



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

I Timothy 4:15

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The following is a reprint (by courtesy of President Joseph Peterson, ELS) of an essay which was delivered before the 1941 Convention of what was then known as the Norwegian Lutheran Synod of America and subsequently was printed in the proceedings, from which this photographic reproduction was made.

Written over twenty years ago in the interest of Christian education, this essay furnishes an opportunity to observe how the principles set forth on that occasion have been proved by time. By the same token it should spur us to greater efforts to apply these ideas in these days of increasing materialism and secularism. For the principles of the essay are the abiding and unchanging principles of the Word. --Ed.

Which Wisdom?

We have chosen the word "wisdom" for our theme because it is a noble word and is defined as "the right use of knowledge." Education ought to be the getting of wisdom. Education could be given a more specific definition, but we all agree that it is in part the getting of knowledge. The use of the knowledge that is acquired, the purpose to which it is put, and the ultimate results of its effects upon us, tell us which wisdom we have gotten. What education we get is not nearly so important as what wisdom we acquire.

We are not now concerned with two classes of knowledge, one to be sought and the other to be avoided. No culture ought to be avoided, if the knowledge of it is tempered with the correct wisdom. No truth is to be shunned simply because it is not a part of the revealed living Truth. Common scientific truth, or truth as it is known from the experience of mankind, becomes an enemy of revealed Truth only when the two are not properly kept together—more learned diction would call it "integrated." Therefore we are concerned with the getting of the right kind of wisdom, the one that keeps both revelations together as friends. And we insist that this wisdom is also the wisest wisdom for our life in the world that now is.

What use we make of information, of education, of science, all depends upon which wisdom we employ. Which wisdom rules our lives? Are we governed by the earthly or by the heavenly? Are our principles temporal or eternal? Are they material or spiritual? Are we pragmatists, behaviorists, and determinists? Or are we governed by a wisdom that is far superior to these high-sounding terms? Are we satis-

fied with knowing and doing, or are we concerned also with being? Are we concerned first with what our children and youth learn, or do we look rather to what they come to be? Are we prepared to say with the "Tenth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence" (1932): "Our age has power over nature, over life and death, over mind," or have we a greater wisdom than that? It is timely to ask, "Which wisdom for our children and youth?"

We have indicated that there are two separate wisdoms. This ought not so to be. We could wish that it were impossible to give a study in education a title such as the one we have chosen. If things were as they ought to be, man's knowledge of God and his knowledge of creation would be in perfect harmony, just as there was a time when Adam's knowledge of God was correct and his knowledge of the creatures was also correct. Yes, there are Scriptural reasons for believing that man's pristine knowledge of the world about him was scientific. We declare with the "Brief Statement" of the Missouri Synod: "We teach that the first man was not brutelike nor merely capable of intellectual development, but that God created man in his own image—endowed with a truly scientific knowledge of nature, Gen. 2:19-23." There was no schism between man's knowledge of God and his knowledge of the world about him. The knowledge of one was not more sacred than the other. There was nothing "secular" about man's tending the Garden God had given him. Nor is there to this day any discrepancy between the facts and truths which God has written in nature and the facts and truths about Himself which He has written in the Word. When God's scheme of things is not disturbed, there is only one knowledge, one truth, one wisdom, one happiness, one blessedness of communion between the creation and the Creator.

But there entered in a disturbance when man began to follow the wisdom of the Serpent. From that time there have been two separate wisdoms in the world, one true and the other false. It is with these two wisdoms that we are concerned, even as it is by one or the other of these two wisdoms that we are bound and ruled, whether or not we are aware of it.

Let us realize, then, that the wisdom of the world knows not God. It can figure out that there must be a Supreme Being who brings retribution upon evil. Beyond that, natural man cannot rise, for he is sunk in total depravity. He is dead in trespasses and sins and is an enemy of God.

Man's Efforts

And yet natural man seeks after wisdom; he seeks noble wisdom; yes, he seeks what he calls the divine. His wisdom at times appears very wise. We have observed natural man spell out the immortality of the soul. He has learned to use the language of God's Revelation, to speak of love and of goodness and sacrifice. The foremost of the world's wise men have done so well as to be called by some, "Seekers after God." But it

has been suggested that the best of them would have been the first to admit the wavering uncertainty of his hopes and speculations. They confessed the powerlessness of their wisdom to energize their wills for good. St. Augustine touched the point at which they failed when he declared that, although in Plato and Cicero he met with many utterances which were beautiful and wise, yet among them all he never found, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The fact is that the wisdom of God for restoration of the lost righteousness and correct knowledge of God is something that no man in the world ever invented, discovered, or thought well of. It was not produced by the philosophical method, nor yet by the scientific; but it is supreme wisdom nevertheless. Not that man has not tried. Man has devised many religions; and he has made many forward-looking movements, especially in social and political affairs. In the scientific laboratory he has done much to conquer disease, ease pain, and lessen the struggles that arise from sin. The inventor has done much to alleviate the curse of sweaty toil for bread which was imposed on man when he separated from God. But he has not discovered that wisdom unto eternal life which alone can avail before God. It is outside his sphere.

Even in the realm of knowledge in which he can operate, man has not done any too well. It is strange how quiet the voices of progress in the land keep themselves today. The implements of man's invention have apparently begun turning upon him. His use of science as a substitute for grace doesn't seem to be working. His cleverness at psychoanalysis has not eradicated guilt. Evil is not cured by the education he has devised nor by what he has done for the glands. And not only has man's wisdom failed to lift him toward God; it has also failed to save man from himself.

When God's Word says that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:14), it does not use a word which describes man at his worst, following the lusts of his depraved fleshly nature. The word for "natural" man is a word which Greek literature used "in praise of the noblest part of man." Therefore it is man at his best, man as we hear him described as being "good," man in whom a spark of divinity is said to remain, man who is said to be surging upward, reaching for the heights, hotly in pursuit of truth—just that man, says God's Word, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." That man has not arrived at the true wisdom, and he never will. That man is unable to combine the truths of the two revelations.

Let us say that just such a man were charged with the task of preparing the form and content of the wisdom which is to be taught in the schools of the world. Would that be a safe wisdom for our children and youth? Is that our choice? Is the best in the world good enough? If the product of the best is not good enough, what shall we say of the wisdom taught the children of our land by those who are mediocre, or those whom thinking men consider entirely unfit?

The one term which best describes the wisdom of these men who are most proficient in the world's way of doing things, is **materialism**. What you and I call moral and immoral is explained by the materialist as a result of environment, of comfortable living or of poverty, even the result of the "system." Lift men out of poverty, they say, and they will be good. Give children every material advantage, let them have an education without having to work for it—in other words, give children "advantages" which the parents did not have, and they will do better and be better. "Ill health and anaemia are the basis of moral delinquency," writes the author of the Iowa Plan for Character Education, quoted by W. A. Squires in "Educational Movements Today," p. 21. In other words, when men become social failures, when they become criminal and dangerous, the wisdom of the world declares that they are the victims of circumstances, but it does not say that they are reaping the fruits of guilt and sin. Neither does the wisdom of the world know that there is a way to remove that guilt, whereupon a God of love will make man a new creature with desire and ability to do good. Even when the wise men of the world seek earnestly to remove both the causes and the results of the world's materialism, their approach is again materialistic, it is worldly. Their efforts become what has been called the lifting of oneself by the bootstraps.

