 Tim. 1, 15. If that was his purpose in coming to the world, Christ could never be a new law-giver. Moses could save no one by the law. St. Paul teaches, Rom. 3, 20: "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin;" and Gal. 3, 10: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all the things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Neither has Christ saved any one by the law. In fact, that would be a downright contradiction; for if any one were saved by the law he would be his own savior and would owe nothing to Christ.

But is there any one, then, who holds that Christ is a law-giver? Yes, this position is held by the pope and, alas, also by many in the Reformed Churches. Christ preached the law. The Sermon on the Mount is the most powerful of all law-sermons. Christ reinterpreted the law and purged it from the leaven of the Pharisees, formalism and perversion. Therefore the papises and others regard Him as a law-giver. They hold that Christ added something new to the law, whenever He pointed out the searching demands and true inwardness of the law. But they are in error; for when Moses says: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might", Deut. 6, 5. and "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself", Lev. 19, 18., he includes everything that Christ taught under the law.

In session 6, canon 21 of the Council of Trent, the Church of Rome went on record as saying: "If any one says that Christ Jesus has been given by God to men as a savior, in whom they must believe, not as a lawmaker, whom they must obey, let him be accursed!" And in the same document, session 4, the Gospel of Christ is designated as a "moral teaching," which should be preached to every creature. As such the Gospel of Christ has been preached in the Roman Catholic Church also long before Luther's time. Luther confesses that as a sincere Catholic monk he was never able to surrender himself to Christ as his Savior, but always stood in great awe of Him as a stern and implacable judge. The following declarations, taken from the same source, session 6, furnish additional proof: "If any one holds that man is justified, either by the imputation to him of Christ's righteousness alone, or by the forgiveness of sins alone, without the cooperation of that grace and love which is imparted to him by the Holy Spirit and dwells in his heart, or, that the grace by which we are justified is nothing but the grace or favor of God: let him be accursed! If any one holds that justifying grace is nothing else than trust in the divine mercy, which forgives sin for Jesus' sake, or that this trust alone justifies us; let him be accursed! If any one holds that the person justified does not in truth earn eternal life by his good deeds: let him be accursed!"

The rationalists and all moralists in the church represent Christ purely and simply as a lawgiver, in fact, as a weak and

indulgent lawgiver. They blue-pencil or rule out the First Table of the law, and declare that Jesus came to proclaim the Golden Rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." To them the Gospel of Christ is nothing but the doctrine that God is the dear Father of all men, and that all men are His dear Children. If we therefore follow in the foot-steps of Jesus and live as blamelessly as we can, we shall surely enter life by our virtues, good deeds, and holiness. There is, in fact, no danger for any one, unless it might be for the slaves of vice, or the worst criminals; for hell is after all only a myth, and God is not so cruel as to plunge any person into eternal perdition. Their creed has always been God, virtue and immortality. Not long ago I heard a pastor of the Congregational Church say: "Our religion in this twentieth century must be love to God (not the Triune God), self-control, and social service." That is their religion, and we may truthfully say, that it contains neither the law, nor the Gospel, for both have been annulled or banished.

Now what does the Word of God teach concerning Christ and his doctrine? We read, Luke 4, 17-21: "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it is written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened upon him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." Here Jesus speaks of His office and His doctrine, but not once does He mention the law, or make any reference to the law. He came only to proclaim the Gospel.

Speaking of the covenant which He intends to establish with His people, the Messiah expressly declares that it shall not be a covenant of law, but a covenant of grace. Jeremiah 31, 31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the

land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

In the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke we have the three precious parables of the lost sheep, the lost penny, and the prodigal son. When we remember that Jesus told these parables to defend his association with publicans and sinners, we perceive very clearly that He did not come to preach the law, but to preach the Gospel. And this becomes still more plain, when He rebukes the Pharisees, saying to them: "Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

One of the clearest testimonies from the Savior's own lips we find in the Gospel of John, 3, 17: "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." Had Jesus been sent as a lawgiver, He would have condemned the world; but He was sent for a totally different purpose, for the purpose, namely, of saving the world.

The combined testimony of the apostles is to the same effect. Joh. 1, 17: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Rom. 1, 16. 17: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every-one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." 1 Tim. 1, 15: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," 1 Joh. 4, 10: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

Jesus is no new lawgiver. He preached the law as no other man has preached it, not even Moses; but this He did only that

He might pave a way to the hearts of men for His saving Gospel. He came not to destroy the law; neither did He come to add anything to the law. "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil," Matt. 5, 17. His purpose in coming was not to give new laws, but to fulfil the old law in our stead, to be "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

## B.

*The purpose of God is hindered, when the law is weakened or corrupted by the admixture of the Gospel; or when the Gospel is impaired and corrupted by the admixture of the law.*

The aim of the law is to reveal and punish sin, awaken true penitence, to be a "schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ," and, finally, to show believers how they should walk before God as His obedient children. The Gospel aims to save lost and condemned sinners, comfort and heal them, create and preserve the new life in their hearts, impart to them the desire and power to love and serve God and man, and at last grant them eternal life through faith in the Savior. These high aims will be realized only when both the law and the Gospel are taught and preached in their full truth and vigor, and without confounding and corrupting the one with the other. The law must be preached in such a way that "every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." There must be left no ray of hope for those who would be justified by the deeds of the law. And the Gospel must be preached so winningly and persuasively that every crushed and terrified sinner may find comfort and salvation therein.

Gal. 3, 11, 12: "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident; for, the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but the man that doeth them shall live in them." Rom. 4, 16: "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all." Gal. 3, 10: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Rom 7, 14: "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal,

sold under sin." — The law must be brought home so forceably to the hearts and consciences of our hearers, that they can no longer hide themselves under the cover of outward piety and holiness, but must confess their complete sinfulness, lost and helpless condition, and sue for mercy. Rom. 3, 20: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." The law does not regenerate; it only convicts. This we must remember. People might like us better as preachers, if we flattered them and gave them credit for being able to do something toward their own salvation. But that would be faithless and unprincipled. Thereby we should only lead them into certain perdition. No, our preaching of the law must be so clear and positive that every hearer will be compelled to say in his heart: "If that preacher speaks the truth, I am hopelessly lost." That is the way an evangelical preacher presents the law; for he knows that only in this way will the Gospel be given a chance to do its blessed work. "First Moses, then Christ; first the Forerunner, then the Savior!" Our hearers may feel at first that our preaching is hard and cruel; but when we thereupon bring them the Glad Tidings of repentance and forgiveness of sin in Jesus' name, they will realize that the preacher is after all their best friend.

*It is a gross confusion of the law and the Gospel to seek to make unconverted men good only by means of the law, or to exhort Christians to good works and a holy life by means of the law. This does not come under the aim and operation of the law after sin has corrupted the heart and will of man.*

Rom. 3, 20: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." The law lays bare, but does not take away sin; it does not subdue sin, but makes sin alive.

Rom. 7, 7-13: "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid! Nay I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For



sin taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid! But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."

Under the new covenant the Gospel, not the law, is the active principle and impelling force in a believer's life. Jer. 31, 31-34: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; — for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

2 Cor. 3, 6: "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." The "letter", as we have already seen, is the law; the "spirit" is the Gospel. Do not attempt to create life by the death-dealing letter of the law!

Gal. 3, 2: "This only would I learn of you. Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

*It is likewise a gross intermixture of the law and the Gospel and a serious enfeeblement of both, to represent contrition, repentance, or even faith, as requisites for, or contributory causes toward the forgiveness of sin, life and salvation. It is true, contrition, repentance and faith are present whenever God grants the sinner pardon, life and salvation. But these have not produced the forgiving grace of God, but they are themselves the product of the grace of God, and so the sinner is rendered capable of receiving that which God offers and grants him in His dear Son.*

Eph. 2, 8-10: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, least any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Eph. 2, 4: But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace are ye saved."

1 Peter 1, 2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

2 Tim. 1, 9: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

Hebr. 12, 2: "Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith."

Eph. 1, 11: "Predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

Phil. 2, 13: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Hence here again there must be a sharp separation between the law and the Gospel; no intrusion of the law into the Gospel, no threats, no demands, such as: "You must repent, you must believe, or you cannot be saved!" No, that is wrong, unevangelical; but: "Have you now learned from the law that you are a poor, lost and condemned sinner? Are you bewildered, helpless, terrified and unhappy? Then listen! God loves you. God has had mercy upon you. Christ Jesus, His beloved Son, has satisfied and atoned for your sins by his holy life and innocent suffering and death. Believe this, and God will forgive you all your sins, accept you as His child, and save you in time and in eternity."

*Lastly, it is a fatal intermixture and a gross abuse of the law and the Gospel to teach, either, that faith justifies before God, though it be dead and unfruitful, or, that faith justifies because of the good works which it produces.* We Lutherans are often denounced because we teach that faith alone is necessary to salvation, and not good works. Now it is true, that is what we teach; but thereby we do not teach that good works are not necessary. They are necessary, but not to salvation. Good works are necessary, because we must have a true and living faith, a faith "which worketh by love", a faith which manifests itself through good works. Only such a faith makes us partakers of the redemption of Christ. We need good works, because faith without works is dead. But remember, it is faith, not good works, that saves.

Gal. 5, 6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love."

Acts 15, 9: "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

1 Joh. 5, 4: "But whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

1 Joh. 3, 9, 10: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

But the Scriptures teach very plainly, not only that justifying faith is a faith that is fruitful in good works; but they teach just as plainly that it is faith alone which justifies, and not the fruits of faith, love and good deeds.

Rom. 4, 16: "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not only to that which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all."

Rom. 4, 5: "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

Eph. 2, 8, 9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Rom. 11, 6: "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of grace, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

### C.

*The purpose of God is hindered, when terrified sinners are threatened with the law, or secure and impenitent sinners offered the comfort of the Gospel.*

This paragraph designates the persons to whom the law and the Gospel should be preached. If we are dealing with crushed and terrified sinners, we do not any longer need to use the law. The law has already done its work. We must now let it rest. The heart is already prepared. We now need to preach the Gos-

pel; and nothing but the Gospel. It is now our task to comfort the sinner, to assure him of his state of grace, to tell him how God is minded toward him, what God has done for him, and now offers him through Christ, with one word, say to him: "Thy sins are forgiven! Believe this, and thou shalt be saved. And be baptized and wash away thy sins, if thou art not already baptized." That this is the right procedure we learn from Christ and the apostles.

Acts 9, 1-18. Here we have the account of Paul's conversion. On the way to Damascus, whither he was journeying to persecute the Christians, he was suddenly surrounded by an intense light from heaven. He fell to the ground, and he heard a voice which said: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And when he enquired who it was, the answer came: "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." And terrified and trembling Saul answered: "What shall I do, Lord?" And the Lord said to him: "Arise, and go to Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." Saul, who was now blind, obeyed. And Ananias, sent of the Lord, came to him, and said to him: "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." And at the same moment he received his sight, and was baptized. — What then did Jesus preach to the terrified and trembling Saul? Not the law, but the Gospel. And His messenger Ananias announced: "The Lord hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost." It was done, and he was baptized. The young Pharisee, the enemy and persecuter of Jesus, was converted, born again, by the divine power of the Gospel.

The same methods was followed by the disciples of Jesus. In the second chapter of the Acts of the apostles we are told how Peter dealt with those who but a few days before had cried: "Let him be crucified!" When these men, pricked in their heart by what they had seen and heard, earnestly enquired: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter did not continue preaching the law to them, but he said: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." He did not

terrify them still more by enlarging on their great sin. They were penitent, crushed, by a sense of their great guilt and that was enough. Now they were prepared to hear and believe the Gospel of grace and forgiveness. Therefore the apostle told them to repent, that is, to receive a different spirit, forsake their unbelief, believe on Jesus, and be baptized in His name for the remission of sins. And their conversion was no sham conversion; for they received the Holy Ghost; they were born again; they were true children of God.

The account of the conversion of the prison-keeper at Philippi is given in the sixteenth chapter of Acts. The very same method was followed by the apostle Paul. When the jailer, awakened from sleep by the earthquake, saw the doors of the prison open and all the prisoners freed, he drew his sword to take his own life. But Paul hindered him. Then it was that he threw himself down trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas, and said: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The apostle answered: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!" "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord", that is, the Gospel, "and to all that were in his house, and he was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

That is the right, apostolic, evangelical procedure. And thereby the final judgment is pronounced upon all methods of conversion, which aim to keep terrified and penitent sinners in uncertainty, to prescribe to them all manner of rules, as to how they are to conduct themselves, what they must do, how long and earnestly they must sigh, pray and battle, before they at last hear a voice from within, saying: "Now your sins are forgiven! Now you are saved! Now you are a child of God!" Not so, but: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

On the other hand we must be just as careful not to confirm secure sinners and hypocrites in their unbelief and impenitence by offering them the comfort of the Gospel. The Old Adam still lives in the hearts of believers. The tempter still lies in wait, to see if he cannot lull them into a sense of security, or lead

them into sin, shame and unbelief. Therefore we must continue preaching the law also in the assemblies of believers; and we must preach it pure and unadulterated, without any admixture of the Gospel, and yet always in such a way that it is brought home, not to the timid and penitent, but to the secure and impenitent sinners.

Rom. 6, 14: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

1 Cor. 6, 9-11: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

2 Peter 2, 20-22: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in her mire."

Rom. 8, 13. 14: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the needs of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

#### D.

*The purpose of God is hindered, when the Gospel is not given the first and foremost place in the preaching and instruction of the Church.*

This is something that we may infer from the very difference between the law and the Gospel. The letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive. The law punishes sin and augments it; the Gospel removes the guilt and punishment of sin and delivers from

its tyranny. Therefore the Gospel should be given the first and foremost place in our preaching and teaching. We must indeed also preach the law; but only as a preparation for the Gospel. The conscious goal, end and aim of all law preaching must be the proclamation of the Gospel. He alone who proceeds in this manner is an approved workman of God, who rightly divides the Word of truth. Ample scripture proof is furnished in the following passages:

Mark 16, 15, 16: "And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

2 Tim. 4, 5: "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

2 Cor. 3, 5, 6: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

1 Cor, 2, 2: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

1 Cor. 15, 3: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."

2 Cor. 1, 24: "Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand."

That the Gospel holds the first place also in the public confession of our Lutheran Church may be seen from the following quotations:

The Augsburg Confession, art. 4, Of Justification:

"Also they teach that men cannot be justified (obtain forgiveness of sins and righteousness) before God by their own powers, merits or works: but are justified freely (of grace) for Christ's sake through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and their sins forgiven for Christ's sake, who by His death hath satisfied for our sins. This faith doth God impute for righteousness before Him, Rom. 3 and 4."

The Smalcald Articles, Part Second, Art. 1:

"The first and chief article is this, that Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins, and was raised again for our justification, Rom. 4, 25.

And He alone is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world, John 1, 29; and God has laid on Him the iniquities of us all, Isa. 53, 6.

Like: All have sinned and are justified without merit (freely, and without their own works or merits) by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood, Rom. 3, 23 f.

Since it is necessary to believe this, and it can be acquired or apprehended otherwise by no work, law, or merit, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us, as St. Paul says (Rom. 3, 28): For we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Likewise (v. 26): "That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Christ."

Of this article nothing can be yielded or surrendered, even though heaven and earth and all things should sink to ruin. "For there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved," says Peter, Acts 4, 12. "And with his stripes we are healed," Isa. 53, 5. And upon this article all things depend, which, against the Pope, de devil, and the whole world, we teach and practise. Therefore we must be sure concerning this doctrine, and not doubt; for otherwise all is lost, and the Pope, and devil, and all things against us gain the victory and suit."

Finally, let us hear the testimony of Luther, Introduction to Galatians, W. VIII, 1524.: "In my heart reigns supreme, and shall reign, this one article, namely, faith in my dear Lord Christ, who alone is the beginning, middle, and end of all my spiritual reflections by day and by night." This too must be our confession and the testimonial which we now and ever must be able to give ourselves, our Synod, our lay-people, and our ministers. Then God will surely bless us and preserve us both as a Synod and as individual Christians.



## THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL.

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### I. WHY ARE WE CONCERNED WITH THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL?

1) Because it is an organization which involves more than one-half of those who bear the Lutheran name in this country.

2) It seeks to embrace all Lutherans in America.

3) It is reaching out also to those who bear the name Lutheran in foreign lands.

