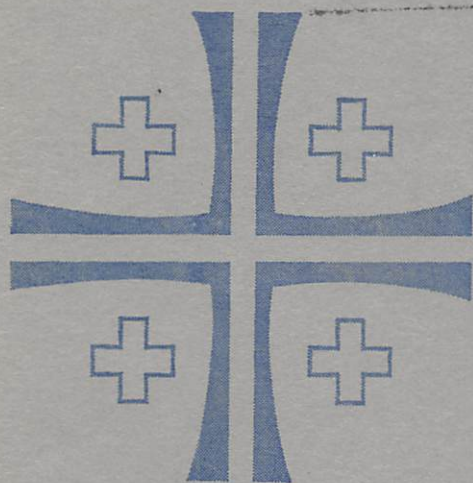


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"Meditate



upon these things;

give thyself

wholly to them;

that thy profiting

may appear unto all"

I Timothy 4:15

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# Ephesians 1:19

## Text and Context

In our previous issue, while discussing the sharp difference between Stoeckhardt and Lenski in their respective interpretations of Ephesians 1:19, we confined ourselves almost entirely to the theological aspects of this difference. Only in passing did we say: "While the technical points of New Testament grammar that Lenski advances in support of his translation certainly deserve serious consideration, they still do not seem conclusive against the naturalness and simplicity of Stoeckhardt's version." Then we moved on to what was our chief concern, Lenski's doctrinal objections. In a footnote we promised, however, to make this particular matter of New Testament grammar the subject of a future article, "lest too many questions be left unanswered." (JoT, Oct. 1961, p. 4)

Our readers may remember that Stoeckhardt connects the reference to "the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward" directly with the next words, "according to the working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ . . ." etc. The point he makes is that our believing is the result of this "working of the strength of His might." Lenski's objection is very terse and seems quite conclusive. It raises two points. First he states quite categorically that "the combination ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ΚΑΤΑ is never found; ΚΑΤΑ never modifies this verb." And then he adds with equal positiveness: "The long elaboration introduced by this preposition could not possibly modify the incidental participle attached to ἤμῶν." (Lenski: Interpretation of Ephesians, p. 398)

Lenski is probably right when he says that this particular combination is never found. One would not look for it in the profane literature of the Greeks, for the entire concept of "believing" in the scriptural sense of that word was foreign to them. So one would hardly look to them for evidence that would be relevant to our question. To the best of our knowledge Lenski is also right with reference to the New Testament. The combination of those two terms "believing" and "according to" is indeed an unusual one. The example before us, if the words do belong together, may well be the only one of its kind. But does that warrant Lenski's conclusion? The New Testament has many "hapax legomena," words that occur only once. Though the term *μεριστης*, divider, appears nowhere else in the New Testament and only rarely in contemporary Greek literature, it does appear in the reply of Jesus to the man who wanted Him to speak to his brother, that the brother divide the inheritance with him (Luke 12:14). It was the fitting word for that occasion, so Scripture has it. Other examples of this kind could be cited at length.

It must be granted, of course, that this one-time use of an unusual word is not a true parallel to the case in point, to the argument of Lenski. For in this case it is not the word or the words that are unusual, but the connection of the one with the other, *πιστεύειν* with *κατά*. But the point should be quite obvious. It is not enough for Lenski simply to make the sweeping assertion that our particular combination "is never found." He owes his readers proof that it could not properly have been said, that is is an impossible combination. For otherwise there can always be a first time. It would certainly be entirely in keeping with the literary ability and originality of Paul — the Apostle who was at the same time under the inspiration of the Spirit — to break through the bounds of precedent and the shackles of the conventional and to create a new way of saying something, provided it would still serve the purpose of all speech and writing, namely to communicate a given thought in clearly recognizable form. But Lenski has done nothing more than make a bare assertion about this particular combination of two words — in a most dogmatic manner, it is true, but without offering a shred of proof beyond the mere claim that it was not said that way before. Does that prove that it then could never be said?

We believe that, given the occasion to express such a thought, it could be said in precisely that form. And we shall try to prove it — not indeed by suddenly producing a previously overlooked quotation which would furnish the precedent, but by showing that the simple meaning of the words permits the very expression to which Lenski so vigorously objects.

Let us begin with the *κατά*. One of the basic and clearly established uses of this versatile preposition is to indicate norm, similarity, homogeneity. In such cases it is translated with "according to" or similar expressions, implying a standard by which something is governed or according to which it is judged. But in this very connection one of the most modern dictionaries of the New Testament goes on to say: "Often the norm is at the same time the reason, so that in accordance with' and 'because of' are merged. . . . The meaning 'in accordance with' can also disappear entirely, so that *κατά* means simply 'because of, as a result of, on the basis of'." (A Greek-English Lexicon of the N. T., by W. Bauer as translated by Arndt - Gingrich; p. 408-a, bottom) Noting particularly the definitions which we have underlined above, it should be clear that if the Apostle wished to assure his Christians at Ephesus that their faith was the result of that "working of the strength of His might," or that this power of God was the cause of their faith, there was certainly nothing in the definitions of the preposition to prevent his combining it with "believe" and thus putting those two words together into a meaningful expression, even though it may never have been done before. Whether that is indeed what the Apostle wanted to say is another question, one to which we shall presently return.

But before we do that, we must face Lenski's second objection, namely that what he calls an "incidental participle" ("the believing ones") could not possibly bear the weight of what follows in the rest of that admittedly massive clause. That *πιστεύοντας* is a participle is obvious. But is it "incidental"? Let the context decide!

The first half of the first chapter in Ephesians is a magnificent doxology to the Triune God "who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (v. 3)

Beginning with verse 15 Paul then launches into a fervent prayer for his beloved Ephesians: that God may give them something (v. 17) and that they may know something (v. 18). The gifts are threefold: the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him — a knowledge that is by revelation and which is therefore true wisdom. A fourth gift sums up the previous three: "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened," — literally, that He may give you enlightened eyes of your heart.

But Paul has a purpose in mind for these gifts, particularly for those "enlightened eyes." This purpose is plainly stated, "that ye may know," and again covers three major points. We believe that the very form of the arrangement will demonstrate that Paul is building toward a climax:

That ye may know

- 1) - what is the hope of His calling,
- 2) - and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
- 3) - and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power.  
. . . etc.

Stoeckhardt discusses each of these at some length. He describes the glory of a hope that is based on the fact that God has called us, the same God of whom it was stated in verse 4 of this chapter that He hath chosen us in Christ before the foundations of the world. He describes the splendor of that inheritance that awaits the Christian, one which the Apostle in another letter (Col. 1:12) calls "the inheritance of the saints in light." He enlarges on the wonderful comfort that the Apostle offers the believer, namely that the secure possession of all these blessings that are and can be received only by faith does not depend on our own strength and ability, but is assured to us by "the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe." Here is the climax. And when Stoeckhardt then takes the next words as an explanation of how the believer comes to faith and is preserved in faith, namely "by the working of His mighty power." he is simply letting these words serve their natural and normal

function of unfolding the full implications of that mighty climax that has there been reached.

