



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

I Timothy 4:15

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A MEDITATION ON LUKE 1

We center our attention upon what is recorded of Zacharias in this chapter, and are led to ponder: 1) The church service which Zacharias never forgot; and 2) The joy in the Lord which Zacharias could not quench.

I.

The text (verses 8-23): And it came to pass, that, while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he tarried so long in the temple.

And when he came out, he could not speak unto them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

Zacharias knew that church was important. This may be easily inferred from the fact that the Scriptures state of him, as well as of his wife, that he was "righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless," (v. 6). As possessors of the righteousness of faith, they actively turned away from evil and lived pious and devout lives in the presence of their Redeemer-God. And what is more important to a child of God than worship and regular use of the Means of Grace?

Zacharias was a priest, a leader in worship. How frequently he must have reminded himself of the sacredness of the high office to which he had been called. How diligent he must have been, time and time again, to battle his sinful flesh when he noticed himself getting casual about his duties. Though he did not have the letter to the Romans before him, he must certainly have been motivated in the conduct of his office by thoughts of awe and thankfulness similar to those expressed by Paul in Romans 9:4-5: "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever."

It is to be attributed to the grace of God that Zacharias, in the manner in which he looked upon and carried out his duties, was not to be categorized with such priests as Hophni and Phinehas of old, whose gross abuse of their office called forth judgments from on high. Nevertheless, Zacharias was no more immune than we are to the manifold temptations of the flesh. One day things became just a little too ordinary. Proper preparation for church had been overlooked. The results were astonishing for Zacharias, and instructive for us. Zacharias found himself at a worship service in the temple which

he never forgot.

Exactly what was so memorable about that worship service recorded in Luke 1? First of all, fear fell upon Zacharias. Would it really be so far-fetched to suggest that Zacharias might have been expected to be overjoyed at the appearance of an angel of the Lord? Who, we may rightly ask, could have been better equipped to welcome an angel of the Lord? Was not Zacharias a deep student of the Old Testament? Had he not pondered the many records of appearances of messengers of God to various individuals? Did he not pore over the accounts of how the Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses, to Joshua, to Gideon, to Manoah, and to others? Had he not analyzed every detail of the appearances of created angels to representatives of his people? Had he not repeatedly thought through such events, reliving them in his mind again and again, until it was almost as though they had happened to him? Did he not perhaps mentally and spiritually prepare himself for just such occasions as these, so that they would not take him by surprise? Surely the devout priests could be counted upon to have their minds occupied with spiritual things such as these. Surely they longed for some divine intervention, such as had been granted over the centuries to Israel. Had not several centuries now elapsed since the last prophet had spoken? Was the time not long overdue for something to happen?

Nevertheless, in that service which Zacharias never forgot, he was first of all surprised by fear when the angel Gabriel appeared to him. Fear had the upper hand right from the start. It grabbed him tightly in its sudden, iron-clad grip. It had him. He was at its mercy. It had fallen upon him. He could not shake it off. For the rest of his life Zacharias would never be able to forget how thoroughly he had been taken by surprise, how complete and overwhelming had been the feeling of fear. All his life he had cultivated reverence for the God of his fathers and dedicated himself to His service. Above all others, he should have been prepared.

Furthermore, in this worship service Zacharias was stunned by failure to believe. Whether we agree with those who feel that with the words "Thy prayer is heard"

(v. 13) the angel was referring back to prayers of Zacharias and Elizabeth for a child earlier in their life, or with those who feel that the angel was referring to the joint prayer of Zacharias and the people in this service for the coming of the Seed of the woman, the virgin's Son, the Consolation of Israel, the important point to keep in mind for our purposes is the direct connection made between the birth of the son to Zacharias and the coming of the promised Savior. The promise of the birth of John was not a promise made in isolation. He is declared to be the fulfillment of Old Testament passages prophesying a forerunner to the Messiah. His birth is linked to the coming of Christ.

Zacharias failed to believe. He was struck dumb by Gabriel. After bringing the service to its strange conclusion, he returned home. There he had ample time for reflection. Ponder the anguish of it all for Zacharias. It would not be difficult to capture some of his thoughts in the solitude of his home: "Here I am, a priest of the Lord, serving God's chosen people. All my life has been lived in relation to that great promise of God to send a Savior to deliver such as me from eternal hell-fire. All my life was based on this truth that with God nothing is impossible. For if anything is impossible, it is that damnable sinners might be delivered from the clutches of the devil and made heirs of everlasting life. Yet that is exactly what I have been believing. Why? Because with God nothing is impossible. And now this promise, this tremendous promise of salvation, has been placed into connection with the promise that I, even I, in my old age, shall still have a son. How well I could have remembered from the Scriptures that a similar promise was made to Abraham and was fulfilled. And yet, I fail to believe it. Ah, the shame, the humiliation, the sinfulness, the anguish, the wretchedness of it all. I have been claiming all along to believe the big promises of God in Christ, and then I reject this simple thing which is placed right before me as a small test. O Zacharias, repent, repent, repent!"

Surely Zacharias never forgot how he was stunned by failure to believe. It was shocking, in a way. And yet not shocking after all. There is a key to understanding

this. Need we doubt that Zacharias, in his intense meditations following that temple service, found the key? For if any grip upon the ABC's of Christianity remains, it will lead us to realize the cause for such spiritual stumbling. Zacharias had forgotten to fight forgetfulness of grace.

Zacharias, the pastor, if you will, had himself forgotten what church was all about. GRACE. Unmerited gifts. Undeserved love. Blessings poured out upon those who have done nothing to qualify for them or earn them. If Zacharias had kept all this in mind, would he have objected to the promise that he would have a child? Would he not have realized that his old age and wife's old age mattered nothing because no human qualities or efforts enter the picture where God's promises are concerned? But because he temporarily lost sight of grace in all its richness and magnificence, and because part of his thinking became snagged on human effort, he was stunned by failure to believe an unconditional promise of God which actually gloried in human weakness.

No one would even think of suggesting that Zacharias sat down one day and decided that he would forget about grace for a while. One doesn't set out to forget something. Yet the most important thing in the world to this priest had badly faded from his mind in church that evening, the treasure to which he had surely always intended to cling. Why? Because, together with everyone of us, Zacharias was by nature a forgetter of grace. Because one need not be a denier or a despiser of grace to qualify as a forgetter of grace. For grace is the exact opposite of the direction of all human thinking in matters of salvation. Human thinking hates grace. Nor will it ever relinquish its hostility to grace. That means that to his dying day, every child of God is and must remain a fighter of forgetfulness of grace.

With what sorrow Zacharias went home from that unforgettable service! Not only had he been forcefully reminded once again that he was by nature a forgetter of grace, but he also had been shown that in his weakness he had even permitted forgetfulness to penetrate the next dimension: he had even forgotten to fight forget-

fulness of grace.

II.

The text (verses 59-75): *And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcize the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marveled all. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God. And fear came on all that dwelt round about them; and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be? And the hand of the Lord was with him. And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began; That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.*

"Jehovah is gracious" ("John") had been born. Zacharias affirms that that is his true name. He appreciates its propriety and has new insight into the truth expressed. Filled with the Holy Spirit, he breaks forth into a remarkable hymn of praise. How thrilling it is to watch as Luke portrays for us: The joy in the Lord which Zacharias could not quench.

This is a remarkable switch. We left Zacharias a shattered man. He had forgotten to fight forgetfulness of grace. And he knew it. For in a worship service he would never forget, he had been surprised by fear of the Lord and stunned by failure to believe.

What a mixture of emotions swirled about in the heart of Zacharias! Never before had he felt so small, as he stood there like a little child looking over the ocean of God's grace, amazed at its length, its depth, its breadth. So vast is the grace of God that even all our efforts to remember it, to say nothing of our forgetting of it, really amount to a forgetting of it. So feeble, Zacharias acknowledged, was his understanding and appreciation and receptiveness in comparison with the superabundant outpouring of grace.

One cannot build a fence around God's grace and then say: "There I have it; it is enclosed here for me to look at when I choose." One cannot tie it up in a bundle, as it were, and tuck it away safely in part of our mind to be examined at our leisure. One cannot stack it up in a convenient pile, take one's stand at the top, and then say: "Now I have mastered it." God's undeserved love for sinners, His kind dealings with us for Jesus' sake, are far bigger than all that. They defy boundary lines. Grace is an ocean, oceans of oceans. We may ponder one phase of it. But there is always another phase. We may dwell upon one aspect of it, only to find that in due time the Holy Spirit will reveal to us another aspect, an entirely new dimension of it, the existence of which we perhaps never even suspected.