4) It represents a definite movement within the Lutheran Church, a great step forward in the direction of liberalism in doctrine and practice, which is doing untold damage to the cause of those truths and principles which we hold most dear.

5) In this movement are directly concerned many whom we still count as our spiritual brethren. In their behalf we too must join in testifying according to our ability.

6) We ourselves above all need to know the facts and to be warned against the dangers which threaten.

### II. WHAT IS THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL?

"The National Lutheran Council was organized on the 6th of September 1918, in the city of Chicago....After two preliminary meetings of the presidents, and representatives appointed by them, of the general Lutheran bodies, the organization meeting took place. The following organizations were represented: General Synod, General Council, Joint Synod of Ohio, the Synod of Iowa and other States, Augustana Synod, Norwegian Lutheran Church, Norwegian Lutheran Free Church, Danish Lutheran Church, and the National Lutheran Commission. Later the United Danish Church and the Buffalo Synod have decided officially to co-operate with the National Lutheran Council. The Icelandic Synod has considered the matter favorably, but referred it for final action to its Ministerium. The Augustana Synod has endorsed the action of its president in participating in the organization of the National Lutheran Council and decided to affiliate with other general Lutheran bodies in the per-

manent organization of said Council. The United Lutheran Church has authorized its president to appoint representatives for said body upon the National Lutheran Council. The Lutheran Free Church and the Danish Church in America have formally elected their representatives. The Norwegian Lutheran Church of America has approved the organization of the National Lutheran Council and its work to date, but has postponed final action with reference to future co-operation until its general meeting in 1920. Formal action by the Joint Synod of Ohio and by the Synod of Iowa and other States is awaiting the general meetings of the bodies." (Report of the General Secretary, Annual Report of the National Lutheran Council, Nov. 6, 1919, p. 9).

According to the Annual Report, 1919, the following are members of the Council:

United Lutheran Church: Dr. F. H. Knobel, Dr. H. A. Weller, Dr. C. M. Jacobs, Dr. V. G. A. Tressler, Dr. W. H. Greever, Hon. E. F. Eilert, Dr. T. E. Schmauk, Hon. J. L. Zimmerman.

Norwegian Lutheran Church: Dr. H. G. Stub, Dr. L. Larsen, Mr. E. B. Steensland.

Augustana Synod: Dr. G. A. Brandelle, Rev. P. Peterson.

Joint Synod of Ohio: Dr. C. H. L. Schuette, Rev. M. P. F. Doermann.

Iowa Synod: Dr. I. Richter.

United Danish Church: Rev. P. Gersen.

Lutheran Free Church: Rev. O. H. Sletten.

Danish Lutheran Church: Rev. P. Gotke.

Icelandic Synod: Rev. B. B. Jonsson.

Buffalo Synod: Rev. K. A. Hoessel.

Article III of the Regulations governing the Council has this to say concerning the membership: "The membership shall consist of representatives from every General Lutheran Body or Synod that may co-operate in the execution of its program. Each Body shall be entitled to one representative for every one

hundred thousand confirmed members or one-third fraction thereof; provided, however, that every participating Body shall be entitled to at least one representative. The term of office of each member shall be two years, but the term of the original members shall expire with the first regular meeting of the Bodies which they represent, when the members from that Body shall be subject to re-election or reappointment for a term of two years, as the Body may decide."

The officers, elected annually, are at present as follows: Dr. H. G. Stub, Chairman; Dr. F. H. Knubel, Vice-Chairman; Dr. L. Larsen, Secretary; Hon. E. F. Eilert, Treasurer. Executive Committee: Dr. H. G. Stub, Dr. F. H. Knubel, Dr. L. Larsen, Hon. E. F. Eilert, Dr. G. A. Brandelle, Dr. F. Richter, Dr. C. H. L. Schuette, Dr. H. A. Weller, Rev. I. Gertsen.

### III. WHICH ARE THE CONSIDERATIONS THAT LED TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL?

These may be summarized as follows, each consideration being specifically mentioned in the regulations governing the Council and in articles written from time to time by representatives of the Council:

1) After-war work in army and navy, maintaining additional pastors and assisting regular chaplains in ministering to the soldiers and sailors, especially the sick and those recovering from wounds; providing adequate equipment and workers for local churches in the neighborhood of ports of debarkation, and in camps; supplying Bibles and other books, equipment and emergency funds to the army and navy chaplains during the period of demobilization. (Lutheran Church Herald, Feb. 4, 1919.)

2) The problem of serving the many Lutherans in the so-called industrial centers, which have sprung up during the war.

3) To represent the Lutheran Church adequately over against the national government and any outward organization where it is necessary that the common conviction and sentiment of the Lutheran Church be expressed, e. g., the language question.

4) The matter of publicity.

5) To promote the gathering and publishing of true and uniform statistical information concerning the Lutheran Church in America.

6) Harmony of action among the various Lutheran bodies in this country on the home-mission field. (Lutheran Church Herald, Dec. 31, 1918.)

7) To bring to the attention of the Church all such matters as require common utterance or action. (Art. II of the Regulations.)

8) To further the work of recognized agencies of the Church that deal with problems arising out of war and other emergencies; to co-ordinate, harmonize, and unify their activities; and, to create new agencies to meet circumstances which require common action. (Art. II of Regulations.)

9) To co-ordinate the activities of the Church and its agencies for the solution of new problems which affect the religious life and consciousness of the people, e. g., social, economic, and educational conditions. (Art. II of Regulations.)

10) To foster true Christian loyalty to the state; and to labor for the maintenance of a right relation between Church and State as distinct, divine institutions. (Art. II of Regulations.)

11) The consideration that such an organization as the Council might become a great help in bringing the different Lutheran Church bodies together into a great American Lutheran Church. (Dr. Stub in Lutheran Herald, Dec. 24, 1918.)

12) In Europe, to relieve the suffering of needy brethren physically.

13) Assist in the restoration and extension of the Lutheran Churches in Europe, especially in the war zone. (Lutheran Church Herald, Feb. 4, 1919.)

14) The saving of the foreign missions conducted by the Lutherans in Germany for the Lutheran Church. (Lutheran Church Herald, Aug. 12, 1919.)

15) The duty of the Lutheran Church in America to take the lead in International Lutheranism. The Lutheran Church in America is the strongest and most orthodox in the world and

the only part of the church that has learned to live under a democratic government. (Dr. Larsen in Luth. Ch. Her., Dec. 31, 1918.)

#### IV. WHAT HAS THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHED?

##### A. In America:

1) Office established at Washington, D. C., to make direct and personal representation to the Government authorities with reference to the position of the Lutheran Church. June 1st, 1919, the General Secretary of the Council became the Executive Secretary of the National Lutheran Commission, and the office was moved to New York.

2) Finances. During the beginning of its existence and work, the National Lutheran Council was financed by the National Lutheran Commission. . . . The question of raising funds for the work of the National Lutheran Council was first taken up by its Executive Committee on the 6th of September, 1918. It was clear that it would be necessary for the Council to raise considerable sums in order to carry out its program of service, especially in the after-war reconstruction period. At this time, however, the armistice had not been signed. Several of the Protestant Churches were considering these same needs for funds. Under the stress of war conditions, these churches, just as the seven well-known welfare organizations, found it necessary to make their campaign for funds a Joint Protestant Drive. Dr. F. H. Knubel and Dr. H. A. Weller were made a committee to represent the Council in conferences on the suggested Protestant Drive, with authority to act. The matter was again considered at the meeting of the Executive Committee on the 8th of November, and our sub-committee was instructed to prepare a tentative budget for the next meeting of the Executive Committee to be held in Columbus on the 11th of December (1918). By the time of the Columbus meeting, the armistice had been signed; but the plans for a Joint Drive in February had prior to the signing of the armistice taken such form that it was impossible for us to withdraw. On the other hand, it had now been determined that the campaign should not be a Joint Drive in the sense of having a common treasury, but that it should be

a simultaneous drive on the part of the denominations interested. The total budget of all participating denominations was set at \$20,000,000, and that of the National Lutheran Council at \$500,000." (Annual Report, 1919, page 11.) The amount raised in this campaign was \$556,732.63. In May of this year another campaign was staged, this time with no connection with the other Protestant denominations. The goal was \$1,800,000 and the most recent reports show receipts of \$623,121.80.

3) The National Lutheran Council stands ready at any time to take over the work of the National Lutheran Commission for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare.

4) Industrial Centers. In the beginning this work was undertaken in conjunction with the Joint Committee of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (Report, p. 14). Later more purely Lutheran work was undertaken in communities assigned to the Lutheran Church by the Joint Committee on War Production Communities (Federal Council of Churches). A Field Secretary was called, Rev. Reichert of the U. L. C., and wherever it was found that Lutheran Church work was necessary it was undertaken with a view to assigning the same to a local Lutheran Board of Missions as soon as such Board would be able to undertake the work. For this purpose a conference was instituted of the several Mission Boards of the Lutheran Bodies in America in harmony with the National Lutheran Council. This conference was held at Columbus, Ohio, and a general agreement was reached that the several Mission Boards would co-operate, and as soon as able would take over the administration of any Lutheran Missions organized or promoted in War Communities. When the armistice was signed mission work was in operation at eleven so-called Industrial Centers. Some of these Centers soon disintegrated and the mission work ceased. Others were taken over by the Mission Boards; but the Mission Board of the United Lutheran Church in America had so many of these points thrust upon it that special arrangement was made with the Mission at North Chester, Pa., whose administration, however, was immediately placed under the Board of the United Lutheran Church. To this new congregation formed at North Chester, the Council has promised, for a period

of five years, support amounting to \$1,500 and the price of house rent per annum to a permanent pastor. (Report, pp. 14 and 15).

5) At the request of the several Home Mission Boards of the Lutheran Bodies in America in harmony with the National Lutheran Council a doctrinal conference was brought about by the Council for the purpose of conferring on questions of doctrine and practice with a view to the co-ordination of the Home Mission and other work. This conference was held in Chicago, March 11th—13th, 1919. (Report, p. 15.) See paper by Rev. Hendricks.

6) Statistics. The committee appointed by the Council and consisting of Dr. O. M. Norlie, Dr. E. B. Burgess, and the Rev. A. H. Dornbirer, has prepared a statistical blank for possible use in the entire Church.

7) The work of Publicity has been attended to especially through the Lutheran Bureau which organization has been taken over by the Council.

8) In the matter of the Language Question resolutions have been passed by the Council and presentations made to the Council of Defense, to Government officials, and to the Federal Council of Churches, but in most cases the situation could only be handled locally or by States. (Rep. p. 18.)

#### B. In Europe:

1) On the 11th of December, 1918, the Council authorized its Executive Committee to appoint and send a commission to visit the Lutheran Churches in Europe for the purpose of Christian contact and helpfulness. The following men were appointed: Dr. J. A. Morehead, chairman, Dr. S. G. Youngert, Rev. G. A. Fandrey, Dr. G. T. Rygh, and Rev. H. J. Schuh. These were instructed to learn definitely the present ecclesiastical situation and problems of each group of Lutherans in European lands which were involved in the war, and were given the following specific duties: "You will convey to the Lutherans there the sincere and cordial greetings of the Lutheran Church in America, with assurances of its deep interest and ready willingness to participate in the solution of their ecclesiastical problems. You will ascertain the conditions confronting each Luth-

eran group, with a view to enable the National Lutheran Council intelligently to afford such counsel and succor as will contribute to strengthen, hearten, and encourage them in establishing the Church of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession in harmonious relationship to our whole household of faith." (Report, p. 19). The Commissioners have visited France, Germany, Poland, The Baltic Provinces, Finland, Austria, and Czecho-Slovakia and have submitted detailed reports of conditions in these countries.

2) By October 31st, 1919, the sum of \$174,679.12 had been distributed for reconstruction work in Europe and by April, 1920, 1,700,000 lbs. of clothing had been sent to the needy in the war zone. Large quantities of food have also been forwarded through the efforts of the Council.

3) Foreign Missions. To solve the problem of the distressed German Lutheran Missions in India, Africa, and other parts of the world the Council asked the representatives of the Foreign Mission Boards of the constituent bodies of the National Lutheran Council to meet for conference. The result of this invitation was the organization of the Lutheran Foreign Missions Conference of North America. This Conference unanimously asked the National Lutheran Council to add the sum of \$300,000 to its budget for foreign missions. This has been done. The purpose of the Council is to help in as far as possible in rehabilitating and safe-guarding the Lutheran mission work that has been so seriously affected by the late war. (American Lutheran Survey, May 12, 1920, p. 4.)

## V. WHY CAN WE NOT JOIN HANDS WITH THE LUTHERAN COUNCIL?

- A. Are we agreed in doctrine? See paper by Rev. Hendricks.
- B. What is the actual status of the Council with regard to co-operation in so-called externals?

1) In a recent article in *Lutheraneren* (Apr. 28, 1920) Dr. Stub would make it appear that the work of the National Council concerns only such matters where doctrinal unity is not required. The following resolutions adopted by the Executive Committee of the Council are quoted in support of this: "In stating its objects and purposes, the National Lutheran Council declares:



1) That it will not interfere with the organization, the inner life, or the principles of fellowship of its constituent bodies; 2) That the execution of those purposes will be carried on without prejudice to the confessional basis of any participating body (i. e. without dealing with matters which require confessional unity); 3) That it is the right of the bodies themselves to determine the extent of co-operation." The Lutheran Church Herald for May 4th, 1920, says: "Dr. Stub makes it plain that the Council has not established church fellowship between the synods. The work of the Council was to be of such a nature in external matters that a complete union in doctrine and practice was not to be required." And in the Lutheran Church Herald for Dec. 24th, 1918 Dr. Stub says: "At this stage we must be very careful not to give the impression that the Council is to be the exponent or spokesman of a united Lutheran Church in matters of doctrine, but only an organization dealing with matters of a more external character."

2) There is a plain inconsistency between these assurances and other statements, which show that internal co-operation was included in the scope and purposes of the Council's activity. Dr. Stub in his annual report as Chairman of the Council characterizes the work of the organization as follows. "We must, however, keep in mind that the National Lutheran Commission had to deal with matters of an external character, with matters not requiring the expression of unity in regard to doctrine and practice, although the supposition was that members of the Commission should only be Lutherans. The National Lutheran Council, on the other hand, would have to deal with matters of a more mixed character. They might be classified as external, as mixed, and as internal. The material help and assistance, the reconstruction work, consisting in furnishing food and clothing to Lutherans in distress in European countries, was, of course, of an external character. The efforts at headquarters in Washington to clear our Lutheran Church from the charge of disloyalty, unjustly raised against it, was also of an external character. The efforts to install Lutheran pastors in the so-called "Industrial Centers," with the object in view of giving these industrial centers over to the Church bodies mostly concerned in these different centers, was of a somewhat mixed character and could not

under the conditions be otherwise. The reconstruction work in European countries would of course bring our Lutheran Church in contact with the Lutheran Church in Europe that had suffered intensely and needed assistance, guidance, and encouragement. Then concerted action was required when the question arose: What can the Lutheran Church in America do in order to preserve the Lutheran missions in the former German colonies for the Lutheran Church? Then another question arose and demanded solution, namely: What can be done in specific cases on the home mission field in our own country, where a possible adjustment of Church conditions is necessary in order to prevent competition, rivalry, and strife, and consequently great injury to our Lutheran Church? There was of course no thought of organic union or federation of these Church bodies nor of a general co-ordination and co-operation on the home mission field. But the problem was only in specific cases to prevent the organization of new congregations and to adjust where there was strife." (Rep., pp. 6 and 7.) At least two paragraphs of Art. II of the "Regulations Governing the National Lutheran Council" show that internal co-operation is included in the work of the Council, namely "4) To further the work of recognized agencies of the Church that deal with problems arising out of war and other emergencies; to co-ordinate, harmonize, and unify their activities; and, to create new agencies to meet circumstances which require common action" and "5) To co-ordinate the activities of the Church and its agencies for the solution of new problems which affect the religious life and consciousness of the people, e. g., social, economic, and educational conditions." Among the "principles of action" adopted by the European Commissioners these two paragraphs interest us in this connection: "5. The non-political, churchly, and spiritual character of this Mission of the National Lutheran Council shall ever be kept in the minds of the people of every nation....7) The fraternal and helpful relations established by the faithful performance of its task should be judiciously utilized by the Commission to further the ends of good understanding, co-operation and federation among the Lutheran Churches of the world." (Report, p. 28.) The Commissioners urge especially that the "National Lutheran Council should take under careful advisement the question of ef-

fective co-operation with the Lutherans of France at the opportune moment in the fundamental task of establishing a satisfactory system of Church education, including an institution for the training of the ministry." They also recommend that the Council take steps to increase its funds in order that it may provide for the continued support of Lutheran Churches in war ravaged countries of Europe. (Report, pp. 21 and 28.) Concerning the first budget for the international reconstruction service Dr. Larsen says that it "provided especially for assistance to the work of the Lutheran Church in Europe and not so much for direct service of relief." Rap. 12).