Let us take an instance to show that the efforts of world-wisdom can only fail to give man temporal and eternal blessedness. We need not take time to establish the fact that selfishness rules the world. The self-seeking of men is too well known to need demonstration. Nor are men themselves ignorant of its consequences to them. They are even trying to overcome its evil effects. They realize that in the matter of work and employment it is what one can give that rewards him with advancement, not what he can **get**. Not a man's **ability to get**, nor even his **need to have**, gives him real advancement. If man has learned to earn, **that** is usually in proportion to his ability to **give** to his employer. Thinking men of the world have learned this. They have been able to tell us that there is something of great value above what the self-seeking world-citizen considers life's chief goal. But in all their wisdom the wise of the world have not been able to rise above their material and worldly sphere.

Take an illustration of this. Perhaps the most popular dose of generosity and "divine" big-heartedness toward other people came out in Dale Carnegie's "How To Win Friends and Influence People." There, at first glance, it seemed that the world had learned some true wisdom. It seemed to have grasped something of the conduct of God and distilled it into a working formula for every man. But alas! It did not take long to discover that it was selfishness parading in the garments of light. The livery of God was to be stolen to do the devil's work again. Its basic idea turned out to be one of selfishness: how to get people to do what **you** want them to do for **your** advantage! See how far from the true wisdom of God is the best wisdom of the world! Behold, also, how the

world exalts the Golden rule; and note how it has changed it from a positive to a negative norm of conduct.

Thinking men have come to see this basic selfishness and sinfulness of the world's scheme. Some have agreed that the world has no real wisdom at all. They have tried to show that real worthwhile wisdom and training, that is, education, can come only from developing a large supply of good habits, habits of generosity, fair play, co-operation, self-sacrifice, cheerfulness, honesty, and noble-mindedness. In their efforts to do this, they have also called for the teaching of the Ten Commandments, and they have asked for a greater awareness on our part of the beauties of His life who came into the world as Jesus of Nazareth. But still they have not arrived at a means that really lifts man out of sin and frees him to serve God in righteousness and purity for ever. They are still plodding in the mire of worldly wisdom. They are still deluded to think that the Ten Commandments hold forth hope for man. They want to teach the Law with optimism. They are still under the delusion that merely by looking at the Master from Galilee men can lift themselves to happiness and bliss. They have come to the point where they realize that we must have religion; school men all over the nation are saying this; but they have not learned that we must have Christianity. Their best wisdom is not true wisdom. Their best is not good enough for our children and youth!

The Issue

The purpose of our discussion, then, is not to show you the dangers of the world at its worst. It is to warn you against the world at its best. We are not looking for the devil with his horns and forked tail; we hope to teach you how he looks when he comes in garments of light, mouthing smooth words of deception. It is not the glaring immoralities of the world's ways that we are seeking to avoid by asking you to demand Christian education for our children and youth; it is the smooth and sneaking damnation that lurks in that of which our country has come to be proud. It is the world at its best that can be most dangerous. O that we all had the gift of discerning the spirits!

It is not so many decades ago that a child's wisdom was learned, not so much in the world as at home. That was where his real character was formed. The schools were an added incidental which helped the child to learn the mechanics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Some recordings of history and geography and the like were added. Schools were considered as aids to the parents. Sense experiences, motor training, and moral discipline, to use the language of schoolmen, were, under simpler social conditions, afforded to children by the incidental contacts of everyday life in the home and in the community. Today, school comprises the child's life. Education, under the influence of John Dewey, is no longer called a preparation for life; it is called life itself. As such, education is a matter of the present and of the future. Education is called the development of social efficiency. To develop social efficiency,

says Dewey, the child must participate in the life and activities of a democratic society. The child must be put into a world by itself. The school must have everything that goes to make up a world. It must be a world that is as broad and as wide and as comprehensive as is the adult-world outside it. It must be a world in which the teacher is, as has been said, "at once leader, inspirer, interpreter, and friend."

The degree to which Dewey-ism has tried to make the school a world is shown by Luther A. Weigle in "Religion the Dynamic of Education," p. 11: "In the elementary and secondary public schools of the better sort today children learn not only reading, writing, and arithmetic, the languages, and the traditional subjects of literature, history and geography, but the physical and biological sciences and their applications; cooking, sewing, and household economy; wood-working and metal-working; gardening and agriculture; stenography, typewriting, bookkeeping, and the economics of business; journalism and printing; drawing, painting, modeling and decorating; music, dancing, dramatic expression, and public speaking; physical education, personal hygiene, and the principles of public health." Yes, the school is a world.

Further to show that it has the effect of being a world we need only to look at the other Dewey-doctrine of child-centeredness. Yesterday the child's school was material-centered, or subject-centered. Yesterday the home and the community and the church were the center of the child's world. Today his world centers in the school. Yesterday the parent took the responsibility for his child's character and behavior; a spanking in school called for another at home. Today the parents hold the teacher and the school responsible, because today the school is the child's world.

To argue the wisdom or the folly of this situation is not our purpose here, although we may here have a cue to some of the failure of the schools of the world. Have educators been unable to construct another world for the children? The complaint is so often heard that their graduates are not ready to fit themselves into the world of reality. Has Dewey-ism boomeranged? To urge this subject is outside the scope of our study; we have merely called attention to a situation which we have before us in the world's schools.

Our question is, Which wisdom do children and youth learn in the world's schools? Is it necessary to answer that it is the wisdom of the world? Must we prove that? Must we prove that world is world wherever we find it? No. It is world even if it is the best world. It is a world which is enmity against God, which wants nothing to do with the wisdom of God, which has in it the seed of death.

Now if Christianity means anything, it means that Christians are to take with them the wisdom of God in Christ, the Redeemer, and their new life in that Christ, into every nook and corner of their lives. Whatsoever we do in word or deed is to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus. To do anything in Christ's name means to do it in connection with His revelation and redemption. We are to glorify God in our body

and in our spirit. We are to be sanctified wholly. We are to be in Christ, and He in us. We are to grow up into Christ. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." II Cor. 3:18. In this there is a different accent, there is a different aim and purpose, there is a different direction. **This is a different wisdom.**

Let no one say that we are comparing things of two different categories. We are not comparing the **knowledge of things** with the **wisdom of God**. Neither are we comparing the knowledge of redemption in Christ with the wisdom of the world. What we want to show is this, that the knowledge of worldly things alone ends in a **certain wisdom**; and the knowledge of God in Christ plus a knowledge of worldly things ends in **another wisdom**. Let us not ask in which **knowledge** our children and youth shall become most proficient. That is a vastly important question, to be sure; but it is not the chief question. It is more important to ask, **Which wisdom** do we teach them, and **by which wisdom** are we training them to live?

The practical application of this is important. When we say that the world's schools are not good enough for our children, we must make clear that it is their worldly wisdom we are talking about, not their ability to teach the lesson materials. When we say that our schools are the better, it must be clear that they are better because of the eternal wisdom instilled by them. The competition between the world's schools and ours in the ability to impart knowledge is a secondary matter. Superiority there may go to the one, then to the other. But it is in the category of wisdoms that we are making comparisons.

Harmony or War

We insist that the knowledge of things and the wisdom of God should go together, for only then can we have true wisdom. We want them harmonized. It is only when they are not harmonized that they become enemies. What we contend is that in the world's schools the knowledge of things has been divorced by the fall of man from the wisdom of God, and the world has not effected, and does not want to effect, a reconciliation. In the world, the wisdom which interprets and integrates only the knowledge of things is a wisdom at war with the wisdom of God, and it is eternal war, war to the death.