This is what Zacharias, together with all Christians, learned by experience, study, meditation, trial, prayer. Grace showed up where one did not expect it. It opened doors one had unconsciously closed. It knocked down barriers one didn't even know he had set up. It caught one unawares because he was so near-sighted in his view of it. How awesome; yet how tremendously comforting to those who submit. And in the midst of his tremblings, Zacharias began to realize that God was not out to get him, but out to comfort and to strengthen him. He realized that God was showing him great grace in His

dealings. Thus, even while the helplessness of his tongue was ample reminder to him of the helplessness of his soul, a deep and abiding peace was sweeping over his heart as he returned to the Cross. Thus we find him in this passage of Scripture overcome by a joy in the Lord which he could not quench.

This is indeed a switch, and a most remarkable one, but not one that confuses us. It is a process the merciful God desires to put into effect for all. "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God," (Rom. 3:19). "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement," (Rom. 5:11). "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," (Rom. 3:23). "And rejoice in hope of the glory of God," (Rom. 5:2). It is the pattern to which every believer continues to submit. "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word. ... It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes," (Ps. 119:67,71). "Weeping may endure for the night; but joy comes in the morning," (Ps. 30:5). Sorrows will come upon us: mighty ones, severe ones, long-lasting ones. But they are the prelude to deeper and more enduring joy. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," (Rom. 8:28). Thus we learn to recognize something very important about the joy in the Lord which Zacharias could not quench. It was preceded by repentant remembrance of forgetfulness.

To gain further understanding of Zacharias' joy, we need to focus our attention on two key phrases. The first of these is "Horn of Salvation." "And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David," (v. 69).

"So it is all really true and about to come into fulfillment," the aged priest thought to himself as he returned to many Old Testament Bible passages. God would not measure him by the law but by the gospel. God was not looking to him for any good works. Every good work would be required of and produced by the Righteous One. "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the

book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart," (Ps. 40:7-8). "From the ends of the earth we hear songs, 'Glory to the Righteous One,'" (Isaiah 24:16 — NASB). God would not permit a single sin to burden him, for the Sin-bearer of the world was coming to shoulder all punishment for sin. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed," (Isaiah 53:5). "He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea," (Micah 7:19). God would not go back on a single one of His promises. He would fulfill them all in Christ, as surely as He kept His promise to give Zacharias a son. God would not permit Zacharias to sweat it out in mortal combat with any single one of his enemies, be it sin, the devil, the law, a troubled conscience, or death. His battles would be fought by Christ, his victories won by Christ, his enemies destroyed by Christ. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," (Gen. 3:15). "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory," (Isaiah 25:7-8).

All this and more Zacharias compressed into one tremendous phrase: HORN OF SALVATION. The thought of the deliverance wrought for him caused him to be overpowered with joy, involuntarily carried away with exultation. One after another, all the thoughts of what his Savior would do for him exploded in his mind and poured over his lips, now freed by the Holy Spirit to open a channel for the fulness of his heart, resulting in a hymn of praise on the precious theme which can never be exhausted: "Jehovah is gracious." The joy in the Lord which Zacharias could not quench was ignited by the Horn of Salvation.

The other phrase which especially attracts our attention is this: "serve him without fear." "That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our

life," (vv. 74-75). What a tremendous thought that is: to be engaged in serving the Lord without the slightest bit of fear. Who can honestly speak of such a thing? And where can such a thing be found? Is not all service of the Lord at least tinged, if not thoroughly permeated, with fear? Is it not offered grudgingly, as something that we do not want to render but is extorted from us? Is it not marred by fear that we are not doing enough? Is it not spoiled by the fact that we often hate what is right, and would much rather be doing something that is contrary to the will of the Lord? Indeed, how is it possible to speak of service without fear? Undeniably, it is a rare quantity. That is why Zacharias was so excited about it. That is why he spoke of it as the pinnacle of his joy. He could actually be cheerfully engaged in dedicating his life to the Lord with no intrusion of coercion, compulsion, hatred, reluctance, terror, or anything that smacked at all of fear. For what was there to fear? Grace covered all his needs. The Horn of Salvation had shattered all his enemies. Not a single demand of the law was left to make life unpleasant or fear-filled for him. All demands had been fulfilled. He was already swimming in holiness and righteousness. Only one thing could emerge from this: freedom to serve without fear!

How eloquently the Scriptures speak of such service without fear as that result miraculously produced by the gospel wherever it has done its glorious work of clearing out all sin and despair and fear and doubt and hesitation and uncertainty. "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts ... for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more," (Jer. 31:33-34). "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart," (Ps. 119:32). "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man," (Rom. 7:22). "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," (Ps. 110:3). "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?" (I Chron. 29:14). (Cf. also I Thess. 1:9 and Titus 2: 11-14).

The joy in the Lord which Zacharias could not quench

burned brightly in service without fear. We observe that Zacharias came full-circle, from being surprised by fear of the Lord, to exulting in the service without fear that he was able to render by virtue of the Horn of Salvation. Zacharias was not led away from service without fear as a result of being convicted of his sin; he was led more deeply into such service. Nor did he try to stifle his joy. He was not afraid of it; he revelled in it, luxuriated in it as an unexpected blessing, the savoring of which had perhaps never before been so complete. Thus was Zacharias privileged to re-experience the truth that the joy ignited by the Horn of Salvation is a joy so deep and pure in the conscience that it becomes a practical reality in every area of our life, exhibiting itself in service without fear.

III.

It takes no lengthy search to bring those passages into view which teach us that we are by nature forgetters of grace. Which ones shall we choose? "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness," (I Cor. 1:23). "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him," (I Cor. 2:14). "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel," (Gal. 1:6). Nor does it take lengthy search to find passages which teach that the Christian life may therefore properly be described as a growing in our understanding of grace and a remembering of things we have been taught. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever," (II Peter 3:18). "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace," (Heb. 13:9). "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance," (II Peter 1:12-13). What are all sixty-six books of Holy Scripture but a vast arsenal enabling us to fight forgetfulness of grace from every angle and along every front?

These things we want to ponder, not only as individuals, but also as publicly called servants of the Word. How pregnant with instruction it is that Zacharias stood convicted in the midst of a worship service. Failure on our part to fight forgetfulness of grace may not lead, as it did in the case of Zacharias, to disbelief of a direct promise of God. But it can lead to casualness, weakness, misplaced emphasis, and even error in our handling of the mysteries of God. Needless to say, careless handling of law and gospel is an extremely serious matter. The stakes are as high as they can possibly be: the eternal welfare of blood-bought souls.

The time comes when we, too, begin to tie the grace of God into a manageable bundle. Whenever new avenues of grace ought to be opened and pursued by us, perhaps some doors are being less and less frequently used, or even barred up completely. Or, to use another picture, the channels of grace become clogged by the sediments of our unreceptiveness and mundane interests. Ought we be afraid to ask ourselves searching questions regarding the unwholesome effects this can have on our teaching? Have we become mechanical and listless in our presentation of the vibrant truths of God's Word? Have we fallen into the pitfalls of legalism and moralism? Have we let down our guard against work-righteousness? Have we begun to suffer from the inroads of incipient Reformed tendencies?

There are other ways in which our spiritual sensitivities can become jaded. Have we been losing our grip on the Spiritual concept of evangelical admonition? Have we weakened in our understanding of service without fear? Has our joy in service without fear faded? Have promptings to deeper study of law and gospel been more or less lost upon us? Which one of us can claim that he has truly given himself to these things as he ought? Which one can say that he has been as diligent as he ought rightly to divide the Word of Truth? Is there anyone who would dare to affirm that his understanding and presentation of law and gospel require no further refinement?

The time we spend with such and similar questions will show us that though we have endeavored to be faith-

ful stewards of the mysteries of God, we also will find ourselves shattered right in the midst of the carrying out of our calling. We may be brought very low, as was Zacharias. Doubtless we shall then be impelled to seek that humility and watchfulness which are imparted by the Holy Spirit. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak," (Mt. 26:41). For the *opinio legis* is so much a part of us that we can never relax in our efforts to guard against its invidious effects on our teaching. The theologizing of the natural man cannot be avoided or overcome by the mere expedient of wishing that it were not there or of mumbling our awareness of its threatening presence. It must be actively and prayerfully resisted.

How grateful we may be when jarred into a realization of our forgetfulness of grace, how appreciative when reminded of the need to mourn those sins which beset us in the midst of our calling. It is a blessing, not a disaster, to be alerted to our weaknesses. And struggle leads to new strength, study to heightened understanding. All this is precisely the avenue to previously undiscovered depths of joy. For it is not a permanent path to terror that is in view here, but a widening of the avenue to service without fear, as that most amazing fruit of the gospel. "Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, And sustain me with a willing spirit," (Ps. 32:12 — NASB). "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:13-14). "For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth," (Heb. 12:5). "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life," (II Cor. 3:5-6). "Feed my sheep," (John 21:17).

"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them:

for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee," (I Tim. 4:15-16). "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins," (James 5:19-20). Need there be any doubt, in view of such promises, that we too may enjoy energetic service without fear?

As the Advent and Christmas seasons approach, may our meditations in Luke 1 and in all of Scripture serve to this end, that we may both save ourselves and them that hear us.