Lenski is fully aware of this same progression, and states it beautifully: "The three indirect questions constitute a unit, and they form a pyramid. From the hope in our hearts Paul looks up to the object of that hope, the heavenly inheritance, and then he looks up still farther, to the divine power which guarantees this inheritance to us. All of this is to move fully into the range of our vision and our knowledge." (Lenski, Eph. p. 395 - our emphasis) — But by stopping where he does he excludes the vital "to us-ward who believe" from this climax, and does so in spite of the way in which the entire trend of Paul's thought is built up to this very point. To treat this expression as an "incidental participle" (p. 398), one that is "merely added for the purpose of elucidation" (p. 397) is to turn a mighty climax into a feeble anti-climax. It surely seems that by being so completely pre-occupied with the grammatical form of the participle Lenski has lost sight of the marvellous content of that precious word which, with all its "incidental" form, is nevertheless employed to express the weighty and momentous thought of faith — saving faith, that faith of which the Apostle has written such wonderful things but a few verses back: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the work of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." (Eph. 1:13-14)

We therefore maintain that when the force of this climax is recognized, it not only permits that the next words ("according to the working of His mighty power") be directly attached to the participle ("the believing ones") but actually demands it. For the flow of words can simply not be interrupted at that point without doing violence to the great thought that the Apostle is expressing for the comfort of all believers, namely that we shall know that the faith on which so much depends is not something that rests on our feeble power. It is a gift that we owe equally to the grace and to the mighty power of God. In His infinite grace He has not only created this faith in the first place, but also preserved it until now, even as it is He alone who also preserves it to the end —

and that by the same power by which in Christ He wrought the great work of our redemption.

This clearly demonstrable trend of thought is the reason why we also maintain that what we treated as a hypothetical assumption on a previous page should be accepted as actual fact. There we said that if the Apostle wished to assure his Christians at Ephesus that their faith was the result of that "working of the strength of His might," or that this power of God was the cause of their faith, there was nothing in the definition of the preposition to prevent that. Now we say that this is indeed what the Apostle wanted to do and say. For the theology of this interpretation see our article in the previous issue of our journal.

E. R.

## A Pastoral Letter

### Part IV

One of the things which may contribute to the danger, that the gifts are not used, is despondency over the thought that the gifts are so few. I know that there are some among us here and there who have a painful feeling that they are poorly equipped and that they have few and insufficient gifts for their important office, even though I cannot point to this or that one and say that he is one of them. But to such a one I would say: Do not think thus, my dear brother, and let your despondency benumb the powers that God has given you. God does not measure with

man's measurement. He does not judge, as these do, according to outward appearance or apparent gifts. If there be faithfulness, zeal, oneness of will — in a word seriousness — then the greatest of the Spirit's gifts is much greater than mere glittering abilities. It will some time be shown how entirely different is God's judgment than is that of man. It is here among the servants of the Word as it is among Christians in general. One is highly thought of, is looked upon as exceptional both in knowledge and zeal and even in piety. But some day we shall see some poor and unbeknown woman, a plain, simple and little thought of man more greatly honored and ranked foremost, while many of those who were here looked upon as great men shall stand far back — yes, may not even have come in.

Who is there now who can tell us anything about a man like Epaenetus, or about a woman like Persis? Church history has nothing to say about them. It remains silent. But in God's book their names are written with indelible letters, and shall there stand so long as the world lasts, while they themselves for ages have stood with jubilation and praise among the host of the saved.

Of this, my dear brethern, I have wanted to remind you who are now the least among us, who seldom can be along in our meetings, who usually remain silent in those meetings, and who seem in their own eyes (perhaps also in other's eyes), to be less in gifts or position or influence.

You may doubt, many of you, that beautiful allegory concerning the two holy angels, whom God called forth to serve upon earth: The one to govern a kingdom, the other to serve in the lowliest of positions — to sweep the way for the first (angel's) feet. Even as it did not cause yon heavenly princes to make an haughty and envious comparison between the two services, no extolling over the glorious position, no complaint over the lesser position — and even as with them there was zeal to do God's will, thus our Lord Jesus taught us that it shall be also among us. Cf. Matt. 20, 16. Joh. 5, 44., and many other passages. The great thing is to be the servant of God and an heir to eternal life. The small and less important differences are the temporary and passing, which can show themselves among the



servants. The objectionable and contemptible and dangerous thing is to see these passing differences to be of great importance.

"When Death has brought the body home  
To grave's worm-riddled chamber,  
'Twill not be asked by any one:  
Who had the seat of honor."

Our common service shall make us "of one mind, compassionate, loving the brethren, merciful, kind," and the common great hope must make us humble, happy, watchful, careful and patient, so that we shall not become "weary." Cf. Rom. 12, 12. I Joh. 3, 2. II Cor. 4, 16.

Also the particular leadings, through which God has led us as a Church body, ought to strengthen us and awaken us to faithfulness in ther service. Through all these years of the church's work and battles God has plainly shown us that we in our church body have an objective to carry through, on which the coming generations' attitude toward the eternal Gospel will in large measure depend. This should give us strength, make us zealous and active; or should make us "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour is not in vain in the Lord." I Cor. 15, 58.

But this objective will not be attained without our going through many afflictions. It can be no secret that the position we take in the footsteps of our true Lutheran forebears, both with respect to Scripture itself and its chief doctrines, justification by faith without the deeds of the law, SOLA FIDE, hereafter even as up to now will meet with hatred and opposition from all sides, just as certainly as we take our confession seriously.

It is not delightful and easy to be reminded of this, for church strife is a heavy and bitter cross. Woe to them who are "doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings." For "strifes and envyings" which arise after this fashion belong to the "manifest lusts of the flesh." But when we in the fear of God guard ourselves against strifes of words and envying, what shall we do when

God's word is attacked and the truth unto salvation is being blasphemed? Do we then have the right to remain silent? Do we have the right, in order to have peace, to hold ourselves back from offering a clear and unmistakable testimony? Do we have the right to keep silent against all of these imaginations of men, which again and again rise up against the word? Do we have the right to tolerate the doctrines of men in those matters which pertain to the kingdom of God and our souls' salvation? Dare we after this fashion attempt to free ourselves from the accusation that we are exclusive, illiberal, orthodox slaves of the letter, which continues to hammer away at doctrine and neglect the life, etc.? Most certainly not. And woe betide us if we after this fashion assured ourselves of friends and good judgment among men. They who demand this of us, or who would praise us if we thus acted, they have not had their eyes opened to what God's Word is, or more correctly, they do not believe that it really is God's own Word, that which we have in Scripture. They do not think the thought through to its conclusion when they use that expression: "God's Word."

Just as certainly as Holy Scripture is God's Word, just so certainly this work will not tolerate any denial, any deviation, any rationalization. Our Lord Jesus has said: "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him shall also the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the Holy angels." Mark 8, 38. May God grant, dear brethren, that these words may be deeply imbedded and unalterably engraven in your hearts!

Our Savior was on account of His words derided as an upstart and a disturber of the peace. His disciples must not expect it any better. Let us make certain that it is not "a strange fire," a fleshly lust which mixes in our testimony, and that we do not give unnecessary occasion for strife. Where it concerns our own person, there we shall willingly step aside. But where it pertains to God's clear word, there we shall willingly rather suffer the loss of all things than to surrender a tittle of the word. But if we have this mind, then strife will come even though we of a truth were the most peaceful persons under the sun.

But where shall the strife arise, someone might want to ask. To this I would answer: Preach only the Law and the Gospel without any limitation or admixture. Cling closely to what God has said. Do not ask what it is that men will want to hear. Whenever you hear some one pervert God's word, then speak to him as humbly and friendly as you possibly can, while you are correcting him. Just do this, and you shall also have to experience what the Jews said concerning Paul: "For as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against."