We do not want that war. That is why we want Christian education. We do not want our children and youth to think that Cain's descendants became skillful in the arts of the world **because** they followed the wisdom of the world and not the wisdom of God. It is not true that the line of demarcation between the two wisdoms divides between the knowledge of God and the knowledge of things. When education is not Christian, **that** is where the line of battle comes to be drawn. And it is an unfortunate place for the line to be drawn. It is too bad when knowledge is attacked in the name of Christianity; and it is too bad when Christianity is attacked in the name of knowledge. It is unfortunat

that our children ever get the impression that science—and we mean science—is agnostic and inimical to the faith; and it is unfortunate that a child of God is ever given to understand that he had better curtail his knowledge of things.

That line of division is pietistic and Puritanical. It bids the followers of Christ to avoid all activities and interests which are not directly connected with the knowledge of salvation in Christ, the Substitute and Sanctifier. But God does not forbid us to probe the mysteries of His creation. In fact He assigned to man the position of dominance over what He had made. God did not ask man to avoid investigation into the creation. He did not ask him to concentrate all study on the mysteries of the promised Redeemer. God did not make divine wisdom an enemy of scientific and cultural knowledge. How could He? Is not He Himself revealed to us in His Word and in His works? Where have these two revelations been more beautifully harmonized than in the 19th Psalm of David? We do not want the Unknown God to remain unknown. The Unknown God of those who know the creation is the Triune God of the Christian. Our children and youth must learn to know that. Then are they getting themselves real wisdom. Then they will not flounder in the wisdom of the world, which, at best, is but a system of hedonism, self-satisfaction, selfishness, and work-righteousness.

No Romanism

Nor do we want the line of division between the two wisdoms to run horizontally, in the manner of Rome. We do not believe that Rome has true Christian education, the right wisdom, even with all its day schools, secondary schools and universities. We have seen too much evidence that with the Roman Catholic church the wisdom of God is looked upon as something superimposed on a very independent world-wisdom. Witness the big space between the Roman congregation and the Roman Mass, with its at-a-distance dumb and awful admiration of that sacrifice. Note, too, the oft-noticed contradiction between the Roman devotee's willingness to follow the world into sin as long as he does not neglect the confessional. Even rank heretics are not always dealt with as long as they abide under the holy roof. Then again there is also evidence of insincerity in the lands where Rome has all its own way; in such lands Rome gives its people neither Christianity nor education. Rome comes out for two orders of knowledge, the natural and the supernatural. The natural can run its course without let or hindrance as long as it will admit the priority of supernatural knowledge as mediated by the Church. Gilson, in "The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy," p. 37, quoted by Bergendoff in "The Church in the World," calls the Christian revelation "an indispensable auxiliary to reason." The comment is then made: "To the Roman Church there is a possibility of an almost independent rational knowledge which is crowned by the Church's revelation."

The more we study the Christian philosophy of education, the more

we will want to avoid that distinction. That distinction can be understood correctly; but to call revealed truth an "auxiliary" is not enough. There is involved a final fallacy in logic. For while we may start out with the consideration that knowledge is merely natural and according to reason and experiment, we will find that it ends by being divorced from its true position with regard to God's relationship to us. It ends, then, in being wisdom of the world, and it disappears in the darkness of separation from God. Factual knowledge separated from Christian interpretation and integration becomes worldly wisdom. We do not want that wisdom.

We must beware, however, of becoming Roman. We must not think that we have Christian education, or are teaching the right wisdom, just because we have religious instruction in addition to what we call the secular subjects. Many of our country's educators are Roman in this respect; and so are a lot of Lutherans. If that principle were true, then there is no longer a reason for having any Christian schools. Then Christian education can be attained simply by adjusting the supply valves of secular instruction and religious instruction. And that could be done, if we insisted, in cooperation with the schools of the world. But we would be arriving at the ridiculous conclusion of combining the wisdom of the world with the wisdom of God! We would not be combining the **knowledge** of the world with the wisdom of God, as many fondly hope; for the world's schools have not only the world's knowledge, but also its wisdom. And two exclusive wisdoms will not mix.

But we do insist that there is to be a combination and a harmony between the so-called secular knowledge and the revealed truth of God—and that combination is what we have called the wisdom of God, which we demand for our children and youth. That is the wisdom of God, which begins with the fear of the Lord, and which continues with the fear of the Lord.

This is made clear in "The Meaning of a Lutheran Education" by A. C. Stelhorn: "The need for education came with the fall of man, when his knowledge, righteousness and holiness were gone, and man was totally depraved, both body and soul, steeped in wickedness and ignorance, blind and dead in spiritual things, an enemy of God, and subject to temporal and eternal death. Since that time, man has been in need of the exact education that we today call a Lutheran education. He needed to be brought back to God, from whom he fell away, and to dedicate himself and his whole life once more to the glory of his Creator, accepting the gracious and free gift of eternal life. He needed to be called out again from among the trees of his forfeited Paradise, where he hid in shame, fear, and nakedness, and to be directed to his loving Father in heaven, who, in His mercy beyond measure, sent His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believed in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. And since this return of man means a return in his whole being and life, he needed to be educated in all his temporal

activities of body and soul. Everything must be made to conform to his regenerated state and his new life in God," p. 29.

True Integration

We must come to realize that wisdom is much higher and nobler than knowledge, and we must understand that this applies not only to the soul, but to the body and to this life as well. It is a mistake to separate body and soul when we consider education. Body and soul are even joined organically. Why then should we attempt to separate them ethically? God didn't do that when He tested man's allegiance in Eden. We can try to do it in our education, but we are then only making fools of ourselves. It is wrong for us to separate manual education in the home or in the school from soul education at the hands of God. It is stupid. It borders on tempting God. It is tempting God. To this day the test of our faithfulness to God includes **soul and body**. Let us not belittle the body, thinking that the body typifies the temporal life. Remember that bodiliness was a high aim of God in creating man. We can't be so sure that the angels are higher creatures than man just because they do not need bodies to make them complete. It is not said of angels, but of man, that he was created in God's image. The Son of God is not humiliated today just because he wears a human body. Perhaps God meant man, **man with a body**, to be the crowning glory of His whole creation. And let us also remember that it is our bodies that are to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of the exalted Christ. If we realize this it may help us to put the accent where it belongs when we consider education. God's Word never treats man as a soul only; it treats him as a complete integer of two parts, body and soul. God does not separate man's psychology from his physiology. Let us Christians take that word "integrate" which we read on almost every page of educational literature and sanctify also that! For "integrate" comes from "integer," and the main integer we are concerned with is the integer **man, body and soul**. The idea of nine months of world's school and one month of Bible school plus Sunday- and confirmation-school begins to look ridiculous. **We want to separate; God wants to integrate.**

Let us neither get into a false **mysticism** nor into a false **materialism**, "as if God would make a world, people it with a human family and then give them a religion suspended in the air instead of one set down in the very movement of human history. These are misinterpretations of the fundamental principles of Christianity, which belong to the realm of reality, not of imagination and ideality. The Bible never dissevers three things—nature, history and religion. Hence it depicts a sane religion, with its feet on the ground; yet in the midst of its practical affairs, its thoughts are often occupied with the contemplation of celestial and eternal verities. The Biblical system is not narrow and one sided; it is our human systems that are so. No wonder we do not get on in our spiritual thinking when we cast God's revelation aside and try to solve impossible problems by the use of the unaided intellect!" "Man's First

Disobedience," L. S. Keyser, p. 72. Let us avoid the false idea of the world, that man is chiefly a body; and let us not think that salvation is only of the soul.

