



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

I Timothy 4:15

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THE PROPER SEPARATION OF LAW AND GOSPEL IN ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR PURE DOCTRINE AND CHRISTIAN LIFE*

What has been said in the foregoing, *in abstracto*, about the difference in the nature, purpose, and effect of Law and Gospel, respectively, is now also to be applied in a proper and practical way to all preaching, pastoral, and official work toward the unconverted and converted, non-Christians and Christians, hardened and penitent. And it can all be summarized in two points: Law and Gospel are never to be separated from each other, and they are never to be mingled.

Law and Gospel dare never be torn from each other in our preaching. Neither of the two, standing alone as an independent thing, can fulfill God's purpose adequately with respect to conversion and sanctification. Although the Law is a part of God's Word, and also the Gospel is a part of the same, yet neither by itself and without the other is the Word, as little as half a man is a man. The Word of God essentially consists of Law and Gospel, and only when the two stand together in their God-given union do they constitute the Word of God. No single part of the Word alone, as essential as it may be, but the total Word, is the saving Word. The Law by itself can only kill, and the Gospel, taken alone without the preceding Law, is and remains an offense unto the Jews and a stumbling-block unto the Greeks, although in itself it is the power of God unto salvation. God has for that reason revealed both doctrines as necessary for the salvation of sinners. He has placed both of them together so that jointly each may fulfill its appointed function for the pardoning, conversion, and sanctifica-

* Note: This presentation comprises the third part of an article by Prof. Aug. Pieper that was originally published in the October, 1910, issue of the *Theologische Quartalschrift*, with the title, "*Die rechte Scheidung von Gesetz und Evangelium in ihrer Bedeutung fuer reine Lehre und christliches Leben.*" The translation is by Waldemar Schuetze.

tion of the lost, not indeed as twin sisters, of like nature and equal worthiness, but rather as maid and woman, servant and mistress, as such who in their work inseparably belong together and never, never walk their separate ways as they go about fulfilling their calling.

It must never be forgotten that as different as Law and Gospel are with respect to their specific nature, office, and effects, both are aimed toward the common purpose of saving and sanctifying the sinner, and indeed in this way, that each renders its specific purpose toward this end. From the very outset they are placed in relation to each other, are adapted to each other and correspondingly adjusted, like hook and eye, bullet and trigger, male and female. They are correlates. As man cannot beget without a woman, or the woman without a man, so the Law without the Gospel, and the Gospel without the Law, cannot spiritually engender unto eternal life, cannot regenerate. As the creation of man would have served no reasonable purpose, without regard for the woman, and *vice versa*, so, with respect to conversion and salvation of the sinner, the revelation of the Law with its commands, prohibitions, curses, threats, and terrors, would be senseless, were it not for the Gospel which delivers the sinner out of the arms of the Law, comforts and heals him for the purpose of saving him. Also the revelation of the Gospel would be senseless without the Law as its counterpart, if the Law would not, so to speak, as a taskmaster drive the sinner toward Christ. The Gospel alone in the world, without the Law preceding it, can only increase fleshly security and impenitence, evoke ridicule and scorn in the hearts of sinners who have experienced no terror and are living in comfortable security. No, Law and Gospel are effective for conversion, sanctification, and salvation only when they stand in relation to each other and are combined with each other. The Law would not have been revealed if the Gospel had not been there, and the Gospel would not have been revealed if the Law had not been there. They are inseparable correlates. Whoever separates them and treats them as independent quantities annuls their purpose, destroys their saving effect. They must always be preached together.