R. E. Wehrwein



SERMON STUDY: ELIJAH THE TISHBITE

Solomon reigned in Israel for forty years, and on the whole his reign was a peaceful one. Even from the beginning, however, there were some signs of discontent, and when Solomon died, this discontent was openly revealed to such an extent that the kingdom of Israel was eventually divided into two separate realms: the northern kingdom, comprising ten tribes; and the southern kingdom, made up of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Jeroboam, the first king of the northern tribes, set up golden images of calves in two places, Dan and Bethel, thus attempting to establish the worship of Jehovah under this beast image. His purpose in doing this was principally political, in all likelihood, for he was seeking to keep his people of the northern kingdom away from Jerusalem which had been the true seat of worship for all of Israel. Jeroboam's attempt to combine the

setting up of golden calves as worship images with the retention of Jehovah as god proved to be a vain effort, for in a short time it led to the sin of idolatry, from which Israel had been essentially free since the days of Samuel. After the death of Jeroboam, five kings reigned over the northern kingdom in quick succession until Ahab became king. Of him is written the terse but impressive description: "And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him," (I Kings 16:30).

It was in this evil time that God sent Elijah the Tishbite as His prophet to King Ahab with a dreadful message of His anger and wrath, coupled with testimony of the Gospel. We will consider this prophet's work on the basis of two portions selected from this section of the first book of the Kings.

I. IMPORTANT LESSONS FROM ELIJAH'S LIFE. (I Kings 17:1-6)

THE LORD'S JUDGMENTS IN THE
TIME OF DEFECTION PROVE HIM
TO BE THE LIVING GOD.

There could be no doubt
of the defection from
the true God on the part
of Israel. While it had

not been the intention of Jeroboam to do away with the worship of Jehovah at the outset, the very erection of those golden images was bound to lead to confusion among the people. That kind of worship had to result in syncretism and worse, for it was not long before idolatry reigned in the land alongside the true religion, with the evident approval of the king.

History shows us again and again that when error is tolerated besides the true religion, it is always error that wins out. If there has ever been an exception to this conclusion, the present writer is not aware of it. Indeed, how could it ever be otherwise, given the sinful nature of man, with his itching ears? Christians need constantly, under God's grace, to guard the purity of their teachings, lest error be tolerated and false teachings be placed on the same level of acceptance as the truth.

In the case of Israel this very thing soon happened under the reign of Jeroboam's successors, especially under Ahab. Ahab took as his queen a woman of Sidon, named Jezebel, the daughter of King Ethbaal, who had been a priest of the goddess Astarte. That wicked woman prevailed upon Ahab to set up an elaborate system of Baal worship beside the golden calf/Jehovah worship. A temple of Baal was erected in Samaria, and a great company of priests administered this idolatrous worship. All this was permitted by Ahab, even to the extent that the queen was allowed to persecute all those who would not worship Baal.

This worship of strange gods was also accompanied by a wave of immorality. Israel began more and more to be conformed to the ways of the heathen world. The great mass of the people turned to the worship of Baal, and perhaps most of the others also compromised between the worship of the true God and the worship of an idol. In the face of this widespread defection from the worship of the true God it must have seemed to those who wanted to remain faithful — and there were still some — as if the worship of the Lord would be rooted out entirely. How could it be that the Lord would observe this state of affairs seemingly without concern and let this pernicious development take its course without interfering or at least demonstrating to this corrupted king and his people in some unmistakeable manner that He is exalted above all gods? Must He not do something to strengthen the faith of that small band of true believers that still remained?

The holy writer reveals that the Lord did interfere through His faithful servant Elijah and Elijah's successor, Elisha. It was to be their task to accomplish that very purpose: namely, to show that the Lord is the only true God and to strengthen and vindicate those who remained faithful to Him. No doubt this was also the reason that through Elijah and Elisha so many startling miracles were performed, such as had not been witnessed since the days of Moses. It was necessary for the Lord at this time to show again by mighty and convincing acts that the Lord is God alone, Who is mild and merciful but also just and severe. Only in this way was it possible to stem the

further development of idolatry and to restore the confused people to faith and trust in the Lord.

And so "Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word," (I Kings 17:1). Up to this time nothing had been heard of this man. Suddenly he appears, somewhat like John the Baptist at a later date, and announces a dreadful judgment. We can well imagine that the appearance of this strange person at the court of Ahab created quite a sensation. Even his external appearance must have offered a sharp contrast to the king and all his surroundings, for we are told that his undergarments were held in place by a leather girdle, and that his cloak consisted of hairy pelts. Most men would perhaps have been afraid to confront Ahab, surrounded as he no doubt was by his courtiers and guards. But it was evidently not so with Elijah. Without excusing his uninvited appearance and without any long explanations, he simply declared the purpose of his coming: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."

Thus Elijah bore testimony to the true God of Israel as the only living God, in contrast to the dead idols which King Ahab was worshipping. The prophet emphatically announced that as far as he is concerned Baal is nothing, and that he owes no allegiance whatever to the many priests and prophets of Baal whom Jezebel with the permission of Ahab had brought into the land. So there the prophet stood before the king and his whole court, not to receive their commands, but to speak for the Lord God and by His authority. Like a servant of the Lord he appeared and brought the Word of God to Ahab.

The words of Elijah, if spoken from the lips of a mere man, would have been utterly ridiculous; but spoken by this man of God, they were indeed a judgment from the Lord Himself, in accordance with God's prior threat: "Then the Lord's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit," (Deut. 11:17).

A few cursory thoughts about our own times, and the great defection we see on all sides, will cause us to reflect upon God's marvelous long-suffering and patience. Surely we will acknowledge that our nation, as well as many of the modern nations, deserves God's judgment just as much as did Ahab's nation in times of old. Should God justly visit us with a judgment similar to that delivered by Elijah, may we by His grace recognize it as such and be turned back to the Lord in repentance and faith in His mercy!

GOD'S OWN HAVE IN HIM A
FAITHFUL PROVIDER AND
PROTECTOR.

In keeping with the prophet's word, dew and rain now ceased in the land of Israel. The prophet him-

self naturally was also affected by this, since he shared the needs of the people, and, as the famine became more and more severe, many undoubtedly came to him and begged him to relent. Perhaps, if he would not listen to their entreaties, he would be in grave danger. Therefore God now provided a refuge for him by promising to feed him at the brook Cherith: "The Word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there," (I Kings 1:2-4). And in the following verses we read that this is exactly what happened.

This was certainly a severe test of Elijah's faith. How long would the water in the little brook last if the drought lasted a long time? And how would it be possible for ravens to provide him with food, if the land did not bring forth anything? Such questions might well have troubled the prophet. It must have been rather difficult, too, for the prophet to understand that, after his dramatic appearance before Ahab, he was again to return to the solitude of the country from which he had just come. Did God expect nothing more from him at this time? — But although Elijah may have had misgivings, he obeyed the Lord. From what we know of him, Elijah was of a rather fiery and energetic nature, and no doubt the thought of inactivity in solitude must have been galling to him; yet he obeyed!

Elijah did not hesitate, but went to the place to which God had directed him. It was God's love that sent him to this lonely place, for there he was to be protected from his enemies, lest they find and kill him. There he was to be safe from Ahab's murderous designs and also, perhaps, from his own hasty reactions to the slander of his enemies. Even the faithful may be tempted and provoked by unjust accusations on the part of opponents to the truth. It may well be that the Lord felt that Elijah needed more training in the art of patience before he would be ready for his further tasks. In his solitude Elijah was to learn to be the Lord's servant without regard to either friend or foe.

Moreover, he was to learn to live entirely by the power and grace of his Lord, Whom the whole creation must obey and serve in order that those who believe in Him may be preserved and strengthened. The daily experience of the Lord's providence was to strengthen Elijah's confidence and faith for the great and difficult tasks that still awaited him. How mightily the Lord spoke to Elijah's soul there in his solitude! What a wonderful way to learn of God's power and, above all, His grace. Each drink from the brook and each morsel of bread and meat dropped to him by the ravens was a powerful sermon of God's infinite power and boundless love. From this the prophet was to learn something of God's nature different from His righteous zeal and anger; he was to come to know God also in His goodness, grace, and love. May we also learn this lesson that, when all is said and done, God alone is our Provider and gracious Protector. May we, then, faithfully walk in His ways, performing our daily tasks in His fear, with the firm confidence that He will be our kind and gracious Father, providing for us both spiritually and temporally out of the riches of His grace.

II. THE SCHOOL OF TRIBULATION AT ZAREPHATH. (I Kings 17:9-24)

As the drought continued in Israel, the brook which was refreshing Elijah also finally dried up: "And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because

there had been no rain in the land," (I Kings 17:7). Now what was to happen to the prophet? It still was not safe for him to return to the land of Israel, for King Ahab and Queen Jezebel would surely seek to kill him if he dared to come near them or remain in the country where their power was absolute. It was unthinkable that God would now withdraw His sustaining hand from His faithful servant. The Lord, Who had so miraculously kept his prophet alive at the brook Cherith, would surely now find other means to provide Elijah with the necessities of life.

