



"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

VOLUME II

October, 1962

NUMBER 4

ENGEL vs. VITALE

"Take into Thy gracious protection our Government and all persons in public office. Set them all to be instruments of Thy blessings, and crown them with loving-kindness and tender mercies forevermore, that under their government we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

In these and other, similar phrases our Christian congregations are wont to heed the instruction of the Apostle "that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men," (1 Tim. 2:1). Perhaps too seldom are the petitioners adequately aware of the need and significance of such prayers. The more reason, then, that our church ought not dismiss with little ceremony a recent event which, while evoking much public clamor and the usual confusion that attends emotional public debate, must be regarded by us as a decisive answer to the prayers of the Church. We refer to the verdict of the Supreme Court on the constitutionality of the recital of a prayer designed by a State Board of Regents for use in its public school classrooms.

Extensive articles and editorials reviewing the High Court's decision in the case known as "Engel v. Vitale" have appeared in almost all areas of the secular and the religious press, and highly placed individuals in nearly every walk of life have been quoted on the subject. It is not our purpose, at this late date, to rehearse the arguments already advanced for or against the decision. We hold it to be self-evident among us that the verdict, while it is indeed limited to a small sector of the whole problem of governmental intrusion upon the domain of spiritual and religious exercise,

must be regarded as a victory for that concept of constitutional rule which alone affords us the freedom of conscience we hold to be an inalienable right among men. We ought, therefore, to thank God for His gracious response to our prayers which, among many attendant blessings, also seek protection against the invasion of the State upon the province of individual conscience.

It is the more necessary to express thus frankly our appreciation of the Court's judgment because the public utterances of those who might have been expected to speak most loudly and clearly in support of the decision have, insofar as we have had opportunity to review them, been somewhat ambivalent. The issues are certainly clear; and the conservative Lutheran position has long been unequivocal — in theory at least. Prayers spoken in tax-supported school rooms are unconstitutional. Almost inevitably they are in each instance also unionistic and a violation of scriptural directive. The ruling of the Supreme Court could contribute greatly toward the abatement of a wide-spread evil which has brought offense into the lives of countless Christian children, their parents and their shepherds.

Spiritual offense, of course, is a concept not widely understood even among Christians. The removal of an offense usually causes the offended ones to cry out in anger. For they have liked the offense; they have been enjoying it. That is its essential character: an offense is an attractive death-trap. Thus we have been hearing a cacophany of voices, coming from the camps of Protestantism and of Catholicism, denouncing the position taken by the Court and in some instances suggesting nullification of the effect of its ruling by means of a Constitutional Amendment. All the stops on the organ of emotion have been pulled out and put to use in a wailing that ranges from the sarcastic to the ridiculous. At the moment we refer particularly to a reaction typified by the observation of Dr. Marl DeWolfe How of the Harvard Law School that ultimately the Court "may find Bible reading, Christmas pageants and similar public school observances unconstitutional," and by the canny speculation of others that this present decision may actually suggest the uncon-

stitutionality of Government chaplaincies and related institutions.

The findings of the Court in cases not yet argued before its tribunal are not proper subjects for conjecture. Yet we can well agree that those religious functions of government which have entrenched themselves within our system despite vociferous challenge by minorities are indeed in an exposed position as a result of the present ruling. Their abrogation through litigation which may reach the Supreme Court is a logical probability; for if the Court is to be consistent and motivated by law rather than by the popular idols of the moment, it can hardly avoid toppling them one by one when they appear as defendants at its bar. At any rate, our historic position has now been vindicated by *Engel v. Vitale*; and we reaffirm our considered judgment that all religious exercises initiated and supported by government, whether in the schools, the armed forces or the legislatures, are both unconstitutional and an offense to Christians.

It should be borne in mind that the exercise of religion, as well as the possession of religious convictions, is a personal and not a group or class concern. In the recent and still current debate much has been made of the argument that government shall promote recognition of God, that our Union was founded upon the premise of dependence upon Divine Providence and that in this respect we ought to distinguish our nation's ideals from the secularism and materialism of atheistic communism. Such argumentation, however, is not responsive to the issue at hand. The question is not whether government shall encourage religion as a force in the hearts of its people; the question relates rather to the manner in which such encouragement should be given. Secularism, like piety, is not the product of a group as a group, but proceeds from the stance and practice of individuals. Justice Douglas in his concurring opinion alluded to this vital truth, although not with the desired clarity, when he wrote: "If a religious leaven is to be worked into the affairs of our people, it is to be done by individuals and groups (of individuals? Ed.), not by the government."

In our prayers this distinction is duly stressed. St Paul requires prayer "for kings and for all that are in authority," referring to the rulers and their subordinates as to individuals. Though in our petitions we may refer to groups such as the Congress of the United States, it is our purpose to appeal for the men and women constituting these departments of government. We pray that as individuals they may be led to honor the true God and in His fear seek out the measures best adapted to the promotion of the general welfare. This does not mean that they shall by virtue of their powers make of government a functioning religious body which seeks to impose a form of religious exercise upon the citizens. It means that we want godly people in government, the sum total of whose efforts will be such that the Providence of the true God may operate peaceably in our land under the laws which have been established.

We hold that this is not only our concept of good government, but was also the design of the majority of those who founded it. Much irresponsible, maudlin oratory has been expended in interpreting the "intent" of our founding fathers; and even the historical picture of the philosophy of the colonists has been grossly distorted. The Supreme Court gives irrefutable answer to many such inaccuracies when it states: "It is a matter of history that this very practice of establishing governmentally composed prayers for religious services was one of the reasons which caused many of our early colonists to leave England and seek religious freedom in America." The Court also refers to James Madison as the author of the First Amendment; and Time Magazine, among others, has done the nation a service in bringing to public attention some of the words of this primary and most authoritative witness when it says: "In Madison's opinion, tax exemption for churches was unconstitutional. So were chaplains for congress or for the armed forces. So, indeed, were presidential proclamations of a religious nature. 'Is the appointment of chaplains to the two Houses of Congress consistent with the Constitution and with the pure principle of religious freedom?' Madison asked. 'In strictness (the answer) must be in the negative.'"

We can only regret the fact that the present ruling of the high court has come late in the course of our history as a nation. Perhaps too late. So late, at least, that Justice Stewart in his dissenting opinion can undertake to dispute the constitutional premises of the Court's majority by referring to "the history of the religious traditions of our people, reflected in countless practices of the institutions and officials of our government ...". It is deplorably true that failure to challenge with sufficient vigor many of the unconstitutional indulgences of government has created a series of entrenched positions from which the siege against the bulwarks of our freedom can be stubbornly carried on. We have in effect tolerated the imposition of presumptuous tax burdens in support of a national religion. Recent color photos in news magazines depicting the magnificent cathedral which stands on the ground of the Air Force Base at Colorado Springs, with its Jewish, Protestant and Catholic chapels adorned in costliest marble and stained glass, have brought a startling reminder of our failure in resisting the mounting tide of unconstitutional religious ministry. For this failure we must share the blame. We have perhaps been too complacent, and too unwilling to carry a part of the burden in the struggle. It is not a source of pride and satisfaction to be told that the significant verdict in *Engel v. Vitale* was a product of litigation brought, not by avowed Christians, but by members of the Jewish persuasion, the Ethical Culture Society and the Unitarian denomination!

It is therefore not too surprising to hear it said in certain quarters that agnosticism and secularism have won a decisive victory in this ruling of our highest tribunal. Such comments must in any case be expected from those to whom the true principle of separation of church and state remains a conundrum. The most significant feature of the debate occasioned by the decision is the degree to which it illuminates both the quandary of Calvinism, which has thoroughly impregnated public education in this country with its views, and the designs of Roman Catholicism which seeks to assert its spiritual prerogatives in our national life. From the spokesmen of these religious forces, in the main, has proceeded the hysteria that rose up against the inescapable constitutional logic of the Court.

After the initial uproar had subsided and the situation was being assessed more soberly, some shrill voices were lowered and fresh appraisals were being made, notably in Calvinistic circles. Now stressing the rights of private belief over those of majority groups, Calvinistic leaders were swinging toward support of the Supreme Court. Yet at the same time certain of their spokesmen were depreciating the importance of the decision in a somewhat cavalier manner. The magazine Presbyterian Life, for example, as quoted by Time, remarked editorially that the prayer which precipitated the whole matter "was really a rather limited, circumscribed prayer directed to a limited, circumscribed God." Such an off-handed dismissal of the significance of the ruling not only misrepresents the prayer in question; it also serves to emphasize the stresses which are inherent in Calvinistic theology. And it is in the recognition of these stresses that we may best approach a fundamental understanding of the issues which confront us.