3) The facts shows that internal co-operation is included in the program of the Council:

a) In Europe. Though it is a generally recognized fact that the established Churches in Europe have for some time been hotbeds of rationalism, that some (see Kirchl. Zeitschr. 1919, 578 ff.; Luth. Ch. Her., Sept. 2, 1919; An Report, 62.) of them, though they bear the name Lutheran, represent the most varied types of doctrine, false doctrines which would be tolerated in none of the Lutheran Churches of this country, however lax, fraternal relations have been established and encouraged with individuals and groups representing these Churches with no further assurance of agreement in faith than the word of the Commissioners or the officers of the Council. These fraternal relations appear from the following:

1. The Lutheran Churches in Europe are continually being addressed and spoken of as "brethren", a term which has until recently had a special significance among Lutherans in America.

2. Fraternal greetings have been sent to the Lutheran Church in France by the N. L. Commission. (Luth. Ch. Her., Oct. 8, 1918.)

3. Of the moneys distributed by the Commissioners in the war ravaged countries, comparatively small sums have been appropriated for the relief of poor and needy, while large amounts have been given toward the direct support of pastors, congregations, and Church institutions. (Report, p. 21 and the following.)

4. Theological students have been granted direct support, and at institutions where there is no assurance that they will learn true Lutheran doctrine.

5. The reception accorded the representatives of the Lutheran church in France and Alsace-Lorraine on their visit to the United States surely implied sincere fraternal recognition.

6. The recent drive for \$1,800,000 included an appropriation of \$300,000 for the support of the German Lutheran missions in foreign countries. Co-operation on the foreign mission field presupposes co-operation at home. In this connection it is interesting to note that the Inter-church World Movement also contemplated the support of these same missions, to the extent of \$1,500,000.

b) In America. Although it has been announced that doctrinal agreement exists between those individuals who are members of the Council, this agreement is, on the one hand, insufficient (see paper presented by Rev. Hendricks), and, on the other hand, it has not been adopted by the various bodies represented in the Council, for which reason it can not be considered as a proof of doctrinal agreement between these bodies and a guaranty of unity in faith, a divine requirement for fellowship in worship and church work. Despite this the bodies represented in the Council have co-operated in internal church work and have united in worship since the organization of the Council.

1. Union services have been common, especially since the declaration of the Committee concerning doctrinal agreement, so common that specific instances need not be mentioned. The services have in many cases been under the direct arrangement of the officials of the bodies concerned and occasioned by the matters for which the Council was directly responsible, as, f. ex., the reception of the delegates from France and Alsace-Lorraine and the institution of drives for funds for the work of the Council.

2. Congregations belonging to the Norwegian Lutheran Church have been merged with congregations of the United Lutheran Church as for instance in Moorhead, Minn.

3. Joint work has been undertaken by the various bodies represented in the Council in a Training School for Mission Work-

ers in Minneapolis, Colony of Mercy in St. Paul, Spokane College, Wash., Lutheran Orient Mission (see Luth Ch. Her May 4, 1920).

4. Only on the supposition of unity in faith can it be understood that Revs. J. A. O. Stub and L. Larsen would accept the honorary title of "Doctor of Divinity" from institutions belonging to the United Lutheran Church.

5. At its meeting in Columbus, Dec. 11, 1918, the Council approved the recommendations of the Home Missions Conference with reference to the emergency work in the Industrial Centers and its recommendation that a joint committee be appointed for a conference on matters of doctrine and practice with a view to readjustment or coordination of home mission problems. In this connection the following most farreaching and important resolution was adopted: "Resolved that the National Lutheran Council commends to all general Lutheran Bodies the desirability of a spirit of highest Christian friendliness in their relations to one another; that, therefore, a polemic attitude should be abandoned, and, if manifested, ignored; that the policy of an open, full fairness be vigorously pursued; that the desire to be positively helpful be fostered, and that any manifestation of an effort to proselyte be resisted." This resolution either presupposes doctrinal unity or is indicative of a plain refusal on the part of the Council to conform itself to a prime requisite of true discipleship, that of keeping that which is committed to our trust (1 Tim. 6. 20). Scripture even says: "Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith" (Tit. 1, 13). Comp. Joh. 8, 31: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" and Jud. 3: "Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

6. Concerning co-operation in the "Industrial Centers" see IV A 4 of this Paper.

C. The National Lutheran Council is not only a unionistic organization itself which without doctrinal agreement is committed to a definite program involving internal church work, but membership in the Council would bring us into intimate relation with church bodies which throughout their history have been known to be

1. Unionistic. No doubt one reason for the rapid inroads of unionistic practice within the Norwegian Lutheran Church is this very contact with bodies which have been strongly unionistic up to this time. Unionism has been so common within the bodies represented in the United Lutheran Church that further proof is unnecessary.

2. Lax in the struggle against the evils of the Lodge. Among the evils which threaten our Lutheran Church in America the Lodge evil is second probably only to that of Unionism. The menace of the Lodge was pointed to a year ago by those of the Norwegian Lutheran Church who opposed the National Lutheran Council, but officials of the Council succeeded in evading and making light of the issue. Today, especially through the untiring efforts of Mr. B. M. Holt, a former Mason and now a member of our Synod, the Lodge question can no longer be disregarded. It was a matter of common knowledge that the United Lutheran Church was full of lodge men and that testimony against the Lodge has been almost entirely hushed in that body (see Proc. of the fifth Convention of the Engl. Distr. of the Mo. Syn., 1919, p. 49). It was also reported that even ministers in this body were lodge members. Mr. Holt has looked into the matter more thoroughly and feels convinced that 250—300 pastors of the United Lutheran Church are lodge men. A list has been compiled of 108 names of pastors and professors of the United Lutheran Church who are Masons. This list can at any time be substantiated by documentary evidence. It is significant that among these are 35 who have the degree of D.D. or Ph.D., one is the president of a Theological Seminary, six are synod presidents, one is the superintendent of a Home for Aged, one is a college president, one is a member of the National Lutheran Council, etc. Can anyone doubt what the outcome would be of intimate relations with a body where the Lodge situation is so deplorable?

D. The organization and work of the National Lutheran Council are a violation of free church principles. So far as we are able to see the first mention of the National Lutheran Council in any of the official organs of the Norwegian Lutheran Church was made in the Lutheran Church Herald, Oct. 22, 1918. "Lutheraneren" for Nov. 13, 1918, in an editorial which wel-

comes the United Lutheran Church as an answer to the prayers especially of the laity and in the same connection prophesies one Lutheran Church in America, urges a "common council" which can represent the Lutheran Church before the Government in the same manner as the Commission did. In this way the formation of the National Lutheran Council was heralded in advance, though the actual announcement of its organization did not come before the latter part of December, 1918, and the beginning of January, 1919. That the Church Council of the Norwegian Lutheran Church took no official action in the matter before a meeting held in the early part of 1919 seems to show that it had no official notification of the organization before this time. The Church bodies concerned have a right to ask the reason for this delay in reporting such a farreaching decision on the part of its officials.

2. Large sums of money (more than \$25,000) entrusted to the Commission were used toward the organization of the Council, and that without the authorization of those bodies which had contributed the money specifically for work among the soldiers and sailors.

3. The endorsement of the respective Church Bodies was sought and obtained (not without a struggle) only after the organization of the Council had been completed and the work outlined and begun, in other words, only after the respective Church bodies through their respective officers were committed to the cause of the Council.

4. The recent drive for \$1,800,000 was staged only one short month before the general convention of the Norwegian Lutheran Church. What plainer disregard of the rights of congregations through their chosen representatives to express their sentiments?

Reformed bodies complain in bitter terms of self-appointed committees and organizations which assume unlimited powers and dictate farreaching policies in the Church. It is our firm conviction that the National Lutheran Council is an evidence of the same menace in the Lutheran Church, a menace which is robbing the congregations of one of their greatest privileges and laying a heavy burden on the consciences of many good people,

who feel that loyalty demands also their support, though their heart of hearts is opposed to the principles involved.

E. From the date of the Council's organization until October 31, 1919, one year and two months, the administration and campaign expenses of the Council totaled \$82,108.59. During this period the sum of \$556,732.63 was collected and \$176,679.12 distributed for European and Asiatic relief and reconstruction. Do these figures strengthen the confidence of those who have contributed the money? In the Missouri Synod a fund of \$2,000,000 has been collected for the support of superannuated pastors and teachers with no expense to the Church. In the same synod \$243,159.68 has been distributed for European relief at an expense to the Church of \$3,978.05.

The more one ponders the aims and purposes of the National Lutheran Council and the men who formed the organization, the more one realizes the colossal task which it has undertaken. The problems confronting the civilized world at the conclusion of the war were stupendous, but the problems of the Church were none the less so. Let no one find fault with those who see the problems, who feel the burden, and face the task. Ours is a duty and a privilege such as the Church probably never has seen. We are living in severely critical times, and the Church and each of its members ought to be feverishly busy about its work of saving souls. The field of action has been greatly extended by and as a result of the war. The Lutheran Church has undoubtedly at this time its special duties and responsibilities, which it would be folly to deny. It would also be folly to deny the fact that the National Lutheran Council has accomplished certain remarkable things. It has shown the value of co-operation. Huge sums of money have been secured through the efforts of the Council and much suffering has been alleviated.

And yet the Council may fitly be characterized as a blunder and a calamity.

A blunder, for the opportune moment was at hand but it was misused. For what hinders co-operation among the Lutheran bodies in this country, even in externals? The opponents of Missouri have made much of the fact that the original regulations of the Council were drawn up by a Missourian—how un-



reasonable she must be when she now refuses to co-operate! The pity is that those who have been misled to adopt unionistic principles are unable anymore to distinguish clearly between external and internals. Certain problems were at hand which would have made a certain co-operation in externals a desirable thing, but it was made impossible by those who refused to make the proper distinction.

A calamity, for through the organization and work of the National Lutheran Council the floodgates of unionism and lodgery have been opened still wider and further sections of the Lutheran Church are being subjected to their destroying power. It is seeking to reconstruct, to build up, in one part, but destroys in another; it seeks to unite, but has caused further strife and dissension; it seeks to save Lutheranism in America and Europe, but is robbing it of its real strength and making it an easy prey to the spirit of the Reformed Churches. The National Lutheran Council has brought a crisis in the history of the Lutheran Church in America. May God in His grace keep us firm!

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### *THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL.*

1) The president of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America has repeatedly declared "that full agreement in doctrine and practice was reached at the meeting held in Chicago 1919, and that this meeting was the most memorable event next to the amalgamation in 1917. He also states that the unity attained in doctrine and in church practice will have incalculable consequences and possibilities for the future of the Lutheran Church of America."

2) The secretary of the National Lutheran Council declares: "Absolute unity is reached in all fundamental doctrines and church practice."

3) All districts of the New Church body adopted the following points at their meetings last summer:

a) "The Iowa District of the Norwegian Lutheran Church

of America heartily indorses and approves the organization and work of the National Lutheran Council.

b) The Iowa District furthermore approves the election of the President of the Norwegian Lutheran Church as President of the National Lutheran Council, and also the election of Rev. Lauritz Larsen as the executive secretary of the National Lutheran Council.

c) The Iowa District expresses its gratitude to God for the unity in regard to doctrine and practice *between a number of Lutheran Church Bodies* represented at the meeting in Chicago, the 11—13 of March, 1919, by representative men of the same church bodies."

4) The South Dakota, Southern Minnesota, and the Iowa District adopted in addition to this the following:

"Iowa District authorizes the church council of our church to take the necessary steps in order to effect co-ordination and co-operation in home and in foreign mission work wherever it may be regarded beneficial to the welfare of the Church and required by the urgent need of our Lutheran brethren in Europe or in the mission fields."

5) In the Lutheran Church Herald, April 6, 1920 we read:

"The Council was discussed at the district meetings last year and some resolutions were passed. All districts approved the organization of the council, sanctioned the election of Dr. H. G. Stub as president and Dr. Lauritz Larsen as secretary and expressed their gratitude for the unity in doctrine and practice as expressed in the theses agreed to at a representative gathering in Chicago.

The South Dakota, Southern Minnesota, and Iowa district, with some dissenting votes, decided to leave the question of co-ordination and co-operation in home and foreign mission work to the Church Council, but the other districts, while not passing identical resolutions, agreed to postpone this question until the meeting this year. Meanwhile Dr. Stub and Dr. Larsen were authorized to represent our Church in the Council and do the work as was necessary."

These statements by the President and the Secretary of the National Lutheran Council, and the resolutions passed by the Norwegian Lutheran Church prove that these men and this Church Body believe there exists full unity in doctrine and practice between them and the *different church bodies* constituting the National Lutheran Council.

The object of our investigation will be to ascertain if the basis of this unity, the theses adopted in Chicago 1919, is a full guaranty for doctrinal unity and church practice.

The theses are printed in the organ of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, The Lutheran Church Herald, March 25, 1919, under the following heading: "*Mutual Declaration Regarding Doctrine and Practice in our Lutheran Church with a View to Possible Cor-ordination in Mission Work.*"

#### THE BIBLE, THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD.

This paragraph reads:

"*All Lutheran bodies* represented in the National Lutheran Council are agreed in the fundamental doctrine that the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired and inerrant Word of God, and only rule of faith, doctrine, and practice." The canonical books of the Old and New Testaments seem to be acknowledged as the inspired Word of God, and the paragraph appears to be satisfactory to all who hold that the Bible contains nothing but God's Word. It seems to establish the true doctrine of inspiration.

But upon a closer examination this paragraph, as the other paragraphs, reveals one weakness. It is *too indefinite*. It is so general that a false doctrine about inspiration may easily find its way into it. There is nothing in this paragraph which prohibits one from asserting that the Bible only contains the Word of God and not that every word in the Bible is God's Word given by inspiration.

A general statement is made in this paragraph which all Protestants agree on, but which does not exclude the modern theory of inspiration.

The Old Synod taught in regard to inspiration that the sacred writers were organs of God, so that what they taught, God taught.

The Spirit of God in a miraculous manner gave to them what they should speak and write, and the very words they should use.

We fail to find this definite doctrine of inspiration in this paragraph. On the other hand, we find a doctrine set forth in such a general manner, a doctrine that is so broad that the modern theory about inspiration may easily find its way into the paragraph.

And it is a historical fact that the Eastern Synods have defended and taught the modern doctrine of inspiration, a doctrine that holds that the Bible contains the Word of God, but not that every word in the Bible is given by inspiration. Prominent men in these Synods deny verbal inspiration. In a booklet published in 1917, Dr. Delk asserts that "no theory of verbal inspiration is longer tenable," since "modern scholarship has set theology free from that false idea of inspiration." And Dr. H. E. Jacobs, theological professor in the General Council, said in an introduction to Dr. Haas's *Biblical Criticism* that, "if the verbal theory of inspiration means that every word and letter (of the Bible) is inspired," that is "an assumption for which there is no warrant."

### *THE WORK OF CHRIST, REDEMPTION, AND RECONCILIATION.*

This paragraph teaches that Jesus Christ is God and man, and that He suffered and died for the human race, fulfilled the Law and paid the penalty for the whole world.

We have no objection to this paragraph, but what we object to is that the Nowegian Lutheran Church declares that there is unity in regard to doctrine between a number of *Lutheran Church bodies* represented at the meeting in Chicago, the 11—13 of March, 1919. Dr. Delk, of the General Synod, attacks the doctrine that in the person of Jesus Christ the divine and human natures are "inseparably joined together." He also declares that the "ransom theory" of the atonement is a "delusion", a "time-worn fallacy." He denies that the death of Christ was a "substitutional sacrifice" for the sins of the world. This doctrine, which is the very heart and center of our faith, is denied by Dr. Delk. And the book in which Dr. Delk denies these fundamental

doctrines is highly praised and advertised in the General Synod. We fail to see how the Norwegian Lutheran Church can agree in doctrine with this church body.