I would fain have spoken to you in this letter concerning certain demands made to us which we must pay attention to, if we are not to be hindered in our proclamation of God's word to bear as much fruit as possible; — also concerning how we shall consider and treat the different requests which our synod places upon us, money matters and the like; — and finally concerning the Norwegian Lutheran Church's attitude in this country as a whole and concerning our churchly opponents attitude toward us, — but if I am to get this letter into your hands in the nearest future, I shall have to conclude it now.

Just one more thing I would add. While I have been writing this letter to you, and in my meager prayers have pleaded with God for help, this thought has constantly been with me that I should really have been the last to say anything to you which serve as correction, admonition or guidance, since I myself stand in need of all of it, perhaps more than anyone else of us. But also here my "call" has risen up before me with the admonition which my office gives me. I have therefore had to meet my own objections with the reminder that it is the duty of my office, which I have sought to fulfill as best I knew. I dare say that what I have written has been with love for you. You will then also receive it in love, concerning this I am certain.

May the God of all patience and comfort accompany all of us under our sacred calling, and give us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind, to carry it out, so that we may all be preserved in the knowledge of the truth in its inmost love.

N. A. Madson Sr.

# The Kingdom of God

(continued)

Thus we arrive at the proposition that the expression "kingdom of God," when employed by Scripture in its proper sense, appears exclusively as a designation for the gracious creating, working, ruling of God by means of the Gospel. What manner of persons, then, constitute the "kingdom" as subjects of the King--taking the term in its derived sense--is an issue not proximately relevant. Whatever God has done, still does and will do to achieve His gracious purposes in men--that, according to Scripture, is "God's kingdom." Since God Himself with His excellent power is active in the Gospel, therefore all passages dealing with the power and activity of the Gospel speak specifically of the "kingdom of God," that is, of God's kingly activity, even when the expression itself is not employed. The same applies in the case of the Savior Jesus Christ; wherever mention is made of His redemptive work, there God is preaching His Gospel, and where the Gospel is preached, there is the kingdom of God.

The Holy Spirit Himself thus identifies these various things in the parallel passages Matt. 19:29; Mark 10:28; Luke 18:29 ("everyone that hath forsaken . . . for my name's sake . . . . for my sake and the Gospel's . . . . for the kingdom of God's sake"). When therefore our Lord says to His disciples: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God"(Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10), this means on the one hand: You know the Gospel; but on the other hand also: You know the mysterious, marvellous manner in which God is active for men in their salvation. But since the Lord utters these words in connection with His instruction relative to His parables, we must assume that the stereotyped words of introduction to the several

parables refer to the same thing. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground" etc.; "Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? . . . . It is like a grain of mustard seed . . . . like leaven" etc. (Mark 4:26, 30; Luke 13:19; etc.) It indicates that in the parables the active ruling of God through the Gospel is being delineated in one perspective or another, as it were: "This is the manner of God's activity in the Gospel."\*

In completing our assembling of evidence we might call attention to the singular manner of speech employed by Luke on several occasions in saying that the kingdom of God is preached. The very expression is in itself instructive. Preaching the kingdom of a king cannot simply mean to lecture on the geographic location, the extent, the nature of the soil and the inhabitants of the kingdom, but to supply information concerning the ruling activities of the king. In all simplicity Luke says on one occasion: "He received the people and spake unto them of the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:11), and another time he writes more solemnly: "He sent them to preach (*κηρύσσειν*) the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:2). In both instances he stresses only the fact that such preaching concerned itself with the ruling of God. But the very circumstance that Jesus and His messengers associated their preaching with those concepts of the kingdom of God which were familiar to the Jews from the promises of the Old Testament, that is to say, with the Gospel in its Old Testament context, is evidence for the connection between

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\* The concepts "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" are indeed not wholly synonymous; but for the present investigation there is no need of elaborating upon the marks of distinction. In their bearing upon the issues that concern us here the two concepts are indeed identical. The "kingdom of heaven," too, as it occurs in Scripture (it is a favorite term of Matthew) is never visualized as consisting in a group of people, and therefore does not in its primary sense mean the Church. The kingdom of heaven also, and indeed in a pronounced manner, is concerned only with the Gospel as an active means in the hand of God.

kingdom of God and Gospel. To this we must add that Luke expressly defines the preachment concerning the kingdom of God as Gospel-preaching. Thus Luke 4:43: "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent;" Luke 8:1: "preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God;" Luke 16:16: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached. . ."; Acts 8:12: "They believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ" (Luther: "when they believed Philip's sermons of the kingdom of God" etc.)\* In these statements the correct significance is clearly indicated. The Gospel proclaims the gracious ruling of God in that He has redeemed sinful mankind by His Son and now brings men to faith through the message concerning Him. Thus the expression kingdom of God summarizes all that God does for the deliverance and blessedness of man. He who rightly preaches the Gospel proclaims this kingdom of God.

It is therefore also appropriate to say that the kingdom of God comes to men or departs from them. This too would be an utterly incomprehensible manner of speaking were God's kingdom to denote essentially the persons who are subjects in a kingdom which is visualized as constituting God's sphere of power. But if kingdom of God is the term that designates God's activity and ruling and if it consistently calls to mind primarily the activity of God by means of the Gospel, then such statements have a significant content. On the basis of Old Testament promise the Jewish people waited for the coming of the kingdom of God. From this promise they had of course de-

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\* Generally speaking, in the English translations the revised versions have reproduced the sense more explicitly than the Authorized Version. Luke 8:1: A. V.: shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God; R. V.: "bringing" for "shewing"; Luke 16:16: A. V.: preach the kingdom of God; R. V.: the gospel of the kingdom of God; Acts 8:12: A. V.: preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God; R. V.: good tidings concerning the kingdom of God; Luke 4:43: A. V.: preach the kingdom of God; R. V.: the good tidings of the kingdom of God.

rived a false gospel and trusted that God would restore the kingdom of Israel as a visible theocracy. And inasmuch as this hope was associated with the promised Messiah, he too was visualized as a temporal ruler who in the power of God, as a mighty hero, would bring about the external deliverance of the nation. But there were always a few who in genuine confidence of faith, though not always with adequate understanding, waited for the kingdom of God as for a spiritual redemption. Thus it is written of Joseph of Arimathaea that he also waited for the kingdom of God (Mark 15:43); and the Evangelists seem intent upon indicating that his confidence had not been wholly shattered by Jesus' death. In accord with that which we have already established, we make bold to say that what is stated of Simeon may also be affirmed of this Joseph: "He waited for the consolation of Israel" (Luke 2:25). The Pharisees and the people they were deceiving, as well as the handful of believers, immediately understood that Jesus was announcing the arrival of the time in which God through the Messiah would accomplish the work that He had proclaimed since the day of the Fall. For them the coming of the kingdom of God meant: Now begins the gracious rule of God of which He had so long assured His people.

