



"Meditate
upon these things;
give thyself
wholly to them;
that thy profiting
may appear unto all"

I Timothy 4:15

Journal of Theology

CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION)

Forward

The launching of a new professional journal, particularly in the category of theology, certainly calls for some explanation. Those of our prospective readers to whom we are relative strangers are entitled to know something about our history and background. Those who have known us in the past, but are members of synods with which we no longer are in fellowship, may wonder about our intentions. We invite their scrutiny. But particularly the members of our immediate group are entitled to a discussion of our policies as well as an indication of what we conceive our function to be. In short, we must state our reason for being - or for our coming into being. Also we should state a number of things for the record.

Our Journal of Theology emanates from a very young Seminary, Immanuel Lutheran, with an admittedly small faculty of two members. Together with the other departments of Immanuel Lutheran College, this school was founded some eighteen months ago, not as a haven for unemployed pastors and professors, but to meet a serious need that was pressing even at that time, the need of providing for an increasing number of young people who had been studying at established synodical schools, but now found themselves orphaned, scholastically speaking, by their or their parents withdrawal from their previous synodical affiliation. The substantial growth of our school since its founding has demonstrated that this was not a mere imaginary need.

These withdrawals were chiefly from the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (Norwegian), both members of the Synodical Conference. They began in 1956, became a matter of public notice in 1957, and have continued to this day. They did not represent a concerted group movement, but were rather the separate actions

of individual members - pastors, teachers, professors, laymen - plus single congregations or parts thereof, each representing an individual protest over an issue that we shall presently describe in some detail. As these withdrawals continued, the need for mutual contact was felt, leading to a rather informal type of gathering called, for want of a better name, the "Interim Conference." After considerable study a statement of principle entitled "Concerning Church Fellowship" was adopted, covering the main points of the controversy. Supplementary propositions concerning the doctrines of the Church and Ministry were also prepared and subsequently incorporated as part of the doctrinal platform of the organization that has now been effected, the "Church of the Lutheran Confession," which takes the place of the temporary "Interim Conference."

That brings the history down to date. The issues remain to be discussed. For, it must be granted, our infant Church was born out of controversy - even as this was true also of that first Lutheran Church, in the days of the Reformation. But this is nothing of which to be ashamed, if only the issues are valid ones, valid by the standards of Holy Scripture. We are fully aware that our actions are something for which we owe an account, above all to God. But we are perfectly ready to explain ourselves also to those who will be taking time to read our efforts. This will be part of the function of our Journal.

To define at least the main issues is no simple matter since it involves the actions and present position of the two synods from which most of us have come - ELS and Wisconsin, both mentioned above. As we see it, two questions are involved in either case. First: When a church body in one way or another has clearly recognized and publicly declared a sister synod to be guilty of causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine that they have learned, may it (even if only within the framework of a larger federation like the Synodical Conference) still continue in the active practice of

church fellowship with such a synod in spite of the clear warnings of a passage like Romans 16:17-18? Second: May the arguments that are advanced in official support of such continued practice of fellowship be isolated from the doctrinal position of such a church, or do they become part of the public doctrine for which the entire body must be held responsible? It lies far beyond the scope of a Foreword to answer these questions here and now. They will help, however, to show what we have in mind when we shall touch on these issues from time to time. For touch on them we shall. There are things that need to be said. And the forum of this Journal may perhaps be the best place to say them.

It is our earnest hope, however, that we shall also find other things to discuss, other interests that will command our attention. For to live on controversy alone can become a monotonous diet. Or, to change the metaphor a bit, it would prove to be a sorry luxury, one that we simply cannot afford. By such a purely negative policy we would be depriving ourselves of the blessed benefits that come only through the positive study of Scripture and its saving doctrines. For it is this that serves so wonderfully for the edification, not only of the individual Bible student, but as we read in Ephesians 4, of the entire body of Christ in our case, of those souls that are entrusted to our particular care. We shall try to do this to the extent of our time and ability by widening the range of interest, by deepening the measure of understanding, by enriching the store of knowledge, by cultivating the practical skills of all of us who serve in the ministry of the Word, be it by teaching or preaching, - editors as well as readers.

The material that we plan to offer is to be arranged under several heads. First of all there shall, of course, be such articles of general interest as are characteristic of a theological publication and which will give body to it. Such articles are quite naturally the particular responsibility of the editors. But we are keenly aware of our limitations and hope therefore to enlist the occasional help of other members of our fellowship.

Whether this be in the form of new material, or perhaps of conference essays that should be accessible for the larger group, or even the republication of some earlier effort - the question is only whether it will serve the overall purpose to which we have committed ourselves above. Another source that we should not neglect is the treasure house of theological literature that is in danger of being forgotten because it is in the German or Norwegian of our forefathers in earlier days of Synodical Conference history. Much of this material has so vital a bearing on the problems of our present time that we hope to render a real service by making at least some of it available in translation. But regardless of the source of our material, one rule needs to be kept constantly in mind in connection with our eventual selections, that is the old principle that whatever is not Biblical is not theological - "quod non est biblicum non est theologicum." We invoke this rule not so much for the sake of keeping out a type of material which is appearing with increasing frequency in so many modern religious publications - articles on psychology, sociology, economics - as for the need of checking on ourselves, lest we let our publication become an instrument for giving expression to our personal feelings (either of individuals or the group), our own pet ideas, our particular wishes and desires. The "biblicum" must always remain our clear point of orientation, lest this present project cease to be truly "theologicum."

In keeping with Luther's axiom that there is nothing that serves better to keep people in the Church than good Scriptural preaching, our special departments will of course include one for Homiletics. In addition to special text studies we hope from time to time to bring complete sermons of particular interest, either from earlier days or out of the life of our newly organized group. So in this issue, where we bring the sermon given at the dedication of the new building erected for our school, Immanuel Lutheran College. Other departments will include one for Christian Education, which we offer not only for the sake of the importance of the subject, but also because of the

particular problems which this phase of our work presents to a small and struggling church body. Current events will also come in for a share of our attention, in a department under the heading of "Panorama." And of course, there are always books to be discussed. While these will usually fall into the classification of theology or Christian Education, we shall not exclude the possibility of occasionally going beyond these categories.

So we launch our modest little venture, fully conscious of the responsibilities we are thereby assuming. We are aware of the delicate sense of balance that will be required to keep our Journal from on the one hand becoming an ivory tower of lofty discussion into which one takes refuge in order to escape the stark realities of life, or on the other of falling into the habit of controversy for controversy's sake and so descending to the level of querulous complaint, of unbridled criticism, of intemperate invective, of vindictive retaliation. We know the danger of both of these extremes. We know that it is not even possible to show just where the exact line of demarcation is to be drawn, where moderation ceases and the immoderate begins. But our readers shall know that we will be trying to avoid these ever present pitfalls, saying what must be said in the face of existing conditions, doing what can be done by way of constructive suggestion, praying that our friends will understand and opponents not misunderstand us, knowing all the while that humanly speaking the extent of our influence must be small indeed, but committing ourselves and our cause to the Lord of the Church.

We trust that our readers will have sensed that neither we of the editorial board, nor our new church body which has requested this project are suffering from delusions of grandeur, that we are not launching this Journal for the sake of acquiring a status symbol, but that we are simply trying to do what we can, where we can, in a day when there is so much that needs to be done - doing this for the sake of preserving the truths that we once held jointly with so many brethren, and in the hope of serving, if God will grant His grace, toward a

restoration of the wider fellowship that once we enjoyed.

To this end we dedicate our efforts and this Journal.

E.R.