If education is primarily for the purpose of overcoming the results of the Fall, and if the world is unable to do this in its own way, ought there be a moment's hesitation in the decision of all of us to have **only** Christian education for our children and youth? For what does Scripture say of the **best** that man can do? This: "He that findeth his life shall lose it." Matt. 10:39. He who gets everything that this life can provide **cannot gain life eternal with all his getting!** Natural man thinks that being as good as possible means eternal salvation. But, on the contrary, it only confirms him forever in his natural blindness and depravity. Hence, we are now ready to deny that the world can educate; it can only confirm the Scripture report of its own death.

Out of their Own Mouths

Thinking men of the world's educational agencies have come to see their failure; in a sense they have come to see our success—in a sense, we say, for it is hardly true that they have learned to see what is the eternal value of what Christian wisdom is and does. They seem to have caught a glimpse of what we have, just as the world can note, at times, the ray of supernatural hope that glows in the countenance of a Christian. Some of the world's schoolmen seem to be feeling for the Unknown God. They are really a pitiful sight. They are crying out for what we have, in the same manner as the whole creation is groaning and travailing together in pain until now, waiting to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Not that the world actually wants what we have; it doesn't; it opposes it. But still its need cries out. Here we could insert statements by the dozen to show this. "Education in our time has eliminated religion and the Bible," complains the Superintendent of Rockingham County Schools, Virginia, "and the people don't stop at anything any more." "Godless education has had its day," said Jacques Chevalier, Secretary-General in the ministry of Public Instruction in France, December 7, 1940, as he announced plans to restore religious instruction in French schools. And on the same day Colonel John J. Hannan of Madison, Wisconsin, is reported as telling directors and officers of the Central States Probation and Parole Conference that "religious instruction should be given in American schools because our educational system has failed to build character and keep children from growing up to be delinquents and criminals." Writing in the "Saturday Evening Post" Will Durant uses almost the same words and says, "Today we may well ask, 'What kind of education should our children receive?'" Walter Lippman said at the University of Pennsylvania on December 20, 1940: "Modern education rejects and excludes from the curriculum of necessary studies the whole religious tradition of the west." And the warden of Sing Sing Prison voices a growing fear when he says, "We have somehow failed to find

the link between education and character." Thus the voices are crying out for fear, not asking for the wisdom of God as we know it, but making plain that the wisdom of God is needed for our children and youth and demonstrating that the wisdom of the world has failed. The words of thinking men cry out that they need what we have! Must we, too, wander away into the darkness of unbelief before we see in the setting sun the golden windows of our own home—windows that reflect, not the setting sun, but the light of Jerusalem above? We have "the Light of the world." Let us use our lamps, not merely for looking out our doors at the pitiful wretches stumbling their way to eternal death, but to show them the way of true wisdom to eternal life!

At the risk of appearing too insistent we call your attention once more to the difference between the wisdom of the world at its best and the wisdom of God. Better educators are calling for a return to religion, to truth, to honesty, fair play. They want religion in education, religion in the form of Ten-Commandment-morality. But Jesus did not say that men's truthfulness, honesty, morality and the like would draw men to Him and make them better. He did not say that the world's best would lead men to eternal life. He did say that **He**, if He were lifted up, nailed to the cross in substitution for us, would draw men to Him, and thus to everlasting life. The religion of the best man in the world will not solve the problem. We must have the Christianity of the true visible church. The line between the two wisdoms is clear. We must see it clearly. Good influence is not enough. To have religious teachers is not sufficient. We are not saved by "religion," by principles and ideals. Religious emotion is often a shallow thing. What the world calls religion is little better than an emotion. And an emotion not based on absolute truth is "a spree,"—which doesn't last. Take a look at revivalism and Moral Rearmament! The only wisdom worth the candle is that which is based upon the historical Jesus, upon the body and blood of the Man from Galilee, true God in man's tabernacle, become one of us to lift us into Himself that we might be filled with His fulness. Only under these conditions is education religious. "The Bible knows nothing of an unpractical theology, but, on the other hand, the Bible knows still less of an untheological morality."

No Star-gazing

Lest anyone say that we are forgetting the practical side of education, let us say a word about the every-day benefits of one's growing up in the wisdom that is according to God. We can take time to hint at only one or two such benefits. He who thus becomes established upon truth has real freedom. The Christian knows where he stands. Therefore he is free to move. And although he, too, is many times puzzled and perplexed, he does not have to stop and stand bound, unable to decide the right or wrong of what he plans to do. He soon decides whether a certain intended act is right or wrong, for he has a standard of conduct which does not change. He has learned not to temporize because of

expediency and temptation to do what is wrong, even if it will bring gain. He is not bedeviled by every situation, robbed of indecision—an anemic failure. He has a freedom that men of the world do not know.

In addition, the Christian's wisdom has a way of simplifying life, which is a true benefit. There is much foolish talk about the complexity of life today. The world thinks it is showing great wisdom when it spends words, words, words on things that are very simple, things that any common Christian has long ago mastered. Apply this to the troubles between industry and labor, to government, to social problems. The whole nation seems dedicated to analyses and solutions and objectives. But simple Christian wisdom has a way of penetrating, all unknown to us, to the heart of the many situations which the world spends so much good time surveying and analyzing. When we read educational literature and see all the worries of schoolmen, we cannot but be struck with the simple fact that the follower of God's wisdom with his Bible is quite ready with the answers. Could we do better, then, in all this than to offer the revealed wisdom of God, before which social problems pale and life is restored to its pristine simplicity? Life and living shouldn't really be complicated just because we have radios and refrigerators, Xrays and sulfanilimide. But rather than increasing our abilities, the world's wisdom, not being master of the modern age, has rather shrunk our capacity for doing things. It has made us passive instead of active. And rather than improving upon simplicity, it has made men simpletons. To all of which Christian wisdom is an antidote, for, along with the redemption from sin by Christ, it brings to life an unselfish activity, responsibility, service to others, a big-hearted fulness instead of the close-fisted self-seeking of the wisdom of the world. Christian wisdom does not consist in a musty atmosphere of facts for facts' sake; it applies itself to life at every turn. And it keeps things simple, for truth is simple—a true boon.

Professor William Lyon Phelps glimpsed what God's revealed wisdom means to us when he wrote: "I thoroughly believe in education, but I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without the Bible. In the Bible we have the nature of boys and girls, men and women, more accurately charted than in the work of any modern novelist or playwright."

But we have not time nor space to explore the manifold advantages of God's wisdom for our children and youth. That we must choose this wisdom over the wisdom of the world is plain. That we must set up schools for the propagation of such wisdom among our children and youth is not said by God in so many words; **but the training given by Christian schools is demanded of us.** The terminology is unimportant; the substance is of eternal consequence.

And Now to Work!

We have taken our stand according to the Word of God. We have had much instruction, so much so that it has been said that the subject

is talked of too much. Synodical essays, pamphlets, and periodicals have devoted much time and energy to the task of clarifying the issue between the two wisdoms. On our choice between the two, there can be no debate, and, we trust, there is none. But when it comes to obediently carrying out what we have agreed is right, there is much coldness and unwillingness. Some schools are maintained only by the rugged determination of the pastor that the school be kept alive. Some continue only because Christian teachers are willing to make the real sacrifice of working for pay that is hardly above the barest subsistence level. Some schools are still working, although there may be many members in the congregation that would only too gladly see them die. Then there is also the spectacle of members of congregations and of workers in the church, whose children are within walking distances of Christian schools, but who choose the schools of the world. We have been told that in the Old Synod teachers of the church despised in their lives the Christian schools which they so nobly praised in public and in print. After reading excellent statements of the case for Christian education by one of the champions of Christian day schools in the Old Synod, we learned, to our chagrin, that he himself chose the world's school for his children, although there was a Christian school near. If these were isolated cases, not so much should be said; but they typify the conduct of many individuals and congregations: they do not choose what they know is right. The situation is similar with regard to Bethany College. The Annual Report for 1940 shows that there are 55 students enrolled in Synodical institutions, and 363 in the world's high schools and colleges. We cannot believe that financial difficulties are the cause of all this inequality. There must be an unwillingness to choose that which we know is right.