The Calvinist of our day stands committed to chiliastic beliefs in one form or another. He understands the nature of the invisible Church no better, in the main, than does the Romanist. For him the kingdom of God assumes concrete form and shape as a growing entity which will eventually conquer the earth and bring to pass a spiritual and, in the extreme view, a political unity among men and nations. In the pursuit of this dream he loses the strict confessional tone of the Christian faith. He becomes a unionist, a politician in the name of Christ, a mixer of church and state and an oppressor of the individual conscience in the cause of true religion. At the same time, if he is an American, he desires to uphold the freedom of conscience and the correlative concept of separation of church and state. The resultant conflict is both interesting and instructive.

Dr. Charles Hodge, the eminent exponent of conservative Calvinistic theology, apparently failed to recognize the contradictions implicit in his argumentations on the subject. Defending the Scriptural and moral propriety of secular Sabbath laws, he discussed the principles involved.* On the one hand, he affirmed the constitutional premises, saying:

* Hodge, Systematic Theology, Vol. III, pp. 340-348.

"It is conceded, (1) That in every free country every man has equal rights with his fellow-citizens, and stands on the same ground in the eye of the law. (2) That in the United States no form of religion can be established; that no religious test for the exercise of the elective franchise or for holding of office can be imposed; and that no preference can be given to the members of one religious denomination above those of another. (3) That no man can be forced to contribute to the support of any church, or of any religious institution. (4) That every man is at liberty to regulate his conduct and life according to his convictions or conscience, provided he does not violate the law of the land."

Having thus professed his loyalty to the Bill of Rights, Dr. Hodge proceeds:

"On the other hand, it is no less true, —

1. That a nation is not a mere conglomeration of individuals. It is an organized body. It has of necessity its national life, its national organs, national principles of action, national character, and national responsibility.

2. In every free country the government must, in its organization and mode of action, be an expression of the mind and will of the people.

6. The people of this country being rational, moral and religious being, the government must be administered on the principles of reason, morality and religion. By a like necessity of right, the people being Christians and Protestants, the government must be administered according to the principles of Protestant Christianity. ...

"The proposition that the United States of America are a Christian and Protestant nation is not so much the assertion of a principle as the statement of a fact. That fact is not simply that the great majority of the people are Christians and Protestants, but that the organic life, the institutions, laws and official action of the government, whether that action be legislative, judicial, or executive, is, and of right should be, and in fact must be, in accordance with the principles of Protestant Christianity."

These excerpts will serve to indicate the specious nature of the argumentation by which Dr. Hodge upholds his conclusion:

"We are bound, therefore, to insist upon the maintenance and faithful execution of the laws enacted for the protection of the Christian Sabbath."

The difficulties which such thinking imposes upon men confronted with the present Court decision can readily be discerned and appreciated.

Since "Protestant America" is primarily Calvinistic America, it is not surprising to learn of the result of a Gallup poll taken in August of this year, revealing that despite the Court ruling and despite sober reappraisal among Protestants 79% of those questioned "favor the continuation of religious observances in the public schools."

Roman Catholicism, meanwhile, has been consistent in its strident opposition to the views of the Supreme Court in this matter. Only those who are unaware of Papal pretensions will find this puzzling. On the surface, indeed, there appears to be a discrepancy in the Catholic attitude. This was pointed up in an inquiry addressed to the editor of Operation Understanding, a supplement of the Sunday Visitor of August 5, 1962. The letter said in part:

"My Roman Catholic priest friends have always told me that it was sin for a Roman Catholic to worship with a Protestant for that indicated that all religions were equal when the Roman Catholic Church is the one true church. Would not the requirement of praying together in public schools be a 'sin' because it is worship together, indicates something of the spirit of equality among religious groups, and certainly cuts at the doctrine of the one true church?"

The reply received was rather brusque: "A joining with others in recognition of the Creator is in no way something forbidden by the Catholic Church and the Reverend Mr. McCartney (sic!) has been misinformed if he thinks that it is."

For the Romanists, as for certain modern-day Lutherans, there is obviously a difference between prayer fellowship and joint prayer! But this inquiry and its inadequate answer do not touch the essence of the problem at hand. Certainly Papal doctrine stands in opposition to promiscuous prayer on the part of Catholics; and the editor cited above is evading the issue posed for him, just as he is misrepresenting the nature of the prayer with which the Court had to deal. It reads: "Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers and our country." This is manifestly something more than a mere "recognition of the Creator."

But the Catholic rejection of the findings of the Court rests upon other considerations. The proscription by the Papacy of a mingling in worship does not stem from loyalty to the Scriptural injunctions against unionism. Both the prohibition and the attack upon the Supreme Court grow out of the monolithic Roman view of the Church. There is, in its tenets, no salvation outside the Roman Catholic sect. The existence of a legitimate Christianity beyond the confines of the Papal domain is denied. Ultimately, in the view of Rome, all inhabitants of the world, all of its governments, laws and social orders should be subject to the Papal throne which is defined as the seat of Christ's regency. Toward this end every phase of the vast organizational complex of the Roman Catholic Church directs its operations. The Roman hierarchy pays lip-service to American democratic institutions; but the ultimate aim of its objectives is the dominance of Catholicism in every American institution, secular and religious.

If the popular will or public indifference can bring about the nullification of the First Amendment, Catholicism will find unlocked a door which has been barred against its pretensions these many years. With its singular power and influence it will seek to have its interests protected so that if prayers are spoken in public schools, they will be Catholic in origin and spirit; and if the Bible is read, it will be the Douay or some more modern version approved at Rome; and if altars are erected, they will feature Mary in the role of

co-redemptrix. Wavering and liberalized Protestantism, meanwhile, with its departure from the organic foundation of the Truth and its inner contradictions, will be no match for the aggressive, unified strength of the Papacy.

The pattern already is quite clear. A Catholic News Service credits Archbishop Shehan of Baltimore with repeating the overworked cliché that "secularism will become America's official religion if the trend illustrated by the U.S. Supreme Court's prayer decision continues." (It should be remembered that the Archbishop would be equally distressed if he thought that Dr. Hodge's Protestantism were to become America's official religion.) But what his Reverence really is concerned with becomes plain when we are told that he thinks that "Federal aid to education must be viewed in (the) light of this trend. He warned that exclusion from Federal aid of private and church-related schools would be 'a tremendous blow' to religion and 'a tremendous victory' for secularism." Then he is reported as having added that "the role of the American Hierarchy in the political field is to preserve Catholic religious freedom from this secularism."

These are pregnant words. A government that does not support church-related education is "secular." This secularism threatens the "religious liberty" of Catholics. Obviously the Archbishop is not interested particularly in governmental support of Lutheran parochial schools, or Presbyterian colleges. These, too, are "secular" in the Roman sense, and threaten Catholic freedom.

The true objectives of Catholicism are dominant in its public reaction to the Court's decision, as they are consistent with every pronouncement of the Papacy on any subject. Its opposition to the decision, therefore, is part and parcel of an old story with which we are wholly familiar. Our primary danger does not lie here. The future of our freedom is beclouded rather by men like Episcopal Bishop Pike who advocates amending the Constitution in order to circumvent the road-block to religious oppression now set up by the Court; and by men like Billy Graham who with an apparently total lack of comprehension of the religious issues involved throws the weight of his popularity into the scales against the verdict and befuddles the already confused and unindoctrinated Protestant citizenry.

Humanly speaking, the outlook for a continued strengthening of our civil bastions of freedom is bleak. We urgently need watching and more industrious prayer in behalf of those things which Truth requires and our convictions hold dear. We need more forthright public testimony on the part of our informed Christian citizens.

"O merciful Father in heaven, who holdest in Thy hand all the might of man, and who hast ordained the powers that be for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well, and of whom is all rule and authority in the kingdoms of the world: we humbly beseech Thee, graciously regard Thy servant, the President of the United States, the Governor of this Commonwealth, our Judges and Magistrates, and all the rulers of the earth. May all that receive the sword, as Thy ministers, bear it according to Thy commandment. Enlighten and defend them by Thy name, O God. Grant them wisdom and understanding, that under their peaceable governance Thy people may be guarded and directed in righteousness, quietness, and unity. Protect and prolong their lives, O God of our salvation, that we, with them, may show forth the praise of Thy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

E. Schaller

Can the Scientist of Today Believe Genesis 1?