Omnes Christiani de Evangelio Consentiunt

God is to be thanked, Luther declares in the Smalcald Articles, that in the Reformation Age even a child of seven can be expected to understand and know what the Church is.¹

In like manner it belongs to elementary Christian understanding to know what the Church is not. It is not a visible institution, an outward polity. Enlarging on what the Creed says about the Church, Melancthon in his Apology of the Augsburg Confession goes on to state: "And it says Church Catholic, in order that we may not understand the Church to be an outward government of certain nations (that the Church is like any other external polity, bound to this or that land, kingdom or nation, as the Pope of Rome will say), but rather men scattered throughout the whole world who agree concerning the Gospel, and have the same Christ, the same Holy Ghost, and the same Sacraments, whether they have the same or different human traditions."² Cf. also "Concerning Church Fellowship," Parag. 57.

¹Trig. 499:2

²Trig. 229:10

It is not necessary, here among us, to review at length these essentials of the doctrine of the Church. But there is a facet in this gem of revealed Truth that merits further polishing. Article VII of the Augsburg Confession states: "Et ad veram unitatem ecclesiae satis est consentire de doctrina evangelii et administratione sacramentorum."³

This pronouncement lends itself to the service of unionistic ends, and has been employed for such purpose, if it is understood as defining the degree of unity required by God for the exercise of fellowship and joint work among Christians. Thus Dr. M. Reu wrote: "The notion that those who wish to enjoy church fellowship must agree in all points of doctrine rests upon an erroneous interpretation of I Cor. 1:10 and similar Scripture texts. Careful study of the respective contexts will lead to different results. Furthermore, this notion requires more than what Augustana VII declares to be essential for unity in the church. Here we read: 'To the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments.' Now we must not, of course, ignore the historical situation in which this famous 'it is enough' was pronounced. It set forth that agreement in ceremonies is not necessary for church union, but only agreement in doctrine and in the administration of the sacraments. Nevertheless, it is very significant that the doctrine is simply denoted as 'the doctrine of the Gospel.'⁴

In an essay read to the Northern Illinois District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in 1931, the author analyzed the Augsburg Confession and, in regard to its seventh Article, said: "It is not difficult to recognize the inner connection between this and the preceding articles. In these

³Trig. 47:2

⁴"In the Interest of Lutheran Unity," p.32

the confessors, on the basis of the divine Word, had shown how the faithful God reconciled the sinful, lost and condemned world through the suffering and death of his Son Jesus Christ and now offers and confers such reconciliation, or forgiveness, in the Gospel, the Means of Grace. Now they who accept the Savior by faith become partakers of all heavenly treasures, receive therewith the absolution won for all the world and lay hold on eternal life. This fellowship of the believers with Christ then reveals itself in a life guided by the Word in the form of works done to the glory and praise of God. The believers, however, do not stand isolated, but form a great and intimate communion, the members of which are most intimately connected with Christ, their Head, and therefore also with one another. This communion, born of the working and gathering activity of the Holy Spirit, is that divine institution which in Scripture is called ecclesia, congregation of believers, or church. Of this Church of the Lord, then, this Article treats."⁵

Of the fact that Article VII of the Augsburg Confession deals with the spiritual unity of the Una Sancta, and does not concern itself with the terms of union in the visible church, the Apology is the best evidence and unimpeachable witness. "These things seem, for the present, to be sufficient for the defense of the description of the Church which we have presented. Neither do we see how, when the Church, properly so called, is named the body of Christ, it should be described otherwise than we have described it. For it is evident that the wicked belong to the kingdom and body of the devil, who impels and holds captive the wicked. These things are clearer than the light of noonday; however, if the adversaries still continue to pervert them, we will not hesitate to reply at greater length.

"The adversaries condemn also the part of the Seventh Article in which we said that 'to the unity of the Church it is sufficient to agree concerning

⁵Syn. Report, Dist. of No. Illinois, 1931, p.13

the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments; neither is it necessary that human traditions, rites or ceremonies instituted by men should be everywhere alike.' Here they distinguish between universal and particular rites, and approve our article if it be understood concerning particular rites; they do not receive it concerning universal rites. (That is a fine, clumsy distinction!) We do not sufficiently understand what the adversaries mean. We are speaking of true, i.e., of spiritual unity (we say that those are one harmonious Church who believe in one Christ; who have one Gospel, one Spirit, one faith, the same Sacraments: and we are speaking therefore of spiritual unity), without which faith in the heart, or righteousness of heart before God, cannot exist." 6

But there remains for us a question of the extent of doctrinal unity envisioned in the Seventh Article of the Augustana. What is predicated concerning the essence and extent of the faith of those "qui consentiunt de evangelio?"

I.

Through the medium of saving faith lost and condemned sinners become saints of God and are numbered with that blessed communion known as the Holy Christian Church. Thus we confess with Luther in his explanation of the Third Article: "...the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts; sanctified and kept me in the true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith." Of the early apostolic days in the Church it is written: "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women."⁷ So on the Day of Pentecost "they that gladly received" the message of Peter "were baptized: and the same day

⁶Trig. 237:29f.

⁷Acts 5:14

there were added unto them about three thousand souls."⁸

The common bond of all true Christians is the same faith in this same message, as St. Paul indicates in writing to the Ephesians: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."⁹ The Apostle assures the saints in Galatia: "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."¹⁰

To such faith men attain only through the marvellous work and operation of the Holy Ghost; for "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,"¹¹ and "...the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."¹² Saving faith is the product of the miracle of regeneration, as St. Paul describes it to the Ephesians: "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 ye are saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."¹³ The Formula of Concord observes: "In spiritual and divine things, which pertain to the salvation of the soul, man is like a pillar of salt, like Lot's wife, yea, like a log and a stone, like a lifeless statue, which uses neither eyes nor mouth, neither sense nor heart. For man neither sees nor perceives the terrible and fierce wrath of

⁸Acts 2:31

¹⁰Gal.3:26 ¹²I Cor.2:14

⁹Eph.2:19-22

¹¹I Cor.12:3 ¹³Eph.2:4-7

God on account of sin and death, but ever continues in his security, even knowingly and willingly All teaching and preaching is lost upon him until he is enlightened, converted and regenerated by the Holy Ghost."¹⁴ Defining the process of regeneration more exactly, the Formula states: "In genuine conversion a change, new emotion, and movement in the intellect, will and heart must take place, namely, that the heart perceive sin, dread God's wrath, turn from sin, perceive and accept the promise and grace in Christ, have good spiritual thoughts, a Christian purpose and diligence, and strive against the flesh. For when none of these occurs or is present, there is also no true conversion."¹⁵ In his Doctrinal Theology, therefore, Hollaz offers this definition: "Conversion is that act of grace by which the Holy Spirit excites in the sinner sincere grief for his sins by the word of the Law and kindles true faith in Christ by the word of the Gospel, that he may obtain remission of sins and eternal salvation."¹⁶

In the moment that Spirit-wrought faith is kindled in the heart of a human being, he becomes partaker of the blessings which Christ has earned and won for all men. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."¹⁷ Whether he is a malefactor on the cross or an Apostle of the Cross, saving faith created by the Holy Ghost comes to him with its full dowry of the treasures earned and won by the Savior: forgiveness of sins, deliverance from death and the devil, and eternal life. The pattern of faith in the Holy Christian Church is not a Joseph's coat of many colors, but a unity, as it is written: "..... even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all,

¹⁴Trig. 889:20-21

¹⁶Doctr. Theol.p.466

¹⁵Trig. 909:70

¹⁷Rom. 5:1-2

and in you all."¹⁸

Faith has a unity both of form and of content. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."¹⁹ In form it is, first of all, knowledge. The Apostle asks: "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?"²⁰ Scripture allows no answer to this question save a negative one. Our Lord declared: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."²¹ Therefore St. Peter also teaches that "his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."²² Such is the "knowledge of salvation" referred to by Zacharias in his Benedictus.²³ As God's Will that all men be saved led to universal redemption and justification, so His Will that men come to the knowledge of the Truth results in their regeneration which confers such knowledge. This is neither a mere familiarity with facts, nor is it a purely intellectual knowledge acquired by the exercise of human abilities. Scripture speaks of the knowledge of faith as a gift, a product of divine grace and not of man's intellect. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things which are freely given us of God."²⁴ Saving knowledge is a part of the saving gift of faith, and its conferring a miracle of grace which is wrought in the baptized infant as well as in the adult and has an origin beyond our comprehension.