Perhaps one reason for this condition is that our duty to provide Christian schools is preached only where there appears to be some possible chance of building a Christian school. We look upon it as something that would be "nice to have." But is a small congregation excused from this requirement because it is small? Furthermore, not all small congregations are without Christian schools, nor do all larger congregations have them. This is a fact, although in our Synod the congregations that have schools average 96 souls larger than those that have none.

We must, however, guard against the danger that our noble declarations in this matter become a sort of salve for the conscience when that conscience ought not be so easily salved! Thomas Carlyle once said: "It is a sad but sure truth that every time you speak of a fine purpose, especially with eloquence and to the admiration of bystanders, there is less chance of your ever making a fact of it in your poor life." This is much the same as taking a firm position for pure doctrine but neglecting the holiness of life which that doctrine demands, as if the mental resolution becomes a sort of substitute for the actual deed. Just as men of great principles can be amazingly mean and cheap and think little of it, so there is a chance that our exaltation of Christian education makes us feel the part of heroes, although we may be doing very little to make a

practice of what we profess. "Let us search and try our ways." Lam. 3:40.

There is much to be done to show our congregations that they cannot afford to be without the Christian school. There is much our Synod can do; there is much every one of us can, by the grace of God, do. May it be done before it is too late!

"I pray Thee, dear Lord Jesus,
My heart to keep and train
That I Thy holy temple
From youth to age remain.
Turn Thou my thoughts forever
From worldly wisdom's lore;
If I but learn to know Thee,
I shall not want for more."

Martin Galstad.



THE PERSPECTIVE OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

One feature in Prof. August Pieper's Commentary on *ISAIAH II* that we have come to appreciate more and more over the years is the way in which the author took the opportunity when it came by way of the text to discuss some of the larger concepts of theology that were relevant to his subject. Such were his remarks on the *GLORY OF THE LORD* and on the concept of *THE HOLY ONE*, articles which we published in translation in our April 1963 issue. Our present topic, dealing with the Perspective of Old Testament Prophecy, comes in connection with the discussion of Isaiah 40:3-5, the prophecy concerning John the Baptist, the "Voice of one crying in the wilderness" (John 1:23). Here Pieper raises the question whether this specific fulfillment was something of which the Prophet was conscious, and points out that this prophecy does not refer to this one man alone, but to all who have the same call, whether they functioned before or after the Baptist. Then Pieper continues as we have translated his words:

For it is often the manner of prophecy to place several similar future events that in their actual occurrence precede or follow each other upon a single plane of time, without perspective. The most familiar example of this is Mt. 24, where the judgment upon Jerusalem and the Last Judgment are framed into a single picture, since in its characteristic phases the lesser event presents a faithful picture of the greater that is to follow, thus serving at the same time as prototype and as positive guarantee of the final fulfillment. Thus in the very first Triad of Isaiah II we find Cyrus, the Liberator from the Exile (Is. 41:25, cp. 44:28 ff) side by

side with Christ, the Savior of Jews and Gentiles (ch. 42:1-9), since the former is a faithful type of the latter. In the same manner ch. 42:10-25 describes the zeal of the Lord's judgment as it is executed upon the hypocrites on the Last Day, just as upon an obdurate Israel in exile. Now this situation obtains through the

entire book, in every direction. The first great part, ch. 40-48, which speaks chiefly of Israel's deliverance from Babylon, is paralleled by the second, ch. 49-57, which pictures the redemption of Christ upon a background of Old Testament conditions and the Exile. Like wise in the third part, ch. 58-66, there is a constant overlapping of the outward restitution of an exiled people and the spiritual renovation of the New Testament Church. The one is actually latent in the other.

The ultimate reason for this lies in the fact that God and men, grace and sin, the Gospel-plan of salvation and the fury of Satan, are unchanging constants throughout the ages. Hence there is really nothing new under the sun. History is constantly repeating itself, until the Last Day. As in the realm of nature, where seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease while the earth remaineth (Gen. 8), so the God who said of Himself "I am that I am," does not cease to be "The LORD, The LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and fourth generation." (Ex. 34:6f) So also, even unto the Last Day, every imagination of the thoughts of the human heart is only evil. (Gen. 6:5) So the history of the human race can bring forth nothing but the constant refrain of sin, grace, unbelief, judgment. Only God's saints escape from this corruption, even though they have part

in it all. All of this culminates in the Christ upon the Cross and runs its final course on the Great Day of Judgment. Until that time the history of the human race is a constant repetition of manifestation of grace and call to repentance; of rejection of grace and of judgment. It is only the particular historical, geographical and national conditions, and externals and the details that are different. In their essence the events are always the same.

Since Christ upon the Cross is the climax of all manifestations of grace, therefore all promises of grace are focused upon Him. And since the Christ of the Last Day is the climax of all manifestations of judgment, all prophecies of judgment really converge upon Him. Both types of prophecy, however, take events that are similar to these climaxes but precede them in time, and carry them along as being in the same category; or they treat them by themselves, but without separating them from their inner connection with those outstanding events. Thus the oldest of the Prophets, Obadiah, combines the impending judgment of Edom with the Day of the Lord over all Gentiles, (v. 15), and the Last Judgment (v. 21) into one image. And after him this becomes a pattern for all prophets. Indeed, because Salvation and Judgment are in effect the same zeal of the gracious God, the Day of Grace and the Day of Judgment are in Scripture frequently treated as one, as coinciding with each other: cf. 42: 1-9 and 10-17; Joel 3; Mal. 3: 1ff; 4: 1-6.

This peculiarity is characteristic of the Prophet Isaiah to an unusual degree. Throughout Part II runs a pairing of imminent manifestations of Old Testament grace and the grace of the New Testament; of Old Testament judgments and the Last Judgment. Hence the way in which Cyrus and Christ are presented side by side, or Israel as servant of the Lord and that Servant of the Lord who is Christ, so that the reader must be careful to distinguish what and who is being spoken of at

the moment. So it happens that the different Old Testament elements of prophecy almost invariably are figures and types of New Testament spiritual realities. Zion-Jerusalem, Israel, Jacob, my people, etc., — these become designations for the Church of all the ages, particularly of the New Testament: cf. Gal. 4:26ff where Paul applies Is. 54:1 to the New Testament Church. To such a degree does Babylon serve as a representative type in New Testament times of a world power that is hostile to God that its very name has in New Testament literature become a designation by which it is identified: I Pet. 5:13; Rev. 14, 16, 17, 18. The obdurate part of Judah becomes the "hypocrites" of the New Testament Church; the Babylonian Exile serves as an accurate picture of the sorry captivity of Christendom under the power of Sin, Law, World, and the Devil; the deliverance from Babylon (a type) of the final liberation of the Church from every evil; the restoration of Israel a figure of the spiritual regeneration of Christians by Word and Spirit — even in their lowliness. Thus Christ and His Heavenly Kingdom are heart and core (Kern und Stern) of the entire Old Testament. Whatever a Prophet may proclaim, — eventually it all points to Him.