Dr. Bernhard E. Keiser

(Editor's Note: The author of the following article, Dr. Bernhard E. Keiser, is a scientist in the field of communications working at RCA Laboratories, Princeton, New Jersey, where he is a member of the Technical Staff. As such he is responsible for research work requiring studies touching on many areas of science, including geology and upper-atmosphere physics, as well as advanced communication theory.

Of particular interest to us is the fact that he receives weekly tape-recorded services from the Orthodox Lutheran Congregation (C.L.C.) of St. Louis, Pastor J.B. Erhart. Dr. Keiser has requested that any reader of this paper who discovers an untruth or a point deviating from Holy Scripture in it please bring it to his attention.)

"The age of the earth may be defined as the time that this planet has existed with approximately its present mass and density. Today the best estimate for this period is 4.5×10^9 years," (that is, 10 multiplied by itself nine times, and then by 4.5, in other words, four and a half billion years).

In this "matter of fact" way a highly reputable encyclopedia* begins its discussion of the age of the earth. Christian scholars, who believe that the entire Bible is God's inspired, inerrant Word, however, generally believe that the earth is much younger than this. Their belief is based upon the genealogies recorded in the book of Genesis, together with the statements in Genesis 1:24-31, which indicate that the first man was created on the sixth day after the creation of the earth. The Bible thus indicates that the earth is approximately 6000 years old, certainly not much more.

* McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960, Earth (age of), p. 330.

Who is Right?

Various ideas of man have often been in conflict with the Bible — or at least man has felt conflicts to exist. This paper will be confined to a discussion of the conflict which appears to exist between the Bible and modern science relative to the age of the earth and the origin of life, which seem to be particularly difficult matters. These matters are difficult because time is constantly moving onward. No one can turn time backward to prove what did or did not happen in some past age. We have the written records of history available to us to tell us what has happened for several thousand years past. The farther back in time we attempt to go, however, the more sketchy and incomplete the written records become. Beyond this, some men attempt to project their conclusions based on historical data into times unknown to them, and doing so on the assumption that these conclusions are valid also for such times.

Why a Conflict?

Why is there a conflict between science and the Bible on the matter of the age of the earth? Conflicts often arise when two parties do not take the time and effort to understand one another. Too many Christians, upon hearing of conflicts between "science" and their faith, tend to regard science as something evil — at least something to regard with suspicion, and therefore to be kept at a distance. Too many scientists, as well, have not taken a careful look at what the Bible says. There is also a group of onlookers who delight in insisting that the Bible is in error because "science says so". Let us remember that these unbelievers will find excuses for not accepting the Bible regardless of what men of science may or may not discover.

Some Definitions

Just what is science? What is the Bible? Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, fifth edition, defines science as "Knowledge" and more specifically as "a branch of study concerned with observation and classification of facts, es-

pecially with the establishment of verifiable general laws..." Science, then, is man's knowledge of the world about him, as he has been able to learn it from present and past observations. Again, using Webster's Dictionary, the Bible is "the book of writings accepted by Christians as inspired by God and of divine authority". While Christians recognize that the Bible is not a manual of history or science, they believe that "when Scripture incidentally treats a scientific subject, it is always right."* Science, then, is man's knowledge, while the Bible is God's message to man.

What Does Science Really Say?

Several methods have been used by scientists in efforts to determine the age of the earth. The meteorite lead method is presently regarded as the most acceptable one. Leads are isolated from various iron and stone meteorites and their different isotopic compositions are compared. Known radioactive decay rates of the various isotopes then are used to estimate an age for the sample under test. Certainly the rocks which have been tested give the appearance of being many millions of years old.

A method of estimating the age of carbon-bearing materials which have formed in contact with the atmosphere is known as radiocarbon dating. This method is based on the radioactive decay of the cosmic ray-produced isotope, carbon-14. Some samples tested by the use of this method appear to be as much as 70,000 years old.

Assumptions

The comments to follow are in no way intended to belittle the work which has been done to advance man's knowledge of the world about him. The results of the rock studies are certainly useful in providing a means of classifying various rock types. However, in arriving at many "scientific results", certain assumptions must be made; for ex-

* Pieper, "Christian Dogmatics", Concordia Publishing House, Vol. I, p. 317.

ample, in the rock studies an assumption must be made that no change in the physical and chemical laws governing radioactive decay rates has occurred during the last 4×10^9 years. Such an assumption is based upon the fact that there have been no known changes in these laws during, perhaps, the last 4×10^2 (400) or 4×10^3 (4000) years.

Another assumption made has to do with the initial conditions of the problem. In the solution of most mathematical problems, a set of "initial conditons" is used. This set of initial conditions prescribes the values assumed by the various variables at some initial time usually designated as "time zero". After time zero, the variables start to behave according to rules prescribed by the mathematician. They begin their behavior from the set of conditions which he has prescribed. Since scientific observations were not being made at the creation of the earth, and since time cannot be turned backward, no scientist can state, based only on human observation, what the initial conditions of the universe were, nor when they occurred.

Although the earth may give the appearance of being many millions of years old, it could have been created in its present form (or in any form) at any time by an omnipotent Creator. No scientific proof to the contrary can be constructed.

The Origin of Life

The discussion to this point has dealt only with the creation of the earth. The origin of life also has been a subject for much scientific speculation. One encyclopedia states: "It has been proposed that life was created by a supernatural event. This has been a common belief of many people based on a literal interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis, which describes the creation of all living organisms by a direct act of God. This type of proposal is not considered by most scientists since it is not subject to scientific investigation."*

* McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960, Life (origin of), p. 496.

The basis of many scientists' present ideas on the origin of life is a theory outlined in 1938 which proposes that life arose in the oceans of the primitive earth, * which contained large quantities of organic compounds similar to those which occur in living organisms. After many non-biological chemical reactions, each of which is possible, the synthesis of the first living organism supposedly could have occurred. Although some scientists have been able to construct a theory which tells how life could have originated, such a theory by no means constitutes a proof of any type.

So How Did It All Happen?

The most outstanding characteristic of living organisms is their ability to reproduce. Some interesting comments about this subject were made recently by Dr. M. J. E. Golay, * recipient of the Sargent Award in Chemical Instrumentation of the American Chemical Society.

"Suppose we wanted to build a machine capable of reaching into bins for all of its parts, and capable of assembling from these parts a second machine, just like itself. What is the minimum amount of structure or information which should be built into the first machine? The answer came out to be of the order of 1500 bits — 1500 choices between alternatives which the machine should be able to decide. This answer is very suggestive, because 1500 bits happens to be also the order of magnitude of the amount of structure contained in the simplest large protein molecule which, immersed in a bath of nutrients, can induce the assembly of these nutrients into another large protein molecule like itself, and then separate itself from it. That is what the process called life consists of, and unless and until we discover a new process in which simpler molecules have semilife properties, the inquiry into the birth of life can be reduced to an inquiry into the possibility or probability of the spontaneous assembly of such a molecule, out of a bath of its essential constituents. And this is exactly where we run into an interesting difficulty.

* A. I. Oparin, "The Origin of Life" The Macmillan Company, New York, 1937.

* M. J. E. Golay, "Reflections of a Communication Engineer", Proceedings of the Institute of Radio Engineers, Sept. 1961, pp. 1378-1382.

"By making the most favorable assumptions as to the conditions in which this spontaneous creation of life could have occurred on this earth, we do not come anywhere near the spontaneous assembly of 1500 bits; we can account for perhaps one-tenth that number. Do not shrug this off as being only one order of magnitude off. This involves a factor of 10 in the exponent, and there is a vast difference between the probability of 1 part in 2^{150} and 1 part in 2^{1500} . Then you might say: But it could have happened in many places in our universe, and if it had not happened here, we would not be here to talk about it.

"Very well, multiply 2^{150} by the number of stars — that is, by the number of potential solar systems, in the universe — and you obtain 2^{220} , still short of the mark. And yet, life did begin, and looking back in time, we see two mysteries, or at least two highly unlikely events: the first, the creation of the universe, of space, of time, of matter; the second, the creation of life ... We may even ... some day ... assemble radical by radical, an unlikely large molecule which can reproduce itself. But this would not resolve the historical mystery of the creation of the first living molecule."