In form, saving faith likewise includes assent and trust. The Call of the Holy Spirit addresses itself to the newly awakened mind and will of the regenerate man, as is indicated by the appeals and

¹⁸Eph. 4:4-6

²¹John 17:3

¹⁹Rom. 8:14

²²II Pet. 1:3

²⁰Rom. 10:14

²³Luke 1:77

²⁴I Cor. 2:12

exhortations of the Gospel: "Be ye reconciled to God!" "Repent, and believe the Gospel!" "Come unto me and I will give you rest!" Of Paul preaching at Ephesus it is said that " . . . he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God."²⁵ And again at Rome: " . . . there came many to him into his lodging to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening."²⁶ It is, of course, not the natural will of man which is operative in the act of agreeing to and trusting the message of the Word. The assent as well as the ensuing confidence are acts of the New Man "created in righteousness and true holiness"²⁷ by Him which "effectually worketh also in you that believe."²⁸ Here too, as in the whole area of saving faith, the words of Jesus to the Jews apply: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."²⁹

As saving faith in all saints has unity of form, so also it is uniform in its content. Both the words and the examples cited in Scripture confirm this beyond question. " . . . The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."³⁰ And Jesus said: "This is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."³¹ Thus Paul and the jailor at Philippi came to stand as equals in grace when both obeyed the divine invitation: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."³²

²⁵Acts 19:8 ²⁸I Thess.2:13 ³¹John 6:40

²⁶Acts 28:23 ²⁹John 6:29 ³²Acts 16:31

²⁷Eph.4:24 ³⁰Rom.10:8-10

Consonant with this view of the essential object of true faith, Dr. F. Pieper in his Christian Dogmatics observes: "A person's membership in the Christian Church depends on his confessing that he deserves damnation before God and at the same time believing that God is gracious to him for the sake of Christ's satisfactio vicaria. Cf. Luther's explanation of the Second Article." ³³ We sing: "The saints on earth and those above But one communion make; Joined to their Lord in bonds of love, All of His grace partake." ³⁴ Such is the meaning of Article VII of the Augsburg Confession when it says: "To the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments."

It goes without saying among us that the above has no relevance when we discuss the extent of confessional agreement necessary for the scriptural fellowship of Christians in the visible church. Here both the Word and the Confessions apply an entirely different standard. Passages such as Rom.16:17 and 2 Thess.3:6 are too familiar to require comment here. The Formula of Concord makes our position regarding togetherness in the visible church clear. "Thus the churches will not condemn one another because of dissimilarity of ceremonies when, in Christian liberty, one has less or more of them, provided they are otherwise agreed with one another in the doctrine and all its articles, also in the right use of the Holy Sacraments...." ³⁵ And again: "But we are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance" etc. ³⁶ (Underseoring ours.)

³³Chr. Dogmatics III, p.400

³⁴Luth. Hymnal: 478,1

³⁵Trig. p.1063:31

³⁶Trig. 1095:96

Nothing less than complete agreement in doctrine is the basis upon which we are permitted to recognize brethren and engage in the privileges of a fellowship that reflects the unity of Christ's spiritual body. But that which establishes membership in the Una Sancta is solely the acceptance by a contrite sinner of God's boundless mercies and infinite love for him in Christ the Redeemer, as revealed in the Word.

II.

While the faith of the regenerate consists of knowledge, as well as of assent and trust, it does not follow that the new-born creature of faith is necessarily endowed with a dogmatic knowledge which embraces the entire system of organized truth.

The fact that "no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost"³⁷ indeed gives us leave to infer that the new life of faith in the Christian is perfect, as also St. John declares: "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."³⁸ It is manifest that the new man never opposes the Truth, but receives it and accepts it. "He that is of God heareth God's words,"³⁹ Jesus says; and again: "My sheep hear my voice."⁴⁰ When St. Paul therefore writes: "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness,"⁴¹ he exonerates this creature of the Holy Ghost from every charge of error and corruption.

At the same time, Scripture finds it necessary to teach the new man in us to pray: "Lord, increase our faith."⁴² Does not St. Peter admonish us to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and

³⁷I Cor. 12:3

⁴⁰John 10:27

³⁸I John 3:9

⁴¹Eph. 4:24

³⁹John 8:47

⁴²Luke 17:5

Savior Jesus Christ"?⁴³ (Cf. also II Cor. 10:15) It was on Resurrection Day, long after the disciples had been brought to the knowledge of their Savior, that the risen Lord "opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures" ⁴⁴ Not only did He "upbraid them with their unbelief and hardness of heart," ⁴⁵ a condition caused, not by their regenerate hearts but by the sinful flesh which still clung to them; He also taught them many things after His resurrection which they could not bear before, ⁴⁶ just as the Apostle later told the Corinthians: "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." ⁴⁷ The complaint was registered against the Hebrew Christians that "when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." ⁴⁸ Among the members of the Una Sancta, then there are children as well as men of faith.

Read in the light of this scriptural premise, the confession of our church "Concerning Church Fellowship," as adopted, will be correctly understood when it states in paragraph 5: "Christians according to the new man are perfectly joined together in the same mind. The Holy Spirit makes them children of God, and He makes them all the same. They are agreed on sin, its nature, its origin, its means, its fruits, etc. They are agreed on grace, its sufficiency, its means, its fruits, etc. There may be different degrees of understanding, differences in the intensity of the experience, yet as far as the essence is concerned, all believers are perfectly agreed."

It is to be noted with due care, however, that here, as well as in paragraph six of the same

⁴³II Pet. 3:18

⁴⁶John 16:12

⁴⁴Luke 24:45

⁴⁷I Cor. 3:2

⁴⁵Mark 16:14

⁴⁸Heb. 5:12-13

confession, the Christian is viewed exclusively according to his new birth in order to define precisely the nature of the unity existing in the Una Sancta. While this is a technical refinement suitable for the exact doctrinal proposition to be advanced, we must guard against false inferences.

The Una Sancta, though a creation of the Holy Ghost, must not be regarded as an ideal society by virtue of the perfection of its constituency. Glorious things are indeed spoken of "Zion, city of our God." The Church is called holy by its King, Who says to its members by His Apostle: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."⁴⁹ Yet the members of this priesthood cannot be separated from the flesh that adheres to them in this life. As saints they remain human beings; and as such they are sinful. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."⁵⁰ It would be unrealistic, therefore, to suggest that membership in the Communion of Saints is limited to, or must be ascribed exclusively to, that part of the Christian which the Holy Ghost has created by the Word, as though the Christian were the new man only and the totality of the Church were for that reason a perfect and perfectly functioning organism especially in matters of faith and confession.

Not only when viewed from our perspective, but in the eyes of God as well, the Christian is a sinner and comes short of the glory of God. "The sins of the Christians are not painted sins; they are real sins. The Christian flees them, he fights against them, he hates them, but they are there. Therefore the Christian daily asks God for forgiveness, and he is comforted by the fact that the saints of old were also troubled by their sinful flesh."⁵¹ Our Confessions say: "For since in this

⁴⁹I Pet. 2:5

⁵⁰I John 1:8

⁵¹The Abiding Word,
II, p. 288

life we receive only the first fruits of the Spirit, and the new birth is not complete, but only begun in us, the combat and struggle of the flesh against the spirit remains even in the elect and truly regenerate men; for there is a great difference perceptible among Christians not only in this, that one is weak and another strong in the spirit, but each Christian, moreover, experiences in himself that at one time or another he is joyful in spirit, and at another fearful and alarmed; at one time ardent in love, strong in faith and hope, and at another cold and weak."52

Scripture speaks frequently of the spiritual dichotomy by which the Christian is plagued in his earthly, temporal existence. Especially noteworthy and well-known in this respect is the complaint of St. Paul in the seventh chapter of Romans. He writes: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."53 In admonishing the Ephesians to "put on the new man," he in the same breath exhorts "that he put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts."54

When the Christian cries with Paul: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"55 he knows, as Paul did, how and when this question will be answered with action. "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed."56 The saint in his heavenly home will not be a combination of spirit and corruptible flesh. As he is already here transformed in mind and spirit unto a new man, so his entire frame will then also

52Trig. 907:68 (word order by Ed.)