### ABSOLUTION.

This paragraph reads:

"Absolution does not essentially differ from the forgiveness of sin offered by the Gospel. The only difference is that absolution is the direct application of forgiveness of sin to the individual desiring the consolation of the Gospel."

This paragraph teaches that absolution is the direct *application* of forgiveness of sin to the individual *desiring* the consolation of the Gospel.

We have taught and yet teach that absolution consists in this that the communicant receives forgiveness from the pastor as from God Himself, and in no wise doubt, but firmly believes, that our sins are thereby forgiven before God in heaven; and that *absolution is not conditional*. We have taught and yet teach that absolution is just as real whether the communicant accepts the gift or not, as the condition of the communicant neither detracts or adds anything to the contents of absolution.

This paragraph teaches that absolution is the direct *application* of forgiveness of sin to the individual *desiring* the consolation of the Gospel. To "apply" on the individual the forgiveness of sin and to "pronounce or declare" the forgiveness of sin to the communicant are two different things. To "pronounce" the forgiveness of sin is according to John 20:23 the same as to remit or forgive sin, but to "apply" the forgiveness of sin is to *use* or *employ* the forgiveness of sin on the communicant. We shall also note the expression, "the individual *desiring* the consolation of the Gospel." Here a *condition* is attached to the individual communicant partaking of the absolution, this condition is that the communicant "desiring" the consolation of the Gospel. We can hardly put any other meaning on this expression, "*desiring* the consolation of the Gospel," than to *believe*, as the beginning of faith often consists only in a longing or desire after God's grace. Christ says: "Blessed are they which hunger

and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6).

From this we see that the *paragraph teaches a conditional absolution* which the *Old Synod declared is no absolution*.

### FAITH.

"Faith is not in any measure a human effort. Faith is an act of man in so far as it is man who believes. But both the power to believe and the act of believing are God's work and gift in the human soul or heart."

Our opponents have always maintained that faith is a work of God, and that the power to believe is from the Lord. But they have also maintained that the successful result depends upon man himself when God through His Word operates on man's heart. And in order to emphasize this doctrine stress is put upon words which speak about Christ gathering the children of Jerusalem together "even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." (Matt. 23:37).

The paragraph in its general terms is suitable for such a construction, and still more so, because it fails to state that God also must create in man the *will* to believe.

### CONVERSION.

"Conversion as the word is commonly used in our Lutheran Confession comprises contrition and faith, produced by the Law and the Gospel. If a man is not converted, the responsibility and guilt fall on him because he is in spite of God's all sufficient grace through the call, 'would not' according to the Word of Christ, Matth. 23:37: 'How often would I have gathered thy children even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not'.

If a man is converted the glory belongs to God alone, whose work it is throughout. Before conversion or in conversion, there is no co-operation of man, but at the very moment man is converted, co-operation is never independent of the Holy Spirit, but always to such an extent and so long as God by His Holy Spirit rules, guides, and leads him."

This paragraph seems to teach that man's salvation is of grace alone and not in the least the work of man.

But as the paragraph deals with a doctrine that constitutes the very foundation of the doctrine of Election a more complete treaty of conversion should have been given.

During the controversy about Election, yes, at the present day, prominent men teach that faith is a condition of salvation. As late as this last winter Prof. Keyser, of the General Synod, writes in *American Lutheran Survey*: "Man's salvation depends on faith as a condition" and, "indeed, the reception of salvation by faith is the only condition on which God can save men by grace (*sola gratia*)."

A condition is that which is required in order that something else can take place. An illustration from daily life may make this clear to us. Suppose a man says: "I will give you \$100." If nothing more is said the hundred dollars is a gift. But suppose he adds: "if you work for me a month," this addition is a condition and changes the gift into an earned salary. So also with our salvation, if faith is a condition God demands from us, then it is no longer a gift but a salary we have obtained by fulfilling the condition. Therefore, if faith is a condition it ceases to be a gift. Dr. Koren, certainly, states correctly the case when he says: "If faith is a condition or a requirement, then it is a merit."

### *ELECTION.*

This paragraph states that "the causes of Election to salvation are the mercy of God and the most holy merit of Christ; nothing in us on account of which God has elected us to eternal life. We reject all forms of synergism and all forms of Calvinism."

During the controversy which the Old Synod had about this doctrine our opponents always denied that they taught synergism—man's co-operation with God in conversion—they even claimed that the Formula of Concord contained the doctrine of man's good conduct in conversion. This being the case a confession by accepting the Formula of Concord is not sufficient. If any one asserts that he accepts our Lutheran Confession and by his ac-

tion shows that he plainly rejects certain portions thereof, then the action decides against the mere assertion.

In examining this paragraph we find a very serious omission, nothing is said regarding the *position* of faith in Election. Any one is permitted to teach that faith is a "necessary prerequisite of Election" or that we are elected "in view of faith" or "on account of faith." This un-Biblical doctrine changes the relation of faith and thereby the NATURE of faith. Let us never forget that the nature of the truths in the Word of God is determined by its relation. If we push faith out of the eternal decree of Election and place it ahead of Election we thereby not only change its position but also its nature, it no longer remains a fruit of Election, but it becomes the necessary prerequisite of Election, something which guided and determined God in forming His elective decree. Dr. Koren says: "If this, that God foresaw faith, is the thing that guided and determined God in Election, then the term 'in view of faith' is false."

Strange to say, the President of the Norwegian Lutheran Church states under oath before the Court in Northwood, Iowa, that he finds no difference between faith as an antecedent to Election and faith as a fruit of Election. He is asked: "That is the way that you explain that there is no difference between faith as an antecedent and faith as a result?" Stub: "Yes, there is no difference." In former years Mr. Stub found a great difference between these two terms.

### BAPTISM.

Concerning baptism the paragraph states that the "Holy Ghost works regeneration of the sinner both through baptism and the Gospel. Both are, therefore, justly called the means of regeneration."

Rev. John Wagner, in the Lutheran Quarterly last year, maintained that infants are not endowed with saving faith in the act of baptism. And Dr. Keyser, of the General Synod, writes: "Most of our children receive in baptism the seed of regeneration." We hold that all children are regenerated in baptism and not merely that most of them receive the seed of regeneration. A strong faction in the General Synod holds the Reformed view



concerning Baptism and the Lord's Supper. How the Norwegian Lutheran Church can thank God for the unity in doctrine with these Lutherans we fail to see.

\* The theses fail to mention the Lord's Supper and the Millennium (Chiliasm) although it is a historical fact that the Reformed teachings concerning the Lord's Supper and the Millennium have many adherents in the Eastern Synods and that these false doctrines have caused agitations for years in these Synods and still are taught by ministers of the Gospel and Professors in the theological schools.

### *MUTUAL DECLARATION REGARDING PRACTICE.*

The church practice in the Eastern Synods has continually leaned toward the so-called "New Measures". These "New Measures" consist in co-operation with the Reformed in an exchange of pulpits, altar fellowship, secret societies, chiliasm, rationalism and externalism.

When the General Council was organized in 1867 at Fort Wayne, the Missouri Synod and the Ohio Synod did not join the new organization, not because the constitution and the confession of the Council were faulty, but because un-Lutheran practices still existed in various Synods. The Ohio Synod asked the Council to give a resolution on the following "Four Points", namely: Chiliasm, Altar-fellowship, Pulpit-fellowship, and The secret societies.

These "Four Points" were discussed during the following years without any concessions from the Council or resolutions to root out the old leaven. During the discussions some of the members of the Council were of the opinion that it was a dangerous subject that ought to be avoided, others that it was below the dignity of the Council to take up the subject, and still others thought that the Council's time was too precious for such discussions. The result of the discussions was the "Akron Rule", which avoids the main issue and refuses to take a definite Lutheran attitude and allows every pastor to act according to his conscience. Dr. Seiss, one of the most prominent members of the General Council, declares concerning the "Akron Rule": "They are badly mistaken who believe that the General Council

demands that only Lutherans must be admitted to the Lord's Supper at our Lutheran Churches."

"When we bear in mind, that this un-Lutheran spirit was the real cause of the numerous conflicts in the Eastern Synods, a warning example is placed before us by which we certainly ought to profit." The history of the Lutheran Church in America testifies to coming ages that a firm adherence to the Word of God and to the Confessions of our Lutheran Church assures a strong Church.

"In the declaration adopted by the Norwegian Lutheran Church we fail to find this assurance.

1. The document states that our Church REGARDS it as a matter of PRINCIPLE THAT ITS MEMBERS attend services in their own churches, that their children be baptized by their own pastors, and that they partake of the Holy Supper at their own altars, and that pulpit and altar fellowship with pastors and people of other confessions are to be AVOIDED as contrary to a true and consistent Lutheranism.

2. Associations or societies which have religious exercises from which the name of the Triune God or the name of Jesus Christ AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE is excluded or which teach salvation through works must be REGARDED as incompatible with the Lutheran Church.

3. We promise each other that it shall be our earnest purpose to give a fearless testimony and to do our utmost to place our respective church bodies in the right Christian position in this matter.

These paragraphs are similar to those dealing with doctrine. They are alike in this respect that they both are evasive and general, so general in their terms that they may be interpreted many different ways and each interpretation may be calimed to be the correct one.

The authors of the declaration claim that their Church REGARDS it as a matter of principle, they do not say IT IS a command given in God's Word that we shall attend these Churches where the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and where the Sacraments are administered according to the institution of the Lord.

Regarding pulpit- and alterfellowship with the sects they merely state that it must be AVOIDED as contrary to consistent Lutheranism. We are of the firm opinion that such unionism must not only be avoided, but that it cannot be tolerated by a church body claiming to be Lutheran. We are also of the firm conviction that such unionism is not only contrary to consistent Lutheranism but contrary to the Word of God.

The statement concerning the secret societies is of special interest. It is stated that societies which as a MATTER OF PRINCIPLE exclude the name of the Triune God and the name of Christ are incompatible with the Lutheran Church. Such societies only which have a settled rule of action or a governing law of conduct to exclude the name of the Triune God and the name of Christ are not in harmony with the Lutheran church. Not a word is said about the fact that secret society members must not be admitted as members of the church, neither do we find anything about this that the lodges are not only contrary to the Lutheran Church but to the WORD OF GOD.

When we remember that the lodges are not only tolerated in the Eastern Synods, but that they are the leading element in these church bodies, do we then ask too much when we demand that a definite platform be given in these resolutions which condemns the lodge principles and asks that the Lutheran Church keeps aloof from this evil?

But this resolution, as well as the "Akron Rule", leaves the lodge question undecided. How Dr. H. G. Stub and the Norwegian Lutheran Church could feel justified in thanking God for the unity in faith and church practice with these Eastern Synods, we fail to see, but we see clearly that the Lutheran faith has suffered terribly in the past by attempts of union and co-operation with various Christian denominations and tendencies. This unionistic spirit has penetrated the heart and the soul of a large part of the Lutheran Church and it has poisoned its life-roots.

## SERMONS

SERMON ON JOHN 10:16; HELD AT MINNEAPOLIS,  
MINN., JUNE 6, 1920.

*And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

No figure of speech characterizing our Redeemer more strikingly presents his person, his office and his sentiments towards men than that of the shepherd. In the picture of Christ, the good shepherd, we find portrayed his power, his love, his care, his protecting tenderness and watchfulness. There is also no other picture that more forcibly pictures to us the real status of his church and of the individual Christian. Being called the sheep of the flock denotes our helplessness, defenselessness and our utter dependence upon the shepherd. The picture unfolds the real relationship between the Redeemer and us. Christ is the owner who has given his life for the sheep, and has thus earned and won them as his very own, away from the ownership of hell. He has real property right to them; and it is not a disinterested ownership, but his great act of self-sacrifice was prompted by love for the straying sheep. He is attached to them by a divine affection. They are the objects of his tender care—he leads them to green pastures and beside still waters. He protects them against all foes and finally leads them to the eternal pasturage of heaven.

It is a beautiful picture portrayed by Christ Himself, but the picture is frequently misused and misapplied; particularly are the words of the text spoken by Jesus misunderstood and incorrectly explained and applied. A meaning is injected that the Savior never intended. Let us consider these much abused words today and seek to ascertain their true sense. The words are:

**THERE SHALL BE ONE FOLD, AND ONE SHEPHERD.**

First, What these words do not mean.

Secondly, What they do mean.

The figure itself presents no difficulties. The good shepherd

is, of course, Christ Himself. The sheep constituting his flock are the believers, the members of his holy Church upon earth, but the Church of Christ, as it presents itself to our eyes here upon earth, is by no means a picture of unity and harmony, but one of friction and dissension. Our eyes behold not one but many folds, a constantly increasing number of folds in vehement opposition to each other, but all claiming Christ as their shepherd. The Christian Church is most sadly torn and divided, and this disharmony and division is a cause of offense to the world and a source of sadness and grave concern to all true Christians. According to all appearances this word of Christ's concerning the one fold has not been fulfilled.

Many people are still awaiting the visible, tangible fulfillment of this expression of Christ's, and console themselves with the thought that the time will come upon earth when all differences and dissensions will cease, when all weapons shall rest; all swords shall be beaten into plow-shares, all spears into sickles, and all the human family with one accord shall bow before Jesus Christ and shall dwell together in unruffled harmony in undisturbed Christian unity of faith and brotherly love. This wonderful time, we are told, will surely come before the end of all things. Before the final judgment, these dreamers claim, Christ will institute the millennium, the kingdom of a thousand years, from which all godless shall be excluded; and in which love and peace and concord and complete temporal happiness shall reign supreme. Strife and discord will be unknown. Then the words of Christ will be fulfilled and we shall find one fold and one shepherd.

This is indeed a pretty dream! Such a condition of affairs may seem to us very desirable, but it is a stern fact that the text does not at all refer to such a millennial kingdom of happiness and peace; and this beautiful dream, this hazy anticipation of a thousand years of joy and harmony is in direct opposition to clear statements of Holy Writ, and whatever is against Holy Writ is wrong, no matter how beautiful and apparently desirable. Whenever the Bible speaks of Christ's kingdom on earth, of the hope of Christians in this world, of the last times and of final judgment, it describes conditions exactly contrary to the expectations of the millennialists. According to the Scripture, the King-

dom of Christ is and will ever remain a kingdom of the Cross. The Church will remain until the end of time a Church militant. The Savior leaves his followers under no delusions regarding the character of His kingdom on earth. He remarks repeatedly that all true earnest children of God must expect hatred and persecution, that the true disciple will have to take up his cross and follow Him; that His children must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

The flock of Christ is called "a little flock", traveling over many hindrances and obstructions the straight and narrow way, while the great multitude travels the broad way leading to destruction. The psalmist calls God's own "the hidden ones" of the Lord, whose life is life in Him, and which will only be revealed with Christ in glory.

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

The kingdom of God is invisible, hidden from our eyes.

Our Savior has never promised that the time before the end shall be a time of rest and peace and unity. Whenever He speaks of these times; His words hold something very different in prospect. He describes the last times as times of temptation, deception and discord; in which many false Christs and false prophets shall preach and spread pernicious error and falsehoods. He warns us that the times will be spiritually so dangerous, that if God in His mercy would not shorten them no one would be saved. Instead of a general and unified faith, He foretells an alarming increase of unbelief, a growing coldness on the part of many believers. The closer the end the fiercer and more difficult would become the battle. In the fire of temptation and tribulation of the last times the number of Christ's followers would become a small flock indeed; the conditions would become worse and worse and finally, when they reached their highest point, Christ would appear suddenly to destroy his enemies and lead his small flock to heavenly bliss. It is a vain hope that the children of men will ever be united in one great harmonious family—one great undivided fold. Such a condition would mean the elimination of sin and the devil. The devil is the

sower of all discord and as long as he continues his pernicious activity there can never be perfect peace and harmony.