Jesus did not employ such expressions as referring primarily to Himself personally. He is not the kingdom of God; but it comes with Him; that is, through Him God achieves and creates the fulfilment of His promises. Included here is the thought that through the preaching of salvation the hearts are converted to God, which is exactly what He wills to bring about through the preaching of the Gospel. With the Gospel comes the kingdom of God, that is, wherever the Gospel reaches, God creates and works for the saving of souls that which He wishes to bring about. When Jesus sent the Seventy out to preach, He included among His instructions the following: "Heal the sick . . . . and say unto them, the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you" (Luke 10:9). But how could that be? Well, only and inevitably in the preaching of the Gospel which the disciples brought and through which God desired

to create true faith in His saving health. Whoever rejects this preaching rejects the kingdom of God, isolates himself from the gracious operation of God. And when Gospel-preaching departs from a given area, the kingdom of God has ceased there, that is, God no longer labors there with His saving grace. Jesus orders His messengers to say to those who despise their message: "Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." (Luke 10:43) Since we know that God administers His kingdom by means of the Gospel, this remark of the Lord implies no less than that because of their stubborn contempt the Gospel, the effective preaching of grace, will be withdrawn from the Jews and carried to the Gentiles - the very truth that Paul and Barnabas announced to the Jews in Antioch of Pisidia: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:46)

What therefore does Jesus mean when He teaches us to pray: "Thy kingdom come?" We have long since recognized this Petition as a Mission prayer, and rightly so, for in accord with the intent of Jesus we are to clothe these words with the following thoughts: O God, grant that Thy gracious work through the Gospel continue among us and all people on earth. "All this is nothing else than saying: Dear Father, we pray, give us first Thy Word, that the Gospel be preached properly throughout the world; and secondly, that it be received in faith, and work and live in us, so that through the Word and the power of the Holy Ghost Thy kingdom may prevail among us, and the kingdom of the devil be put down, that he may have no right or power over us, until at last it shall be utterly destroyed, and sin, death and hell shall be exterminated, that we may live forever in perfect righteousness and blessedness."\* Again, what does it mean when Jesus says: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God,

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\* Luther in his Large Catechism. Read the entire context. Triglotta page 711f.



and his righteousness"? (Matt. 6:33) Nothing other than this, certainly: Let it be your prime and principal concern to abide under the strong activity of the Gospel in which God deals with us according to the righteousness which Christ has purchased for us and labors creatively within you to the deliverance of your souls. In the light provided by this understanding the other statement of Jesus, so often misunderstood and abused, comes into proper focus. Addressing a certain scribe, He said: "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." (Mark 12:34) These words have frequently been read as expressing the thought that in this man's heart a change had already taken place to the degree that, while not yet converted, he nevertheless had moved closer to conversion than others. From this the conclusion was promptly drawn that this is the normal course by which conversion is effected in a person, namely that by and by, step by step, so to speak, he is brought nearer the kingdom of God until at last he enters it. This latter conclusion could with sufficient justice be disallowed merely by pointing out that it constitutes an unjustified generalization. We do not know what it was that Jesus in His omniscience saw in the heart of this individual and can therefore not assert that it will consistently recur in others under similar circumstances. But Jesus did not, after all, say that the man had closely approached conversion; His statement was that he was near the kingdom of God! Illuminated by the clear passages which we have heretofore considered, this word of the Savior reveals a meaning that indeed makes it applicable generally in similar cases. How could it have benefited the man had Jesus with cold calculation offered this diagnosis: Thou hast indeed moved quite near the borders of the kingdom of God, but thou art not yet entirely within? But what the Lord actually did say to him, in words which the scribe must immediately have understood in the frame of reference provided by his Jewish concepts, was not concerned with the subjective attitude of his heart. Jesus saw that he had answered discreetly, that is, that he was not rejecting out of hand, in blind fanaticism, the things which did not fit his preconceived notions. Therefore the Lord spoke a winning word, an evangelical message: If only you would open your eyes and behold me rightly, if only you would pay heed to my statements

you would realize that you are not far from the kingdom of God, but that in Me and in My Word it is confronting you at this moment. With an exquisitely fine understanding of his personality Jesus desired to alert this scribe to the fact that God had brought him face to face with the Savior in order to subject him to His gracious operation toward the man's salvation.

Because the gracious activity of God extends beyond the immediate present into the distant future, into eternity itself, it may under certain circumstances properly be said that even they who already stand in the faith are waiting, or ought to be waiting, for the kingdom of God. Passages of this nature, too, do not admit of the thought that the expression kingdom of God denotes the sphere of divine working; for this is, certainly, always and invariably the creature, whether in its totality or in its parts. But God's kingdom means the working and ruling of God! In this sense Jesus intended it when He says: "I will not henceforth drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matt. 26:29); or, as Luke reproduces the words: "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God . . . . I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." (Luke 22:16-18) Herewith He does not contradict His earlier claim that the kingdom of God was already here. Rather, He thought of the imminent events whose arrival also belonged to the kingdom of God, inasmuch as it was through the determinate purpose and counsel of God that He was delivered into the hands of His enemies. The gracious ruling of God in behalf of mankind waxed in strength through the very labors and suffering which He was to undergo during the approaching hours. His emphasis, then, lay not upon the promise that He would at some time in the indefinite future once again eat bread and drink wine with His disciples, although from this too they might have derived a certain measure of comfort during the dark hours of the next several days. Rather, the Lord sought to arm them against the period of severe temptation with the thought that what they were about to experience was no quirk of cruel fate but was actually un-

der the control of God's gracious rule. Of what import the Lord considered this very thought to be for His disciples is seen in the fact that, even before He allowed the disciples at Emmaus to recognize Him, He demonstrated to them from the Scriptures that Christ must suffer these things. Then they recognized God's kingdom, that is, the gracious ruling. This understanding supplies the key for the remarkable word of Jesus: "Verily I say unto you, that there will be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." (Mark 9:1) It is by no means necessary to deduce from this remark that Christ in His humiliation wrongly assumed that Judgment Day would dawn during the life-time of the specified persons. The grand revelation of God's Ruling at the Final Judgment is, after all, only a part of His kingdom, that is, of the ruling which had its inception at the exaltation of Jesus Christ in His session at the right hand of the Father. The import of the promise, then, is that some of His hearers - whether many or few, Jesus did not say - would live to see the beginning of the mighty power-rule of the Exalted One. It is certain that at Pentecost Peter was expressing only the conviction that the kingdom of God was come with power when he said: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted. . . . He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:33)

Pointing farther into the future, Jesus said: "...when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." (Luke 21:31) The context clearly shows that He is speaking of His return to judgment. Upon this divine power-working which is to bring final deliverance from all evil to the children of God on earth they also wait in all confident hope. That is the springtime toward which they look expectantly (v. 29f), that portion of the kingly rule of God and of His Christ which they regarded as certified in the future through the promise. This same part of the power-rule of God St. Paul also denotes simply as the kingdom of Christ: ". . . . the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom. . . . ." (2 Tim. 4:1) The kingdom of Christ, that is, not merely

His right to rule, but the actual unfolding of His power, His working and ruling, will then become manifest before the eyes of all people. Finally the Savior also notifies His disciples of the truth that this mighty ruling of God will not end with time, but shall actually endure as an eternal kingdom. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13:43); in other words, they shall throughout all eternity continue, as here on earth, under the same fatherly-divine ruling. Herein, and only herein, lies the assurance of ceaseless, eternal blessedness, that it is perpetually wrought in them by God Himself. As the sun obtains every ray it emits through God's power-working alone, so also will the brilliant glory of the just made perfect be continuously supplied them, created and wrought in them by God.