53Rom. 7:22-23

55Rom. 7:24

54Eph. 4:22

56I Cor. 15:51-52

bear the image of the heavenly; and that renovation, here begun, of which Baptism is both the instrument and the symbol, will be consummated so as to conform with final and utter adequacy to the description of the Apostle: "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of (Christ's) death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."⁵⁷

"Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory."⁵⁸ But until then, "with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."⁵⁹

We observe that while Scripture and the Confessions distinguish the Christian according to the new man when urging upon him the duty of sanctification and its problems, neither Scripture nor the Confessions emphasizes the divided state of the Christian when specifically speaking of him as a member of the Una Sancta. Though he deplores the vile burden of his fleshy nature, St. Paul never viewed himself as being vertically or horizontally divided in the state of Grace. As he describes his inner conflicts, he says: "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it; but sin that dwelleth in me So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."⁶⁰ But when speaking of those justified by faith, he prays for himself as for the Thessalonians that the "whole spirit and soul and body" might "be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."⁶¹

⁵⁷Rom. 6:5-7

⁶⁰Rom. 7:19-25

⁵⁸I Cor. 15:54

⁶¹I Thess. 5:23

⁵⁹Rom. 7:25

Dr. F. Pieper explains: "I John 3:9: 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him' describes the Christian according to the new man who maintains dominion over the old man. The Apostle distinguishes between 'committing sin', (~~ἁμαρτία~~ ἁμαρτία, I John 3:9) and 'having sin' (~~ἁμαρτία~~ ἔχειν, I John 1:18). Christians do not 'commit sin,' that is, they do not permit sin to rule over them, to give it free reign; they 'have sin,' but in the power of the new man, the offspring of God, they control sin."⁶²

The Christian as a member of the Una Sancta is embarrassed and harassed by his weakness, and cries: "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."⁶³ Our confessions say: "We are speaking not of an imaginary Church, which is to be found nowhere; but we say and know certainly that this Church, wherein saints live, is and abides truly upon earth; namely that some of God's children are here and there in all the world, in various kingdoms, islands, lands and cities, from the rising of the sun to its setting, who have truly learned to know Christ and His Gospel. And we add the marks: the pure doctrine of the Gospel (the ministry of the Gospel) and the Sacraments. And this Church is properly the pillar of the truth, I Tim. 3:15. For it retains the "pure Gospel, and, as Paul says, I Cor. 3:11 (: 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ'), the foundation, i.e., the true knowledge of Christ and faith. Although among these there are also many weak persons, who build upon the foundation stubble that will perish, i.e., certain unprofitable opinions which, nevertheless, because they do not overthrow the foundation, are both forgiven them and also corrected. And the writings of the holy Fathers testify that sometimes even they built stubble upon the foundation, but that this did not overthrow their faith."⁶⁴

⁶²Chr. Dogmatics, III, p.32

⁶³Mark 9:24

⁶⁴Trig. 233:20f.

Thus "there is great diversity among Christians. Some are strong in their faith, others weak. Some have an excellent knowledge of the Christian doctrine, others are woefully deficient in this respect. (Eph.4:13-14; Rom.14:1ff). There are orthodox Christians and heterodox Christians (see Chapter I in the section 'Saving Faith': 'Orthodoxy and membership in the Christian Church are not coterminous') But there is full accord among Christians on the doctrine of justification. All Christians are at one in believing that God forgives their sins by grace, for Christ's sake, without any merit of their own. For it is this faith which makes the Christian."⁶⁵

So it behooves us that we set up guards against a recurrence of the error of the Gnostics in the Alexandrine period of church history, when, in speaking of the Christian, regeneration and sanctification were sometimes utterly confused. Thus Clemens Alexandrinus: "Having been baptized, we are illuminated; having been illuminated, we are made sons; having been made sons, we are perfected; having been perfected, we are superior to death We, the baptized, have erased our beclouding sins, the condemnation of darkness, by the divine Spirit, have the free and unhindered and bright vision of the Spirit Therefore we have washed away all our sins, and are immediately no longer evil. This is the one grace of illumination, viz., to be no longer the same as before, or to have cleansed the way."⁶⁶

Similarly we must reject and shun the Pelagian-Arminian view of man espoused by the Oberlin School of theology, notably of its prominent teacher C. G. Finney (d.1875), who in his Systematic Theology "teaches that it is impossible for sin and virtue to coexist in the human heart at the same time ... and that the soul is either wholly consecrated to Christ or it has none of His Spirit. These two states may alternate, and this man may be a Christian at one moment and a sinner the next; however, he cannot be at one moment a sinful or imperfect Christian."⁶⁷

⁶⁵Pieper, Dogm. II, 516 .. ⁶⁶Paidagogos, II, 3, pp.113,114,116

We do well to emphasize, therefore, that it is not the perfection of his new nature which holds the saint in true and full communion with the Body of Christ, just as he is not a member of the Una Sancta because according to the new man he never contradicts or rejects any truth of God. If the Church which Christ loved and for which He gave Himself is "a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish,"⁶⁸ this is essentially a product of the forgiving grace of God which by the blood of Jesus Christ covers the saints wholly with an alien, heavenly righteousness. In heaven it will be said of the members of the Communion of Saints that "these are they which have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and he that sitteth on the Throne shall dwell among them." ⁶⁹

E.S.

⁶⁷Concordia Cyclopedia, p.805. See also J.J. Neve, History of Christian Thought, II, p.278

⁶⁸Eph.5:27

⁶⁹Rev.7:14-15

The Form of Sound Words

II Tim 1:13

Since this Journal is venturing to add its contribution, however modest it may be, to the blizzard of present-day theological literature blowing in from all points of the compass and settling in heaps on the desks of our pastors, it offers herewith to make some slight amends by rescuing from drifts

which have well-nigh buried it an admonition of the Apostle Paul to Timothy and thus restoring a somewhat forgotten criterion for all who would read and write theology with discrimination. The Apostle writes:

"Ever have (that is, hold in useful possession) as original pattern of healthy words those which you heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus;"

Without presenting here a detailed grammatical and exegetical analysis of the Greek text, we refer this task to the reader and invite him to verify by personal study and research the validity of the brief commentary which follows.

The thinking of Paul in this passage is eschatological, as v.12 shows. He is persuaded of the power of his Lord Jesus Christ and commits to Him the guardianship of a sacred and precious deposit, the Gospel which was entrusted to Paul's charge and use but which no man in his own might can safely preserve. The Lord Jesus will keep it safe to the end of days. Paul is assured of that. At the same time, the Apostle understands his personal obligation in that respect, and the obligation of all who are endowed with possession of the saving oracles. The Lord of the Church is their Keeper; but He chooses to work through His human instruments. In this problem of preserving the Truth, Timothy also has a commitment, as verse 14 shows: "The good deposit guard thou through the Holy Ghost Who dwells in us."

The intervening verse (13) proposes a vital measure for the discharge of this duty. Paul admonishes Timothy to persist in the use of healthy words for which Paul's inspired record offers the original pattern. As a painter might copy the work of a master, so Timothy is to speak and write in the language of his teacher. The term *logos* refers both to individual words and to forms of expression in general, all of which are to be - note well - not merely healthful (health-giving), but healthy, sound. Although the element of sound content is certainly

a primary concern of the Apostle where language is concerned, it would distort his meaning to say that his admonition is restricted to a demand for dogmatical correctness in communicating the Gospel, as though doctrinal accuracy could be divorced from the words which are used. It is precisely the Apostle's concern that the Gospel be preserved in its integrity not merely by what Timothy says, but by the way he says it. The fitting word is essential. Not the thoughts that Paul expressed, but the words that he used are the "Urbild," or pattern, to which he would bind his disciple. The apostolic church has consistently heeded both the letter and the spirit of this prescription. Even the expressions employed in orthodox theology that are not biblical in form, such as the terms "Trinity" and "objective justification," respond precisely to the doctrinal formulations of the Word itself.