Whoever does not keep this great truth in mind will be unable to understand any Prophet, least of all Isaiah II. For in all three sections, even in the first (40-48), his prophecy is actually of Christ and the eternal Kingdom of God, even though his immediate objective is the deliverance of the Old Testament people of God from their Babylonian enslavement. The good news, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people . . ." with its threefold basis was indeed meant in the first place and in a limited sense for the exiled people, but actually and in its full sense it is addressed to the New Testament people of God, for the troubled Christians of our day. So also this passage concerning the Voice in the Wilderness. The Prophet Isaiah — and in the very book that is to follow — was this

voice. Here as well as in verses 6-8 he speaks of his call to fulfill this function. Jeremiah, Ezekiel and others were this Voice for Israel. But all only in a limited degree, in so far as it was meant for a Jewish nation still languishing in Babylon, or for a people still so meagerly rehabilitated. It does not find its complete fulfillment until in John the Baptist, who is then immediately followed by the Messenger of the Covenant, the Lord Himself in the revelation of the Glory of His grace and judgment, coming to save and to judge all the nations of the world. If Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the later prophets were preachers of repentance for the spiritually ravaged Israel of their day, then John the Baptist was the Voice κατ' ἐξοχήν, sent to preach repentance to an Israel in which this desolation had reached its climax, and also the Preparer of the Way in the specific sense, when He whom they knew not had come into the midst of His Israel. And whoever now, after John and after that coming of the Lord, is called to be a preacher of the Gospel —he should know that this prophecy refers also to him, that also he is called to prepare the way for the Lord by preaching repentance, and on the basis of the accomplished manifestation of the Glory of the Lord to proclaim to believing hearts the surpassing comfort of God, so that the Glory of the Lord may be manifested richly also to them.

—translated from August Pieper, *ISAIAH II*
pp. 16-18 by E. Reim

PAIDEIA

THE TEACHER

AS ARTIST

The concept of the teacher as artist reveals a bias and discloses many assumptions. It puts the teacher apart, makes him a prophet, assigns him a special role, and consigns him to a lonesomeness that many will not bear. It acknowledges how much men need him, but it betrays their lack of appreciation of him until he is gone.

An artist is a maker, a pointer to paths, and a molder of men. He is a partner in the work of the very Creator, who promises a repentant Israel: "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers, and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Isaiah 30:20f.

Nor do we apologize for the aura of the word, artist. It is still accepted in the world as the word for the one who sees ideals beyond the daily vision of men. "It is from the artist that society gains its loftier images of itself, gains a sense of the God-given individuality that exists within the whole," writes Joseph Wood Krutch.

A teacher is therefore something more than a practitioner who handles tools, devises machines, makes things go, and delivers the goods. He is one who releases power in those who are learning. He is one who recognizes creativity when he sees it. He has an insight that we must have in those who are to be molders of men.

The teacher who aspires to be an artist and a creator of men knows that he can do very little to cause learning to take place. He knows that his task is rather to arrange for it to happen, as often it will. He will wonder why one student learns, and another does not: precisely the puzzle-ment that will make him a better guide of learning if he will but rise to the challenge.

The artistic teacher will not think of teaching as primarily a process of transmission. To be sure, there is much knowledge to be transmitted, but the gifted teacher will arrange for the learner to have the joy of discovery, not just the obligation of receiving the established mass of information. He will know that the learner should have the joy of finding for himself, not just the obligation of taking on the load of learning that has been piled high by discoverers who have preceded him.

The better the teacher knows the behavior of minds, the more he will be aware of the Socratic question: "Can you tell me, Socrates, whether virtue is acquired by teaching or by practice . . . or in some other way?" After trying his best to teach virtue (as that word is most broadly defined), he will fall back on the much sounder theory that somehow only that is learned which is truly experienced by the learner himself. "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" The recommendation of others may have relevance. "But whom say ye that I am?" The decision of the self has cruciality. Individuality is decisive. The primary crisis is subjective with the learner; the measure in which the situation is objectively intellectual is highly debatable.

The teacher who knows the art will guide his doings by this mystery. He will himself be sensitive to all that confronts his mind. The learners about him will sense his responses. They will tend to become like him, so surely as he stands before them as a thinking individual. No hopeful response will be thwarted because it is stumbling and not complete. This teacher will not pretend that everything is understood by him or must it be comprehended in full by the learner. He will not act as though he has no problems, and as though nothing baffles him.

Troubled people think; puzzled people learn. Questions stimulate investigation, difficulties develop muscle, and solutions exhilarate. Christians know that when they seem to have weathered one wave of trial and testing, the Lord has a way of raising a hurdle that is a little higher. Successful school children enjoy being challenged. They despise "easy stuff." Obstacles energize them and call forth ingenious solutions that reveal genuine development of expanding powers.

The teacher who knows his craft will set the stage and then retire a bit. He will elicit trial and success, allowing some failure, but not enough to frustrate and discourage. He will know that just as there is in young bodies considerable muscle hunger, so there is in the normal youngster a certain craving to find intellectual solutions. He will himself be bright enough to know that it is natural for mankind to seek difficulties and their solutions. Mountains are to be climbed because they are there.

The teacher blessed with art for his work will question the extent to which education is the intellectual mastery of material. He will have noticed that scientific or descriptive knowledge is accumulative, but that normative knowledge is not necessarily so. Man can climb atop the

pile of accumulated knowledge, stand on the shoulders of his forebears as it were, and go on from there; but each man has to be and become a good man from the foundations of his own beginnings. No other can enhance him for having been good; in this he is on his own.

This makes each learner a unique person, an heir of accumulated knowledge, but an adopted son of the good. Though there be art in transmitting the scientific data of the technological world, the greater art attends the shaping of man as good man; and no adequate Christian teacher will settle for the contention that the two are the same.

What the psychologist today calls reflexivity is the sin that destroys the uniqueness of man. Reflexivity means that the inquirer and the object of inquiry are one, a single process constituting life. This view brushes from its hands the responsibility of saying whether something is good or bad. Much of what is called academic freedom stems from this lazy stance in the teacher. It hides behind the half-truth that knowledge increases understanding.

The better critics have now surrendered the contention that mastery of nature yields automatically a better breed of men. "Watch out with your liberal arts, your arts of reasoning, or you will have equipped a monster to rationalize his monstrosities. You will have beefed up a part of man --the part unique to men and to angels, and to fallen angels," (Milton Mayer). But even those who hoist these warnings hope for some good from the disciplines that deal with man as man, expecting that a little post-nasal drip will fall from the head into the heart.

We go back to our concept of the teacher as an artist --artist defined as inventive creator, a maker, if you will. To be this is the prerogative of the Christian teacher. For religion informs education and makes it greater than itself. Education per se does not make men either better or truly

human. Christian education can and does transform them. Vicious lusts are tamed, and in their place come vital loves. The fire-breathing persecutor becomes the chief of all apostles. "Such were ye" becomes a reminder of Whose sons ye are now.

Come apart and think on this awhile; then go back to your making of men. Some lonesomeness may be your lot, but "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." Hebrews 6:10.

Martin Galstad

===== PANORAMA =====

REVELATION, INSPIRATION, INERRANCY — A REPORT

The 1962 convention of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod had before it a number of memorials charging Dr.

Martin Scharlemann of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, with teaching falsely concerning the Biblical doctrine of inspiration. As for the professor, the findings were inconclusive, leading almost immediately to a futile debate as to whether the errors with which he had been charged had or had not been renounced. But the convention did call for a commission which was to "consider and seek to adjust matters concerning which differences have arisen in the Synod." This commission has now published its report, which is described as "strictly advisory," even though it does present "a short thesis-like statement of the doctrine under discussion which seeks to embody the results of the evaluations and offer conclusions which seem to us to be justified by our studies. In this way we (viz. the Commission) hope to indicate the limits within which and the lines along which our common study of these issues should move and so to give stimulus and direction to a concerted investigation of the problems on the part of all members of the Synod." (Our emphasis).