And so it was: "And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there; behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee," (I Kings 17:8-9). The time of Elijah's testing was not yet over. The Lord was still sending him to school, as it were, the school of tribulation at Zarephath.

THE DIFFICULT LESSON. In reality it was a two-fold lesson, as the sacred account reveals. As we consider the directions God gave to Elijah, also especially the instructions to take up his staff and travel to Zarephath, which belonged to Sidon and was, therefore, located in the heathen country of the Phoenicians, it is helpful to remember that it was from this very country that Jezebel had come. It was from this very district that she had brought the worship of Baal to the land of Israel. And it was Baal-worship against which Elijah had so energetically protested. Going into the very country from which Israel's idolatry had come must surely have filled the prophet's heart with misgivings.

He was sent to a widow, who in times like that of general famine perhaps had even less to eat than others. No doubt Elijah marveled at this command of God. When he came to the gate of the city, he met a woman, to whom he addressed a strange request: "Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink," (v. 10). And when she immediately went to fetch the water, he asked her to bring him also a morsel of bread. Most likely, this form of questioning had the purpose of discovering

whether she was the person to whom God was sending him. And when she replied, "As the Lord thy God liveth...", he knew that she was acquainted with the God of Israel.

And then she, too, was put to the test. For when she revealed: "I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse; and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die"(v. 12), her own personal condition was evident — this was the very last bit of food she had for herself and her son! Should she now give it to a stranger? The test before her was whether or not she trusted this stranger, and, since she knew of the true God, whether or not she trusted in Him!

The prophet asked a great deal of her: "Go and do as thou hast said; but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and thy son," (v. 13). No doubt she had saved and scrimped on her small supply of food for a long time, and now that she had reached the very end of her food, this man came from nowhere and asked her to give him some of it first. We are God's children; if we were in like circumstances as this woman, would not such a request be a most severe test to our faith and love?

But a still greater and more severe test was in store for the prophet and also the widow: "And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him," (v. 17). In brief, the widow's son died. We can understand her grief, as she said to Elijah: "What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?" (v. 18). Her situation was like that of the widow at Nain, who lost her only son. She was completely bereft. As mothers often seek some definite cause to explain the loss of a beloved child, the widow came to think that her son's death was caused by the prophet's presence in her house. And she believed that this loss was inflicted on her because of her sins. Her son's death was also a severe test for the prophet. He was the servant of the one

true God. How could Jehovah, Whom he knew as a kind and loving Father, do this thing to this widow, who for many days had sustained and cared for him? And what could he say to her at this time?

While we may not be tested to the same extent, with such a difficult lesson, we should bear in mind that we, too, as God's children, may be thus severely tested by temptations and afflictions of many kinds. This is the way in which God schools His children. May we be led to learn!

THE TEACHABLE PUPILS.

The pupils involved in that school at Zarephath are, of course, Elijah and the widow and, perhaps to a lesser degree, the son, even though nothing is said of him. The prophet himself had already passed through a period of instruction at the brook Cherith, by means of which his faith and trust in the Lord had surely been much strengthened, and this increased faith and trust made him all the more ready to obey the Lord now at this time.

While he may have had misgivings about the Lord's command to go to Zarephath, this land of the Phoenicians, where Baal was worshipped, the very god whom he had opposed in Israel (and thus in a very real manner he was going into the lions' den), we see no evidence of hesitation or fear in Elijah. While he marveled at the command of God, Elijah nevertheless subjected his reason to the Word of God and obeyed. If ravens could feed him in the wilderness, then a Phoenician woman could also do so if that was the Lord's will.

How Elijah must have rejoiced that he was to live with a widow who knew of the Lord. In order to assure himself more fully, he said to her: "Fear not," (v. 13). What a strange word to say to a woman who, with her son, was facing starvation. And yet, as he asked her to make a little cake for him before getting a last meal for herself and her son, he assured her that all would be well: "For thus saith the Lord God of Israel: The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth," (v. 14).

"And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah; and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days," (v. 15). Thus we see that not only the prophet of God, but also this Phoenician widow, are indeed teachable pupils. Even though their reason must have strongly rebelled, both learned their lesson. Of course, when her son died, the woman did rather vehemently accuse God and His prophet of bringing this dreadful affliction upon her. And we have also seen how sorely troubled the prophet himself was by this unexpected blow of grief and affliction. Yet even here we find the prophet to be a teachable pupil: "And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again," (vv. 19-21).

Elijah had learned his lesson well. When this affliction befell the widow, the prophet was at first at a loss, since there was nothing he could do to change matters. But he did know Him Who could help under any circumstances, and in his need he turned to the Lord. There is an unusual boldness of faith here. It is the Lord's province to give and to take life. Elijah knew that, and yet his faith in the Lord's power and mercy gave him the courage to ask Him to restore the life He had taken.

Are we such teachable pupils in our schools of affliction and grief? It is comparatively easy to counsel patience and trust as long as we personally are not afflicted. But let ourselves be the afflicted ones, and we bitterly complain and almost rebel against our Lord. It may be that we sometimes are able to present an impassive front before others, but inwardly we rage and rant against the griefs we are sometimes called upon to bear. Our only remedy under such conditions is to follow the example of Elijah and pour out our hearts to the Lord and simply let Him take over, knowing that all things must work together for good to them that love Him.

THE GOOD REPORT.

When parents send their children to school, they expect and receive reports at certain intervals from the teachers as to the conduct and progress of their children in their studies. They may sometimes be disturbed by a so-called bad report; or again they may be well pleased by a good report.

In the school of affliction at Zarephath the time also came for a report from the Teacher. Because of His grace and mercy, the report is not the bad one that might have been expected if it had been based only on the efforts and accomplishments of the pupils. Since it is, in reality, a report of what the Teacher Himself has done, it is a very good report. Let us examine it. In the first place, we observe that the prophet himself grew in knowledge and faith. He let himself be completely led by the Lord, and the Lord instructed him, step by step. Where else could Elijah have gained the courage, the boldness, which led him to ask the Lord for a restoration of the child's life? Only those who have an invincible faith would venture to ask the Lord to perform such a great miracle. And the Lord granted his request: "The Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother; and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth," (vv. 22-23). Thus the Lord vindicated the prophet's faith.

There is also a good report in regard to what had been accomplished in the widow: "And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth," (v. 24). What a blessed report. Out of her affliction came a mature believer in the Lord. Yes, now she knew! Oh, that all of us might grow out of our afflictions to be confident children of God!

John Lau

ADDRESS AT THE OPENING SERVICE
AT IMMANUEL LUTHERAN COLLEGE*

Paul, the apostle, was heading for disaster. He was being transported to Rome as a prisoner to appear before Caesar, and the ship that carried him was being battered by a furious Mediterranean storm. The crew had given up all hope of coming out of the situation alive. But the angel of the Lord appeared to Paul and told him not to fear, for no one would be lost. The twenty-seventh chapter of Acts records the prisoner's encouragement to his captors and to the crew: "I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of the God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar. And, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." Let us dwell briefly upon those few words from the twenty-third verse which reveal the source of Paul's courage and show the direction of his life: GOD, WHOSE I AM AND WHOM I SERVE. I submit that these words could well be the theorem of everyone in the public ministry of the Word, for they bespeak the assurance of faith and victory. Let us think of them as QUALIFICATIONS OF A CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR: He is Christ's and it is Christ he serves.

Ever since the Lord had met him on the road to Damascus, Paul knew himself to be a child of God, the blood-bought property of Christ, a sheep of His pasture. That Jesus, Whom he once despised, had become the anchor of his faith and hope, his joy and inspiration, the power and strength of his life. Being Christ's own, Paul had no need to fear. Not the raging sea nor the pending trial, not the strength of Satan nor the curse of sin posed

* This sermon was delivered by Pastor Elton A. Hallauer, chairman of the Board of Regents, at the installation of Prof. Robert Rehm and Pres. Roland Gurgel, in the opening service at Immanuel Lutheran College on August 21, 1978.

a threat to Paul; for Jesus was his mighty Protector to shield him against all evil, his Savior to pardon all his sins, his strong Deliverer to help him in every need, the Conqueror of death and hell's destruction to bring him safely through the storms of life to the eternal haven.