Orthodox pastors concerned with the task of keeping the Faith inviolate are well aware of the fact that not all who retain in their form the use of healthy, traditional words and expressions in theological discussion do so in the spirit of the Apostle. Satan has devised semantic means for corrupting doctrine through the employment of scriptural terms with a change in connotation. The words have the old, familiar ring; but both content and context have been altered. The powerful and idiomatic scriptural terminology, by a subtle process of exinanition, has in some quarters been divested of its divine definitions and filled with a human content which makes it a fruitful exponent of error. Thus the modernist advances his destructive cause, not by excising such key terms as righteousness, salvation, atonement, reconciliation, inspiration and many others from his theological parlance, but by withdrawing them from the analogy of Scripture and arbitrarily investing them with human and unscriptural concepts, employing them liberally in their perverted sense to the confusion of the simple. Healthy words cease to be healthy when the inspired content is aborted. They thereby become additions to the list of "vain words" by which men are deceived. (Eph.5:6)

It is equally prejudicial to doctrinal purity, however, when theologians, either in ignorance or by design, presume or pretend to clothe the old truths in new expressions calculated, as they allege, to make them intelligible to the modern mind. The abuse of distinctive scriptural expression by the exponents of unscriptural theology does not warrant the surrender of such terms and the substitutions of new ones. And it is precisely in the coining of sonorous "modern" verbiage that Satan has more recently poised his most effective weapon against the defenders of the Truth.

There seems to be an implication current in theological circles, in the conservative as well as in the liberal camp, that only such theology is relevant today which operates freely and learnedly with terms such as "self-disclosure," "divine encounter," "existential," "confrontation." Some theologian with the soul of a press agent invented the use of "dynamic" as a catch-all adjective which successfully defies the necessity for precise dogmatic definition of the term it modifies.

Many a humble theologian, trained in the relatively clear and uncomplicated terminology of the age of orthodoxy in the Lutheran Church has been terrified by his adventures in the never-never land of the modern scientific theological jargon. The familiar expressions of doctrinal formulation common to the Lutheran Confessions and the dogmaticians of the 17th century were employed in the literature of our more recent fathers, and their treatises printed in theological journals of a later age were home territory for the students of Scripture in our conservative circles until very recently. Now, however, those who undertake to write and publish professional theological works must, if they fail to season their paragraphs with the spicy erudition of 20th century logoi, confront their contemporaries with the same shrinking sense of fossilized inadequacy that might assail a man who drives a Model-T Ford down a highway populated by its 1961 descendants.

There is a certain horrible fascination in the

grandiloquent theological dialect ⁱⁿ common use today. This is obvious from the fact that even nominally orthodox theologians have succumbed to its demands. Conservative theological journalists seem to show a compulsive need for escaping the stigma of amateurism by adopting the new slang of their more ostentatiously learned colleagues here and abroad. It sometimes proves difficult to tell, without looking at the by-line, whether one is reading Archbishop Temple, John Baillie, or a member of the Concordia Faculty at St. Louis. The number of those who continue to speak the oracles of God exclusively in the traditional terms of the old orthodoxy is rapidly decreasing. We are witnessing, not so much the death of a theological era as the gradual extinction of a theological species.

The question then arises: Must the orthodox church of today, in restating the message of Scripture and its doctrinal tenets, do so by employing the terminology of the modernist? To borrow a few occult phrases: Is theology existential only when it speaks of the divine encounter through the self-revelation of God in concrete action in history? As matters stand, one is never quite sure that superb obscurities such as these make any sense, or convey to others the sense intended by the author. For modern terminology issues from the womb of evasiveness and is per se ambiguous. To understand it, one needs a glossary, not merely of words, but of contexts in which the words are employed. The verbiage of liberal theology is by design a tool of the Schleiermacher school. It is a robust handmaiden of those who have spearheaded the development of a doctrinal theology rooted in Christian self-consciousness rather than in Scripture.

Significantly, many of the terms now current in Protestant theology are found clustered about the area of revelation and the Word. They serve to disguise a virulent and uncompromising attack upon verbal inspiration and the authority of Holy Writ. They are the stock in trade of the present-day agents of the Ich-Theologie in the new Barthian garb. They are rationalistic in intent, and subjectivistic in content. Their use creates an illusion of depth

that conceals a tragic theological superficiality. They are not "healthy words." Insofar as they restate the old orthodox position, they are unnecessary additions and an encumbrance to the Christian's vocabulary. The traditional expressions are clearer. Insofar as they seek to supplant scriptural concepts with those of Neo-orthodoxy, they are abhorrent to the devout servant of the Word.

Doubtless these observations will occasion contemptuous shoulder-shrugging in some quarters; and for the dissenters such unscientific blasphemy against the word-gods of the modern theological Babel will betray the reactionary nature of this Journal. We are confident, nevertheless, that our strictures against the overtly irreverent terminology of Modernism will stand in the judgment of God; and, except for the necessity of adverting to them in occasional critical evaluation of the modern scene and thought, these pages will scrupulously avoid the use of the abstractions of liberalism in favor of words that reflect the spiritual health of a twentieth-century Theology of Repristination. As the Formula of Concord declares: "... it is safest of all, according to the admonition of St. Paul, 2 Tim.1:13, to hold fast as well to the form of sound words as to the pure doctrine itself, whereby much unnecessary wrangling may be cut off and the Church preserved from many scandals." (Trig.949:36).

E. S.

PAIDEIA

In launching these essays in education we can promise only to labor at a large task, that of discussing many aspects of the subject education. Education is only a part of $\pi\alpha\lambda\delta\epsilon\iota\alpha$, which is "the whole training and education of children... whatever in adults also cultivates the soul... instruction which aims at the increase of virtue... chastisement; chastening" (Thayer). To which must be added $\tau\epsilon\chi\nu\eta$, for utility must not be neglected.

We do not intend "systematic" discussions, for we believe that philosophy of education interpreted as a system is a pitfall. We would rather confine ourselves to outlining guiding principles which take into account "how things go" in the work of education. A book was written a few years ago in which a philosophy of Christianity was called for. We hope that a Christian system of philosophy is never developed, for that would likely spell the end of growing understanding of the Christian way. Likewise for education: systematization can harm the subject, if by that is meant an intellectualization, an imposed way of thinking on the subject. Christian $\pi\alpha\lambda\delta\epsilon\iota\alpha$ must never have saddled upon it any view of things which happens to be current at the time. Together we would rather seek to understand better the many timeless things that the Word tells us about our growing up into Him which is the Head. And together we will pursue what pertains to learning in the sphere below, always under the aegis of the sphere above.

Education is a process, not a fixed being, some kind of entity that has been established once for all. It is partly an art, to which some are more

nearly born than others. At the same time it must be said that some verifiable body of knowledge concerning it has been discovered. Accordingly, it is our hope that essays in $\pi \times 10^6$ will contribute to better performance by all who teach: in all likelihood there is a better way for each of us who do it.

The Responsibility of a Minority

In the field of education, as in that of religion, "wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:13-14).

We see examples of this in the times that are passing before our eyes. The sudden reversal to greater "toughness" in the schools is something that a minority has been advocating all the time. This has been as true of a few public school educators as of a number of them in private schools. But as surely as it became popular of late to be tougher in the schools, it remained for a minority to show how to be strong in a truly effective way. Many American children today have more homework than ever before, but it remains for a few teachers to make homework something more than repetitive busy-work, boring and time-consuming. The piling on of work does not necessarily educate.