The words of the text are also subject to other misinterpretations. The contention is made that these words of the Savior constitute a command to drop all doctrinal differences, that is, all differences in the teaching of the various churches, to unite all contending Christian parties into one grand church. There is much talk in our day along the lines of union and amalgamation. The spirit of union seems to be in the air! In speech and writing we are told that those who are filled with the spirit of Christ must overlook and ignore all differences of teaching. Their duty is simply to abolish all such differences, or at least to minimize their importance, to gloss them over, to refrain from mentioning and emphasizing them. Even though there be no entire doctrinal agreement, the spirit of Christian charity demands a polite ignoring of this fact. The things upon which we disagree, we are told, are small and immaterial, inconsequential matters, upon which little or nothing depends. They represent really only differences of view and opinion. They are not fundamental,—others too have the truth, only in a different form. All of them lead to salvation, only upon different ways. These things constitute no real basis for division or even discussion. Let us come together and form one fold even though we do not agree in all points, even though we do not all have the same faith and profession. Such sentiments constitute a distinct temptation. There is indeed a certain glamour in the prospect of greater work to be accomplished by unified and concentrated effort. There is something very tempting in the logical deduction that united powers make for greater efficiency and will increase the power for good.

The Lutherans particularly are scolded and upbraided for consistently opposing such efforts of unifying the Christian forces. We are called narrow, stubborn, head-strong, exclusive, lacking in charity, hindering the fulfillment of Christ's words, "There shall be one fold and one shepherd." We are accused of acting contrary to the will of Christ; and, if the words of Christ really have the sense and meaning that these people claim for them then we indeed have reason to repent and to abolish our position.

And, how can we know whether or not our position is the correct one? No doubt, by turning to Christ, upon whom the Christian Church is founded and who is Eternal Truth; and this Eternal Truth never would demand or sanction an external union which can be established only by the denial of that Truth, which he has revealed to us. There is only one Truth and that is the Word of God. It is a finished product, not subject to the variations or interpretations directed by the whims of man. It is an entity and admits of no partial acceptance, or of any wilful ignoring of any part of it. It is not a thing which can be made to fit human notions and desires, but a mold according to which all actions and thoughts and teachings of man are to be cast. Wherever there is a divergence from this Word, we find error. This Word is not only sacred in its entirety, but every statement is inviolable. In the real sense of the word, there are no unimportant doctrines. God's Word can never be unimportant, and besides this we dare not trust our judgment as to what is important or not. Where God's Word is concerned, we have only the one duty of an unquestionable acceptance.

"If you continue in my words, then are you my disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth."

He who departs from God's Word departs from truth, and whosoever places mere human opinion and logic and deduction upon the same level with eternal truth and accords it equal right of existence is sinning. Any union attained by the sacrifice of truth is plainly against the will of God. The true sheep of Christ's flock listen only to the voice of the good shepherd and follow no strange voice. They cannot and will not join themselves to any flock where any other voice but that of the good shepherd resounds. They cannot remain in union with those in whose midst the sheep are led to any other pasture but that of the Word of God; and this latter condition is indeed the case where anything else is taught but what the Word of God teaches.

The wave of unionistic tendencies which has swept over our country and over the world is plainly of satanic origin. It is one of the two methods of Satan to despoil the Church of Christ. It is a favorite trick of his to disrupt the church through false doctrine, to sow the seeds of discord and then to seek to effect a union at the sacrifice of truth. He is a liar from the begin-



ning, he is the father of lies, who naturally hates the truth. Every union that is not based on a unity of faith has in every case proven disastrous, and all its splendid promises have turned out to be a vain delusion. A union which compromises truth immediately deprives itself of the promise of divine blessing, and even though a firm position regarding the soundness of every jot and tittle of God's Word may mean that we will have to suffer loneliness, being cut off from the great number to whom the promise of temporal advantage is of greater importance than an unpopular adherence to the plain statements of Holy Writ, we are safe and right only then when we stand on the simple platform "Thus saith the Lord". We do maintain that the words of Jesus emphatically do not mean that the different church bodies are to manufacture with the suppression of truth an external union. In spite of all glowing promises, such a union must always remain an abomination. z o

But what do the words of Jesus mean? These words have already been fulfilled. In connection with these words the Savior says to the Pharisees:

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice."

"The sheep of this fold" are the Jews. The sheep which "are not of this fold" are the heathen. In the time before Christ the human race was divided into two folds—the one fold being the people of Israel and the other the heathen world in general. The Jews were indeed the chosen ones of the Lord,—under His constant care and providential leadership, fed and led by God's own miraculous power, the recipients of His wondrous promises, the custodians of His word, tenderly guarded and trained. And on the other hand the heathen could be likened unto a fold or flock without a shepherd, wandering aimlessly and helplessly about in the wilderness of this world, cut off from the green pastures of Jehovah's word, unable to quench their spiritual thirst at the fresh water of divine favor and promise. The blessed flock of Israel was strictly separated from the heathen, not only by difference of race, but by having a special country with its special divinely given laws. The Pharisee of the time of Jesus had developed the pride of race to a remarkable degree and looked with supreme contempt upon the heathen. Through the

appearance of the blessed Son of God, the time had come, however, when the wall of division between the two flocks was to be torn down, when all race and caste differences were to vanish, and also the heathen were to partake of the blessed promises of Jehovah. Thus indeed, there would, through the wondrous work of Jesus, be one fold and one shepherd. Through the preaching of the gospel Christ was to build one Church of Jews and heathen, the Church which would spread itself all over the earth, the Church, the doors of which should stand open to the believers of all nations, united into one body by the bonds of one faith. This glorious prediction of Christ was fulfilled when the apostles went out into the world with the saving gospel of man's redemption. The promise began to be fulfilled as soon as the divine invitation went out to all men irrespective of race,

*"Come, for all things are now ready."*

Thus the fulfillment of the words of our text lies not in the future but in the past and in the present. The one flock, under one shepherd is the holy Christian Church upon earth. We are indeed deeply grieved by the lack of external unity in the church and we are bound to feel the prompting of the temptation to fashion by hook or crook, with or without real unity, at least an external union. If we yield to this temptation, we are depriving the shepherd of a prerogative that is distinctly His. Christ is the shepherd, we ministers are only his undershepherds, members of the flock commissioned to carry out the shepherd's commands. We are never to mix our own voice with His, His voice alone is to resound. He is well able to handle the situation. We are so inclined to try to meddle in His management of His flock and are prone to become impatient with the seeming lack of results. But let us not be disturbed. Let us calmly and quietly proclaim our shepherd's message. Let us feed the flock with the food that the good shepherd provides, doing everything in our power to prepare the conditions so that His voice may resound without let or hindrance. That is all that he has commanded us to do. It is a glorious privilege, a privilege connected with the Master's promised blessing. Harking only to His voice, permitting only His voice to resound, let us continue our way, troublesome and obstructed though it may be, until finally we shall reach the blessed pasturage of heaven. Amen.

## PASTORAL SERMON.

Text: Acts 20:26-28.

Fellow redeemed, dearly beloved hearers of the Word of God, brethren in the ministry.

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is a power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Thus the apostle Paul writes to the Romans (1:16) and thereby briefly and forcefully announces not only the theme of the epistle, but also the platform on which he took his stand: the Gospel of Christ, a power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. This is the theme, the keynote of all his preaching. To this he had been called not by man, but by Jesus Christ himself, just as immediately as any one of the twelve, endowed with as great gifts as they. And none of them have delivered unto the church of God a fuller or clearer exposition of the contents, power, sweetness, and comfort of Christ's Gospel than the apostle Paul. By his Gospel he lived. In it he labored, praying night and day for its success, suffering hunger and thirst, the scoffing of the wise Greeks and the hatred and persecution of his own countrymen, the fanatical Jews, all for the sake of this Gospel, because the love of Christ constrained him, and he adds, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel." In his love toward Christ and zeal for the salvation of his people, the Jews, he even goes so far as to wish that he might be accursed from Christ if he only thereby might save his brethren according to the flesh. (Rom. 9). However, he had experienced this saving power of the Gospel not only on his own heart, he had witnessed it also in these many of gentile extraction who had turned their back upon idolatry and became partakers of the common joy, comfort and power of the Word of the Cross as well as of the tribulations and persecutions for the Gospel's sake in common with the apostle himself. Therefore he was not ashamed of the Gospel, having found in it Christ the Lord with all His gifts of mercy.

Brethren, especially you colleagues in the ministry, I have been requested to speak a word in the name of the Lord particularly to you, and to myself as your fellow servant, although it also concerns all Christians that are assembled here, since we

ministers are appointed by God through the call of our congregations to the ministry of the Word to be shepherds and overseers under Christ, having the same mission to perform as the apostles. By the gracious assistance of the Holy Spirit, I shall endeavor to do this, following in the steps of the great apostle to the gentiles. For among all the great examples of the church of God, no doubt, none are more worthy of following than that of the apostle Paul. And so much the more cheerfully may we do this as he himself, moved by the Spirit of God, exhorts us saying, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." (1 Cor. 11:1).

In our text the apostle shows by his own words and example how the Gospel is to be preached and that ministry to be performed which the Lord has entrusted to us. We then ask,

**WHY SHOULD A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL PUT HIS WHOLE HEART AND SOUL INTO HIS WORK?**  
Our text gives us two good reasons, namely,

- 1) The great demands which the Lord makes upon him, and
- 2) The abundant comfort and assistance which He promises a faithful performance of these demands.

#### I.

Our text is a part of the apostle's farewell address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, where he had labored three years. He was now on his way to Jerusalem, where bonds and afflictions awaited him. He was in haste and determined to sail by Ephesus, but summoned the elders of the church to meet him at Miletus in order to give them a parting word of warning, admonition, and comfort. And to remind them of the importance of that office which God had entrusted to their care, and the obligations which it imposes. This address is, indeed, a pastoral sermon. And since we agree that whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning so these words also. We can, therefore, never sufficiently praise God for having suffered these words to be committed to writing and handed down to us. Hence the ministry of the 20th century must need the admonition and comfort they contain as well as that of the first. Brethren, we need them only too well. For, although the conditions and circumstances of the present day be

different from those of Paul's age, nevertheless the demands on us are in the main the same, and the dangers and temptations from satan, the world, and our corrupt flesh are also essentially the same.

First of all, the apostle reminds the elders that the Holy Ghost had placed them in the office which they held. It was not Paul nor even the church at Ephesus which had effected this, but the Holy Spirit, the Holy One in Israel, He that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth (Rev. 3:7) without whose assistance and gracious working their work would be in vain. He has also placed us as overseers and spiritual advisers. Though He calls through men, through our congregations our calling is none the less a divine calling. Indeed, what God said by the prophet applies in our case as well: Give them warning from me. (Ezek. 3:17). We say we preach, baptize, absolve, administer holy communion by virtue and on behalf of God Himself? Let us always remember that we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. This is the first demand of God that we be mindful of the fact that it is His will and command we execute, His baptism, His absolution, His holy supper we administer.

The next requirement imposed upon a minister of the Gospel is that he always bear in mind who those are among whom he labors and whom he serves. We are inclined to look more at the outward, visible side of things. In like manner we look upon those sitting below the pulpit or gathering at the font and the altar as ordinary sinful and weak persons like ourselves, and this, of course is true. However, the apostle calls these the flock and church of God which He has purchased with his own blood. They are men and women with immortal souls, souls that by nature are altogether contaminated by sin, lost and condemned creatures who like newborn babes would perish if left to themselves. But in His ineffable love God took pity upon their misery as He says in Ezek. 16, And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood: Live! Moved by compassion He sent his only begotten Son in the likeness of sinful flesh who fulfilled the Law for them, suffered and died and shed his

precious blood as a ransom for all their sins, in order that He might bring them to his heavenly Father saying, Behold, Father, here are all the millions of men that were eternally lost, subject to Thy wrath and judgment. This have I done for them. Art Thou satisfied? And his heavenly Father was satisfied, which He solemnly declare before all creation by raising Christ from the dead. Thus, my friends, did God purchase his church with his own blood. As many as have been received into communion with Jesus Christ by holy baptism and by a living faith have appropriated to themselves the work and merit of Christ, are sheep and lambs of his flock, they are his church, a dearly bought possession. They are sanctified by God's Holy Spirit; therefore He is very solicitous concerning their welfare, and will not tolerate any mismanagement of his flock saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm. (Ps. 105:15). Conceded that they are full of frailties and faults, such as Paul had to rebuke in the Corinthian Church, still it is impossible for us to know their hearts, and we must regard them in charity as members of the flock of Christ, for we have the promise of God that where his Word is preached in its truth and purity some will always become converted—few or many—unto Christ and be sheep of his fold. In such a flock or church we ministers are to labor. Unto this flock we are to take heed, says the apostle. Here the apostle presents the same illustration as our Savior used, and which was used by the prophets in the Old Testament, namely, the illustration of the shepherd and his work. This designates the most tender relation of love and care on the part of a minister toward his congregation. For this reason also the minister bears the beautiful name of pastor—a shepherd.

We must take heed unto all the flock, says the apostle. As a shepherd may have different kinds of sheep under his care, so also the pastor. There are the young and the old, the strong and the weak, the well and the ill, both physically and morally, some with a good knowledge of the Word of God, others with little or none, some that are easy to get along with, others more or less difficult and contrary. Therefore the Holy Ghost says with emphasis: ALL the flock. And let us not overlook one class of people in the church: the children—the lambs of the

fold. How important that we in the spirit of a loving shepherd give them the pure milk of the word, and in such a manner that they can understand it. The children are the future church. Soon we, the present shepherds and flock, shall no longer be members of the church militant. The pastor himself experiences a special blessing and encouragement when he tells children in simple words the story of Jesus' wonderful love.

St. Paul also shows us in our text how we are to feed God's flock. "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God," he says. Wherefore he even dares testify to them, "I am pure from the blood of all," which is to say that it was through no fault of his, if any one in the church at Ephesus did not know the way of salvation, or had not been admonished regarding the Word of God. How eager he was in promoting their spiritual welfare he shows by calling to mind how he ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. These are courageous, almost challenging, words of the great apostle. And yet, brethren, they contain the very things which the Lord has given us to do: to preach all the counsel of God unto salvation, to exhort, to encourage, beg, and to plead with our hearers not to resist God's Word, but to accept it, that they may not have believed in vain.

If a minister of the Gospel shall be able to preach all the counsel of God he can not confine himself to a certain narrow circle of more general Gospel truths or cling to certain pet themes, but he must hold forth those things which his hearers especially need to know and take to heart. Thus, when he preaches the Law, he must not only preach ABOUT the Law, or, when he reproves sin he must not hammer away at gross vices only of which, perhaps, none of his hearers are guilty, but which every one admits are shameful. But he must wield the hammer of the Law so as to hit the conscience of those who in some form or other serve both God and mammon, or those who refuse to make the natural will of man incapable in choosing to accept God's proffered hand of salvation, or who believe that some remnant of the image of God has remained after the fall. He must apply the Law as the surgeon applies the lancet in opening up the festering abscesses, showing from the Word of God the deep corruption and evil inclination of natural man; showing

also that God, regardless of man's inability to keep any of his commandments, still does not in the least annul his demands, so that the hearers may realize what David realized when Nathan, the prophet, said to him, Thou art the man!

When we by the aid of the Holy Spirit have succeeded in reproving sin, let us by all means not forget that this is but the preparatory work, that the Law is but a mirror showing man his sin and God's wrath on account of sin. Nevertheless however, as the mirror is not able to remove the filth which it reflects, so powerless is also the Law to remove sin. Therefore, the remedy must be brought to those who are alarmed and in despair on account of their sin. The blessed Gospel concerning Him who bore even their sin in his own body on the cross must not be withheld but preached in its fulness. We must show through the Gospel how their debt of sin has long since been paid, how God himself declared this Easter morning at the empty grave of Jesus, and that the sinners are only to accept the full atonement and righteousness of Christ, that they are only to believe this, take God at his Word, and they are saved. Through the very Gospel Jesus Christ himself creates in their hearts the faith whereby these gifts are received.

I have tried to set forth what the apostle means by taking heed; what He means by feeding his flock, and how the Law and the Gospel is rightly divided.

One requirement still remains which the apostle places at the head of his admonition. He says, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves." These words contain a powerful exhortation to self-examination. One who undertakes to show others the way should certainly not only know the way, but also walk in it. When we set forth the abomination of sin, and how it ruins man for time and for eternity; is it then such an abominable thing to us? When we exhort others to shun it as their worst enemy, do we ourselves always flee from it? In preaching the Law to others, we should be mindful of that this message of God is meant for us also. Especially, when we describe God's incomprehensible love to sinners in order to move and admonish them, are we moved ourselves by the mercy of God, so that we may say, as did the apostle, "The love of Christ constraineth us?" God requires of us that all our work in his kingdom, all our



preaching, all our preparation of sermons, all our instruction of the youth, all our admonition and exhortation in public or private, must emanate from love to God. It must proceed from love, if it is to be pleasing to God. For the apostle says that if he brought the greatest sacrifices even to giving his body to be burned, but had not charity (love) he would be as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. (1 Cor. 13). It is a stern word which the Lord spoke later to this same church at Ephesus saying, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. (Rev. 2:4).