What Paul believed and hoped concerning himself is the sum and substance of the joy and power of every Christian, particularly of the Christian educator. This is what we look for in our professors, that they be Christ's. We want to take nothing away from the professional training and education of the instructors at Immanuel. Let them be scholars in the branches of learning they are to teach. Let them be of broad culture, of deep learning, and of wide intellect. But above all, let them be out-and-out Christians. We want people at our institution who have seen their own littleness, the blackness of their sins and the vanity of their own inventions and the world's wisdom. We want those in whom these failings have been replaced by Christ's greatness, the Spirit's forgiveness and the Father's knowledge. We want those who, although they may be giants of intellectual power and storehouses of learning, know how to humble themselves before their Savior and His precious Word, letting that Word speak to them in tones of forgiveness, peace and joy, letting it satisfy their thirsting souls, shape their personalities and control their characters. We want — and, if ever we are to maintain faithful and loyal public servants of Christ in our CLC, God, in His grace, must give us — educators who make no apology for sticking to the good old Bible teachings and who make no secret of their happy faith in Jesus and their love to Him. May the joyous faith and the humble dedication of our faculty members be so impressed upon the souls and minds of their students that they may be a source of constant inspiration to them. And may we, as members of our church body, as Christian parents and as students at ILC not forget to remember our professors often in our prayers, asking that our common Lord may keep them loyal to Himself, strong in faith, fervent in love and abounding in hope.

The knowledge that you belong to Christ will surely

be a wonderful comfort to you gentlemen who are today to be installed into the offices to which you have been called. Christ knows them that are His; He leads, strengthens and counsels them. With His mighty arm He protects them against all harm and danger; and whatsoever they do shall prosper. You are to believe that God has led you to these positions and that He also will watch over you and give you strength for every task. And when the thrill and romance of the new position begin to give way to feelings of routineness and frustration, may our gracious Savior supply you with new inspiration and joy and bless your labors of love, your service to Him and His kingdom.

This leads us to the second qualification we expect to find in a Christian educator, namely, that he serve Christ. There is a vital connection between the concept of belonging to Christ and serving Christ. Those who by a true faith are Christ's own will feel the impulse of love to serve Him Who gave Himself for them.

We need not dwell long upon the service of the apostle to his Lord; his untiring labors in behalf of the kingdom are well-known to most of us from the book of Acts and from his epistles. Suffice it to say that the love which Christ had shown him constrained him to wear himself out for his Savior, to make his whole life a worshipful service to Him Who died for him and rose again.

The Christian educator who has experienced the same love of Christ will surely view his work as a direct service to the kingdom of our Lord, especially in view of the fact that, here at ILC, he has the privilege and responsibility of training men and women who shall gather and preserve souls for the mansion of heaven. He will perform his work, not with the coldness and lifelessness one might expect from an unconcerned employee on an assembly line, nor from the selfish and sordid motive of personal honor and prestige, but as one who realizes he can do no better than return himself and his God-given talents to Him Who made him what he is. When this is the Christian educator's attitude, the students will sense that his heart and soul and love are in his work. His zeal will certainly rub off on many, if not all, of

those who sit at his feet, resulting in rewards he never envisioned, attention he never anticipated, and dedication he never may have expected.

You have a fine opportunity, dear brother Rehm, to serve the Christ to Whom you belong in the Education Department of our school. True, you will not be involved with courses in theology primarily, but rather with teaching methods as they pertain to Language Arts, Childrens' Literature, Social Studies, Religion, and perhaps others. Still, the teaching of these subjects in the light of God's Word affords you a splendid opportunity to counteract and condemn the godless humanism that is so rampant today. Furthermore, your effective teaching of these subjects will help train the intellect and increase the thinking powers of your students and thus help prepare them intelligently to take hold of the problems and difficult situations they will encounter in their teaching ministry. We encourage you to place your work upon the high plane of service to Christ and His people. Then you shall have a source of inspiration which will impel you to diligent preparation for your classes and motivate you to stick to your task with joy, even in the face of difficulties and disappointments. For Jesus' sake your work will be a joy, and with Jesus it will be a blessing.

The office we confer upon you, dear brother Gurgel, is that of President of Immanuel Lutheran College. You will continue to have opportunity to serve your Christ in the classroom, educating and influencing our young people for good as you have done so ably in the past. As president, moreover, you will represent the school to the members of our church body and to the world. Your task will not be an easy one; for you will be dealing with people and, occasionally, even Christians are unable to suppress the Old Adam when he rears his ugly self to promote dissatisfaction, unrest and strife. While your duties as president will pertain particularly to the supervision and coordination of the academic work of the several departments at Immanuel Lutheran College, you will have excellent opportunity also to serve your Savior, the student body and the other members of the faculty by your example, by your guidance and by your personal counsel. The effect, we pray, will be that the

work of our school will be carried on in peace and harmony for the benefit of us all. We beseech you to make your office, the students and your colleagues the object of daily, fervent prayers to the throne of mercy.

A word to the student body of Immanuel is surely in place. We exhort you to accept your new professor and president as representatives of God over you. He gives them to you in order that He, through them, may bless you with His saving Gospel and an appreciation of the moral standards set forth in Scripture. Give them the honor and respect, the love and cooperation which are due a servant of Christ. May you in every way help to lighten their burdens and give them joy in their work, for this is profitable for you.

And now, brethren, so that you may fulfill your tasks with joy, may the Lord, Whose you are and Whom you serve, send His Holy Spirit to be near you, to guide and sustain you, to cheer and comfort you, as He promised when He said: "Fear thou not, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Amen.

Elton A. Hallauer



ADDRESS AT THE OPENING OF IMMANUEL LUTHERAN SEMINARY

Text: Luke 24:28-35.

Dear fellow-redeemed, and especially you young men who are present here today, either to commence or to continue your studies in preparation for the Holy Ministry:

While today's chapel address has been especially prepared for the opening of our Seminary school year, the substance of our meditation will find its application in the lives of all who are present here today. You have, no doubt, recognized the narrative in today's text

as constituting an important part of the inspired record of Jesus' meeting with the Emmaus-bound disciples after His glorious and triumphant resurrection from the dead. It was this very text that provided the inspiration for the writing of the hymn we have just sung: "Abide with us, the day is waning," as well as for the hymn written by Henry Lyte: "Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide; The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide." As surely as our text moved the hymn writers to pen these hymns which we know so well, so surely should it move our hearts today to express our heartfelt commitment to the Lord, His Word, and His Work.

We all need this boost and encouragement; for is it not true that all too often we have been like the Emmaus disciples whom Jesus found it necessary to address with these words: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken"? They had the inspired word of the prophets which spoke to them of Christ's suffering and death on their behalf and which prophesied of His glorious resurrection, as well. But when Jesus drew near and went with them, they did not recognize Him but thought of Him as a stranger. And furthermore, although they had the report of the angel's appearance at the tomb and the words, "He is alive," yet they walked with heads bowed down and with their hearts clouded over with sadness. Is it not true that we also at times walk around and act as if Christ were not really alive to be our solace, strength, and stay? As great a man as Luther was, he, too, suffered such periods of sadness and depression. Once, seated at his desk, he was alerted to attention by a rap at the door. His wife came in, clothed in garments of mourning. When asked why the mourning-garb and who it was who was dead, Katie answered, "Jesus is dead." "But nay," Luther responded, "He is not dead, but risen." Katie then reminded him that he was, however, acting as if Jesus were dead and not alive. Luther got the point and placed upon his study wall, as a constant reminder, the word *Surrexit* (He is risen). We can well imagine that many a time he felt the need to look up and be reminded of the meaning of that word.

We find little cause for exalting ourselves and placing ourselves on a higher spiritual level than that of

the weak Emmaus disciples or, indeed, that of Dr. Martin Luther. On the other hand, we find ourselves so often in the same situation — so slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! For this very reason we see the great need to open our ears to listen to the sacred and holy Word of the living God of mercy and grace. Thus in the classroom, dear Seminarians and ILC students, we need to listen and to meditate when the sacred truths of Scripture are laid before us that they might be impressed upon our hearts. This we need first of all for the strengthening of our own faith, and then that we might be well-prepared to share the precious truths of Scripture with others to whom we will be called to minister.

Just take a look now at the results in the lives of the Emmaus disciples. After Jesus had spoken to them the Words of life; after He had expounded to them in all the Scriptures concerning Himself; after He had turned in to abide with them and to sup with them — then their eyes were opened, and they knew Him. The mission had been accomplished. Now they said one to the other: "Did not our hearts burn within us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" The Word had had its effect also along the way, and now they realized it as never before. There was a special warmth that had come to their hearts, an uplifting of the spirit, a cheer which caused them now to look up. For was it not true that Jesus had been with them all along the way? No need to fear. No cause to be sad. No reason to be down-cast. Here is strength that never fails, even when all earthly help no more avails.