It goes without saying that in these passages as well we have the fundamental premise that God in this working is motivated by His grace, so that here also the proclamation concerning the kingdom on the one hand and of the Gospel on the other are identical concepts. Now therein we find the key for those other passages in which the preachment of the Gospel is defined as a ministry of the kingdom of God. Matthew 13:52 belongs to this group: "Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Jesus was acquainted with scribes who were not "instructed unto the kingdom of heaven," no matter how well versed they were in Scripture and how expertly they knew their way about in contemporary dogmatics. They did not perceive the kingdom of God, the rule of God in the Gospel. Only he is a true scribe who knows the Gospel as power of God through which exclusively God creates and works the salvation of men. Such an one - and the context proves this to be the sense in which the Lord spoke - can then, as a result of this knowledge, relate his traditional, natural knowledge of nature and human life to the new idea of the Gospel and is able to find parallels and to devise parables; in brief, he is able to make profitable use not only of the Gospel itself

but, by virtue of his understanding of the ruling of God, also of all his knowledge of natural phenomena. The point of comparison, then, is not the faithfulness of such a householder in making provision for his family, but rather his ability to provide in conformity with the will of God. Thus the proper application we are to make of this to those who are called as servants of the Word is obvious. They are stewards of God in a sphere of activity determined by their vocation; they achieve all genuine success only by means of the Gospel, through which God exercises His rule as King; as colaborers with God, therefore, (συνεργοί, 1 Cor. 3:9), they actually participate in His kingdom, in His gracious ruling among the children of men. In this sense undoubtedly Paul also intended the word of praise which he accords his associates: "These only are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God." (Col. 4:11) We may, moreover, here refer to the word of Christ: "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62) The entire manner of the Lord's speaking at this point indicates without question that in this instance the issue is not that following of Jesus which comes of the Spirit and of faith. In that matter no person is more fit or "well disposed" than another. The man to whom Jesus thus spoke had offered a physical discipleship; he desired to accompany the Lord as disciple and considered himself properly prepared for any service which such a following-after might entail. But from the request of the man for permission to arrange a farewell dinner in his home before assuming his discipleship it was manifest to the Lord that the state of his heart was not yet correct. He lacked the proper singleness of mind which knows but one aim and one objective in serving the Lord. Whoever wishes to assume a share of the work in the kingdom of God, in the activity of God for the saving of sinners - that is to say, he who desires to be a servant of the Gospel in that specialized sense current among us -- must not allow himself to be influenced by all sorts of secondary interests. Collaboration in the kingdom of God in this sense demands the entire man with all his thoughts and energies. If anyone is not prepared so to dedicate him-

self to it, we would indeed not be justified in questioning out of hand the genuineness of his heart's attitude toward Jesus; but we would judge that he lacks the intensity of conviction which alone could qualify him for participation in the kingdom of God, that is, in the direct, vocational Gospel work.

(To be continued)\*

E. S.

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\* For the sake of its contribution toward an understanding in the current discussion in Lutheran circles relating to the doctrine of the Church we are offering this translation of an article written by the late Prof. John Schaller. The original may be found in the *Quartalschrift*, Vol. 15, Nos. 2-3

# PAIDEIA

## STANCE AND CONSEQUENCE

The large work of paideia, defined as "the whole training and education of children" and "whatever in adults also cultivates the soul," requires a repeated looking to ones own fund of knowledge and to his effectiveness in leading others to a similar or greater store. This looking is especially important if one is a teacher, whose burden is much greater than if he were a mere witness. The teacher must have concern for how learners react; for without desirable consequences the teacher's work will be more than tedious, it will be discouraging.

In his hot pursuit of fruits the teacher must remember that he can not compel desired results; he can only so teach that there should be good results. The mystery of failure may just be the mystery of iniquity (and in spiritual matters we can find no more basic explanation), but in other things there are times one wonders if it isn't also what someone has called "pigheadedness in the pedagogue."

All this implies that the teacher must look to his stance, how he appears, how he approaches learners, and how he affects them. This is not all it implies, but it is one thing that it indicates. Too many seem seldom to have thought of this, and therefore we want to bring some thoughts on the matter into focus.

First there must be attention to ones own fundamental position, to his convictions and to his commitments. It is a matter of being "sold" on what he teaches; and this means that he practices it, or earnestly strives so to do. How can the teacher bring others to act in love if he in his whole bearing and demeanor is unloving? Can he lead others to be generous if he takes advantage? Will others become zealous if he never comes to the boiling point? Will there be enthusiasm if he never becomes excited? Prospective learners will hardly be brought to learning something concerning which there is serious doubt that their teacher really believes it.

Children have an uncanny sharpness to discern some things. They are especially keen to detect sham. Their radar works. Adults may not resist so much because some of them have learned from experience that they must do what someone says rather than as he does. But in the case of both it is certain that the stance of the teacher can really be influential; what he does speaks so loudly that they cannot hear what he says.

An interesting example of concern for stance appeared in the press recently. The delegates at New Delhi in 1961 had a reminder concerning it vis-a-vis the ancient reverence of the mystery religions in India. Aside from the sad witness of syncretism that is likely to come from there, we do find a truth called to the attention of the conference that we should appreciate, remembering Justin Martyr's dictum, "All that has been well said belongs to us Christians!": "It is an important part of the religious tradition of India that the life of devotion to God involves a real renunciation of things of the world. . . . It is difficult for most people in India to take seriously a claim to religious insight which is not accompanied by an element of austerity in regard to such matters as food and living conditions. . . . To Gandhi, as most Indians, the claim that Jesus is the light of the world was profoundly offensive. If we are to make that claim (it is the theme of the meeting) clearly and effectively at our meeting, we shall have to do it humbly, remembering that many of us are identi-



fied in the minds of most Indian's with a 'Christian' civilization which flouts the teachings of Jesus." (Quoted in St. Paul Dispatch, Nov. 21, 1961.) We read this in the spirit of St. Paul's warning that the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles for similar reasons.

The devil will use the same technique; this does not show that it is wrong, but only that our Adversary can be smart. We are free to labor at outsmarting him. If he is bright enough to make approaches that get a hearing, we ought doubly to do so. And let none say that the failures we shall likely see in New Delhi come from the method; they will come from the matter. We have too many examples from Jesus in the Gospels to think otherwise. Satan's cleverness must never force us to crudeness; he did not succeed in that with Jesus, nor should he with us, so surely as we have Jesus' Spirit.

Accordingly, our concept of how a teacher stands implies a certain idea of quietness at times. He must know how to push, but not push too hard; he must insist, but not to the point of causing rebellion. There is the temptation, once a person is on fire with ideas and causes, that he tries to inflict his new wisdom on others. But if he is truly wise he will be able to wait for the right time and the right place and even for the right person to listen to him. The sacred proverb puts it clearly: "A prudent man conceal-eth knowledge, but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness" (Prov. 12:23). By not being prudent in "a time to keep silence, and a time to speak" (Eccl. 3:7) a person can reap effects that are the opposite of those intended. Again the Proverb speaks: "Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding; but that (whether it be real or pretended wisdom) which is in the midst of fools is made known" (14:33). It is well to remember that witnessing has this side as well as the one that calls for crying from the housetops.

The Advent King is striking in His stance. He came with humility; therein was the winningness of His work. He came to serve, not to expect service. Not having

where to lay His head, He did not ask for the best house in town, not even for a hut. It must be this way, for none must be allowed to think He was seeking ought for Himself. His stance was such that it appealed to the passover pilgrims, to the poor, to the sinners, to the meek and the mild. We know that during His trials there were times when He opened not His mouth. Silence, too, is an answer, and often the best.