We want to make the point that throughout history the majority generally neither grasps the essentials of good education nor arrives at the

best methods of achieving the desired goals. And we say this, not to take pride in a humble minority position, but to help assign each of us the work we must do to be worthy of the position in which God has put us. The very best that God gave His people Israel soon became perverted by them. Every improvement that one or a few have introduced in history soon became adopted by the unthinking majority and lost its point. The parallel between the sacred and the secular is inescapable.

In his History of Rationalism (1865), John Fletcher Hurst said of the decadent period following Luther: "It was very evident that the Lutheran Church would require a long period of self-purification, if indeed she could achieve it at all. The shorter and more effectual way would be to operate individually upon the popular mind. And does not the entire history of the church prove that reform has originated from no concerted action of the body needing reformation, but from the solemn conviction and persevering efforts of some single mind, which, working first alone, has afterward won to its assistance many others?" (P.84). Luther's work was that of a few who saw. The masses have not been dependable except for a short time, perhaps, when they were enlightened; but how long did they remain such as choose the better way?

The undependability of the many was forcefully driven home by Plato in his myth of the cave. The man who came to a true understanding of how things are and how this world goes was fearfully set upon by the many who preferred to keep their illusions and delusions regarding things as they seemed. There is a startling analogy between things in the world and things in the spiritual realm.

We need only to read a few serious books and magazines in our own day to see the task of the minority, a situation to which we refer purely for illustration of the position we are in educationally. Take for illustration what Harry Ashmore said in the Post for October 29, 1960, p. 52, regarding the free press: "It is evident by now, I think, that the press is not capable of reforming itself, for the

good reason that it will not admit collectively that there is any need for reform. And it has the power to establish its own virtue in the minds of most of us simply by proclaiming it. By what standard does a man who has never seen a good newspaper judge the one he has? Does a high Trendex rating really prove that 50,000,000 American prefer TV Westerns if there is nothing else to see between supper and bedtime?"

In education, as in theology, we must have the boldness to say what must be said, even as the writer last quoted also declared on the same page, "We have got to insist that, in addition to what they want, the people have got to get what they need."

Responsibility commits^a minority to quality education, to that which first of all takes into account the eternal verities, and then which in every sense of the word is the very best education.

TXIX can have no less from us. Schools are for learning. That they are Christian must not be used as a trick to excuse poor performance in regard to things intellectual. That they are Christian should be used to make them more intellectual than ever. Even to study science means to study all the harder to trace the finger of God in creation. Education matters very much to us. It must receive our best.

M.G.

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PREACHING THE WORD

"Self-dedication"

(Sermon preached October 9, 1960, at the dedication of a new classroom building for Immanuel Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota, by Pastor L. Schierenbeck, Austin, Minnesota.)

Text: Matthew 16: 13-18

In Christ Jesus, the Lord, the Savior and the Hope of His Church, dear friends of the Truth.

"This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." As we gather together this afternoon for the dedication of the classroom building of Immanuel Lutheran College and the installation of additional professors, who will deny that we have before us a visible demonstration of the wonder of the grace, power and glory of our God?

Immanuel, - God with us in and through His Son, our Savior, - this we praise today. By itself the very existence of Immanuel Lutheran College is marvellous in our eyes. When we consider the fact that in the second year of its existence the expansion of the faculty and the facilities of this College is not only necessary but an accomplished fact, our hearts must be filled with holy awe,

thanksgiving and joy. "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

But even as we today rejoice in thanksgiving, we must be keenly aware of the task that the Lord has set before us. The joy we feel today will be of no lasting value unless each of us dedicates himself in grateful thanksgiving to the labors and toils that lie before us.

May God through His Holy Spirit grant that this may be our solemn vow today: "As We Dedicate This Building, We Dedicate Ourselves." For the blessing of God, the heavenly Father, will continue and abound among us, if we dedicate ourselves,

- I. In humble recognition that the Lord builds His Church;
- II. In grateful appreciation of our calling and part in that work;
- III. In steadfast confidence that, since our labor is the Lord's, it cannot fail.

I.

At the time of our text the early popularity of Jesus among the people, based largely upon His miracles, had slowly ebbed away and had been replaced by an increasing tempo of opposition. You may be sure that the Savior's disciples were not unaffected by the turn of events. Human as they were, they too had their dreams, - dreams of large masses of people dedicated to the glorious work to which they had been called and dedicated. The Lord knew that a lack of popularity and prestige and the opposition of the world would not only be His lot until it brought Him to the cross, but that the same conditions would continue until the end of time for His disciples of all ages.

Aware of the shattering of their false and human hopes, the Savior in His love assures His disciples that, despite the lack of earthly power and the presence of active opposition, His blessed and saving work among sinners would be accomplished. Therefore the mighty God and Lord says, "I will build My Church."

Our age, which may well be characterized as the organization age, has lost sight of this basic and elementary truth. Despite the clear Word of God Satan has succeeded in implanting the damaging delusion that powerful earthly organizations are necessary and essential for building the Church, at least in our age. In the simple Word of our text Christ exposes this soul-damaging lie of Satan when He says, "I will build My Church."

The Savior not only told His disciples that the work of building the Church was His work, but also how He would carry on that work. He says, "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church."

What is this rock upon which Christ builds His Church? We can quickly dispose of the false claim of the Roman Catholic Church that with this Word the Lord elevated Peter to the primacy of the papacy, and that, therefore, he is the rock upon which Christ builds His Church. Even if we disregard other clear passages of Scripture on this matter, our text simply will not allow the false Catholic claim.

If Christ does not state in our text that He will build His Church upon the person of Peter, what is "this rock" to which He refers? Peter had just made his glorious confession of faith, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Peter was able to make this glorious confession because it had been revealed to him by the Father. The rock, therefore, the foundation upon which the Lord builds His Church, is the revelation of God, His Word, which brings men to the glorious knowledge and confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

As we consider the work that lies before us, let us dedicate ourselves in humble recognition that the Lord God alone builds His Church by means of His Word which leads men to the soul-saving confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

II.

In the building of His Church Jesus does use men. Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of

the living God," was not only an expression of his personal faith in the Redeemer, but also a confession concerning the person and work of Jesus for the sake of others that they might receive the same faith unto their salvation.

The glorious confession of Peter and the blessed knowledge it imparted was needed in Jesus' day. It was surely needed by the rank heathen who lived in the darkness of unbelief and wallowed in the mire of their sins. It was also needed by the respected religious people of that day, the Jews, who prided themselves in being seed of Abraham. Though they possessed and revered the same old Testament Scripture as the disciples, though they had heard Jesus Himself declare that He was the Messiah, the Seed of the woman, the Seed of Abraham, the long-awaited Redeemer, they would not believe. Oh yes, they wanted to honor Jesus. They had fine things to say about Him. They identified Him with their most honored men - John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah and their other prophets. Yet they steadfastly refused to join Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

When Peter made his confession, Jesus said, "Blessed art thou." Amid a crooked and perverse generation, what was it that brought Peter to his confession? The answer is not to be found in the person of Peter. Jesus reminded him of this truth when He called him Simon Bar-jonah, son of Jonah. Peter was flesh and blood and therefore sinful as are all men. Of him it was true as of all men, "There is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." It was the heavenly Father who through the power of His Holy Spirit in His Word brought Peter to believe and confess Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Others in Peter's day had the same revelation, the same Word of God. Yet they did not come to the same faith and confession. Though they gave lip service to the Word of God, they refused to listen to that Word with the obedience of faith. Had they not rejected the counsel of God, they too would

have joined in the confession of Peter. They too would have been built into Christ's Church by faith in Him. They too would have received the divine benediction of Jesus in this world and in the world to come.