And so, when our hearts burn within us with a heavenly glow, to what should all this move us? Should we sit back and keep this all to ourselves? Such selfishness does not befit the child of God who has been moved by the Spirit. Indeed, we can do no better than did the Emmaus disciples, for of them we are told that they gave up their trip to Emmaus and returned to Jerusalem, "and they told what things were done in the way and how he was known of them in breaking of bread." We ought to be so mightily moved that we can hardly wait to share our good news with others. This is an eagerness which no one

wants to dampen or suppress. That we might be properly prepared in heart and soul and mind for this glorious task, for this purpose we are here. May we all be set on fire by the Spirit that we may burn with eagerness to serve the Lord as He shall direct us and lead us. The vineyard is His, and He will place us as He sees fit. May God bless us all and lead us in His own good way, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Heavenly Father, God of grace and mercy, cause Thy face to shine upon us this day, that we may bask in the sunshine of Your presence. Warm our hearts that all coldness and indifference may depart. Bless the holy Words that have been set before us that we may receive them into believing hearts. Give us all the zeal and eagerness to go forth as witnesses to Thy Son, Jesus Christ, testifying of His vicarious suffering and death, His triumphant resurrection and His glorious ascension, to the salvation of immortal souls. Bless and lead all teachers and students and members of our staff that all may be done to Thy glory and honor, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

C. M. Gullerud

— P A N O R A M A —

ROME AND ITS NEW POPE.

With the usual pageantry and solemn procession, typical of Rome, 111 red-robed cardinals filed into the Sistine Chapel to be locked in until a new pope would be chosen by them to succeed the recently deceased Pope Paul VI. Outside in St. Peter's Square a milling throng had gathered to watch for the white smoke signal from the stove-pipe above the Sistine Chapel, which would announce the election of a new pontiff to occupy the papal throne as the visible head of 700 million Roman Catholics throughout the world. Confusing smoke signals — in spite of precautions taken — left the waiting thousands in doubt as they saw now black smoke and then puffs of white smoke emerging. Finally, however, they saw standing above them in the balcony the patriarch of Venice, Cardinal Albino

Luciani, who was being presented as the cardinals' choice. The new pope took the name of his two predecessors, John and Paul, and since this was a new name in papal annals, he would be known as Pope John Paul I.

Significant to us are the reactions of the Roman Catholic subjects, both lay and clergy alike. We have read no word about loyalty to the Scriptures alone or of a commitment to the Gospel of grace alone, merely words expressing belief that he will follow the pattern set by his two predecessors since he had chosen to bear their names. To a church that is disunited in spite of its outward unity under the authority and rule of the pope, the new pontiff will seek to bring the discordant elements together. Here the power of the Word will not be the healing instrument, but diplomacy joined to the exercise of an authoritarian rulership. In this there will be no change. But Roman Catholics all over the world are wondering if Pope John Paul I will take a more conciliatory stance on such subjects as the ordination of women, birth control, abortion, the marriage of priests, etc. These seem to be the main concerns of a large segment of the Catholic population. Doctrine is graced by hardly a mention, if indeed it is mentioned at all. And that is typical. The Roman Catholic curia are, of course, more concerned that their new leader should be faithful to the traditions and to the decrees of the Councils, which they believe operate with infallibility. One thing we know for certain: that is that the new pope will be committed to the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, which stand in spite of the interpretations of Vatican II. No Catholic will presume to say that Vatican II stands in any essential part in contradiction to the Council of Trent Decrees. Unless the new pope should abdicate and renounce completely the basic doctrines of Roman Catholicism, he will declare *anathema* upon all those who will say that a man is justified by faith alone without the deeds of the law. In this cursing of the central doctrine of the Bible the pope is identified not as the vicar of Christ, but as the Antichrist prophesied in II Thessalonians 2.

In spite of confusing smoke signals in connection with approaches to non-Catholic churches, Rome remains

the same and has as its aim the conversion of others to bring them under the umbrella rule and cover of the pope. He will remain until he is destroyed with the brightness of the Lord's coming, as it is prophesied in II Thessalonians 2:8. Strong delusion there is, and signs and lying wonders there are, designed by Satan to lead men astray. There is no indication that John Paul I will ever truly follow the apostle John, who said: "Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the son of God?"; nor is there any sign that he will follow the apostle Paul, who said: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." The name John Paul I as the cognomen of the new pope gives no more hope for a change in Rome than did the name John XXIII and Paul VI.

C. M. Gullerud

BOOK NOTICES

During the past two years a number of paperbacks have come off the press of Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. With brief notices we call them to the attention of our readers with the suggestion that orders be placed through our CLC Book House, Immanuel Lutheran College, West Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI 54701.

Of special interest to members of the CLC at this time when we are involved in the establishment of a ministry in Nigeria will be two books written by Pastor E. H. Wendland, who is serving as a Wisconsin Synod missionary in the Lutheran Church of Central Africa. The first of these is entitled *Of Other Gods and Other Spirits*. This is a 112-page book which sets before the reader a look at African life and the ministry carried on by WELS in this part of Africa. The price is \$3.25, and the book is certainly well worth the price. We are sure that the author is speaking with tongue in cheek when he says of

polygamy: "Those who still advocate polygamy should try it sometime. I have dealt enough in such cases to be frightened by the very thought of it," (p. 67). Some readers may not appreciate this approach to the problem and may conclude that the writer does not hold that monogamy is the God-ordained form of marriage nor that the entering upon a polygamous marriage is a perversion and therefore a sin. The author, however, does not presume to present a theological discussion of the matter.

Another volume by the same author is entitled *Dear Mister Missionary*. In 116 pages Missionary Wendland presents excerpts from his correspondence and gives us a look at his "thoughts and sentiments." The price tag is \$3.50.

For those who are looking for a little booklet to place into the hands of the sick and shut-ins we can recommend the 3½" X 5½" paperback which contains comforting Scripture passages, together with hymn stanzas and Christian poetry. The title is *Abide With Us*, and the selections have been made by Wm. A. Lauterbach, who is known for his other booklets, such as *Heavenbound*, which have filled a great need for Christian literature suited to those who are confined to their homes and unable to attend the public church services. The price is \$1.25.

A Model Christian Congregation presents a Bible Study Course on I Thessalonians. The author of this 56-page booklet is David P. Kuske, and the price is \$1.90. The title is suggested by I Thess. 1:7: "So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia." This congregation was indeed not a model in the sense that there was no need for instruction in the leading of a godly life, as is shown, for instance, in chapters 4 and 5 of the epistle, but this does not detract from the fact that Paul places the congregation as an example for others in certain areas of congregational life. The booklet takes the form of outline, study of the text, application of the Word. Teachers' helps are provided with suggestions for analysis and for appropriate prayer.

As we prepare for the 400th anniversary of the Book of Concord, we are happy to announce the reprint of the

Formula of Concord's *Epitome* in pamphlet form. This booklet needs no further recommendation than to say that we have here the condensation of the more lengthy *Thorough Declaration*, and it is a confessional writing to which we are committed as a church body and as individual Lutherans, as well. Here, for instance, is found the summary of our Church's confession regarding "The Third Use of the Law," which was discussed at great length at our recent convention. The pamphlet comprises 46 pages, is priced at \$1.50, and is admirably suited for use in the congregation for study purposes and home use. Certainly there is unanimous consent among us that a concentrated study of our Lutheran symbols will be of great value in our congregations.

A subject that should be of concern and great interest to every child of God is dealt with in the book *Here and Hereafter*, authored by William A. Kramer. An overview of the content of this 104-page book is given by the writer in the Foreword: "This book represents an attempt to help the reader understand the relationship between sin and the hereafter, purpose in life and the hereafter, family life and the hereafter, and sorrow and death and the hereafter. These areas represent the principal situations in which the Christian finds himself or herself," (p. 7). The price is \$2.95.

We are living in a day when, through the various media, much attention is directed to the occult as a substitute for the eternal truths of the Spirit. Vainly are men seeking for answers to questions which God alone can reveal as He sees fit. Children and adults alike are often fascinated by television presentations which deal with subjects which tickle the imagination and delve into mysteries which tend to boggle the mind. It is, therefore, like a breath of fresh air when these are all examined and judged in the atmosphere of Scripture as is done in the book *Wizards that Peep (A Journey into the Occult)* by Siegbert W. Becker, a professor of the Wisconsin Synod Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin. The title is taken from the book of Isaiah: "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter; should not the people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?

To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," (Is. 8:19-20). The book deals with Divination, Magic and Witchcraft, Spiritism, Demonic Possession, and Satanism. Source material is given for reference and further study. There are 121 pages and the price is \$3.95.

A book that will be of interest particularly to our readers who are teachers in the parochial schools of our church will be the booklet entitled *How the Child Learns*, by John Isch. Insight is given into the learning process. In his presentation the author has taken the subject of the psychology of learning and made it understandable to the average reader by keeping the technical terms at a minimum "while keeping the Christian teacher and the Christian child in mind." The book comprises 98 pages and is priced at \$2.75.

C. M. Gullerud

BOOK REVIEW

Crisis in the Reformed Churches, Peter Y. DeJong, Editor (Grand Rapids, Michigan: The Reformed Fellowship, Inc., publisher, 1968). 266 pp.