The encouragements to strength and staunchness are for us in our moments of fear and timidity. "Gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee" (Jer. 1:17-19)

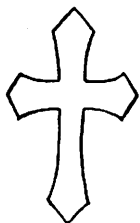
And read God's encouragement to Ezekiel: "Thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not. And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them" (Ezekiel 33:30-33).

High grade objectives call for high grade methods; for the purpose of destroying, low-grade methods will suffice. The schoolroom, the home, and every chance for witnessing call for warmth, for service, for foot-washing, and for sincere earnestness--for beseeching, yes, with tears. We can only help the understanding, help open doors, in-

spire with zeal, warm with love. This is not weakness; it is strength. It must be our stance.

First it must have worked with us, so much so as to have become second nature. Having drunk deeply, we will have living waters for others. Understanding, we will become able to explain. Living by the light, we "are the light of the world." As we give light, searching souls will seek us. We call it stance, for men and children see it; and from what they see they will come or they will go, come to us, or go away. Our stance has consequences.

M. G.



# PREACHING THE WORD

## OUR HERITAGE

Psalm 119:111-112

### Editor's note:

(Our April issue carried part of a sermon preached at the organization of the "Lutheran English Synod," the body that later became the English District of the Missouri Synod. The preacher, the sainted Pastor F. Kuegele, became the first President of the organization, and the following is the second part of the sermon preached by him at the 1893 convention. While it is interesting for its historical value, and while it reveals an almost prophetic awareness of things to come, its most important feature lies in the warning that it sounds, a warning that is as valid now as when it was first preached, a warning that we do well to take to heart with reference to our own responsibilities. The copy of this sermon has been prepared by Charles and Helen (Kuegele) Johanningmeier of Carlsbad, New Mexico. Mrs. Johanningmeier is a grand-daughter of the author.)

"Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart." Above his throne, above power and honors and riches and pleasures, David accounted the Lord's testimonies his heritage. In these his soul delighted. Of them he said: "The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver, sweeter than honey to my mouth."

Yes, the true doctrine we should also take for our heritage, knowing that in the true doctrine we have the true Christ and the true way unto life. Riches, ease, honors, popularity, high offices and lucrative position our heart should not crave and the fleshly ambitions of these things we should crucify. The learning of the age we should indeed not despise. In mental culture the Christian, and chiefly the minister of the gospel, should be up with the times, but earthly knowledge we should steadfastly account only the maid, the Scriptures the mistress. Science enlightens the world, the Bible the grave. Its testimonies we should account our heritage in comparison to which all else is of small value. A trinket, yea a piece of furniture inherited from parents and grandparents is especially dear to us; how then should we prize the Gospel truth inherited from our fathers! Verily, it should be the rejoicing of our heart.

And here we should not overlook a danger to which we are exposed because of the very manner in which we have received the true doctrine. I mean the danger that orthodoxy be with us a matter of the memory and understanding, but not a living power actuating the heart. What is obtained at little cost is generally little appreciated. Those who through many struggles have come to the knowledge of the truth know by experience the value thereof, but with their children receiving it from them it is apt to be a dead treasure, not tested and little accounted. The treasure we have inherited, but do our souls also know the value thereof? Unhappy the man who professes the Gospel truth before men, but in his own heart he values it not. Unhappy the minister who preaches the truth to others but his heart is indifferent to it or his own soul loses it. Shall we be found as people knowing the truth and loving it not? Shall we preach to others and ourselves be castaways? The truth of the Gospel must not be a light in the understanding only, it must burn in the heart, enlightening

the soul. When we witness to the truth as it is in Jesus, we must not be parrots speaking things of which our own souls know nothing. Jesus with His Word must live in the heart that when speaking of Him we speak from the abundance of the heart.

If so we can say with David: "Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart", we are also ready to add: " I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end." The pure Gospel truth which we have inherited we must also carry out in practice. We must practice it both publicly in the church and privately in our own lives. And here let us well remember that deeds speak louder than words. Vain and idle the profession which is not carried out in practice. Let us remember that small and insignificant a body as we now are, the eye of the whole American Lutheran church is upon us- not so much to read our profession, as rather to see what we will do. Here is a new body springing up; English Lutheran on the basis of the Synodical Conference. The eye of the confessional church is upon us inquiring - will they abide in the good old paths? The eye of the liberalistic wing of the church is upon us asking- will they fall in line with us? History will record our names one way or the other and the record of our deeds will be brought before the judgment seat of Christ. Great is our mission and great the responsibility resting upon us. Let us gird our loins and quit ourselves as men holding high the banner of truth through days sunny and days gloomy, through honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report, and the Lord will be with us and will enlarge the stakes of our tent. "Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end."

Amen.

# PANORAMA

**A TRIBUTE TO WALTHER** Before we close this year of 1961 it would ill become us if we were to pass over in silence the sesquicentennial anniversary of Dr. C. F. W. Walther's birth. As we are wont to thank God for the gift He gave to His Church in the person of Dr. Martin Luther, so we lift up our hearts in gratitude to God for having granted His Church the gift of a man like Dr. Walther. If this is to mean anything, however, then we should be dedicating ourselves to the same orthodox and Scripturally sound principles for which He contended. Any student of Dr. Walther's writings will know that he did not presume to have discovered a more scholarly and contemporaneous method of studying the Scriptures. He did not depreciate nor did he traditionalize the work of the Fathers but he used and cited their writings as a testimony of their faithfulness to the Scriptures and as a reminder of the value that their witness had and will have for the Church of all ages. This was a man who walked in the Scriptures and he expected men to follow him only as he spoke "as an oracle of God." (I Peter 4:11) It is one thing to use Dr. Walther only when we find that he agrees with us and it is quite another thing to quote him because we find that he is scrupulously faithful to the Word of God. It can be said as a sure thing that Dr. Walther did not wish to be honored for a leadership resulting in a large organization while the things for which he stood are being chipped away one by one. Dr. Walther as a Christian theologian does not belong to any organization but he belongs to the Church and specifically to those who give him the honor his memory deserves.

It was a delight to read the article entitled "Walther and the Scriptures" presented by Robert D. Preus in the November issue of Concordia Theological Monthly. This is Walther as we have learned to know him in his writings. It is a true picture of the man who became known as a champion of the inspiration, the authority, and the inerrancy of the Scriptures. It is a true picture of the man because it is drawn from his writings all of which breathe a humble submission to and acceptance of every Word of Holy Scripture. There was no sign of compromise with those who came with their "scholarly" insistence that the human side of Scripture must be borne in mind, i. e., when portions dealing with history, geography and science are being studied. There was no hesitancy in saying that the Bible presented truth and fact even when it spoke of such matters which did not involve the acts of God. He did not distinguish between verbs and nouns in speaking of the inerrancy of Scripture. Dr. Walther was not ashamed to be aligned with a Quenstedt when he said: "The holy canonical Scriptures in their original text are the infallible truth and free from every error. That is to say, in the sacred canonical Scriptures there is no lie, no deceit, no error, even the slightest, either in content or in words, but every single word handed down in the Scriptures is most true, whether it pertains to doctrine, ethics, history, chronology, topography, or onomastics; and no ignorance, lack of understanding, forgetfulness, or lapse of memory, can or should be attributed to the amanuenses of the Holy Spirit in their writing of the Holy Scriptures." Surely it would be dishonor to the memory of a Walther to say that in all this insistence on the absolute inerrancy of Scripture he failed to magnify the truth which God delivered through the holy men of God who penned the Scriptures. In fact by his insistence on the verbal inspiration of the Bible and its absolute inerrancy he let Scripture be Scripture and preserved for the common Christian the clarity and authority of Scripture and issued a declaration of independence from the so-called "higher scholarship" and "scientific exegesis!" In all of these matters the aforementioned article in the C. T. M. has been true to the memory of Dr. Walther.