Present vs. Past

In any scientific observation one must recognize the need for distinguishing between one's knowledge of what exists at present and one's guesses as to what happened in the past, especially before the time of recorded history. A small child may see a large city building every day, and because that building is always there, and looks older than anything else with which he is acquainted, he may come to believe that the building always was there — he simply cannot imagine that such a huge structure could have a definite beginning. Not anyone can tell him the age of that building. He can best learn that from someone who knows the builder.

No one can turn back time. All the past before the time of recorded history must remain speculation, unless we look to the record left by the Builder Himself, the Holy Bible.

Without this Book as a guide, we are forced to an extrapolation backward beyond historic times. Such an extrapolation backward is just as fallible as an attempt to predict the future — both are dealing in the realm of the unknown.

Astronomers tell us that some stars appear to be millions of light years away. This means that the light rays from these stars are very nearly parallel, indicating that these stars are at an extremely great distance. Let us remember that the same God who created the earth and every living thing in it is also capable of creating parallel light rays, as well as stars in an infinitely great space.

But Why?

But if the universe is as young as the Bible indicates, why did God put in men's paths such stumbling blocks as old-appearing rocks and fossils and stars "millions of light years away"? Why did He create the first man as an adult rather than as an infant? Certainly God has His own reasons for these things, and we cannot know His Mind in all that He does. Perhaps some of these things are to test our faith. God the Creator made all of the laws of science. Man's knowledge of the world about him, however, is far from complete at present.

What Attitude Should the Church Take?

Although the Bible was not intended by God to be a book of science, it is, nevertheless, God's infallible Word and, as such, it is correct wherever it touches on scientific subjects. The Church's primary purpose is not to concern itself with proclamations of "scientists" who neglect to state the assumptions they made in reaching their conclusions; nor is it the purpose of the church to "speculate" into the past; the purpose of the church is to proclaim a "changeless Christ" as man's only Savior from sin.

Although God's Word is inerrant, man sometimes makes errors in interpreting it. The past errors of some church leaders dealt with matter currently in existence and scientific

ically demonstrable, such as the shape of the earth, or the motions of the planets. The question of the age of the earth, however, cannot be settled by scientific demonstration. All that can be said is that the earth appears to be a certain number of years old based on physical and chemical laws as presently known. But how old did it appear on the day when God created it?

Any Real Proof?

In a current television fiction series for children, a super-intelligent dog has a "way-back machine", by means of which he can put his master and himself back into the nineteenth century and adventure in the "wild west". Until some scientist can invent such a "way-back machine" and turn time backward many centuries, there can be no proof, scientifically, that the earth is any given number of years old.

Should the Church teach that Scripture may not be correct in peripheral matters? Such a teaching is not required by any proven scientific fact.

Religion and Science

Shall the Church attempt to detach itself from the issue by claiming to speak in matters of religion only, and leaving the field of science to others? Such a distinction might seem expedient in view of the emphasis and attitude prevailing on this subject in public school education in America today. It would seem to relieve us of the need of defending our faith where "Science" contradicts. But if we do not believe the Bible's statements on matters of science, how shall we treat Jesus' death and resurrection: as medical or theological? "Modern medicine" says that a resurrection after many hours of death cannot occur. An insistence that science and religion are two entirely separate subjects thus can lead directly to a denial of the Christian faith.

Many of these questions go back to one fundamental issue: Shall we accept the word of man, with his limited observations, or that of the Creator Himself? As recently as the

beginning of World War II, "science" was teaching that "matter can be neither created nor destroyed". Then came nuclear fission, with the conversion of matter into energy. When men suggest that some new "scientific" finding "proves" some portion of the Bible incorrect, a good passage to remember is Ephesians 4:15, "... be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." It is dangerous for any church body to fit its teachings into the science of the day; the church that changes to suit every whim of the public soon loses the respect of all. Romans 12:2 tells us, "be not conformed to this world..." First Timothy 6:20 warns, "keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."

Excuses

Those who refuse to associate with the Church on the ground that it is unscientific are simply attempting to find an excuse — they are attempting to flee from God. Such statements mark those who are worshippers of man and his knowledge rather than God. Mark 10:27, however, tells us that "With God all things are possible." The Christian, on the other hand, must never take the attitude that scientific inquiry is evil. Even in the first chapter of Genesis, God told man to investigate the world about him when he commanded in Genesis 1:28, "subdue it (the earth): and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

In Conclusion

The scientist can accept the entire Bible as God's inspired Word for it is inerrant, that is, it contains no error, and in particular no scientific error. The phrase often used in scientific circles, "it is generally accepted" is one of the greatest enemies of true scientific progress. A scientist will be a better and a more searching one if he keeps a clear distinction between assumption and proven fact.

The Book of Revelation closes with a stern warning to any who would attempt to change the teaching of the Church in the name of "science" or any other teaching when it says in Chapter 22:18-19, "...If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

In conclusion, when the Holy Bible speaks on matters of science, it is correct. Obviously the Creator knows what He made.

PAIDEIA

Telling and Teaching

"Don't read it Mommy, talk it," said a little girl, four years old, when her mother agreed to read again from the well-worn book of Bible stories and pictures. The little girl's request indicated a better way for her mother to communicate what the two little children wanted to hear. She spoke for her little brother, too; indeed, she spoke for all children.

What prompted the child to make this request, a request well worthy of one who has observed children for years? She had hardly given thought to methods in education. She had never sat in educational conference to discuss how things go. She simply expressed something that is true of the nature of learning: there is a better way than just telling, and that better way is talking — talking that is conversation, sharing, dialogue, meeting of minds, learning at its best.

The denotation of telling is testifying, reporting, making known, informing; and the connotation is saying something assuredly, saying it with conviction, even implying that the alternative to acceptance can be dire indeed. The word describes a very fine activity in the witnessing of the Christian message. But it can easily deteriorate into an unfeeling, detached, and unconcerned consciousness of superiority on the part of the teller.

Talking denotes the exchange of ideas by means of spoken words in a friendly manner, in familiar chatter, even in gossiping. It can readily degenerate into useless time-wasting and worse. The connotation of talking may go so far as hidden persuasion, manipulation in confidence, and even shameful compromise. We agree, of course, that talk may be the road also to valid compromise. Talking has prevented shooting!

We are interested in these processes as they apply in the context of teaching. The child speaks to us: "Talk it, Mommy, talk it." "Since we are preaching to children, we must also prattle with them," said Luther. "When Christ wished to teach men, he became a man. If we are to teach children, we must become children. Would to God we had more of this child's play!" Quoted in Painter: Luther on Education (Concordia, St. Louis), p. 155.

The basic Scripture for God's education method is given in Deut. 6:6-7: "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Matt. 12:34.

In one sense it can truthfully be said that education is not a definitive body of content. Education is rather the process of forming the next generation as well as the present in the values and truths that are held in a given culture and society. Among Christians, the Truth is the vast central part of the values concerned.

Now, how shall these truths best be transmitted, "grav-
en with an iron pen and lead in the rock" of people's hearts
forever? Only the powerful Holy Spirit of God can do this
writing; but God assigns to us the doing of the same task.
That is no insurmountable paradox: God doing it, yet asking
us to do it. We live by such paradoxes.

According, we proceed. We work as though it all depended on us, conscious that with might of ours nought can be done, doing all we can with the Word of God and our knowledge of nature's laws of learning, so that our teaching be as nearly as possible the kind of teaching that should succeed. More, we know not and cannot.

We observe what God has already revealed, and we study the laws of learning in nature. We see how wisely God set the solitary in families. In Israel children participated in the doings of adults. Customs became morals, in the sense of expected behavior. Doing the will of God was to be uppermost; doing it was expected of children. Instruction and life were equated. We can imagine the conversation. Children were picked up in the flow of life; they absorbed beliefs and behavior.

Strictly religious matters were mediated by festivals and religious rites conducted in the home. The meaning was told by the father. Questions were asked by the children. When the passover meal was prepared and the family was gathered in preparation for travel, the children asked, "What mean ye by this service?" The father explained. "The father responded in proportion to the intelligence of the children," said the Palestinian Talmud. Here was talking. Here was discussion. Here was explanation. Here people should have learned.

It has been well said that "some day we are going to have to realize that you cannot give anybody an education. The best you can do is to make it possible for him to get one." We cannot really reach any one's mind, in the sense that we can form it and command it at will. But we can ourselves so act, so project ourselves, so talk and demean ourselves that those who will receive our teaching will receive it. Paradox again, but isn't it so?