This is an important word also for us and our congregations. The intimate bond of love with Jesus Christ is so apt to grow weak through the cares of this life. The ministers of the Gospel and the church always face this danger. There are so many external and secondary things that demand time and effort. Some of them may be needed for the welfare of the church, but in occupying our minds with them we are tempted to forget the most important thing, namely, an unceasing communion with our Savior in behalf of ourselves and our flock. When the Lord again charged Peter to feed his sheep and lamb, He thrice repeated the important question for Peter's self-examination, Loveth thou me? And he puts the same question to us ministers, Lovest thou me? How important, therefore, that the word of the apostle, Take heed unto yourself, be placed always before his mind's eye.

Need we then be in doubt as to whether these great demands which the Lord requires of us urge us to put our whole heart and soul into our work?

## II.

The great consolation and assistance which he promises to every faithful servant should also urge us to be zealous in our work. The more we contemplate what God requires of us in our holy office, the more will we realize the truth of what the apostle says, Who is sufficient for these things? Of ourselves we are insufficient and unworthy to speak his Word or administer his sacraments. But God be praised! We have the same consolation as Paul when he says, Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our

sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament. (2 Cor. 3:5).

Regardless of our unworthiness, God has entrusted to us this most important mission. We poor sinners have been called to proclaim to sinners (ourselves included) that He is the friend of sinners who has purchased them with his blood and would have them saved. What an office, and what a mission! What can be more wonderful or more honorable than this? If the president of our country appointed one of us ambassador to some foreign country, would we not regard it as a great honor? We would begin at once to familierize ourselves with the matters pertaining to such a mission. How much more then, brethren, as ministers and ambassadors for Christ in charge of his affairs on earth to the salvation of the citizens of his heavenly kingdom.

If He, the Lord of heaven and earth, and the God of our salvation, sends us on this mission, of what account are all the objections of our flesh? Did not He who intended us for this very work before we were born know that we were both insufficient and unworthy? Need we hesitate then to believe that He has made us and henceforth will make us worthy and efficient?

He wants us to come to him with our prayer for assistance, strength, comfort, and courage. If you lack wisdom, dear brother, especially in difficult situations, enter boldly in his presence and ask Him to open to you the fountains of wisdom, His holy Word, and you will not go in vain. He says I will be your mouth and your wisdom. Take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. (Matth. 10:19). Our strength and our confidence must be in the Lord. Be confident that the Lord has placed you in the office and that you have not arrogated it unto yourselves. Do all the difficulties and vexations of the ministerial office cause you concern? Then look at St. Paul, what are your difficulties and labors compared with his? Or compared to our Savior's labor and pain? Do you see little results from your prayers and your labors? Remember then how much the Spirit of God must work upon the souls of men; remember how much it worked even upon your own soul, before it bore any fruit. Do you look for a harvest as soon as you have sown the seed?

Remember that, they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. (Ps. 126). The harvest time for the seed of the Word of God will surely come, and the gracious reward shall be granted all faithful workers in the vineyard. Shall then the fact that our testimony is spoken against by the children of unbelief, and that the god of this world rages and incites to resistance be permitted to dampen our zeal, dull our energy, or discourage us? Our Savior has foretold us that we must not expect to fare any better than He. And furthermore, that we are blessed when men shall revile us and persecute us and shall say all manner of evil against us falsely, for His sake. (Matth. 5:11).

Finally, the fact that the Lord has placed us in this work, and that He will acknowledge our work as his, will uphold and sustain us during possible misunderstanding and misrepresentations that may arise within our own church. It is untold grace on the part of God when the pastor and his congregation work together in harmony. But even though the pastor, as he should, "walks uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel" (Gal. 2:4) there may often enough arise misunderstandings, strife, and even separations in the church. The trouble caused by those outside the congregation are comparatively easily borne, but difficulties within the church caused by those who to all appearance desire to be Christians are heavy burdens indeed. But let us in the first place not forget that in our own actions and conduct there may be faults that deserve correction. And let us thank any brother or sister for well intended advise or reproof. Thus the apostle Peter received a serious reprimand from Paul, as we read in Gal. 2. In the second place let us not forget that even when our speech or conduct is in accord with the Word of God we may nevertheless be misunderstood or gainsaid, but in this we are not above our Master. For the same thing accured to Him even on the part of his own disciples. How often did He not have to reprove them. How much forbearance, longsuffering, and patience did He not have to exercise toward them. And in the footsteps of Jesus we behold St. Paul when he assures the church at Thessalonica that he treated them gently as a nurse treats her children. (1 Thess. 2:7).

May the Lord Jesus Christ make us more and more like-minded with Him, the great Shepherd, for His name's sake.

Amen.

Text: John 21:15-17.

Beloved Friends in Christ!

God has bestowed on us Christians the great honor, that He makes use of us as His instruments and co-laborers in furthering His kingdom on earth, and consequently we should perform the work which has been assigned to us according to the instructions that He has given. When a man intends to build a house he first lays the foundation. He digs down deep into the ground so as to get a firm footing and then he proceeds to build, first the foundation and then the house; the same plan should be followed in the building of God's kingdom, His church on earth. These are the instructions given by the Lord of the church. Hence it should be our object first of all to build God's kingdom in the hearts of the little children, making them a part—and a very important part—of that spiritual temple which has been in process of construction ever since the day of Pentecost, and which shall be fully completed, when the kingdom of Christ shall be consummated in eternal glory. And we may be certain of this, that the Lord who has purchased also the little children with His own precious blood, and who has commanded us to bring the little children to Him, and who speaks with such earnestness to Peter in the text before us, saying, "Feed My lambs! Feed My sheep!", will not excuse us if we neglect to do our duty toward the little children. In order that we may be spurred on to do our duty in this respect and in regard to schools for our little children, let us apply our attention to the admonishing words of Jesus in our text. There is especially one statement in the text before us that I would endeavor to impress upon us all, namely, the command of Jesus:

"Feed My lambs!" Let us consider

- I. To whom this command is given.
- II. What it implies.
- III. Who alone *can* feed Jesus' lambs.

The event of our text occurred at one of the manifestations of Jesus to His disciples after His resurrection from the dead. The words of Jesus in the text are addressed to Simon Peter, who on this occasion is reinstated in his position as an apostle. In the night when Jesus was betrayed, Peter had committed the

gross sin of denying his Master. But he repented, weeping bitterly on account of his sin, and when Jesus on the day of His resurrection appeared to him we may be certain that He assured him of his forgiveness. But Peter had not only fallen from grace by the sin which he had committed, but he had also lost his apostleship. On the occasion mentioned in our text, therefore, Peter is in the presence of the other apostles, in an impressive manner, reinstated in his calling. Three times in succession the Lord puts this question to Peter: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" By this threefold question the Lord no doubt refers to Peter's threefold denial, and by the words, "Lovest thou me?", the Lord would remind Peter of his declaration in the night of His betrayal. During that night Peter had declared that he was ready to go with the Lord, both into prison and to death. So great a love he believed that he possessed. Yet, when it came to a real test, it appeared that Peter's love was not so great, after all. He fell and sinned grossly. But what is now his relation to Jesus? Does he now possess an ardent love to Him? And is it therefore certain that his repentance is sincere? When the same question, for the third time, was put to Peter by the Lord, Peter was grieved, we are told. He knew that Jesus had reason to doubt his sincerity, considering his shameful denial of his Master. But Peter assured Him that He who knows all things, knows that he loves Him. And on this express declaration—that he does love Jesus—Peter receives this command, that he shall feed the Lord's lambs, that he shall tend and feed Christ's sheep; in other words, that he shall care for that flock, that congregation, which the Lord has purchased with His own blood.

We certainly do not misinterpret the words of our Lord in our text when we say that by the word "sheep" is meant adults and more mature Christians, and by the word "lambs" is meant the weaker Christians and the little children. When, therefore, Jesus in His command to Peter says, "Feed My lambs", He has thereby enjoined upon Peter that in the administration of that office which He has given him, he must not neglect the little children who are so dear to Him, the Good Shepherd.

These words of Jesus, "Feed My lambs", are then, as we see, addressed particularly to Peter. But since they are re-

corded in the Holy Scriptures it is absolutely certain that they are not intended for him alone, but that this command is given to all the disciples of Jesus. It is given to all who are called to teach and preach the Word of God, to all Christian parents and all Christian church members. As surely as the command of Christ, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," has been given to all Christians, just so surely has the command of Christ in our text, "Feed My lambs," been given to all Christians. There are church members who will do little or nothing for the education of the children, because they, themselves, have no children, or because all their children are grown up or confirmed. But do these members act according to Christ's command in our text when He says, "Feed My lambs"? They surely do not. These people act as Cain did when the Lord asked him, "Where is thy brother?" He answered and said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" We should note that the children who are baptized do not belong to the parents alone, but they belong to the congregation. Yea, they belong to Christ. Note carefully what Christ says: "Feed MY lambs!". Therefore this command concerns all Christian church members, as well as all Christian parents; and especially does this command of Christ concern those who are called to be shepherds and teachers under Christ. He who has established His kingdom of grace on earth, and by whom all true teachers and ministers are ordained, says in our text to each and every one of these, "Feed My lambs". That Lord, who has given to Christian parents children, speaks with great earnestness to such parents in our text and says, "Feed My lambs!" And that Lord who has loved all Christians and has washed them from their sins in His own blood, and made them kings and priests unto God, as the Book of Revelations tells us in Chapter 1, says to those same Christians, in our text, "Feed My lambs!" In other words, it is to the church and not to the state that this command of Christ is given. The state has other problems to deal with than feeding the lambs of Jesus. It is to you, dear fellow-Christian, that this command is given. Will you, then, heed this admonition? Can anyone be a true Christian and refuse to heed this admonition of Christ?

II. But when the Lord says, "Feed My lambs!", what does this command imply? It is not so difficult to understand what

is meant by this command. The work of an ordinary shepherd consists in tending the flock which has been entrusted to his care, to see to it that the flock is properly fed, to lead the sheep into the best pasture that he can find so that they may obtain nourishment, and to the fresh waters so that they may quench their thirst; to protect the flock against wild animals that would attack it; if possible, to bring back to the flock such sheep and lambs as may have strayed away, and to bring the flock back to the fold when the day is ended. And it is the duty of the shepherd to watch with special care the weaker sheep which are particularly apt to become the prey of the wolf. This is especially the case with the little lambs. And if there is here or there a lamb which is so frail that it is not able to follow the flock, it may become the duty of the shepherd to carry such a lamb in his arms. Therefore, when the Lord says in our text to all spiritual shepherds—parents, teachers and all Christians, “Feed My lambs!” He has thereby enjoined upon them: “Take diligent care of the flock that has been entrusted to you! Lead them into the pastures of God’s Word and to the refreshing waters of the gospel! Provide carefully for the weak sheep and the lambs, the children! See to it that they may be amply nourished with the milk of God’s Word, so that their spiritual life day by day may be sustained and increased in strength! Do not neglect to instruct them thoroughly in God’s Word, so that their understanding may be enlightened and they may learn to see that they are sinners before God and that I am their Savior! That their will may be strengthened for that which is good! That the new power, desire and yearning, which through regeneration were created in their heart, may not diminish but increase! That their conscience may become very tender, that they may be afraid to do what is wrong!” “Watch over them,” He would say, “so that their evil foe, Satan, may not do them any harm. Protect them against all the dangers to which they are exposed in this wicked world. Teach them to listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd and to obey Him. Seek the true welfare of each one of them. Carry them to Me in baptism, so that I may bless them and make them heirs of eternal life! Bring them to Me upon the arms of prayer! Lead them by your admonitions and warnings, and by your example, in that path which leads to the sheep-fold of eternal life.”

It is clear that all these things are contained in the command of Jesus, "Feed My lambs!"

But then the question arises: How is all this to be done? A great deal of what has been spoken of must be done in the home, by the children's parents. Acting as true shepherds, the parents must bring their children to Jesus in baptism, they must daily bring them to Him in their prayers, and teach them to pray and tell them about God and the Savior in whose name they are baptized; and by leading a Christian life, the parents must make the home a real Christian home, so that the spiritual atmosphere wherein their children live and breathe may be good and wholesome. This is of more importance than most men realize.

But the duties which these words of our Lord, "Feed My lambs!", enjoin upon us are so many and so great that even the best home is scarcely able to fulfill them all. The church has also realized this, and therefore it has found it necessary to establish schools whose aim and purpose it is to feed the lambs of Jesus. A great many of our congregations are thus conducting Sunday schools where instruction in the elements of Christian doctrine is given. In many congregations schools are conducted during the summer, at the time when the public school is not in session, and here Christianity is taught. In one congregation of our Synod the so-called Gary plan is followed and instruction in religion provided once or twice a week. Among our Missouri brethren it is customary for the congregations to conduct what we call parochial schools, which are held at the same time as the public schools and give instruction in the same branches as the common school, and in religion, in catechism, explanation and Bible history. We have a few of these schools also in our Synod.

Now, as to the Sunday school and the so-called Gary plan, let us not underestimate their value, but we must also guard against the danger of overestimating this means of providing religious instruction; and under no circumstances should we entertain the idea that this is all the instruction our children need. When we think of the duties which the command of Jesus, "Feed My lambs", enjoins upon us, is there anyone who really believes that the above mentioned schools fulfill all these duties? If so



little time were given to the instruction of your child in arithmetic, geography or history, as is given to instruction in God's Word in the schools mentioned, what kind of knowledge would they acquire? When we also consider that many of those who are teachers in the Sunday school often have little or no experience in teaching, then it must be self-evident that the fruits of the Sunday school will be very meager. If the children also get the idea—which is often the case—that when they have attended the Sunday school they need not attend the service, then the usefulness of the Sunday school is of very doubtful character.

Neither does the summer school provide a real solution. When you consider what is contained in Christ's command, "Feed My lambs!", do you then dare to make the assertion that these schools, which are conducted a few weeks in the warm summertime, when the children usually enjoy their vacation, fulfill the duties which the Lord enjoins upon us in this command? Is it in this manner that a shepherd tends his sheep, that he gives them all the nourishment they need — and almost more than they need—for six or eight weeks, and then lets them starve the rest of the year? Do Christ's words in our text leave the impression, that it is in this manner that He wants His lambs to be fed? There is only one school for children which is able to fulfill the demands contained in the words of Jesus, "Feed My lambs!", and that is the so-called parochial school, which is conducted at the same time as the public school and gives instruction in the ordinary, common-school branches, together with *daily* instruction in God's Word, and where all the instruction is given in the light of God's Word—a school which is permeated by the spirit of Christianity and is a Christian school throughout.

We ought, therefore, to make this school our goal, to establish as many of these schools as possible, one in every congregation, or at least one in every parish, which all the congregations constituting the parish may make use of. If, in connection with the school, a boarding club is conducted, then it makes little difference if the children live many miles away, for no matter how cold and stormy it may be, the children can nevertheless be present at school.

Yet, though it should be our aim to establish parochial schools,

we should also willingly pay the taxes for the public schools. As obedient citizens we must do this. But, since church and state are separate institutions in this country, and since the schools of the state do not offer any instruction in Christianity, and since God has not commanded the state to feed the lambs of Jesus, then, we not only have the right, but it is our duty to establish schools for our children which provide for both their temporal and eternal welfare.

Furthermore, let us not forget that if God's kingdom is to remain with us, and if our children and young people are to be kept for the church, we must heed the solemn admonition of Christ, "Feed My lambs!" There are many dangers confronting us, and especially our young people. The shameful disregard for divine truth, which is so apparent in our day: the lack of respect for the civil government which manifests itself so clearly in such movements as socialism, and anarchism, which are constantly gaining ground: the jealousy, greed and avarice which are revealed so clearly in the many strikes, and in the constant struggle between capital and labor: and, finally, the disregard that so many show in regard to the laws of marriage, as well as all the immorality which is so prevalent in our time: these are dangers which threaten to destroy both the church and the state. If, therefore, the church is to remain with us, and our young people are to be kept in the covenant of their baptism, we cannot, we must not, be indifferent in regard to this command of Jesus, "Feed My lambs!", but seek to fulfill the duties which the Lord has enjoined upon us. And let us not forget that in the parochial school we have the most effective means to combat the evil tendencies of our time.