Many of the readers of this journal are no doubt well acquainted with *Present Truth*, the periodical which has featured such excellent material in defense of the objectivity of the Gospel "amid the present deluge of religious subjectivism" and "in this barren wilderness of groveling internalism."¹ A variety of stimulating articles has appeared in this magazine, which is "dedicated to the restoration of New Testament Christianity in our day." That not everything within its covers meets with our approval goes without saying. But that need not deter us from thankful amazement at the vigor, clarity, freshness, and aptness with which it is saying many things that desperately need to be said.

It is the historical material which is often as illuminating as anything else. Perhaps no article was

quite as eye-opening for us Lutherans, who may sometimes be perhaps a bit narrowly confined to events in our own circles, as the article in the election issue (September, 1976; Vol. 5, No. 6) entitled, "Recent Reformed Criticisms of the *Canons*." The footnote, explaining that this article was reprinted from a book entitled, *Crisis in the Reformed Churches*, never entirely escaped the mind of this writer, and efforts to procure the book were finally successful.²

The chapter reprinted in *Present Truth* is by far the most interesting of the ten chapters in the book. Nevertheless, our readers might welcome a summary of the book's entire contents and a few observations to which a reading of it gives rise; the more so because, observing as we are the 400th anniversary of the signing of the *Formula of Concord* and looking ahead to 1980 as the 400th anniversary of the publication of the *Book of Concord*, we find ourselves in the midst of a preoccupation with the history and continuing significance of our own confessional writings which may well lead us to an appreciation of similar concerns occupying other confessional communities. What is being said in the Reformed community about the *Canons of Dort*? In 1967 we Lutherans observed the 450th anniversary of the posting of the *Ninety-five Theses*. One year after that, the Reformed were observing the 350th anniversary of the Synod of Dort. Hence, the publication of the book that we now have under consideration.

Crisis in the Reformed Churches is subtitled: "Essays in commemoration of the great Synod of Dort, 1618-1619." Besides Peter Y. DeJong, the editor, who contributed two essays, there are eight essayists who contributed one chapter each. Four of the essayists, DeJong, Klooster, Praamsma, and Woudstra, were professors at Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, of the Christian Reformed Church, at the time of writing. Another, Palmer, was a minister of the CRC. Murray was professor emeritus of Systematic Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary, Van Til professor of Apologetics also at Westminster, Kistemaker professor of Bible and Greek at Dordt College, Iowa, and Runia professor of Systematic Theology at the Reformed Theological College, Geelong, Australia. The

chapters are well organized. The book contains nine helpful appendices, including the pertinent confessional documents.³

1. "The Rise of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands," by Peter Y. DeJong. This chapter surveys ecclesiastical and political developments in the Netherlands from pre-Reformation times to 1618. Various individuals and movements, such as the Brethren of the Common Life, preceded the Reformation. After the Reformation began, the Anabaptist movement was quite influential for a time. "Calvinism was the last of the reformatory movements to gain a foothold in the Netherlands" (p. 9). In the political realm, the fires of revolt began to burn when Philip II, son of Charles V, relentlessly pursued a policy of religious and political absolutism, even suppressing religious dissent by the widespread use of the Inquisition. Of great significance in this entire period was "the strange admixture of ecclesiastical and civil control" (p. 7). For various reasons, chief among them the fact that most of the faithful leaders of the resistance to Spanish tyranny were Calvinists, church and state became closely united. This was greatly to the disadvantage of the staunch Calvinists in the years leading up to Dort, inasmuch as the state permitted the spread of Arminianism, even doing its best to prevent the calling of a national synod to settle the doctrinal disputes which were raging.

2. "The Background of the Arminian Controversy (1586-1618)," by Louis Praamsma. The various precursors of Arminianism are discussed. Chief among them was Coornhert, an able politician and man of letters.⁴ All the others were ministers, and they shared the following characteristics: 1) they advocated doctrinal freedom; 2) they had objections of various kinds to the Reformed doctrine of predestination; 3) their deviations in this area led to further deviations in other doctrines; 4) they were Erastian in their view of church government and were generally in coalition with the magistrates. Arminius himself, who had been a student of Beza, died in 1609. His followers carried some of his ideas further than he had. Oldenbarnevelt was largely responsible for the governmental policy of tolerating Arminianism

and preventing a national synod from being called. According to Groen van Prinsterer, "a systematic oppression of the Reformed Church and its faith was organized" (p. 32). Prince Maurice of Orange finally took action, and the door was opened for a national synod.

3. "Leading Figures at the Synod of Dort," by Simon Kistemaker. Four Calvinists and three Arminians are discussed. The Calvinists are Johannes Bogerman (1576-1637), president of the sessions, who in the 57th session denounced the Arminians for fraud and double-dealing, with the result that, at his urging, they left the synod; Franciscus Gomarus (1563-1641), a learned and able defender of the Reformed faith who at one time had been professor at Leiden together with Arminius and who, though a passionate man, remained remarkably quiet at Dort; Si-brandus Lubbertus (1555-1625), known for his excellence in Hebrew and Greek, for his controversy with Rome, and for his stand against Socinianism; and Gijsbertus Voe-tius (1589-1676), a fiery and disputatious man of great industry and extraordinary memory who distinguished himself as "the leader of the Reformed Church during the middle of the seventeenth century" (p. 49). The three Arminians are Johannes Uytenbogaert (1557-1644), who, upon the death of Arminius, called the Arminians together and drew up the "Five Articles of the Remonstrance" in 1610, but who lost courage when the national synod approached; Simon Episcopius (1583-1643), who assumed leadership of the Arminians at the Synod of Dort; and Conrad Vorstius (1569-1622), who played a prominent role in the decade prior to Dort by his energetic polemical writings, writings which generated great antagonism to the Remonstrant cause and were a source of dismay even to the friends of the cause he defended, such as Uyten-bogaert.⁵

4. "The Doctrinal Deliverances of Dort," by Fred. H. Klooster. This, the longest chapter in the book, is a sympathetic study of the doctrinal content of the *Canons of Dort*. At the outset Klooster states that the *Canons* "emphasize both divine sovereignty and human responsibility" (p. 52), and a number of pages near the end of the essay are devoted to further discussion of Dort's emphasis upon human responsibility. "In fact, human respon-

sibility pervades the *Canons*" (p. 83). This point is emphasized because the essayist believes that the thrust of the *Canons* is frequently misrepresented. After the Remonstrants drew up their "Five Articles" in 1610, conferences at the Hague in 1611 and at Delft in 1613 failed to produce agreement. The *Canons* were drawn up with two Arminian documents in view: the "Five Articles" and the "Opinions of the Remonstrants" ("*Sententiae Remonstrantium*"). The latter statement had been drawn up by the Arminians at the request of the synod. In analyzing the *Canons*, Klooster begins with a discussion of Sections III-IV, dealing with creation, the fall, and conversion, rather than with Section I, which deals with election.

5. "The Synod and Bible Translation," by Marten H. Woudstra. Luther's German Bible had been translated into Dutch and published in 1526. This version was popular and went through many editions. Various other versions came to be more or less widely accepted. At the urging of President Bogerman, the Synod of Dort voted to proceed with a new translation. The resulting version, known as the *Staten-Bijbel*, was finally completed in 1637, just before Bogerman died. It became known as "one of the best translations of the Reformation period" (p. 112). Even the Remonstrants could detect no doctrinal bias. The version is still being used in the Netherlands, "although a new version, produced in the fifties of this century, has found wide acceptance" (p. 112). The chapter contains a discussion of Reformed hermeneutics and biblical scholarship of that day, particularly in relation to Old Testament Messianic prophecies.

6. "Preaching and the Synod of Dort," by Peter Y. DeJong. Emphasis is given to three points. 1) The Arminian controversy was by no means confined to professorial disputes, but involved two entirely different modes of preaching and therefore directly affected the common people. They were able to see the issues on the congregational level and became deeply involved. Of great importance in the beginning of the entire controversy was a series of sermons which Arminius preached on the book of Romans. 2) The synod dealt with many practical matters of church life, such as the promotion of proper preaching. 3) Implicitly, the *Canons* have a great deal

to say about the urgency, the character, the content, the approach, and the aim of true preaching.⁶

7. "The Significance of the *Canons* for Pastoral Work," by Edwin H. Palmer. This is an interesting attempt to apply the "Five Points of Calvinism," often thought to be cold and spiritually deadening, to the work of the pastoral ministry. Various common misconceptions are stated and refutation is attempted.