Conversation has the tone of appeal, the advantage of seeming to show personal interest, and the opportunity to explain. In talking one has to respect the listener as one who can respond. Response on the part of the learner is neces-

sary if he is to "get" it. We cannot imagine what would have happened had Jesus just told the woman at Jacob's well what was what. But in talking with her He reached her, engraved truth on her conscience, got her response. Can we imagine this result without her opportunity to ask questions?

There is food for thought in the statement: "The preaching of the Gospel merely brings men to the threshold of discipleship. If they are to cross the threshold to become, in the true sense, disciples, that is, learners or students, they must have a teacher. The two terms are correlative, disciple and teacher, and where there is no teacher but only a preacher, one need not expect to find disciples." James D. Smart: The Rebirth of Ministry (Phila.: Westminster Press), p. 93. Believers there may be, by the grace of God; but disciples are something more.

"Ministers and teachers follow the fallacy that they need only to tell people what they ought to know and the message will be heard and accepted. The monologue is the result. They are so anxious about getting content across that they forget that the meanings of the student and teacher must meet if learning is to take place. A lecturer honors the dialogical principle when he speaks to the meaning people bring to him." Reuel Howe: "Dialogic Foundations of Christian Education for Adults" in Concordia Theological Monthly, July 1962, p. 405. Acceptance is mediated by the Holy Ghost; learning is helped by "talking it" as God asks in Deut. 6:7.

This Scripturally-sound basis pushes us to realize that the home situation of adults talking with children is the ideal learning situation. The typical school situation is artificial, a state of affairs for which we need to apologize, yet one which we can hardly change, for many obvious reasons. Of necessity, then, we must make the school as much like a home as possible. But this, many of our teachers feel, is almost precluded by the way things are in our culture.

Shall we then surrender our ideals? That would be an unworthy and a lazy man's solution. We can have much conversation in the classroom; in Sunday school we can surely "talk it" with children; we can devote more of our ministry of the Word to talking with our people in their homes, on the street, in the fields, and wherever. We can magnify in their minds the value of spiritual conversation. We can be more ready to talk about things that count, and we can drop the defensive laugh that so often seems to go with a serious remark. Our conversation can be reseasoned with the salt of important truth. Yes, "Talk it, Mommy; talk it, teacher; talk it, pastor."

M. Galstad

PREACHING THE WORD

Sola Scriptura

(Editor's Note: The following sermon was preached by Dr. Norman A. Madson on the occasion of the Ninety-fifth Anniversary of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Mankato, Minnesota, September 16, 1962)

"God's word a treasure is to me,
Through sorrow's night my sun shall be
The shield of faith in battle;
The Father's hand hath written there
My title as His child and heir,
'The kingdom's thine forever;'
That promise faileth never."

And our one petition on this anniversary day is this:
Grant us by Thy Holy Spirit that these words may not merely remain a matter of empty lip service, but be inscribed in our inmost hearts as a living reality in our lives. Hear us for the sake of Christ Jesus, our one and only Savior. Amen.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."
-II Peter 1:19-21.

Fellow redeemed, festival worshipers: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Coming events cast their shadows before." It was with a keen sense of one who had given heed to the Savior's admonition that we should discern the signs of the times, that the leader of our Norwegian Synod, Dr. Vilhelm Koren, had decided to make his testament to the synod he was serving by discussing the fundamental doctrine of VERBAL INSPIRATION.

While many spiritual conflicts had beset our little Norwegian Synod, Koren knew that so long as the Word itself remained inviolate and the unfailing guide for troubled souls, men who really were concerned about the saving of their souls rather than a mere saving of face, would still find their way out of the Slough of Despond to the refreshing heights from whence they could catch a glimpse of the Delectable Mountains of Beulahland. And therefore he also knew that an insidious attack would be made upon the very bulwark of our Christian faith — the reliability and clarity of Holy Writ itself. So the battle-scarred veteran of the cross chose to challenge all false teachers and weak-kneed Christians by taking his unalterable stand on the impregnable Rock — God's saving Word. And that is why we have chosen the words you have already heard read as our text this morning, on the basis of which we shall speak on:

SOLA SCRIPTURA

By that term which is the Latin term for "Scripture alone," our father meant to say that (as we do in the Smalcald Articles): "The Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel." Part II, Art. 2. We shall show that:

1. The Bible is absolutely reliable.
2. The Bible is clear.
3. The Bible gives us the only saving message we have.

1. Peter was not only one of the chosen twelve, but he was also one of the favoured few who on certain occasions were given the special privilege of being with the Son of God

when some special manifestation of His glory was to be revealed. It was he and James and John who were with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration, when Elias and Moses came down to speak with the Saviour before His suffering and death. So elated was Peter on this occasion that he wanted to remain on that blessed mountain top, offering to build three tabernacles there: One for Christ, one for Moses, and one for Elias. But no sooner had the suggestion been made, when the Saviour leads the three disciples back into the valley again, only to be met with the ever-present evidence of sin and suffering.

Now we know how tempting it is for human nature to want to wax eloquent upon some subject where the person in question has enjoyed some special privilege. You are familiar with the preachers who have to go abroad every so often, in order that they may have something to preach about — their experiences. Now Peter was very human. We might expect therefore that when he mentions this unusual experience on the mount, he would go into detail about those experiences. But lo and behold, he has no more than mentioned it, when he immediately forgets himself in remembrance of something far more important, the everlasting word. For what is his follow-up? "We have also a more sure word of prophecy." As though he would say: "Forget Peter for the time being, and get back to your Bibles."

To Peter the Holy Scriptures had become an inexhaustible storehouse of everlasting truth, from whence he could draw all which was necessary during his sojourn. There he found the law in all its crushing conviction, showing him how desperately he was in need of a Redeemer if he were not to perish in the midst of his many and heinous sins. But there was also to be found the Gospel, a comfort for every sorrow and a balm for every wound, life itself in the very midst of death. For we must not suppose that the blessed Gospel was withheld from the human race during the long centuries before the coming of Christ. No, from the very beginning, the "promised seed of the woman," which was to bruise the head of the serpent, had been pointed to again and again, so that Peter could confess, as he does in the house of Cornelius: "To him (Christ) give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

But it is especially the reliability of that word to which Peter would draw attention when he speaks of it as "the more sure word of prophecy." Yes, so absolutely reliable is Holy Writ that our very Saviour could with all justice rebuke the two downcast disciples on their way to Emmaus that first Easter day: "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets (mark you, Moses and all the prophets), He expounded unto them the Scriptures in all the things concerning Himself." Luke 24:25-27. So when the Saviour assures us that "the scriptures cannot be broken," (John 12:35), He refers to all which had been written by holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. "Had ye believed Moses," He tells the Pharisees of His day, "Ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" John 5:46-47. And how crushing are not His words of rebuke to the rich man in torment, who wanted more than that sure word of prophecy: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 17:29 and 31.

"But," you may ask, "has there ever been any question within our Lutheran Church as to the absolute authority and reliability of Scripture?" Yes, I am sorry to say, there has been and is, but they are then no longer anything more than Lutherans in name. Paul's words of warning to the congregation at Ephesus have, alas, found their fulfillment within the fold of the Church of the Reformation: "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw many disciples after them." Acts 20:30. There are men calling themselves Lutherans today who would have us believe that Scripture is not always reliable, but that it must be tested in the crucible of human research, and such things rejected as will not stand the test of the human mind. They tell us, for instance, that if science has proved that it took our God longer than six natural days in which to create the world, we can no longer hold to the words of a Moses which tell us: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day." Exodus 20:11.

But tell me, what will then become of the entire structure of the Levitical law? It will collapse like an house of cards, and Peter's contention that it is "a more sure word of prophecy" would simply be a lie. A lie which poor Peter was of course not aware that he was telling, but a lie nevertheless, told in the simplicity and ignorance of an unschooled fisherman, who would never have committed such a blunder, had he but had the advantages of a university education in our cultured and enlightened age.

But God be praised, the Son of God knew what He was doing when He chose that humble fisherman as one of those who were to bring to a sin-sick world that word of which it stands in greater need than all the accumulated wisdom of men. Let the worldly-wise call it foolishness. But on the day of final accounts it will be found that Peter's statement regarding the reliability of the prophetic word shall stand unshaken, when those who have doubted its reliability and have sneered at its heavenly message will go down to perdition into the bottomless pit. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words (that more sure word of prophecy) shall not pass away." Matthew 24:35.