To hold the blessed faith of Peter concerning the person and work of Jesus and to confess the same before men is today, as it always must be, the free gift of God's mercy. We must ever devoutly thank our God for the faith that we hold and confess. But we must never forget that this glorious faith and confession is inseparably bound up with the revelation of our God, - His Word. They can never be separated. The great in faith and confession, the blessed of Jesus, who are called to share in the Lord's work, are those who humbly listen to His Word and in willing obedience echo for all to hear, "Thus saith the Lord."

This truth needs continued emphasis among us, particularly as we view our future today. There are many who want to witness for Christ today, but who believe that their witness need not be based upon the full revelation and authority of God's Word. The Scripture is to them not the only source of divine truth and wisdom that leads to salvation, but something to be used by them to promote their own human notions and errors.

Only in so far as God gives us the grace to cling steadfastly to His Word are we fit for use by Christ in the building of His Church. Only then are we the blessed of Jesus, to be used by Him that others may share this blessing.

It is vital that our schools and colleges which train our pastors and teachers remain true to the revelation of the Father and thus also to the confession of the only saving faith in Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the living God. Yet this in itself is not enough. Each of us individually must be completely dedicated to the truth that the revelation of God, His Word, and the faith and confession that leads Jesus to say, "Blessed art thou," cannot be separated. That truth we can hold only by the power

of the Word itself. Therefore, let all of us continue and deepen our study of God's Word.

In joyful appreciation that God through His Word has brought us to the blessed confession of Peter and of all saints and made us the blessed of Christ, let us dedicate ourselves to preserve and promote that truth in these last and evil days.

III.

To do the work of the Lord in our generation will be no easy task. Our work will be difficult indeed, because it is carried on in a world that is interested in religion, but not in the truth. We are and will continue to be subjected to the pressures of our day, based upon the promise that the salvation of the world and of the church lies in joining together in the largest possible organization, even though this be at the expense of the truth.

We are, as we must be, out of step with the world. Yet, as we face the future, continuing in the revelation of our God, we can and should face our work with steadfast confidence; for the Lord of the Church says, "Upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against It." All the powers of hell itself will not be able to withstand the building of the Church by the Lord Jesus through those who steadfastly maintain and promote the glorious truth of God's Word which leads sinners to confess concerning Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

The world, if it takes note of us at all, will correctly point to the smallness of our numbers and the feebleness of our resources and our efforts. These facts we do not deny. Yet the world fails to reckon with the fact that we are faithfully carrying out the will and work of the Lord and Builder of His Church, Who says concerning our work, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The great danger that we face, however, does not come from without, but from within. The danger

comes from fleshly pride in human accomplishments and efforts. It is strange but true that the very blessings of our God increase the danger. Far too many because of pride have sold their birthright of the truth for a mess of pottage that equates the building of the Church with power and prestige. Such strength is actually weakness. And the weakness of simple dependence upon the Word of God is nothing else than strength. Paul realized this when he said, "When I am weak, then am I strong;" for he says that "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

Let us dedicate ourselves today to the truth that our strength is alone in God and in His Word. Then we shall have the steadfast confidence that our labors for the Lord cannot fail.

As we dedicate this building let us dedicate ourselves in the steadfast confidence to the truth expressed by Martin Luther in the hymn so familiar and dear to us all,

"With might of ours can naught be done,
Soon were our loss effected;
But for us fights the Valiant One,
Whom God Himself elected.
Ask ye, Who is this?
Jesus Christ it is,
Of Sabaoth Lord,
And there's none other God;
He holds the field forever.

"The Word they still shall let remain
Nor any thanks have for it;
He's by our side upon the plain
With His good gifts and Spirit.
And take they our life,
Goods, fame, child and wife,
Let these all be gone,
They yet have nothing won;
The Kingdom ours remaineth."

Amen.

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PANORAMA

As the curtain is being raised on this department of our Journal of Theology, it may not be amiss to make a statement on our purpose, our policies, and our aims with respect to the reporting of the doings and sayings of men. Panorama---as the word implies, is a comprehensive presentation of a subject, with due regard for all that comes to view in every direction. While the picture can be seen only a section at a time, it is not separated from the scroll which is being continually unrolled and of which it is a part. A panoramic view reveals not only those things which appear in the foreground but also the details of the background which give to the picture its dimension as well as its perspective. All of these things are involved in a proper reporting and evaluating of the news. For instance, one does not rush into print with an accusation of "heretic" as soon as a man makes a wrong statement of doctrine, nor does one cover up and call a man "a weak brother" when he causes divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned.

It shall be our aim to report historical events not for the mere purpose of disseminating information after the fashion of a news magazine but for the purpose of discovering and evaluating the temper of our age, that we might be forewarned and forearmed. And if, by the grace of God, those who have fallen into unspiritual and unionistic ways are awakened and aroused by what they find on these pages, it will be in fulfillment of a hope and prayer which shall follow along with the penning of these lines.

It is our intention to report facts without

prejudice and to guard against distortion. We pray for grace to see and recognize good when it comes to view and to give it its due; and for grace to recognize evil when it raises its head, to label it, and to warn against it without fear or favor. When we find that our opponents publicly criticize what we have publicly written, we shall not run to Matthew 18 for cover. Concerning matters which have come to public attention we shall by the same token feel free to write after the manner described in Gal. 2:11-14 and I Tim. 5: 20-25, and for the same reasons.

It is not our wish to engage in a battle of wits with those who love to cross swords for the pleasure of it or to bother with those who use smear tactics, for nothing is gained in either case. Vindication of personal honor and the advancement of a false synodical loyalty shall be eschewed. We have seen enough of these road-blocks to last for a lifetime.

Those who walk in the ways of the Athenians and the strangers which were there (Acts 17:21) will need to look elsewhere for their material. And we do not propose to cover the church news so that every area is given consideration, for we have neither the time nor the space to enter upon such a program. But we shall endeavor to sift and select with the view of offering that which would best serve the readers of our Journal. With respect to this process of selection we realize our choice may not satisfy the desires of all nor always agree with their judgment. Since a certain amount of subjectivism is here involved, we invite the suggestions of our readers and solicit materials for our consideration.

With these introductory words which we thought fitting and necessary we open these columns, remembering the words of Paul to Timothy: "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." II Tim.1:13-14.

C. M. G.

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SEMPER New winds are blowing; a more favorable
EADEM atmosphere has been created; barriers
 have begun to crumble and so the way to
reconciliation has been opened. This is the thinking
of the Roman Church which does not cease to speak
of the separated brethren and their return to the so-
called "mother-church." Apart from the fact that
Scripture clearly teaches that the church of the
Anti-Christ will continue with its deceptions until
the brightness of the Lord's coming, there is ample
evidence on hand to show that Rome has not changed
even though she makes the appearance of being amena-
ble to approach by colloquy and dialogue.

Catholic reports of the Archbishop of
Canterbury's visit to the Vatican are carefully
worded so as to give the appearance of a possible
rapprochement, but not a word is spoken which could
be interpreted as a concession to Reformation prin-
ciples. The red herring of "a common front against
communism" is studiously drawn across the path, while
the picture of a kindly and patient pope is raised
to attract the attention of unwary Protestant who
have lost their sense of direction. Roman Catholics
are carefully consolidating their gains on the
American scene. While some have held up the picture
of an American brand of Catholicism not bound to the
pronouncements of Rome on matters pertaining to
church-state relationship, it is only an elusive one.
It is a picture which will vanish into thin air as
soon as the time is propitious. For some time to
come the picture will be with us but only so long as
the honeymoon is in progress. Those who have lost
their conviction that Scripture actually teaches that
the pope is the Anti-Christ cannot expect to cope
with the Jesuitic mind, regardless of how scholarly
and learned they may appear to be. It is only by the
grace of God and the enlightenment of the Holy Ghost
that men will be able to recognize the errors of the
Son of Perdition and to escape the trap that is being
set for them. What a grievous thing it is to refuse
to receive the love of the truth for "for this cause
God shall send them strong delusion, that they should
believe a lie." II Thess. 2:11.