It would be good if we could leave the subject with these remarks, but honesty demands that a further testimony be given regarding the aberrations of some who even in these days be-speak a veneration for the man whose birthday anniversary is being observed. Without going into great detail we express our amazement that the writer of the C. T. M. article (who has so well captured the spirit of Walther) could now accept a call to be colleague of one who has departed from Scripturally sound principles reproduced so well in the tribute, "Walther and the Scriptures". It is no secret that Dr. Martin Scharlemann of Concordia Seminary has been quite ready to say that the old-time understanding of the inerrancy of Scripture must be discarded in view of his allegation that the writers in imparting historical and natural information did not always present a factual and precise report. He holds that the writers at times made use of folk tales and traditional stories which were not in all instances factually correct. This is where he claims we must take into consideration the human side of the Scriptures in order that we may preserve and magnify the truth that comes by divine revelation. It would appear that, having found these alleged errors, he does not wish to attribute them to God and so the difficulty is to be solved by stressing a "human side" of the Scriptures which allows for such errors. Walther said: "For if I believe that the Bible also contains errors, then it is no longer a touchstone for me, but needs a touchstone itself. In short, it is unspeakable what the devil tries with the "divine-human Scripture.""

Dr. Preus in his article says: "The old heresies which Walther opposed in his day are still being advanced. Present neo-orthodoxy is saying something about Scripture and revelation quite like what those old positive theologians said. In a very true sense the neo-orthodox theologians today are repristination theologians; they are not very original. In opposing this theology we will find Walther can be of great help to us. He faced many of the same problems we

face. And he manifested a firm confidence in the God of Scripture, a confident spirit which will serve as a mighty example to us all when we become confused or hesitant in confessing the truth. Today we must speak forthrightly as he spoke. For nothing has happened, nothing can happen, to make us change our stand on the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture." The writer of "Walther and the Scriptures" should have pointed out that principles defended in this article are being vitiated by Dr. Scharlemann. This would have been a Waltherian forth-rightness called for by the present situation. But then, of course, the article would not have been printed in the C.T.M. But a public statement to this effect would make it clear that Dr. Preus does not hold with the views of a Scharlemann. As it now appears such an article as "Walther and the Scriptures" is permitted to stand in the same stall with Scharlemann's "The Bible as Record, Witness and Medium" which has not been retracted.

C. M. G.

Ecumenical  
Mobilization

"Ecumenical Mobilization"-that  
is what the General Secretary  
called it and it is a good name

for it. The World Council of Churches is now in session. While Hindus, Moslems, and Buddhists looked on with their mouths open, the representatives of the 198 mobile units (denominations) filed into a striped tent. This is indeed ecumenicity on wheels with automatic transmission and all. The Vatican had its observers there and so did the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Bishop Eugene Carson Blake was there, smiling as the Russian Orthodox Church entered the Council and took its place among the delegates. Communion was celebrated. To the communion table strode the delegates oblivious to the fact that their diversity gave the lie to the very act. The Associated

Press report in our local newspaper in its enumeration of the denominations involved in the communion, included "Reformed Lutherans". We suspect that a comma has slipped out of place, but the designation was nevertheless appropriate as far as those Lutherans were concerned. Shades of Marburg! This was quite different from the testimony of Luther who refused the hand of fellowship to a Zwingli stating that they were of a different spirit.

And so the sessions are under-way. What can we expect from this august assembly which has carefully avoided any confession which would tie it to a distinctively Trinitarian creed and which embraces every stripe of modernism? These social-gospelers with their painted Christ will have nothing to offer the Buddhist, the Hindu, and the Moslem which they do not already have, if indeed they have a true mission program which seeks the conversion of these pagans. Surely their attitude to the Jews in Israel shows that they are satisfied to let them rest in their Judaism. If the formula "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" is to prevail then we can expect no truly Christian missionary program from this assembly. But we can expect messages to be ground out for the direction of the world in such matters as nuclear testing programs, disarmament, integration, and the like. It is ironical that such a mass of people from the world over should meet under the Christian banner in the presence of pagans for whom they have no real message of sin and grace. Dr. F. Pieper in his day labelled the then Federal Council of Churches "The Protestant Anti-Christ!" We now shift the label to the World Council of Churches with this difference that it can no longer be called Protestant. Perhaps the better expression would now be "the Non-Roman Anti-Christ" and if things go forward as planned by many we may have to remove the negative from "Roman!"



"Beyond a letter transmitting the requested official text of the pertinent resolutions there has been no indication of a desire for any particular reaction on our part.

" In the absence of such an approach your committee has considered it wise not to attempt any evaluation, either of the action itself or of the attendant circumstances. We do feel constrained to point out, however, that this suspension of fellowship does not in itself remove the real issues that are involved in our relations with the Wisconsin Synod.

" In this connection we want to remind our membership that any approaches that may be made to individuals ought to be referred to the president of our Body, in order that confusion be prevented and the best interests of all of us protected.

" In the meantime, all of us need to be on guard against a double danger. It would certainly be a mistake to close our minds against the hope referred to above. But it would be just as unwise to conclude that this action of Wisconsin automatically solves any of the issues lying between Wisconsin and ourselves. Let us be willing to await the facts and to judge them according to their merits. May God grant us His Spirit of wisdom toward this end. "

The Resolution as Adopted by  
The Convention

"We concur with the report of the Board of Doctrine "On Wisconsin Synod Action Regarding Missouri" and adopt it in full with this addition that we mention the issues that lie between Wisconsin and ourselves, namely: deviations from the Scriptural doctrine of Church fellowship, and the

doctrine of the Clarity and Authority of the Scriptures, as well as instances of violation of the sanctity of the call."

Since we have expressed our sincere and sympathetic concern in our previous issue, it may be asked why there now should be any further mention of "the issues that lie between Wisconsin and ourselves." Certainly, any attempt to widen the rift, to perpetuate the separation between ourselves and our former affiliation, ELS as well as Wisconsin, would be a grave offense. Of this we are fully aware, and we shall weigh our words carefully lest inadvertently we do what we are so earnestly trying to avoid.

We believe that simple honesty calls for recognition of the disturbing fact that there are such issues between us. That is why the Report refers to them. That is why the Resolution mentions them by name, as much a reminder for ourselves as for the sake of anyone else whom it may concern.

The references must, of course, be to specific and official statements, not to mere private opinion or hearsay. But when for a number of years an organized church body (Wisconsin) defends a certain course of action against another (CLC) which holds the opposite view--when one group maintains that Scripture has decided the issue while the larger body holds out for the operation of "sanctified Christian judgment," then official statements of record will not be lacking. We have in mind for instance the Wisconsin Convention's endorsement and official acceptance (1959 Proceedings, p. 211) of an earlier Report which has become the classic defense for a policy of postponement where termination of an existing fellowship is involved. The tragic course of action (or should we say inaction and deferment?) that is now history is in itself the clearest commentary as to the real meaning of that Report, even as it reveals a position which can be explained only on the assumption of a real difference between our two bodies as to the doctrinal premises on which that action was based.