8. "Calvin, Dort, and Westminster on Predestination — A Comparative Study," by John Murray. Murray's purpose is to demonstrate that in the doctrine of predestination there is essential agreement between John Calvin, the *Canons of Dort*, and the *Confession of Faith*, completed at Westminster in 1646. This agreement sometimes extends even to the language employed. The Westminster *Confession* is distinguished for its compact brevity and great precision. Of Section VII of that confession, Murray states that "no paragraph in the whole compass of confessional literature excels [it] for precision of thought, compactness of formulation, and jealousy for the various elements of truth in the doctrine concerned" (p. 154).⁷

9. "Recent Reformed Criticism of the *Canons*," by Klaas Runia. Criticisms from within the Reformed community are discussed. Karl Barth's objection is to the idea of a *decretum absolutum* which he believes is to be found in the *Canons*. Dr. J. G. Woelderink's objections, expressed in his booklet, *The Election*, of 1951, begin with article 6 of the first section, "which takes its starting point in the decree," rather than in the Gospel. Reacting to the causal thinking, he himself views election primarily as "an act of God in time." "Woelderink utterly rejects the idea of an eternal decree of reprobation" (pp. 165-166). The Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church adopted a document, *Pastoral Letter*, which registered a number of criticisms of the *Canons*, particularly of the idea of "causality." More recently, the theologian G. C. Berkouwer has reopened discussions on the *Canons*. He distinguished between their basic motif, with which he is in full agreement, and their framework of "causality," with which he has difficulties. A. D. R. Polman is but one of several who have voiced their agreement with Berk-

ouwer's criticisms. The chapter concludes with an interesting discussion of reprobation; the essayist argues that the proof for this doctrine comes, not from Scripture, but from logic.

10. "The Significance of Dort for Today," by Cornelius Van Til. Van Til views Roman Catholic theology as a false synthesis of human autonomy and divine sovereignty, the Protestant Reformation as a destruction of this false synthesis ("It was the fatal union between Christ and Aristotle that was broken by the reformers," p. 186), and the Remonstrant position as a re-introduction of human autonomy and hence a return to the same basic Roman synthesis. The views of the Roman Catholic historian of doctrine, John Adam Mùhler (1796-1838), are discussed. He wrote a work comparing Protestant and Roman Catholic confessions. Van Til objects to his charge that the reformers taught determinism. Vatican II and the "Confession of 1967" (connected with the merger of the United Presbyterian Church of North America and the Presbyterian Church in the USA) are also discussed. Dort is still significant, Van Til concludes, because we face the same kind of apostasy as the fathers faced.

Some paragraphs on pp. 119-120 (the chapter on preaching) remind one of recent developments in the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod. "Only by increasingly filling the pulpits with young men sympathetic to creedal laxity could they [the Arminians] hope to maintain themselves. Thus delay was to their advantage ..." "During this period, then, congregations were rent by schism." "Often it is insinuated that the Calvinists were rigid, unbending and intolerant, while the Arminians were champions of religious freedom. History gives the lie to this construction."

More than once (pp. 138, 143, 147) one finds statements which warn against excessive curiosity in matters beyond us, and against permitting the voice of reason to lead us to conclusions which are contrary to the Word of God. Would that such excellent advice would be more consistently heeded in the area of election! How much futile discussion of pseudo-problems might have been avoided as a result!

This leads to the final observation. One searches in vain for real clarity on Law and Gospel precisely at those points where one seeks it most anxiously. Even a brief study of such material lifts one to a new level of appreciation of the beautiful statement in our *Formula of Concord*: "As the distinction between the Law and the Gospel is a special brilliant light, which serves to the end that God's Word may be rightly divided, and the Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles may be properly explained and understood, we must guard it with especial care ..."⁸

How clear and welcome also, by contrast, are the insights of J. P. Koehler: "The doctrine of hardening is the intensification⁹ of the Law just as the doctrine of the election of grace is of the Gospel. That is, both doctrines drive home most emphatically a central thought, whether of the Law or of the Gospel; in them the thought comes to its strongest expression. Through the Law God reveals himself as the almighty Lord and Judge of the world, accountable to no one. God is sovereign in his judgment. That is expressed by the statement: He hardens whom he will. Similarly, he reveals himself as sovereign in his grace. The doctrine of the election of grace expresses this. In this way both doctrines have in common that they are intensifications of the area of doctrine which they represent."¹⁰

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," (II Tim. 2:15).

The book offers countless fascinating leads, as it launches us into the whole area of recent developments in Reformed thought and life. Perhaps the occasional pursuit of topics in this area will be of interest to our readers.

R. Wehrwein

FOOTNOTES

1. Masthead of *Present Truth*.

2. A copy was finally located in Richard Owen Roberts' large, religious, second-hand bookstore, 205 East Kehoe Boulevard, Wheaton, Illinois, 60187. Previous efforts to locate the book in similar stores in Grand Rapids and Chicago had failed, and it appeared that one might have to be content with the last resort of finding some means of procuring the book on loan from an out-of-state library!
3. Unfortunately, the book is marred by a large number of misprints, at least one of which is mildly humorous: we learn of Gomarus on p. 44 that "he remained a superlapsarian [*sic*] until his death." The closing quotationmarks in line four of p. 66 should be omitted. Not only are words misspelled; even an occasional sentence is mauled, whether by word omission (pp. 128, 151, 189), mistaken punctuation (p. 174: evidently the comma at the end of line four should be a period), or even other means (pp. 104-105).
4. It was when Arminius undertook the task of refuting Coornhert that he began entertaining doubts of his own on the doctrine of election, doubts which he was unable to dispel.
5. It seems that Vorstius was appointed to replace Arminius in his professorship at Leiden when the latter died in 1609. (Cf. pp. 44 & 49.) Thereupon Gomarus, staunch Calvinist, resigned to take a pastorate at Middleburg (p. 44). But such was the uproar over the appointment of Vorstius (even James I of England attacked him for his Arminian doctrines — "which came close to Socinian teachings") that he was subsequently dismissed and settled elsewhere in 1612 (p. 49). What is confusing is that it is also stated of Vorstius on p. 47 that he took the place of Gomarus at Leiden. Equally confusing is the fact that it is stated of Episcopius, both that "he occupied the position of Professor of Theology vacated by Franciscus Gomarus" (p. 42), and that he "succeeded Arminius as professor of theology at Leiden" (p. 54). A little clarification at some point would have been appreciated. A statement regarding Episcopius similar to the one on p. 54 is to be found in Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom* (Vol. I, p. 511, Baker Book House, paperback edition of 1977). Both *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church* (J. D.

Douglas, editor, Zondervan, 1974) and the *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (four-volume edition, 1891) state that Vorstius replaced Arminius and that Episcopius replaced Gomarus. Gomarus, by the way, did not leave Leiden until 1611.

6. This chapter contains two quotations on the nature of Arminianism. The first is from F. Platt's article on "Arminianism" in the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, James Hastings, editor: "Theologically, Arminianism is a mediating system throughout. Its most characteristic feature is conditionalism. Absolutism is its most persistent opposite; moderation, the mark of its method ... it sought to construct a system which should be dominantly ethical and human throughout. It contended, therefore, that moral principles and laws consistently condition the manward activities of the Divine will ... But whilst the peculiarity of Calvinism is found in holding fast to the absolute idea of God in opposition to all 'idolatry of the creature,' the centre of gravity of the Arminian system is found in the sphere of anthropology." (Quoted on p. 124.) The second is from William Cunningham's book, *Historical Theology* (Edinburgh, 1870), Vol. II, pp. 374f.: "The fundamental characteristic of Arminianism (shows itself as) a scheme for dividing or partitioning the salvation of sinners between God and sinners themselves, instead of ascribing it wholly, as the Bible does, to the sovereign grace of God — the perfect and all-sufficient work of Christ — and the efficacious and omnipotent operation of the Spirit" (Quoted on p. 125).
7. The statement in question is this: "The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as He pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice" (Quoted on p. 154).
8. FC, "Thorough Declaration," Art. V, "Of the Law and the Gospel," *Triglotta*, p. 951.
9. That is an attempt to render the German *Exponent*, a mathematical term representing the English "exponent" or "index." Apparently Koehler has reference to the

raising of a number to a higher power (e.g., five cubed). What the exponent is to the original number, the doctrine of hardening is to the Law and election to the Gospel. The illustration is stunningly apt and illuminating!

10. *"Die Lehre von der Verstockung ist der Exponent des Gesetzes wie die Lehre von der Gnadenwahl der des Evangeliums, d.h. beide Lehren treiben einen Hauptgedanken je des Gesetzes oder des Evangeliums am tiefsten ein; in ihnen kommt der Gedanke zum stärksten Ausdruck. Durch das Gesetz offenbart sich Gott als der allmächtige Herr und Richter der Welt, der Niemandem Rechenschaft schuldig ist. Gott ist souverän in seiner Gnade. Das drückt die Lehre von der Gnadenwahl aus. Insofern haben beide Lehren das gemeinsame, dass sie Exponenten des Lehrgebietes sind, das sie vertreten."* ("Die Lehre der Schrift von der Verstockung," J. P. Koehler, Conclusion, *Theologische Quartalschrift*, January, 1913, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 30).

We regret to inform our subscribers that by resolution of the Church of the Lutheran Confession, in its convention of last July, we are obliged to increase the subscription cost. The new rates established by the convention are as follows:

One year: \$5.00; two years: \$9.00.

The new rate is now in effect. Subscribers who receive notice that their subscriptions have expired with this or a previous issue will kindly renew at the new rates.

Prof. John Lau, Managing Editor



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