The Commission explains its method: to offer "a study document which presents both the position hitherto held by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the position presented by the essays in an exploratory way (as posing contemporary theological questions to which the church should address itself)." —In the foregoing quotation the emphasis is ours, the "essays" those of Dr. Scharlemann.

Repeated readings of the Report leave us with the feeling that the Commission as a whole shows a definite preference for what it calls "Position One," the old position of Missouri. They hope that in the formulation which will eventually emerge the final authors will be working "from the strength of our traditional position and to build upon it as a foundation for a more comprehensive Scriptural formulation of the doctrine of inspiration." (Our emph.) But good though these intentions may be, yet we fear for their consequences. For what this Report offers on page 14 as a formulation which "may serve a a basis for further discussion" seems to indicate that the "strength of the traditional position" is already fast going down the drain. For when this Commission describes the function of the Creator Spirit at work in the men who He inspired as "claiming their will for free obedience to God and creatively making their words the fit and adequate vehicles (our emph.) for the Word of God," one can almost hear the argument that will follow: Does this mean that those words therefore are the Word of God, or is this not rather an admission that those words, even though coming from inspired men, are nevertheless merely the vehicle in which the Word of God is to be found? This would indeed be playing directly into the hands of the advocates of liberalism, making it the legitimate function of the professional theologian to tell one just what in the Bible is Word of God and what is not. To have this said by a church body that was once the outstanding exponent of theological conservatism would indeed be a signal victory for this new (for Missouri) type of religious thought.

Lest this seem too severe a judgment to base on a single dubious expression, let a few examples demonstrate that this Report has on the one hand already conceded far too much of "the strength of the traditional position," and on the other speaks far too gently in its critique of "position Two,"— the liberal position. For to describe 2 Peter 1:11 and 1 Cor. 2:13 as "passages which

refer, not directly to the inspiration of the words (original emphasis!), but to the inspiration of the prophets and apostles themselves," even though subsequently qualifying these two concepts as "not thought of as separate but as organically connected," offers almost the precise terminology that has long since become a veritable slogan for those who contend against verbal inspiration and who love to define the term as implying an inspiration of men rather than of words. But does not the strategy of the Commission at this point become perilously like that of a military commander who abandons his most potent weapon to the foe?

On the other hand the Commission has been far too gentle in its evaluation of what it calls Position Two, the "exploratory essays." Take for instance this statement of those who advocate that position: "Whatever the Biblical authors wrote they did under the special guidance (our emph.) of the Holy Spirit, to which we apply the term 'inspiration' in its narrower sense." (page 7). Is it enough for the Commission to say in its evaluation that "Special guidance" is weak (our emph.) in comparison with our traditional emphasis on verbal inspiration? Does the Commission not understand that this term provides a convenient escape hatch for a modern theology which seeks to get out from under the implications of an inspiration of the very words? Does it not border on the naive when the Commission reports by way of criticism: "The formulation 'special guidance' does not say openly that the Bible is Word of God for us"? This is surely the understatement of the year. Is it not quite obvious that this "formulation" has been designed for the express purpose of saying that one should not equate the Bible with "Word of God," but rather that the Bible merely contains that Word?

We still like to believe that the Commission wants to defend the "traditional position" of the old Missouri orthodoxy. We believe it is shaping its strategy toward that end. It should remember, however, that one of the most

dangerous errors in strategy is to underestimate the strength of the opponent. This we believe the Commission has done. May their eyes be opened before it is too late!

E. Reim

A REPORT
OF THE BOARD
OF DOCTRINE

A brief notice in the January issue of the SPOKESMAN (p. 14) brought to its readers the information that during the first days of

the new year the Board of Doctrine of the CLC met with representatives of the Commission on Doctrinal Matters of the Wisconsin Ev. Luth. Synod. We herewith present a fuller account of the nature and progress of their discussions.

Our readers will recall that at the Spokane convention in August of 1961 our church body took note of the fact that the Wisconsin Synod had, on August 17, 1961, suspended fellowship relations with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod "on the basis of Romans 16:17-18." The convention at the same time recognized that this action of the Wisconsin Synod did not, of itself, dispose of the divisive issues which lay between that Synod and our church body. In its resolutions the Spokane convention defined these issues. As they were later listed and explained in the Spokesman (issue of January 1962), they involved charges against the Wisconsin Synod of "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."

It was for a discussion of these issues that the recent meeting was called. A similar, though briefer meeting held at Mankato in November of 1962 had failed to yield

satisfying fruit in mutual understanding. We are happy to report that this latest effort was somewhat more productive. Sessions were held in the morning, afternoon and evening of January 2, and in the morning and afternoon of January 3. To some degree all of the issues involved were brought under scrutiny, with the result that they became more clearly defined in the minds of all concerned, and thus a better understanding for the proper method of dealing with them was assured.

An article in the Journal of Theology of December 1962 was used as the basis for a discussion of the Scriptural doctrine of termination of church fellowship. The Wisconsin representatives declared that they were, in their words, "aware of nothing in its exposition of Scriptural fellowship principles to which we would have to take exception." They affirmed that their church held to the principles expressed by the article. At the same time they disavowed the position ascribed to the Wisconsin Synod in the article. Thus they wished to place their church on record as being in agreement with our church in the doctrine under discussion.

It was pointed out by the Board of Doctrine that in the judgment of our church such an affirmation of agreement would nevertheless leave the charge of "deviations from the doctrine" unresolved. For it seems manifest to us that the action of the Wisconsin Synod relative to the Missouri Synod in 1955, 1956, 1957 and 1959, as well as certain official public statements of Wisconsin on the principle of termination of church fellowship, made during that period of time, violated the principle now professed by its representatives. It was also pointed out that if the doctrinal position of a church is beclouded by diverse statements or by practices not consistent with an avowed principle, the clarity and authority of Scripture is undermined, and that this accounts for the second of the charges raised by our church against the Wisconsin Synod.

All of these matters were extensively discussed in the meetings. It became quite clear that, in order to come to grips with the issues effectively, it will be necessary to review with Wisconsin representatives the procedures and official doctrinal pronouncements of that body during the years from 1955 to 1961 in the light of what is now being set forth as the official doctrinal position of Wisconsin in the matter of termination of church fellowship. It will also be necessary to discuss examples of official practice in matters of the divine Call during that period, in connection with the doctrinal principles involved. These, we were assured by the Wisconsin representatives, are not in dispute, since their concept of the divine Call coincides with our own. Specifically, they agreed "that the validity or basis of a Call is not contingent on mere outward or formal membership in a Synod, "and rejected the proposition that the Call is "a contract which may be terminated at will by either party."

Lack of time and other considerations prevented further exploration of these matters. In anticipating future discussions, we on our part urged that they include the entire membership of the Wisconsin Synod's Commission on Doctrinal Matters.

The Board of Doctrine
E. Schaller, Chairman

WHAT STILL REMAINS —AND WHY? The foregoing Report of the Board of Doctrine appeared first in the LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN, February 1964. Its purpose was to give the members of our CLC reliable information on the status of discussions between a subcommittee of the Wisconsin Commission on Doctrinal Matters and our own CLC Board of Doctrine. In spite of the clear language of paragraphs five and six, it seems that the mere re-

ference in the preceding paragraph to a statement of the Wisconsin representatives has already led to the forming of some unwarranted and premature conclusions.