It is not our intention to debate the merits of this question here and now. Perhaps a better time and place will present itself. Nor would it serve any good purpose to furnish additional examples at this time. Our intention is simply to affirm that there are issues that lie between our old Synod and ourselves, that our Spokane Resolution was not an irresponsible statement. It seeks to serve the cause of truth by pointing to the existence of obstacles. It does so with the sole purpose that these obstacles may eventually be removed.

E. R.

..... AND A      As we go to press an Associated  
POSTSCRIPT      Press Dispatch reports that the  
                         Supreme Court of South Dakota has  
upheld the ruling of a lower Court to the effect that a church has the right to oust its pastor because "he was not hired for a specified period of time." (We quote the Associated Press. The language is not necessarily that of the Court.) We add this information to the preceding article as a Postscript, because it demonstrates what our CLC resolution means when it refers to "violations of the sanctity of the Call."

That the courts of the land do not understand our Lutheran, our scriptural doctrine of the Call is not surprising. That is the verdict of the world, to which the Gospel is foolishness, even as it once was to the Greeks. That is why the very thing that expresses the high esteem in which Lutherans hold the sanctity of the Call, namely that it is normally not "for a specified period of time," becomes the basis for the reasoning of the Court which holds that the Call is a contract which may be abrogated by either party at will. (We refrain from putting this last statement into quotes because the text of the decision is not before us. But we vouch for its substantial correctness.)

The importance of this decision does not lie in the consequences that it will have for the pastor and that part of the congregation that does honor his call. They will accept and bear their lot as have many others among us. But what about Wisconsin, which in its textbooks teaches indeed that the Call is not a contract to be abrogated by either party at will, but which through some of its district officials has nevertheless become involved in this action and stands to profit by it. Will Wisconsin endorse and accept the "contract" principle? Will it supply and install a rival pastor? Or will it have the grace and the character to decide these questions on the basis of its own established teaching concerning the sanctity of the Call?

E. R.

#### N. L. C. AND MISSOURI HOW MUCH IS "SUFFICIENT"?

The Lutheran Witness  
of December 12  
announces the conclus-

ion of exploratory discussions between representatives of the National Lutheran Council and the Missouri Synod.

The Missouri Synod presents the outcome in a "Report to the Churches," according to which their Doctrinal Unity Committee will ask next summer's convention of that Synod "for permission to participate in the creation of a new cooperative agency in American Lutheranism." By way of explanation it adds: "The ultimate adoption or rejection of the constitution . . . would be reserved to a subsequent convention." This means that what is reported about these discussions in two pamphlets\* published jointly by the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod and The National Lutheran Council is still far from being final. Nevertheless the six essays that are presented in their full text -- three by Missouri and three by NLC authors -- as well as their covering statements make highly interesting reading. They constitute the case for the new organization as it will be

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\*) "Essays on the Lutheran Confessions Basic to Lutheran Cooperation" (May, 1961) and "Toward Cooperation among American Lutherans" (Nov., 1962).



presented to the several conventions, a presentation which will without doubt carry great weight in the final decisions. While it is granted that "there are still points of doctrine which require further systematic study," the Report to the Churches adds that "these conversations established the fact that there is a far greater extent of consensus on the subjects discussed than had been generally realized." We are told that "it was the unanimous judgment of all participants on these consultations that the papers and discussions have revealed a consensus on the doctrine of the Gospel and the meaning of confessional subscription sufficient to justify further exploration (our emphasis) regarding the possible establishment of a cooperative agency to replace the National Lutheran Council as presently constituted."

It is the phrase which we have underlined above that draws our interest at this time and prompts the question in our heading: How much is "sufficient"? We recall a meeting between Missouri and United Lutheran Church representatives in 1936 to which the then President of the ULCA, Dr. Frederic Knobel, had invited all Lutherans on the premise that a basis for union already existed, "since we all accept the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions." When the time came for setting up the agenda for the meeting, the Missouri delegation called for a discussion of the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration as the prerequisite and indispensable basis for any profitable discussion. This request was denied by the ULCA committee because, as some one put it, they were not going to let themselves in for a "Roman holiday" by a discussion of that topic. Needless to say, that was the end of the negotiations. The necessary basis was simply not there. But the attempt had at least been made to establish one.

We have gone through the 66 pages of the present report and fail to find any indication of a serious attempt to provide a similar basis for these current discussions. All that we have found, however, is an indication that there are still "points of doctrine" that require further study, plus the optimistic intention of "the continuing of theological studies with the objective of achieving ever

greater unity." On the other hand, there are some differences that do appear, even after only a hurried reading. Thus the second of the NLC essays states: "We no longer assert as unqualifiedly as the Augsburg Confession did that baptism is necessary for salvation, and we are rather less sure than the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope that Matt. 16:18, 19 refers to Peter's confession instead of Peter." (Essays, p. 29) On the next page we find an argument for the "quatenus" subscription to the Confessions (that one subscribes to the confessions "in so far as" they agree with the Scriptures). On the same page we find the strange argument: "A two-fold obedience is therefore required of us: we must listen to God as he speaks to us in the witness of the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures and we must listen to God as he spoke to us through the Reformers — indeed, as he spoke to us through Christians throughout the entire history of the Church."

But our purpose at the moment is not to establish a list of "points of doctrine" which require further study, but rather to ask how these and others shall be cleared up if agreement is not reached first on that other "point of doctrine," the question of Inspiration. A doctrinal structure is being erected, but it is being built from top down, and this at a time when the very foundation is in a dangerous state of disrepair. Time was when Missouri and the leading members of the National Lutheran Council at least admitted their mutual disagreement on that issue with commendable frankness. If they who formerly so freely denounced and sometimes ridiculed Franz Pieper for his presentation of this doctrine, and who so vehemently rejected the Brief Statement in its articles on Inspiration— if they have actually been convinced of their error, should that not have been the first item to be mentioned in this Report to the Churches? If on the other hand there has been no such conversion, is it permissible that a matter of such grave import be quietly passed over and ignored in a report of such vital importance? And why? Must one conclude that Missouri itself is no longer capable of

speaking on this question with the firmness and unanimity for which it was once so widely known?

We return to our original question: How much is "sufficient" for the further exploration which is recommended and for which an entirely new "cooperative association" is being contemplated? Has what once was insufficient suddenly become sufficient? Has the doctrine that--as the "organic foundation"--once was considered indispensable suddenly become something that can be dispensed with after all?

E. R.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

Our readers are entitled to some explanation for the lateness of this issue. Our Journal is now being printed by our CLC Book House. An unforeseen and unavoidable delay in the delivery of certain necessary equipment made it impossible to maintain the intended schedule. While these difficulties have now been solved, it will hardly be possible to make up all of the lost time at once. We ask our readers to bear with us if our datelines will be rather unrealistic for some time to come.

With this issue our first volume comes to a close. Expiration notices are accordingly enclosed for our original subscribers. We hope that your renewals will be prompt. Please note that renewals as well as new subscriptions are henceforth to be sent to the CLC Book House, Box 145, New Ulm, Minnesota.

# Concerning Church Fellowship

## A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

Revised Edition

This statement of principle was adopted in revised form by the Church of the Lutheran Confession at its constituting convention in Watertown, South Dakota, in August, 1960. It is part of the confessional platform of the C. L. C. Copies of this revised edition may be secured by sending 50¢ per copy to the...

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