III. Having seen to whom this command of Christ is addressed, and what it implies, let us in the third place consider who alone really can feed Christ's lambs.

Who alone can fulfill the duties enjoined by the command of Christ, "Feed My lambs!" is shown clearly by the three-fold question of Jesus to Peter: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" These words show clearly that it is those who love Jesus, consequently are true Christians, who alone in reality can feed the lambs of Christ. Therefore it is of the greatest importance that those who are called to instruct the little children in Chris-

tianity, as well as all who have anything to do with the Christian training of the children, are themselves true Christians. If that is not the case, they are not real shepherds and will not know how to care for the little lambs of the Master. A teacher who does not love Christ is a hireling; and of the hireling Christ says that "he careth not for the sheep." The work referred to by Jesus in our text must be prompted by love if it is to be a real service. Then it will also be a pleasure to perform this work, even if one has to make many sacrifices and endure many hardships in its performance. The love of Christ will also create the right kind of zeal and enthusiasm for the work. Furthermore, if a person does not love Christ, that person is spiritually blind; and what the result would be if a blind man were to care for a flock of sheep is not difficult to imagine.

But it is also of great importance that the members of the congregation in whose midst the work we have spoken of is conducted, and who themselves are to assist in this work, also love Jesus and consequently are true Christians. Great sacrifices are required to conduct this work. Such an institution as a parochial school is not by any means a cheap affair, and certain sacrifices are necessary on the part of the church members in order to establish and maintain such schools. But if the members are imbued with a fervent love to the dear Savior, the means that are necessary in order to maintain such schools will not be lacking. If there is anyone present here who perhaps is opposed to the parochial school, let him consider the question of Jesus in our text: "Lovest thou Me?", and he will perhaps find that here is where the fault lies,—that his lack of interest in the parochial school is due to the fact that he has no real love for Jesus. The words of Jesus, "Lovest thou Me?", should certainly lead us all to examine ourselves thoroughly. If all our church members, ministers and teachers, could answer and say with Peter, even though it be with much sorrow, that their love is so incomplete, He who knoweth all things, knoweth that they love Him, then surely would Jesus' lambs be well fed: then surely our little children would be thoroughly instructed in God's Word.

May the Lord grant us His Spirit and Grace, that we may learn to see our duty in the matter we have discussed, and may the Holy Spirit fill our hearts with the love of Christ and grant us willingness and ability to perform what Jesus has commanded us when He says, "Feed My lambs!" Amen!

*E. Hanson.*

## BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS

### *Temporary Committees.*

*President's Report:* Rev. M. K. Bleken, Rev. E. Hanson, and Mr. P. G. Tjernagel.

*Publications:* Rev. L. S. Guttebo, Rev. M. Fr. Wiese, Mr. G. Grundeson, Mr. E. N. Edwards, and Mr. M. Gunderson.

*Missions:* Rev. H. M. Olson, Rev. L. P. Jensen, Mr. E. B. Ellingson, Mr. N. Nielson, and Knute Ophelm.

*Finances:* Rev. A. J. Torgerson, Mr. A. Rein, and Mr. L. E. Ludvig.

*Church Extension:* Rev. E. Hanson, Rev. C. N. Peterson, and Mr. E. G. Mellem.

*Schools:* Rev. H. Ingebritson, Prof. J. E. Thoen, Mr. J. Forde, Mr. H. S. Hanson, and Mr. E. K. Juveland.

*Miscellaneous No. 1:* Rev. M. K. Bleken, Rev. J. A. Molstad, Rev. H. A. Preus, Mr. P. G. Tjernagel, and Mr. J. G. Sime.

*Miscellaneous No. 2:* Rev. G. A. Gullixson, Rev. J. Hendricks, Mr. S. O. Nygaard, Mr. G. M. Mellem, and Mr. O. P. Tveden.

*Equalization of Pastor's Traveling Expenses:* Rev. G. O. Lillegaard.

*Committee on Minutes:* Rev. O. M. Gullerud, Mr. T. C. Satra, and Mr. E. G. Mellem.

*Nomination Committee:* Rev. H. Ingebritson, Rev. L. S. Guttebo, and Mr. E. G. Mellem.

*Nomination of Board of Trustees:* Mr. T. C. Satra, Rev. H. M. Olsen, and Mr. V. Gulbrandson.

*Resolutions:* Rev. M. Fr. Wiese.

### *Standing Committees.*

*Home-Mission:* Rev. H. Ingebritson, Rev. Chr. Anderson, and Mr. J. G. Sime.

*Foreign Missions:* Prof. S. C. Ylvisaker, Rev. J. Hendricks, and Rev. E. Hanson.

*Parochial Schools:* Rev. H. Ingebritson, Rev. E. Hanson, and Mr. E. B. Ellingson.

*Higher Institutions of Learning:* Rev. A. J. Torgerson, Rev. Chr. Anderson, and Rev. M. K. Bleken.

*Church Extension:* Rev. H. M. Olson, Rev. L. S. Guttebo, and Mr. G. H. Kiland.

*Publications:* Rev. Chr. Anderson, Rev. H. A. Preus, and Rev. J. Hendricks.

*Finances:* Rev. O. M. Gullerud, Rev. J. J. Strand, and Prof. V. Overn.

*Editorship:* Rev. J. A. Molstad, Rev. H. A. Preus, and Rev. G. A. Gullixson.

*Rail-road Secretary:* Rev. Chr. Anderson.

*Relief in Europe:* Rev. G. A. Gullixson.

## REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES.

### I.

#### *Parochial Schools.*

1. The committee is pleased to report that Mrs. T. Larson, Parkland, Wash., has donated One Thousand Dollars to the Synod. This money shall constitute a Fund for the support of the Parochial Schools. Non-interest-bearing loans shall be granted to needy congregations from this loan, when such congregations wish to establish Parochial Schools. And these loans shall be paid back as soon as practicable in order that other needy congregations may receive a similar help.

2. The Synod is much pleased to learn that Our Savior's Church at Albert Lea, Minn., has resolved to establish a Parochial School, and it encourages other congregations to do likewise.

3. The Synod recommends that its members aid this worthy undertaking by generous contributions.

### II.

#### *Higher Institutions of Learning.*

According to a resolution passed by the Synod in Albert Lea, 1919, the committee on Higher Institutions of Learning met with the Board of Electors for Concordia College, St. Paul, and took up the question of co-operation in the educational work at said College. The committee met with a most cordial welcome by our brethren in the Missouri Synod. The result of the meeting was the establishment of a professorship at Concordia College with the understanding that the Norwegian Synod appoints this professor, and that he be a member of the faculty, and that he be paid the same salary as the other professors. The Norwegian students were granted the same privileges as the students of the Missouri Synod.

Dr. S. C. Ylvisaker was called by our Synod to this position, and he accepted the call. This arrangement has been a marked success. The work has been carried on in harmony. By this arrangement the Synod enjoys the fruits of many year's work and expenses laid down by our brethren in the Missouri Synod.

Through the school-year, eleven of our boys attended the College.

The committee requests that the Synod adopt the following resolutions:

1. The Synod expresses its gratitude to God for His care for us in providing a school for our young men and thereby solving a most important question for our Synod.

2. The Synod expresses its gratitude to the Missouri Synod for the consideration and friendliness it has shown us in establishing a professorship at Concordia College, St. Paul, and for inviting us to make use of this school as our school.

3. The Synod feels grateful to Dr. Ylvisaker for the care he has shown for our students and for his conduct of the work in general.

4. Our congregations are urged to show their interest in this most important work by

a) sending their boys to this school,

b) donating money and provisions to the school and to the boarding department of the school.

5. We recommend that in the near future the Synod makes a similar arrangement for the training of teachers for our Parochial Schools.

### III.

#### *Committee on Publications.*

According to the authority granted by the Synod, the publication committee met in Minneapolis, March 2nd, and took the necessary steps to establish the book company, "The Lutheran Synod Book Company", Minneapolis. An executive committee was appointed consisting of Chr. Anderson, John Hendricks, and John Moe. This committee was requested to organize the company, to secure suitable quarters for the business, and to purchase the necessary books and supplies. A beginning has been made by purchasing a small stock of books and by engaging Mr. John Moe as temporary business manager.

As a comparatively large stock of "Synodalberetninger" and "Folke-kalendere" remains unsold, the committee reduced the price of these publications to insure a larger sale.

Rev. M. Fr. Wiese has been requested to edit "Evangelisk Luthersk Folke-kalender", and the manuscript is ready.

#### *Our Church-Organs, Tidende and Sentinel.*

The cost of printing and mailing our Church Papers has advanced considerably this year. We now pay \$60 a week for this work, while we paid last year \$40 for the same work. A deficit could, therefore, not be avoided. This deficit has been paid out from the Treasury of the Synod. During the year, the number of subscribers to "Luthersk Tidende and Sentinel" has been increased about 560.

*The Committee on Finances:*

1. The Synod expresses its gratitude to God for causing our people to see the needs of our Church, and for granting them willing hearts to contribute liberally thereby making it possible to meet these needs.

2. We are grateful to God to be able to report that the accounts of the Treasurer show a balance in the treasury although our publications have incurred an expense considerably in excess of the receipts.

3. Realizing the great importance of our publications, the Synod requests that its members work more diligently to circulate our publications and in this way help to further the cause of the truth.

## V.

*The Report of the Treasurer.*

(From May 27, 1919 to May 30, 1920.)

*The Synod-Treasury:*

## RECEIPTS:

Balance from last year.....	\$1,046.74
Donations during the year.....	2,974.73
From our Publications . . . . .	1,773.22
Interest on deposits . . . . .	104.95

Total Receipts . . . . .	\$5,899.64
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## EXPENSES:

Publications . . . . .	\$2,728.64
Teacher's salary . . . . .	925.00
Rev. C. N. Peterson's salary.....	50.00
Loan to Lutheran Synod Book Co.....	500.00
For publications . . . . .	127.42
To needy students . . . . .	133.50
Freight charges etc. . . . .	5.85
Expenses of Ry. sec'y.....	5.00
Postage and stationery . . . . .	14.46
Miscellaneous . . . . .	6.00

Total Expenses . . . . .	\$4,495.27
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Balance in Treasury . . . . .	\$1,404.37
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*Mission Treasury.*

## RECEIPTS:

Balance from last year . . . . .	\$1,700.59
Donations during the year . . . . .	4,605.96

Total Receipts . . . . .	\$6,306.55
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## EXPENSES:

Salary to Rev. Hendricks.....	\$1,079.75	
Salary to Rev. H. A. Preus .....	810.00	
To needy students .....	50.00	
To China Mission .....	46.26	
To India Mission .....	5.00	
To Negro Mission .....	207.50	
To the needy in Europe .....	190.65	
To Indian Mission .....	459.60	
Salary to Rev. Thoen .....	100.00	
To Rev. L. P. Jensen.....	25.00	
Lorel Ave. Mission, Chicago.....	22.80	
Church Extension .....	10.00	
Traveling Expenses for O. P. Tveden....	30.00	
Traveling Expenses, Ylvisaker.....	4.81	
Peterson Printing Co.....	5.50	
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Total Expenses .....		\$3,064.87
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Balance in Treasury .....		\$3,259.68
<i>Church Extension.</i>		
RECEIPTS: Donations during the year.....	\$2,340.20	\$2,340.20
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EXPENSES: Loan to Somber Congregation	\$400.00	\$ 400.00
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Balance in Treasury.....		\$1,940.20

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The auditing committee has examined the accounts and has found them to be correct.

E. Hansen,  
E. K. Tyssen.

Northwood, Iowa, May 30, 1920.

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RESOLUTIONS READ, DISCUSSED AND ADOPTED.

## I.

*President's Report.*

1. Exhortation to seek our strength in the Word of God and not in externals.
2. The dangers of our time.
3. Church-discipline and doctrinal discipline.
4. Secret Societies.
5. Calling of pastors.
6. Unionism.
7. Organizations within the congregations.
8. Our Schools.



9. "Evangelisk Luthersk Tidende and Sentinel."
10. Our Book Company.
11. Aid to our needy brethren in faith.

## II.

*Publications.*

1. The Synod expresses its gratitude for the progress made during the year by "Evangelisk Luthersk Tidende and Sentinel" and requests that pastors and laymen work diligently to circulate our church papers.

2. The Synod resolves to publish "Evangelisk Luthersk Folke-kalender" and "Synodalberetning" and seek to distribute them as widely as possible.

3. The Synod approves of the establishment of the "Lutheran Synod Book Company" and requests that our people patronize our book concern. The committee on finances is authorized to grant the necessary funds to conduct the business.

## III.

*Missions.*

1. The Synod expresses its thanks to God for the great and blessed work done on the Home Mission field during the last year, and invokes the Lord's blessings on this work in the future.

2. The Synod approves of the increase of the Missionary's salary to \$1,200 a year, and that Rev. H. A. Preus's salary was raised to the same amount.

3. The Synod recommends that independent congregations be organized on the mission field as soon as practicable.

4. The Synod authorizes the mission committee to call one or more missionaries on the Home-Mission field, as soon as the work demands such additional workers.

5. The Synod elects a sub-committee on Home Mission for the Pacific Coast.

6. The Synod approves of the suggestion made by the committee on Foreign Missions to co-operate with the Missouri Synod on the Foreign-Mission field. The Synod also approves of the committee's advice to elect a member on the Board of Foreign Missions of the Missouri Synod. Furthermore, the Synod urges our people to contribute liberally toward the support of this mission.

## IV.

*Finances.*

1. The Synod approves the report of the committee on finances.

2. The Synod urges each pastor and congregation to consider the importance of greater systematic work for the circulation of our publications.

3. The congregations are requested to elect committees on publications for the purpose of introducing our publications into every home.

## V.

### *Church Extension.*

#### Rules for the Church Extension.

Par. 1. The name of this fund shall be: "The Church Extension of the Norwegian Synod".

Par. 2. The object of this fund shall be to assist needy congregations of the Synod to erect church-buildings, or to procure other church-property.

Par. 3. The officers shall be elected at the same time and in the same manner as the officers of the Synod.

Par. 4. The funds shall be procured by contributions, legacies, or annual offerings by the congregations.

Par. 5. Non-interest-bearing loans shall be granted to needy congregations wishing to erect church-buildings, parochial school-buildings, or to secure church lots. Such loans shall be secured by mortgages on real-estate.

Par. 6. The officers of the Church Extension shall submit annual reports to the Synod showing assets and liabilities and the principal features of the business.

## VI.

### *Schools.*

#### The Parochial School.

1. The Synod resolves to establish a Fund for the Parochial School based upon a Donation of One Thousand Dollars given by Mrs. T. Larsen, Parkland, Wash., to the Synod.

2. The Synod requests that the committee on Parochial Schools draws up rules for this fund and reports at our next annual meeting.

3. The Synod authorizes said committee to supervise this Fund and to use the moneys that may be paid into the Treasury by granting loans to needy congregations wishing to establish Parochial Schools.

#### *Higher Institutions of Learning.*

1. The Synod requests its members to contribute money and provisions to the Boarding Department of Concordia College, St. Paul, Minn.

2. The congregations of our Church are requested to encourage their boys to attend Concordia College and to obtain their education at our schools.

3. The committee on Higher Institutions of Learning is authorized and requested to confer with the Boards of Education of the Missouri Synod and the Joint Synod of Wisconsin for the purpose of making arrangements for the training of our parochial school teachers at their institutions.

## VII.

### *Miscellaneous Matters.*

#### (Committee No. 1.)

1. Our Lord and Savior says: "Blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it." (Luke 11:28). And He promises, that He will be with them "Alway even unto the end of the world," and grant them strength and success through His Word. As the means of grace are the only means by which the Church of God is established and kept, we realize how important it is for us to cling to the Word of God through a living faith, and to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling." This faith will make us fearless witnesses who are willing to sacrifice all for Christ's sake. This is our mission, though we gain adherents or stand alone.

2. The Synod urges its members to beware of the worldly-mindedness and liberalism which meets us everywhere. And it warns every member against partaking in such movements as "The National Lutheran Council", or the "Inter-church World Movement", and the like.