"Osservatore Romano," the official organ of the

Vatican, has given the substance of an address of Pope John XXIII as follows: "The faults of which we Catholics are not free, alas, lie in our not having prayed enough to God to smooth the ways that converge on Christ's Church; in not having felt charity to the full; in not having always practiced it toward our separated brethren, preferring the rigor of learned, logical incontrovertible arguments, to forbearing and patient love, which has its own compelling power of persuasion; in having preferred the philosophical rigidity of the lecture room to the friendly serenity of the Controversies of St. Francis of Sales." Again the pope is reported to have said: "In working for reunion, it is necessary first to be very meek and humble; second to be patient and know how to await God's hour; and third, to avoid discussions that may hurt the virtue of charity, leaving aside for the moment those elements on which we differ." While prayers for charity and patience are recommended, it is clearly evident that those virtues are to be practiced for the purpose of winning the separated brethren back to the "mother-church." Let us make no mistake about it: the reunion of which they speak is a reunion via the return route to the Roman Church; the reconciliation is one with the pope in Rome. A writer in the Catholic magazine "America" says: "It is the mind and heart of the Church and of Christ's Vicar upon earth that we must follow." This shows unmistakably that the Roman Church has no intention of bowing to the "sola Scriptura" principle.

C. M. G.

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ON WHAT At a recent meeting of the National
LEVEL? Lutheran Editors' and Managers' Association held in St. Louis, the Public Relations Director of the National Lutheran Council made an observation which should give pause to those who have been defending a practice of fellowship on one level while rejecting it on another. This is what the man said: "If it's not wrong for leaders to meet, pray, and work together, then it's not wrong for followers, and it's not wrong for editors to recognize the fact." We agree that the one is as right - or wrong - as the other. Sad to say there

have been many who have defended their acts of unionism by seeking cover under the argument that fellowship activity is permissible for instance on a Synodical Conference level but is not permissible on the synodical and on the congregation level. Leaders who pray together at union meetings and censure the rank and file when they practice the same personally or in inter-congregational life, are operating on levels not allowed in Scripture and are proceeding on the basis of a double standard. To defend the one and condemn the other is a vain defense mechanism which has no Scriptural basis.

The idea of different levels is strictly speaking a Roman idea. Thus in "America" reference is made to the first formal theological colloquy between American Catholics and Protestant religious leaders held at Collegeville, Minnesota. This was represented as a meeting of leaders. A clear line of demarcation was made between the higher echelon of the clergy and the lower. Thus goes the editorial: "What meaning do these and similar events occurring on all sides have for clerical and lay men-in-the-street? They will not feel equipped to enter into formal conversations with those of other faiths on topics in the field of technical theology." Whether or not the two Missouri Synod men who took part in these dialogues felt equipped or not, they were there: more is the pity! And if it is true, as is publicly reported, that they all joined in reciting the Lord's Prayer, then the framers of the Chicago Statement have indeed reaped the whirlwind.

G. M. G.

UNDER THE Under the same roof we find men like
SAME ROOF E. P. Schulze and Martin Marty. The
 former writes in "Christianity Today"
(interdenominational-conservative): "Doctrinally,
we must stand as alone as Luther at Worms, for we
may clearly perceive the peril of standing other-
wise." The latter writes in the interdenominational-
liberal "Christian Century": "There should be a
Protestant closing of ranks, an upstep in ecumenical
advance." Along with this statement follow a list

of "learned" but unscriptural arguments calling for a projecting of the Protestant image as a part of a crash program of concentration. These two articulations are as irreconcilable as they are different in their separate approaches. The one, that of Schulze, has all of Scripture (both precept and example) behind it; and the other has nothing but the philosophy of the ecumenicist and is often as incomprehensible as are the writings of Tillich. These two, Schulze and Marty, find themselves under the same roof and unless there is separation there will be subtraction, paradoxical as this may seem.

It is significant to see that the effusions of a Marty hardly cause a ripple of protest from synodical sources (at least not any of which we or the public which reads have become aware), while the well-stated and Scripturally sound protest of a Schulze is met with a barrage of objection from the Public Relations Department of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and others. The world must be informed that Missouri does not countenance the statement of a man from the hinterland who dares to lay bare the wounds which long have been festering.... Just by the way, we do not cease to be confounded at the wide range of periodicals in which Missouri men are serving as Associate and Contributing Editors. The latest surprise was the discovery that a Missouri man is contributing editor of the new "Lutheran Standard," official periodical of The American Lutheran Church. And so this thing runs the gamut from "The Confessional Lutheran" to the "Christian Century" with "The Lutheran Standard" in between.

C. M. G.

KING, JAMES L. S. Under this title Time Magazine SUCCESSOR? (Jan. 13, 1961) announced the publication in England of what is to be called "The New English Bible." The declared purpose is to provide a completely new translation in the English of our day. We are told that the translators hope that it "will not only introduce the Scripture to those for whom it has been a closed book

but will also freshen its meaning for those who know it well." We share the hope, but with more than a little misgiving.

A new Bible translation may or may not be a good thing. That depends on how faithfully and in what spirit the translators do their work. For the Bible is God's gift to man. It is His sacred Word. They who handle it - as handle it we must - are treading on holy ground. Unless they approach their task with this sense of humble reverence they will fail to do justice to their great subject, regardless of how profound may be their scholarship. This is the reason for the concern that we have expressed.

We shall suspend judgment on the translation until the complete product appears, at least for the New Testament. The brief samples that have been released are too scant to furnish a basis for any kind of fair judgment. But at least something of the spirit of the undertaking may be gathered from the pre-publication notices. The translators are indeed not to be held responsible for the statement that "the 350-year-old King James Version might as well be in the original Greek for all the sense that most moderns can make of it." This is Time's breezy and irreverent way of speaking. But if the chairman of the translators' committee has been correctly quoted, he is saying much the same thing. . . . I hope we have produced a work which will be far more widely read by the younger generation who now regard the Bible, with its archaic phrases, as a stuffy and old-fashioned book." If this is a fair sample of the thinking of this committee, we fear for the result. It is certainly not treason to diagnose the weaknesses and faults of an older version; nor is it sacrilege to offer an improvement. But to resort to such rather disparaging remarks in reference to a work that has not only been a monument in the history of Bible translations but has been God's Word for so many generations of English speaking people, that is certainly unworthy of a Bible scholar, particularly when (as seems to be the case here) it is done in connection with the pre-publication sales campaign. We hope that the

shabbily commercial tactics employed in the launching of the RSV will not be repeated. We hope that in spite of what has already occurred British restraint will prevent a recurrence of such excesses.

But why must these things happen at all? Why must men tear down the old before they have demonstrated that they have produced not only something new but something better?

E.R.

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"FELLOWSHIP
THEN AND NOW"

Under this general heading the Northwestern Lutheran of February 26 brings the second of a series of articles written in behalf of the Wisconsin Commission on Doctrinal Matters. It begins with a question: "What were the principles of fellowship that guided our forefathers in the years preceding the founding of the Synodical Conference?" Wisconsin's short-lived membership in the General Council, now part of the United Lutheran Church, is mentioned only in passing. But it is mentioned in a way that might seem to condone that synod's present policy in its protracted dealings with Missouri, a policy that advocated termination of church fellowship when one has reached the conviction that admonition is of no further avail. In similar words the present article says that Wisconsin left the General Council "when further testimony appeared to be of no avail." The two statements do not say quite the same thing. But the uninformed reader may well draw the conclusion that prolonged discussion and negotiation was the rule on fellowship "then" as "now." That this would be wrong becomes clear when one reviews the time-table of that brief and unhappy union. It goes as follows: Drafting of "Fundamental Principles," December 1866; Organization Meeting, with Wisconsin as a constituent member, November 1867; Wisconsin withdraws after protest against altar-and pulpit-fellowship with non-Lutherans, June 1868. Certainly not a model for the tempo of today!

We dare to hope that in the interest of the truth also these facts will be made known to the readers of the Northwestern Lutheran in future installment of its series.

E.R.

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