This fourth paragraph refers to an article in our JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY that was used as the basis for a discussion of the Scriptural doctrine of termination of church fellowship. It quotes the Wisconsin representatives as declaring that they were "aware of nothing in its exposition of Scriptural fellowship principles to which we would have to take exception." At the same time this paragraph clearly stated that they disavowed the position ascribed to the Wisconsin Synod in the article. — It seems strange that a statement so carefully drawn by the Wisconsin representatives and so soberly reported by our committee chairman should nevertheless have given rise to the impression that full agreement must be just around the corner.

We know that there are many within Wisconsin as well as our CLC who are hoping for a restoration of fellowship. That should be the sincere desire of all of us, on either side. But the cause of such an eventual restoration is not well served if men indulge in easy optimism, jump to premature conclusions, and perhaps even let their wishful thinking lead them into saying or doing things for which there is not yet a solid basis of fact or reason. It is no pleasant task to pour cold water on warm and rising hopes, but if they are premature, it may have a wholesome sobering effect. So we shall with reference to the current state of these intersynodical discussion undertake to show what has already been indicated by our heading, namely what still remains to be done, and why it must be done.

We take it that no thinking person on either side, having lived through the tragic disruption of a few years ago, will wish for a situation that might call for a rep-

itation of that chain of events, or even only a part of it. Yet that is precisely what would happen if the agreement for which our respective committees are working should prove to be superficial and incomplete, if the issues that lie between us should after all not really have been settled. Any indication of such a trend would indeed be due cause for alarm. Not only would the same ground have to be covered once more. There would be grave doubt as to whether we could still muster the necessary spiritual strength and endurance. So while it was gratifying indeed to hear the Wisconsin men declare their agreement with the principles of our article, it would be folly not to note the full significance of the added statement that they disavowed the position ascribed to the Wisconsin Synod by us. But what we had written was simply an earnest attempt to define the point or points on which we differ. It represents a considered judgment, one to which we still hold with conviction. Yet we must take the Wisconsin men as being equally sincere when they say that their Synod's position on those principles is not what we think.

It would therefore not be honest to ignore such a situation. At some point or other we are obviously still talking past each other, are not understanding each other in spite of the progress implied by their declaration of agreement with the principles we had set forth. The ground that seems to have been gained should certainly not be abandoned. It is particularly valuable if it is indeed common ground. But that is precisely why we have asked that further discussions provide an opportunity "to review with Wisconsin representatives the procedures and official doctrinal pronouncements of that body during the years from 1955 to 1961 in the light of what is now set forth as the official doctrinal position of Wisconsin in the matter of termination of church fellowship." From the viewpoint of intersynodical diplomacy this may seem to be poor strategy. For this area

of synodical history that we have specified includes some very sensitive issues. But those issues are the very ones that need most to be settled. There lie the reasons that have compelled us to understand the position of Wisconsin as we do. And there lies the opportunity for Wisconsin to demonstrate that the statements and actions that brought about these issues either no longer apply or that they do not mean what we think they do. This is the area on which we therefore must concentrate if our previous efforts should really be crowned with final success.

All this means work, work that is necessary, work that we dare not shun if any resultant agreement is really to be an honest one. For this then let us gird ourselves. As for the considerations that spring from the flesh, let us recognize them for what they are. If they be the weariness and indifference that would lead one to declare an agreement where there is no agreement, let us remember that such methods will never produce a cure. If they be in the nature of those obstacles which the flesh offers in such endless variety —obstacles of malice, stubbornness, willful pride, or whatever else might block the attainment of an honest Scriptural agreement—let them be banished as an evil thing! Let them be replaced by the simple obedience of faith! This is the way to an honest agreement. And this is why we must face the fact that there is indeed much that still remains to be done, and that we must understand the reason why.

E. Reim

PRAYER IN
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Those who believed that the Supreme Court Decision of 1962 had settled the question of prayer or other forms of worship in public schools by reaffirming the principle of separation of church and state as it is defined in the First Amendment of the Federal Constitution may experience a rude awakening. Hearings are now being held

before a Congressional Committee to determine whether the First Amendment shall be amended so as to permit what so many are vociferously demanding, namely the return of prayer in public schools. That these appeals are made in the name of religion, specifically of Christianity, and often by prominent church leaders like Billy Graham, only adds to the confusion. The important part this amendment has played in the history of our country for protecting the rights of religious minorities is forgotten for the sake of imposing an outward form. Nor do such men understand that the cause of a Gospel which is to be preached and taught is not served by such superficial religious window-dressing.

For clear thinking in this matter we commend an editorial from THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL of April 26th headed "The Court Did Not Banish Religion but Protected It." By permission of the editor of that paper we are reprinting the article in full, without further comment.

E. Reim

QUOTE

Court Did Not Banish Religion but Protected It

If all the people writing pleas and signing petitions to 'put God back in the schools' with officially prescribed prayers were devoting the same time and effort to the practice of prayer themselves, in their own hearts and homes and churches, they would much further advance the true cause of religion. One suspects that many just want somebody else to take care of the religion business for them.

All their pressure on congress to sanction rote piety in the public schools fails to realize that a practice of government to ordain religious exercises is not wholesome for either government or religion. It fails to comprehend that the present constitutional ban on such practice is not to banish religion but to assure its freedom, to save it from being diluted and degraded, to protect it from interference by the secular government.

The supreme court did not volunteer this interpretation; it was asked what the first amendment meant in this connection and had to answer in the only possible way. Twice in the last two years it tried learnedly and devoutly to explain that this principle of separation was written and is being made to operate in favor of religion.

Thus, Justice Black reminded in the 1962 decision that the founders, far from being antireligious, knew how "many people had lost their respect for any religion that had relied upon the support of government to spread its faith." They took the view, as he restated it, that "religion is too personal, too sacred, too holy, to permit its 'unhallowed perversion' by a civil magistrate."

And Justice Clark was eloquent in the 1963 case: "The place of religion in our society is an exalted one achieved through a long tradition of reliance on the home, the church and the inviolable citadel of the individual heart and mind. . . . It is not within the power of government to invade that citadel" even with benevolent intent.

The understanding has yet to sink in. The emotional reaction persists that the court threw religion out of American life. Despite the opposite fact, congress is so plagued that the house judiciary committee has now reluctantly begun hearings on a horde of proposals to water down the first amendment. They will take up weeks of committee time.

The hearings may help show, however, what a tin-derbox of contention and strife would be opened, how misguided the pressure is. Just what prayers for school use would suit all 83 sizable denominations, not to mention all the smaller ones, and who would decide? What Bible readings would be universally acceptable, and from which version of the Bible? What about the 24 Protestant and Orthodox communions, including most of the biggest, that officially support the first amendment as it now stands interpreted on this point?

Proposing that government be authorized to "invade the citadel of the individual heart" in a matter of religion is merely disruptive of American religious life and a distraction from right aims of religion.

Wisconsin, certainly no godless state, has always accepted an absolute bar to such invasion, even more explicit in its constitution since 1848 and as interpreted by devout jurists since 1890.

C O N T E N T S

VOLUME 4

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NUMBER 2



WHICH WISDOM? 1
Martin Galstad

THE PERSPECTIVE OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY. 16
Aug. Pieper -- E. Reim

P A I D E I A

THE TEACHER AS ARTIST. 21
Martin Galstad

P A N O R A M A

REVELATION, INSPIRATION, INERRANCY --A REPORT. 26
E. Reim

A REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DOCTRINE. 29
E. Schaller

WHAT STILL REMAINS --AND WHY?. 31
E. Reim

PRAYER IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS 34
E. Reim

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