Furthermore, the Synod warns against all church-politics which makes the church only an institution of social reform and leads it away from its true purpose: to preach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments.

3. The Synod acknowledges with thanks the work which have been done by the Ladies' Aids, Young Peoples' Societies, and Church Choirs. As the Synod commends the work of these societies, it is also mindful of the dangers of too many organizations within the congregations thereby making it almost impossible for the pastor to find the necessary time for his studies and "to give attention to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine."

However, no definite rules can be laid down, as conditions vary in the different localities, except this, that we never lose sight of the essential things.

4. The Synod requests its members to assist in the work for the needy in Europe through the "American Lutheran Board of Relief."

The Synod resolves to elect a committee of one to co-operate with said Board, and to publish from time to time reports of the work done.

## VIII.

### *Miscellaneous Matters.*

(Committee No. 2.)

1. It is recommended that the following themes be taken up for discussion at our next annual meeting: "Church-discipline and doctrinal discipline" and "Unionism."

2. The Synod warns against Secret Societies and requests that its pastors and congregations oppose the work of the lodges in the right manner and by the proper means.

Furthermore, the Synod expresses its gratitude to those who have testified against the lodges, and it encourages these friends to continue with their testimonies.

3. By the grace of God, the Synod takes exception to the worldly practice in calling pastors prevalent in some Lutheran Church bodies. The essential requirements: to divide the Law and the Gospel rightly, to convert sinners, and to keep them with the Lord in one true faith, are of little importance, while great stress is laid upon the pastor's ability as a fluent speaker, and upon his willingness to accept a call determinable at the option of one or either party.

## IX.

### *INCORPORATION OF THE NORWEGIAN SYNOD.*

The following Articles of Incorporation were unanimously adopted by the Norwegian Synod on the 10th day of June, 1920:

### ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION.

Be it resolved by the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church in meeting duly assembled.

#### ARTICLE I.

That a corporation is hereby formed and incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota, and more particularly Sections 6612 and 6613 General Statutes of Minnesota, 1913, being Sections 3152 and 3153 Revised Laws, 1905.

#### ARTICLE II.

The name of this corporation shall be the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church.

## ARTICLE III.

The Synod accepts as its only source and rule of faith and doctrine, God's Holy Word revealed in the canonical books in the Old and New Testaments; and all the confessional books of the Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord, as a true exposition of the canonical books in the Old and the New Testaments. These books are: The Apostles' Creed; The Nicene Creed; and the Athanasian Creed; The unaltered Augsburg Confession; The Apology of the Augsburg Confession; The Smalcald Articles; Luther's Small Catechism; Luther's Large Catechism; The Formula of Concord, (Epitome); The Formula of Concord, (Solid).

## ARTICLE IV.

The purpose of this corporation shall be to foster, maintain and establish the interests of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and to that end establish missions, call and send missionaries, establish and maintain schools, colleges, seminaries, orphans' home, and charitable institutions; educate ministers of the gospel, teachers for Christian institution of children and youths, and missionaries for mission work; encourage discussion of moral and theological themes, and maintain the preaching of the Word of God, and use proper means to develop true faith and Christian lives among men; encourage the reading and use of the Holy Scripture, Lutheran School Books, Hymn Books, and other devotional books, periodicals and papers, by dealing therein and by printing and publishing the same.

To carry its purpose into effect, this corporation may exercise all the power conferred by the Laws of this State, and may adopt a corporate seal, make contracts, establish by-laws, rules and regulations of the management of its business, sue and be sued by its corporation name, and may acquire real and personal property by purchase, gift, grant, devise or bequest, and hold and employ the same for religious, charitable or educational purposes, and may sell, invest, transfer or mortgage the same, and transact all secular business and manage the temporal affairs of said corporation, and may exercise such other power as its constitution and by-laws may prescribe, not inconsistent with the Laws of this State, and the Lutheran Confessions.

## ARTICLE V.

This corporation shall belong to the church of religious denomination known as the Evangelical Lutheran, and the district or territorial limits over which this corporation shall exercise jurisdiction shall be the United States of America.

## ARTICLE VI.

The officers through whom the corporation shall act shall be a Board of Six Trustees, who of their number shall appoint a Chairman and a Secretary of the Board, who shall be known as Chairman and Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, and a Treasurer whose title shall be Treasurer of the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Trustees and Treasurer shall be elected, and the election shall be held at the annual meeting of this corporation, at such definite time and place as the usage and constitution of the Synod may prescribe; at such election the lay delegates of the congregations belonging to the Synod and every pastor of such congregations, and such other persons as the constitution and by-laws determine, shall be entitled to vote; and such persons in meeting duly assembled, shall have the power to transact all business pertaining to the interests of the corporation. The term of office of the Trustees shall be three years, and two Trustees shall be elected at each yearly meeting of the Synod, but of the Trustees of the first Board, two shall serve only one year, and two only two years. The term of office of the Treasurer shall be two years. The term of office of Chairman and Secretary of the Board of Trustees shall be one year. A vacancy in the office of Treasurer shall be filled by the Board of Trustees until the ensuing annual meeting, and in case of vacancy in the Board of Trustees the remaining Trustees shall have power to act as the Board of Trustees until the vacancy may be filled at the annual meeting.

## ARTICLE VII.

The Trustees shall have the general management and control of all the secular business and temporal affairs of said corporation. All such business and affairs they shall conduct in accordance with the constitution, by-laws, rules and resolutions of the Synod. The Secretary shall keep a record of all transactions of the Board, and have the custody of the corporate seal.

## ARTICLE VIII.

The Treasurer shall receive and disburse the funds of the corporation under the direction of the Synod and its Board of Trustees, and shall keep true account of all funds received and disbursed, and make full report to the Synod for each fiscal year. He shall also make full report to the Board of Trustees at such times as the Board by resolution may request. He shall give such bond for the faithful performance of his duties as the Board may direct. The fiscal year shall be from the first day of May to the last day of April of the following year.

## ARTICLE IX.

The names and addresses of those elected as the first officers of the corporation are as follows:

Trustees for one year:

B. Harstad, Parkland, Wash.

P. Tjernagel, Story City, Iowa.

Trustees for two years:

L. E. Ludvig, Lake Mills, Iowa.

Nels Spangelo, Albert Lea, Minn.

Trustees for three years:

Alvin Drotning, Deerfield, Wis.

G. A. Gullixon, Chicago, Ill.

I, B. Harstad, do hereby certify that I was the presiding officer of a meeting at the City of Minneapolis, in the State of Minnesota, on the 10th day of June, 1920, held by the representatives, delegates and others entitled to vote at the annual meeting for 1920, of the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, which is a Synod for religious purposes, composed of and representing several congregations in the State of Minnesota and elsewhere; that at said meeting a resolution to form a corporation was duly adopted by said representatives, delegates and others so entitled to vote; that the foregoing is a true copy of said resolutions and of the whole thereof.

Dated at Minneapolis, Minnesota, June 10th, 1920.

BJUG HARSTAD, Presiding Officer.

STATE OF MINNESOTA)

COUNTY OF HENNEPIN) ss:

L. P. Jensen, being duly sworn says: That he was the secretary of a meeting at the City of Minneapolis, in the State of Minnesota, on the 10th day of June, 1920, held by the representatives, delegates and others entitled to vote at the annual meeting for the year 1920, of the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church; that said body was then a Synod for religious purposes, consisting of and representing several congregations in the State of Minnesota and elsewhere; that at said meeting a resolution to form a corporation was duly adopted by said representatives, delegates and others so entitled to vote; that the foregoing is a true copy of said resolutions and of the whole thereof; that B. Harstad, whose signature is affixed to the foregoing certificate was the presiding officer of said meeting, and that said certificate is true.

[Seal] L. P. JENSEN.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 10th day of June, 1920.

K. T. DAHLEN,

Notary Public, Hennepin County, Minn.

My commission expires February 2, 1921.

## X.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

*Resolutions read and adopted:*

Rev. J. Johansen sent the following greetings:

"To the brethren of the Norwegian Synod of the American Ev. Luth. Church. Grace and Peace: Although my health does not permit me to undertake the long journey to the Synod Meeting in Minneapolis, I am glad to be able to send you a brotherly greeting, being one with you in spirit. I have, like yourselves, been unable to join the amalgamated Norwegian Luth. Church. My conviction is that this church body has chosen a road foreign to that which the Old Synod so many years followed, and on which it was so signally blessed.

This action causes me grief, but the fact that there are yet brethren who are willing to stand squarely on the old foundation causes me joy and happiness.

It is true, you are few—too few—and your outward strength small accordingly. But you have still a sure support, yes, the best support both in the history of the Christian Church and in the Words and Promises of our Lord. The history of the Christian Church teaches us that it dates its beginning from the testimony of twelve humble men, few in numbers and poor of means, nevertheless, they made many rich in God and established a work that bears testimony to all ages.

With the Lord is no lack of power to save sinners because the workers are few. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6). Hence it is the Spirit of the Lord that must lead us onward in the battle for the truth. This Spirit makes us strong and valient in the fight against the world, the flesh, and satan. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (1 Tim. 1:17).

We are then able to look forward with hope, although, we meet strife, adversity, and disappointment, yea, we are able to say with Justus Falkner:

'Op i Jesu navn at vinde, Seiren bliver vis og stor.

Om vor pande vil vi binde, Vidnesbyrdets ord.

Lad det gaa, som det maa; Ordet evig skal bestaa.'

Your humble brother in Christ,

Fresno, Calif., May 1920.

J. Johansen."

We hereby express our heartfelt thanks to our dear brother and co-worker, Rev. Johansen, for his kind words of greeting and encouragement. We pray that God in His mercy will abide



with our brother and strengthen him in body and soul to such an extent that he may be able to continue to proclaim the glad tidings of Christ Jesus. May God in His mercy keep him and us "joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment", (1 Cor. 1:10), which now by so many are neglected and violated.

We also have the pleasure to state that the Reverend C. A. Molstad, P. Blicher, J. R. Vaaler, and others are one with us in spirit, that they send us their brotherly greetings, as they are not able to be with us on account of illness, infirmity or other causes.

May God in His mercy be with them and us through Jesus Christ.

On behalf of the Norwegian Synod,

M. Fr. WIESE.

Minneapolis, Minn., June 10, 1920.

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Rev. J. A. Thorsen and his brother Rev. M. Thorsen, two of the pioneers in the church field, attended our Convention. Rev. J. A. Thorsen addressed the Synod in the following words:

A great many imagine that the true worth of the Church is measured by its numerical strength. But is this a correct view? Do great numbers in the Church prove beneficial, if indifference to the Word of God prevails? Not by any means. The essential thing is that the Lord is with us. Only when we respect His Word, honor and obey it, do we have assurance that He is with us. If we fail in this, nothing will help us. Our boasts about great numbers will only add to our guilt and make us more contemptible in His sight. Luther says: "I have a little place, the Word of God, there I stand. If any one regret that he stands with me on this place, let him leave me. If any one feel afraid, let him flee. My support is secure, that I know."

When our Lord and Savior arrived at the grave of Lazarus and was met by the doubts of Martha, He said to her: "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, that thou shouldest see the glory of God?" That we believe the Word of God determines the matter.

This all important duty and privilege also teaches us that we must bring up our children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." If we neglect this, we are without hope. Our main fault in the Old Synod was that we did not establish parochial schools and comply with the Words of Christ: "Feed my lambs." Dr. F. Pieper said once to me, when I asked him to state the cause of the great success of the Missouri Synod: "Next to God, it is our Parochial schools." Concordia Seminary at St. Louis is the largest theological institution among the Protestants in this country. Not long ago, a prominent man of

the Reformed Church visited the Seminary and asked Dr. Pieper to give the reason for the great success of this institution. Dr. Pieper pointed at the parochial school buildings and said: "There you see the reason." The visitor exclaimed: "O, if we only had such schools."

Furthermore, it is a great joy to me to know that we are many enough to continue a true Lutheran Church. But let us not forget that we must be prepared to suffer persecution and be ever ready to battle for the truth. One of our most important duties is to defend the truth. We can not lay down arms as long as our enemies assail our faith and endeavor to take away from us our dearest treasures.

*The New Church body is based upon a falsehood.* They tell us that they are agreed in doctrine and church practice, but they are not agreed.

The president of the Synod thanked Rev. Thorsen for his kind words and asked him: Do we part now with the understanding that you fully agree with us and accept what we in former years confessed, and do you wish that we shall remain on this foundation? To this question Rev. Thorsen answered: "I do."

#### MISCELLANEOUS RESOLUTIONS.

The Synod requests that the standing committees report in writing to the Synod at the beginning of each annual convention.

Rev. J. A. Molstad was elected to represent the Synod in the matter of purchasing communion wine.

Rev. Chr. Anderson was allowed Fifty Dollars for his service as railroad secretary for the past year and a similar amount for the coming year.

The committee on Finances was authorized to grant a loan of One Thousand Dollars to the Lutheran Synod Book Company.

The following resolution was referred to the Pastoral Conference:

The Synod resolves that no loans shall be granted to congregations admitting as members secret society members.

Dr. S. C. Ylvisaker was requested to extend the thanks of the Synod to Rev. Lindemann and to his congregation for his service rendered the Synod.

On behalf of Fairview congregation and himself, Rev. Anderson thanked the visiting guests for the pleasant days spent together. A special expression of thanks was made to the visiting singers.

At the request of the Synod, Rev. Harstad thanked Fairview Congregation for the hospitality and kindness shown the Synod during the Convention.

### DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

All sessions were opened with devotional exercises. The following pastors conducted these exercises: B. Harstad, M. Fr. Wiese, J. J. Strand, L. P. Jensen, G. A. Gullixson, P. A. Widvey, H. M. Olsen, C. N. Peterson, and J. E. Thoen.

Rev. M. K. Bleken preached the opening sermon. Sunday morning the English sermon was preached by Rev. Paul Lindemann and the Norwegian sermon by Rev. J. J. Strand. An offering was taken for the Home Mission. A song service was given Sunday evening by the Choral Union. On Monday evening a pastoral sermon by Rev. J. Johansen was read by Rev. Harstad, as Rev. Johansen was hindered from attending the convention. A sermon on the parochial school was given by Rev. Emil Hanson Tuesday evening. On Wednesday evening most of the members attended the commencement exercises at Concordia College, St. Paul.

#### *Closing Devotion.*

In closing the Convention Rev. Harstad made these remarks based on the following Words of our Lord: "Ye are the salt of the earth." All true Christians are a salt in this world, because Christ has said so. This is certainly a great honor and a great blessing. But this honor and this blessing was not granted the Christians on account of their merits or worthiness, but solely on account of God's grace and mercy.

It is, therefore, of great importance for us to be vigilant and ready to resist our deceiving flesh and to remain steadfast by the Word of God. Only by doing this, will we retain our spiritual strength, our courage, and our efficiency, which is of the greatest importance for us in our work. And above all, we shall be clothed in Christ's righteousness.

When we now part, we part only to continue our journey to the heavenly home.

After the hymn, "A mighty fortress is our God," and the Lord's Prayer, the Benediction was pronounced. And thus ended this blessed Convention.

Unto God be Glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end!

## OFFICERS OF THE SYNOD.

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Vice-President: J. A. Molstad, 1535 N. Keeler Ave. Chicago, Ill.

Secretary: L. P. Jensen, 502 N. 5th Street, Mankato, Minn.

Treasurer: A. J. Torgerson, Route 3, Northwood, Iowa.

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## CONTENTS.

Opening Sermon . . . . .	3—9
THE ORGANIZATION AND THE MEMBERS OF THE SYNOD	9—12
The President's Report. . . . .	13—26
DOCTRINAL PAPERS:	
Differences and Similarities between the Law and the Gospel . . . . .	27—63
The National Lutheran Council. . . . .	64—80
The Doctrinal Position of the National Lutheran Council . . . . .	80—90
SERMONS:	
Sermon on St. John 10:16. . . . .	91—97
Pastoral Sermon . . . . .	98—106
School Sermon . . . . .	107—114
BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS:	
Temporary Committees . . . . .	115—
Standing Committees . . . . .	115—116
Reports of Standing Committees. . . . .	116—119
Resolutions Read, Discussed and Adopted. . . . .	119—123
Incorporation of the Norwegian Synod. . . . .	123—126
Miscellaneous . . . . .	127—130
Officers and Pastors of the Synod. . . . .	131—

1870

1871

1872

1873

1874