"O Word of God incarnate,
O wisdom from on high,
O truth unchanged, unchanging,
O light of our dark sky;
We praise Thee for the radiance
That from the hallowed page,
A lamp unto our footsteps
Shines on from age to age."

2. But what would it avail us that the word of God is absolutely reliable, if it were not a clear word, which the average man could understand and make use of in his daily life? "If the Holy Scriptures were really so obscure a book," says the sainted Dr. Walther, "that the meaning of all these passages which form the basis of articles of the Christian Creed could not definitely be ascertained, ... the Scriptures could not be the word of God." And why not? It would simply mean one of two things: Either that God were

unable or unwilling to make them clear. And that would not only cast doubt upon our heavenly Father's omnipotence, but would cause us to question His mercy as well. But what does the Bible text have to say on this score? It calls the Scriptures "a light that shineth in a dark place." Yes, thank God, it will remain true to the end of time: "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 119:105.

If it were true, as is taught in the Papacy, that Scripture is so obscure that you can scarcely understand it, and that you have to have the traditions of the Roman church, why should the Saviour have urged us to search the Scriptures? John 5:39. And why should a Paul have commended the Bereans because they searched the Scriptures daily, to see whether those things which Paul preached were so? Acts 17:11. No, it will ever be true in the words of Luther: "It is the sheep who will have to determine whether or no the voice is that of the shepherd."

What were you and I taught regarding the clarity of the Scriptures? We had a question in our "Explanation" reading thus: "Is not the Bible dark and obscure to the simple and unlearned?" And the answer? "In all things that are necessary to know in order to be saved the Bible is plain enough to those who use it aright whether they be lay or learned." Why, the Bible is called God's revelation to men! And what is a revelation? Does it mean to make obscure? To make it difficult to understand? To hide? It means the very opposite. And therefore the words of a Paul are exceptionally meaningful when he says: "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." II Corinthians 4:3.

And lest you think that I am attributing to Rome what cannot be proved, permit me to quote from one of the most widely-read commentaries of the Roman Catholic Church — Cardinal Gibbons' "Faith of our Fathers". Here is what he has to say regarding the intelligibility of Scripture: "A rule of faith, or a competent guide to heaven, must be able to instruct in all the truths necessary for salvation. Now the Scriptures alone do not contain all the truths which a Christian is bound to believe." page 72.

And so he concludes "That the Scriptures alone cannot be a sufficient guide and rule of faith because they cannot, at

any time, be within the reach of every inquirer; because they are not of themselves clear and intelligible even in matters of the highest importance, and because they do not contain all the truths necessary for salvation," page 73.

Paul has assured Timothy that "the holy scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." II Timothy 3:15. As between Cardinal Gibbons and the Apostle Paul, I shall ever prefer the latter.

So, our beloved Luther is eminently right when he says: "There is not a plainer book on earth than the Holy Scriptures. It is, in comparison with all other books, what the sun is compared with all other luminaries. The papists are giving us their twaddle about the Scriptures for the sole purpose of leading us away from the Scriptures and raising up themselves as masters over us in order to force us to believe their preaching of dreams. It is an abomination, a disgraceful defamation of Holy Writ and the entire Christian Church, to say that the Scriptures are obscure, that they are not clear enough to be understood by everybody, and to enable everybody to teach and prove what he believes."

And it is the very clarity of Scripture concerning which our own Dr. Koren said away back in 1908: "When it is said that we stand on the shoulders of our elders and therefore have a wider horizon than had they, this is nothing more than mere phrases and idle talk. We are no closer to the truth than they were, and we have the same way to walk which they had, in order to come to Christ and believe on Him. God's Word is as eternal and unchangeable as is God Himself... We have need, each and every one of us, to become as little children, to learn not to consider ourselves wise, especially not wise above that which is written. According to God's Word we have reason to be certain, that many an unschooled man and woman, and by the world despised, has gotten farther in the knowledge of God and His will, than have the vast majority of learned preachers and professors. To all of us Christ has said: 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'" God bless the very memory of Dr. Koren for that God-given testimony! That is what we, as a true Lutheran Church, teach and believe. And may no so-called scholar ever lead us away from its Scripture contents.

But this understanding of Holy Writ is not something at which we arrive through our own intellectual acumen. No, it is a gift of God pure and simple, as are all other graces which He in mercy confers upon men. We may still with our Saviour confess: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Matthew 11:25. Yea, it will remain true to the end of time that the "natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Corinthians 2:14. It is this fundamental truth to which Clausnitzer has given expression in the hymn we sang at the opening of our service:

"All our knowledge, sense, and sight
Lie in deepest darkness shrouded,
Till Thy Spirit breaks our night
With the beams of truth unclouded.
Thou alone to God canst win us,
Thou must work all good within us."

3. But neither the reliability nor the clarity of Scriptures would profit us anything, unless they had a message for poor sinners which would bring comfort to their burdened hearts. And therefore it is the very central truth of all of Holy Writ to which Peter directs our attention when he says in our text: "Until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." For who is that day star? It is none other than the very Son of God, who says of Himself on the very last page of Holy Writ: "I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." Revelation 22:16.

What John writes toward the close of his Gospel might well stand as a superscription over the entire record of Holy Writ: "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." John 20:31. For outside of Christ there is no salvation. Either you are saved through Him, or not at all. For says Peter: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. Exclusive? Yes. But it is also all-inclusive.

For it is none other than the Savior Himself who bids all sinners: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30.

And Dr. Koren did not fail to make it clear what that Gospel meant. It is toward the close of his address that he dwells upon "the victorious comfort and inexpressible joy which the Bible brings those who believe what it says." He calls attention to the fact that Christ calls it His Gospel. And what does Gospel mean? Not good advice, not expert opinion, but "GOOD NEWS." And what could be better news for sinners than to be told in plain words: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound"? Romans 5:20. To be told: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool"? Isaiah 1:18. To be assured by none other than the Redeemer Himself: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"? John 6:37. No, let us conclude, as did Koren, after all the evidence is in — conclude in the ever-memorable words of Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." John 6:68, 69.

This is the faith you have struggled to maintain during these trying and troubled days of unionism and uncertainty. And let no one who is sincere in his confession find fault with what you have done. May your prayer be that of our dear Luther, as you look forward to the centennial of Immanuel:

"O Holy Ghost, to Thee, our Light,
We cry by day, by night:
Come, grant us of the light and power
Our fathers had of yore;
When Thy dear Church did stand
A tree deep-rooted, grand;
Full-crowned with blossoms white as snow,
With purple fruits aglow."

Amen.

P A N O R A M A

SECOND VATICAN C O U N C I L On October 11th the Second Vatican Council will be convened in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. With all of its traditional pomp and pageantry the Roman Catholic hierarchy will be gathering for the first general council since papal infallibility was pronounced to be a dogma of the Roman Church. It is well to bear in mind that when the Roman Church considers this to be the twenty-first ecumenical council, this is part and parcel of its contention that it is the true church which numbers its councils from apostolic times. To the Roman Church this is a council representing the entire Christian world, and in that sense they call it ecumenical. The Roman Church by calling this gathering "The Second Vatican Council" has made it easier to designate this meeting by a term that is not as distasteful to us Protestants as is the title "Twenty-first Ecumenical Council."

PURPOSE OF THE COUNCIL

The First Vatican Council opened on Dec. 8, 1869 and closed its working sessions on July 18, 1870, the very day on which the dogma of papal infallibility was proclaimed by Pope Pius IX. It may seem strange that no general council of this type has been convened from that day to this. And yet it is not so strange. The provisions of the decree on the infallibility of the pope virtually made councils superfluous and unnecessary. Upon the insistence of Pope Pius IX the following decree was passed by a majority vote (some of the most brilliant leaders of the Roman Church opposed it): "We, the sacred Council approving, teach, and so define as a dogma divinely revealed, that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra* — that is to say, when in the discharge of the office of pastor and teacher of all Christ-

ians, by the virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith and morals to be held by the universal church — is, through the divine assistance promised to the blessed Peter himself, possessed of the infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be endowed for defining doctrine concerning faith and morals; and that therefore such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church, unalterable. But if any one shall venture (which may God avert) to contradict our definition, let him be accursed." In view of this far-reaching decree which the Pope himself asked for and got, and which made the convening of councils quite unnecessary for a period of ninety years, we may ask why is a council now to be convened?

The announced purpose of the Council is to bring Church practices and disciplines up to date. Areas covered in the voluminous study manual are for instance: the power of the bishops, relation of clergy and laity, sacraments, liturgy, Christian unity. Communism, religious liberty, church-state relations, mixed marriages, and other subjects will come in for their share of discussion. Protestants who will attend as delegate-observers will be particularly interested in discussions concerning Roman Catholic relations with other religious denominations. It is made clear by Roman Catholic dignitaries on all sides that while no doubt clearer formulations of certain doctrines will be sought, there is no prospect that Rome will recede from or change any of its doctrines. It will retain all features which identify it as the Church of the Antichrist, of this we may be certain. Now while the above-mentioned items on the agenda are given as reasons for convening the Council, we may still be left wondering about the underlying purpose of the Council. We cannot expect that this purpose will be stated. We know that there are currents of thought within the Roman Church which threaten to raise havoc with that "solidarity" and "unity" of which the Pope likes to speak. The Pope naturally sees a need for calling in all his prelates in order that the "unity" may not be disturbed. Any close ob-

server of Catholic opinion cannot escape the conclusion that the leaders are not as united as the Pope would like to make them appear to be. A recent example of such disunity is the differences of Catholic evaluation of the recent Supreme Court decision regarding prayer in the public school. A controversy is raging concerning the liturgy, its language, and the participation of the laity in the service. Besides all this there is a struggle going on between the Curia (the papal court) which wants to maintain all the gains made for the power and primacy of the pope and the bishops who wish to have their status and authority defined no doubt with the purpose of restricting the pope's exercise of the unlimited authority given him in the First Vatican Council.

There are those who judge the Pope's call for a Council as an act which tends to cast a cloud over the dogma of papal infallibility a thing which the curia would resist with all its power. However, the Pope has now announced an act which should dissipate all thought that the Antichrist will in any way permit his papal authority to be impaired. He has announced that he intends to proclaim the beatification of Pope Pius IX during the course of the Council. This makes it clear that the present pope, John XXIII, regards this predecessor as being especially blessed and as a candidate for canonization. This he could hardly do if he were planning to recede from the claim of papal infallibility which was the major "accomplishment" of Pope Pius IX who will be remembered also as the one who promulgated the "Syllabus of Errors" wherein for instance the freedom of religion, separation of church and state, the possibility of error on the part of popes and councils were denounced. This pope is shrewd and as a diplomat is seeking to hold all sides together without giving up any ground that has been gained. Also we see in his call for a council meeting, an attempt to meet and counteract the influence of the World Council of Churches which has drawn into its membership a number of churches that hitherto had remained aloof.

But will the general public get news reports that will give the people an opportunity to judge the proceedings of the Council? This is very doubtful. In fact the carefully planned procedure for the handling of news coverage is against it.

REPORTING THE COUNCIL

On the surface it may seem that the chances for proper information regarding the proceedings of the Council are very good. Non-Roman representatives have been invited and have been given the nondescript title "delegate observers." They have been assured of admission to certain sessions from which the press will be excluded. However, the Catholic periodical America says: "Publication on September 5 of Pope John's regulations on procedures at the Council revealed that some major events will be open to general news coverage. This document also made it plain, however, that much of the proceedings will go on behind closed doors. Hence the understandable concern of the press — secular and religious — about their ability to get adequate and reliable information on the continuing progress of the Council's affairs." An AP report from Rome says: "Observers from other churches in accepting the invitations to the council, implicitly agreed to talk to no one about the council except their own church groups, Vatican sources said. This rule was outlined in the pope's letter." This rule definitely cuts off the free flow of information to the public and it was indeed one of the causes of the resignation of the Catholic Director of the bureau of information of the National Catholic Welfare Conference of Washington. Christianity Today says of him: "He favored easier access to Catholic news by the general press (including Protestant publications), a policy which meets much skepticism in the Vatican. Liaison between Kelly's bureau and the press office was so limited that he held out little hope of being helpful to American newsmen." As far as the press-men are concerned they are receiving their credentials with the understanding that they are to "maintain an entirely correct attitude in reference to the Holy See." With all these safeguards it is apparent that news coming through will be filtered and restricted. Besides all this of course we know that there will be sessions that will be closed to all but the hierarchy who will reveal only those items that are approved for general consumption. To be skeptical regarding the adequacy of news coverage of the Council meeting is simply to be realistic about the whole matter. We will hear of those things only that the Vatican chooses to reveal. C. M. G.

E. L. S. AND We are informed that at its 1962 convention
THE C A L L the Evangelical Lutheran Synod has modified
 an earlier resolution pertaining to the Call,
particularly the situation that arises when a pastor has
found it necessary for conscience' sake to withdraw from a
synod of which he formerly was a member and of which his
congregation is still a part. In order to supply the proper
context we are presenting the pertinent resolution as it ap-
peared in the 1961 Convention Report, and then adding the
new formulation.

Policy on Resignations

WHEREAS, There are congregations in member-
ship with our Synod being served by pastors who have
terminated their membership in the ELS by volun-
tary resignations for conscience reasons; and

WHEREAS, Such a resignation presented by a pas-
tor to the Synod alters the basis on which the congre-
gation originally issued the call; and

WHEREAS, It is in keeping with the sovereign
right of the congregation concerned that it be given
an opportunity to declare whether or not it wants this
call to remain in force under such circumstances;
and

WHEREAS, If such an opportunity is not given the
situation may cause unrest, disruption and division
in the congregation to the spiritual detriment of
precious souls; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That whenever a pastor is involved
in such a situation he be advised to submit a resig-
nation also to the congregation so that the congre-
gation may exercise its sovereign right and thus have
an opportunity to take such action as will be in ac-
cord with God's Word and expressive of the Spirit-
guided will of the congregation. cf. I Cor. 14:40; I
Tim. 2:4; I Pet. 5:6.

It is for this foregoing resolution that the 1962 Convention
adopted the following substitute. The WHEREAS'es remain
unchanged.

RESOLVED, That when a pastor is involved in such a situation, he be advised to inform the congregation of his actions and its rights in the matter. If, in order for the congregation to exercise its sovereign rights, it becomes necessary for the pastor to resign, the synod regards such an action as proper. Cf. I Cor. 14:40; I Pet. 5:2, 3, 6.

We consider this new version a distinct improvement, since the old was probably understood by many to mean that a pastor's withdrawal from a synod calls for an immediate and automatic resignation from his ministry in that congregation. According to the new form, he is to inform his congregation and await its action. We still feel, however, that the revision has not yet gotten to the root of the problem, which in our opinion is to be found in the second "Whereas," the one which says that a pastor's resignation from his synod "alters the basis" on which the congregation originally issued the call, and makes that a prime reason why he should tender his resignation. Surely, this introduces an unknown and unpredictable element into the basis. For synods have changed, even within a generation — and usually the change has not been for the better. The history of the old Norwegian Synod — which had once been so sound, and then became capable of entering the ELC Merger — is ample demonstration of this fact. For many generations our candidates have been ordained and pastors installed upon their pledged acceptance of Scripture as the sole rule of faith and life, and of the historic Lutheran Confessions — the latter because they are the true teachings of that Word. That has been the entire "basis" for the calls that have been issued in the past. Let it be sufficient also for now, and for the future.

Here it may be in order to mention another point, something that appears not only in the resolution but particularly in the preceding paragraphs which state the underlying reasons. Here there is a heavy emphasis on the "rights," the "sovereign rights" of the congregation. We grant without argument that there are such rights. When a pastor withdraws from a synod, his congregation is certainly entitled to an explanation — even as he is entitled to a hearing. If

his reasons for his action do not stand the test of Scripture, then his congregation has not only the right but the duty of terminating his call. But when it is a matter of maintaining the purity of the Word that is to be preached in a congregation, does not this word "duty" offer a better approach to the whole problem than any arbitrary assertion of "rights" and "sovereignty"? Whereas these latter terms can easily turn one's thought into channels of law-mindedness — as they will if they are invoked as weapons — the word "duty" should lead in the right direction, namely that in such a critical situation everyone concerned ask in all simplicity: Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?

Then we shall have the answers. The pastor whose conscience compels him to withdraw from his synod need not merely be advised to inform his flock. He has the duty to do so. This is the flock that has been committed to his care. He bears the responsibility. He must tell them why he has felt compelled to take such action. And for the same reason the congregation has the duty to hear him. He is the shepherd whom God has given them. And if they find his reasons to be valid according to Scripture, then they surely have a clear duty to support and follow him. If on the other hand the congregation finds his reasons to have been false, if it finds that he has erred from the Truth of Scripture, then its plain duty is to admonish him (in which difficult matter it may of course invoke the aid of "officials"). And then, if admonition should fail and he adheres to his error, then it not only has the "right" but the clear duty of terminating his call.

We sincerely believe that a revision along such lines would not only clarify but strengthen the resolution in question. And what is more important, it would make for a practice that would be truly Scriptural and therefore thoroughly evangelical.

E. Reim

WHAT CLEVELAND It has been interesting and instruc-
M A D E G L E A R tive to note the manner in which the
 religious press has reacted to the
decisions of the Cleveland convention of the Missouri Synod.
The general agreement seems to be that what has emerged
is a different Missouri, that there has been a notable change
of course. Some hail this as a good sign. Others defend it
as something that is not inconsistent with Missouri's earlier
standards and principles. And some — though only a
few — deplore it. We believe that there are particularly two
articles that should be of interest to our readers.

The first is from the Aug. 14 issue of the LUTHERAN
STANDARD, official publication of the American Lutheran
Church. The author, Dr. Martin E. Marty, is a Missouri
Synod pastor, but also a frank and outspoken advocate of the
ecumenical movement. He is an associate editor of the
CHRISTIAN CENTURY, an inter-denominational periodical
that is committed to the same cause of ecumenicity.
If Dr. Marty has any misgivings about this policy, that has
not been put prominently in evidence.

Dr. Marty quotes with obvious approval a convention
essay which defined the aim of the World Council of Churches
as "the proclamation of the Gospel throughout the world
without the scandal flowing from divided churches" (our
emphasis). He reports the permission that Missouri granted
its commissions and boards to affiliate and cooperate with
divisions of the National Council of Churches "within the
carefully prescribed limits the Synod sets," and added that
this "came in the year when 'apostles of discord' had been
particularly active in anti-N. C. C. opposition." Concerning
the San Francisco resolution which had given certain docu-
ments, particularly the Brief Statement, a well-nigh
confessional status he states that they would have been "in-
surmountable barriers to future inter-Lutheran theological
unity," that they "would prove to be uncongenial to many non-
Missourians (as they are to some Missourians) were they to
be imposed as confessions." As to the internal struggle
which was so widely publicized we read: "The Synod decis-
ively repudiated its 'radical right wing' which threatened not

so much to prevail as to paralyze the convention. . . This repudiation is important to non-Missourians because the 'radical right' opposed all the forms of gesture toward other Lutherans described in the preceding paragraphs." And as a final thrust: "the extremists were not put down by extremists from the other or 'liberal' side but by the mainstream of leadership and the typical pastors and laymen" (our emphasis). The following sums up the author's conclusions: "Missouri is big, successful, sometimes prideful, not always recognizing its need of other Christians. It may not yet have its whole heart in the ecumenical reality. But it has its mind there. We might say it is moving head first but not headlong in this direction."

The second item is a three-page editorial from the LUTHERAN WITNESS with a significant heading, "Turning Point." Using the fact that Cleveland had by many been described as the "Crisis Convention," it goes on to admit the change, but to describe the convention in glowing colors as the one that "repudiated the legalistic tactics of a tiny segment which had troubled Synod relentlessly for decades and the devious devices of splinter groups which had spawned irritation and festering discontent during the past triennium." There was more in the same vein, much more, and it carried an unmistakable note of triumph, a proclamation of victory over a group that, when all is said and done, had simply stood (and we hope still stands) strongly for the Scriptural principles of which Missouri had once been the outstanding exponent.

But then, almost as though in fear of having possibly said too much and spoken too harshly about what it called an "ugly development (that) has been brought to the surface," the editorial begins to take on a character of hypnotically soothing reassurance. After all, as Dr. Marty pointed out, the "victory" was gained not by liberal extremists (they did not have the votes) but by the moderate middle group that counts itself conservative and wants to remain so. With fascinating and deadly effect the article states that there is nothing to worry about. "By no means, however, did the Cleveland convention lift all restraints or outlaw all forms

of doctrinal supervision and discipline." The meetings with Presbyterians that had been conducted in the framework of joint prayer are to continue, but of course "in conformity with the stated principles of our constitution and with the Scriptural principles of fellowship." By these and similar arguments the folks at home are to be assured that all is well. "Lieb Vaterland, magst ruhig sein!" Having admitted a crisis, the direction of the change is claimed to have been all to the good.

We believe that this line will go across with the great middle group of Missouri. It is shrewdly written. It says what the people want to hear. But what about those who stood embattled for their Scriptural convictions? For let there be no mistake about this. Missouri has charted its course, a new course, to the left. Not so far left as some would have wished — left, but with a bit of caution — but nevertheless left! And the convention served notice to the minority that it will stand for no nonsense, no opposition. That is what Cleveland made clear. And the administration, the "leadership," likes it that way. That is the situation that the minority faces, one that certainly confronts them with a crisis of their own. Will they accept the verdict? Will they continue as they are, weakly protesting, perhaps, but continuing nevertheless? Or will they finally take the action that is so long overdue? — May God grant them strength!

E. Reim

JOHN BRENNER: As we are about to go to press,
IN MEMORIAM word has just reached us of the
death on Sunday, September 30, of
Pastor John Brenner, former President of the Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Active in the ministry until
his retirement less than five years ago, his years of serv-
ice extended well beyond the half-century, during which he
left his mark in every field to which his responsibilities took
him. Cudahy, Wisconsin, remembers him not only because
there was his first parish, but also because of the manner
in which he served a small Slovak congregation which was
without its own pastor at the time — where he made it a
point to acquire a fair speaking knowledge of their language,
simply in order to be able better to serve them. Milwaukee
remembers him not only for his outstanding ministry at St.
John's which was an inspiration for many a young pastor,
but also for his participation in the work of the Milwaukee
City Conference where he was a major influence in the never-
ending struggle for sound principles and practice. The
Wisconsin Synod remembers him particularly for the twenty
years of exceptional leadership that marked his years as
President, a leadership that concerned itself not only with
the mass of administrative detail, but was above all intent
upon following faithfully the guidelines of Scripture in the
increasingly trying situations of mounting inter-synodical
differences. It was during this time that he laid the found-
work for what came to be known as the "Wisconsin position."
The Synodical Conference remembers him — perhaps with
mixed emotions. ~

Those of us who were privileged to work with him in the
various forums where these inter-synodical discussions
were held will remember him for many things: his tireless
energy, his exceptional skill and quick repartee in debate,
his personal integrity, and so on. But most of all they will
remember him for his consistency, a consistency that
stemmed not from mere personal fixity of purpose — or
stubbornness, as some would call it — but simply from an
unswerving loyalty to the Word. That is what made him
truly a Lutheran, one following steadfastly in the footsteps
of the Great Reformer. When some of us found ourselves

constrained to withdraw from Wisconsin in these last few years it was a matter of keen personal sorrow that Brenner was not with us. We think we understand, though we shall attempt no explanation. But as we do our work we like to feel that we are in fact carrying on the same principles for which he contended during the time of his leadership, and that we are doing it for the same reasons and, we hope, in the same spirit. May his memory live long in our midst.

E. Reim

CONTENTS

VOLUME II

October, 1962

NUMBER 4

ENGEL vs. VITALE..... 1

E. Schaller

CAN THE SCIENTIST OF TODAY

BELIEVE GENESIS 1?... 12

Bernhard E. Keiser

PAIDEIA

TELLING AND TEACHING..... 22

M. Galstad

PREACHING THE WORD

SOLA SCRIPTURA..... 27

Norman A. Madson

PANORAMA

SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL..... 36

C. M. Gullerud

E. L. S. AND THE CALL..... 40

E. Reim

WHAT CLEVELAND MADE CLEAR..... 43

E. Reim

JOHN BRENNER: IN MEMORIAM..... 46

E. Reim

THE JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY (Church of the Lutheran Confession) is published at New Ulm, Minnesota, by authorization of the Church of the Lutheran Confession. Subscriptions are payable in advance at the CLC BOOK HOUSE, Box 145, New Ulm, Minnesota. The rate is \$2.00 per year for five issues: February, April, June, October, December. All correspondence other than subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to Prof. E. Reim, Editor, 436 James Ave., Mankato, Minnesota. The Editorial Committee: E. Reim, Chairman; C. M. Gullerud; E. Schaller, M. Galstad.