Law and Gospel must go together, first of all, where

it concerns the unconverted, the heathen, worldlings, apostates, Pharisees, slaves of sin, the wise, worldly-minded, scorners and scoffers, murmurers and disputers with God, in every instance where a conversion is involved. True, the Law by itself achieves the knowledge of sin and contrition, but unless the Gospel is added, it is no more than *contritio passiva*, driving man into despair and perdition, worldly sorrow, which unmistakably works death. Only when the Gospel is added, evoking hope and faith in grace, will the sinner be converted and only then will godly sorrow be engendered, "a repentance to salvation not to be repented of," (II Cor. 7:10). Nothing could be worse than going to the heathen or to the marketplace of a godless metropolis, and for half a year, or only four weeks, or for the length of one single sermon, preaching only the flaming, condemning Law and for the first maintaining absolute, complete silence regarding the Gospel, with the thought, perhaps, of first of all effectively terrifying the impenitent and taking heed not to weaken the thrust of the Law by a premature addition of the Gospel. That would be horrible preaching and an atrocious venture. This is not God's will. This would only cause bitterness, blasphemy, and despair. We do not know how fast or how slowly the Law achieves its terrifying, killing effects, and we dare not become guilty of destroying souls in complete despair and hardening by withholding the Gospel. The Gospel dare not be withheld one hour from one who has been terrified by the Law. Satan in the meantime could murder his soul. We have no right to permit one captured by the Law to lie one minute longer than necessary in the agony and danger of despair and hardening. He needs divine comfort immediately. He must at once learn to know the way of escape out of fear and danger. It is a wrong, thoroughly unevangelical, and completely legalistic (and, in addition, pharisaical) thought that terror over sin must first have become really deep and thorough and reached a certain stage, before the hope of grace through the Gospel dare be awakened. This is found nowhere in Scripture. This is adding to God's Word, botching up God's work with man's work, and seeking to improve upon God's conversion method. God has nowhere said how deep the terror over the Law must be in order to make conversion through the Gospel thorough and genuine. When, where, and how deep He shoots His darts

into the heart of the one or the other is His business and belongs to His majesty. Whoever dabbles in His work sets himself on His throne and corrupts His work. And even where only a tiny terror of His wrath exists, God can through the Gospel effect a proper, genuine, true saving faith. The result is not our affair at all. Whether it concerns Law or Gospel, we cannot by our own exertion add the least bit to the killing of the former nor to the quickening of the latter. It is not our assignment to accomplish, but to preach; and we are to take heed that we do it aright: Law and Gospel together, combined with each other, each always and immediately set in relation to each other — selfevidently in keeping with God's direction.

It would be just as wrong if a pastor were to approach one who has fallen into gross sin or unbelief, an impenitent, hardened person, exclusively with the rigor and sharpness of the Law until one would judge that he has been crushed. He would have to wait a long time. For the Law does not produce true crushing in the sense of genuine repentance. The repentance of a Peter is produced only by the look of the Lord, reproof and gracious pardon, earnestness and love, Law and Gospel combined with each other. Indeed, the Law by itself works terror, but at the same time also rebellion, embitterment, hardening, not a spark of a blessed repentance like Peter's. The prophets of the Old Covenant, also John the Baptist, the Lord Himself, and the apostles of the New Covenant without exception reprove sin, the unbelief of the people and the rulers of the people, as apostasy from the Lord Who revealed Himself unto Israel as the God of grace, abundantly showering them with grace and keeping faithfulness. Always, always, the preaching of the Law is set in relation to the Gospel. Their sermon of repentance is reproof and inviting at the same time, combining Law and Gospel. "Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep mine anger forever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast scattered thy ways ..." (Jeremiah 3:12-13). "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," is the form of the New Testament. It must never be forgotten

that the Gospel only then works repentance when preached in relation to the Law.

Brotherly admonition according to Matthew 18 is neither admonition nor brotherly if it operates exclusively with the Law; if it only condemns sin, but does not invite a return and does not attract with God's grace. One must not regard Nathan's preaching of repentance directed to David as pure preaching of the Law (II Sam. 12). Before proclaiming the Lord's sword he holds before David all the special grace with which God had favored him, which naturally included God's general grace and sonship. At the very outset he sets the fearful punishment in relation to the Gospel, and thereby brings the king to confess: "I have sinned against the Lord."

Even the banning of a sinner is not an independent operation of the Law. The bondwoman does not put the impenitent out of the Church until the saving function which the royal mistress has carried out has proved to be fruitless and she has delivered the scorner of the Gospel over for disposition of the case. But even then it is not an unconditional delivering over, but a delivering into a state of imprisonment, "as long as he does not repent," with the hope for a return, "for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus," (I Cor. 5:5). Here the Law in this dismissal once more points to the Gospel and proves itself also here as a taskmaster unto Christ. Thus the final removal of the Old Testament covenant people, the Babylonian exile, was a repudiation in hope, aiming toward repentance and return, and a returning to the land of promise, into the gracious arms of the ancient God. The Old Testament Scripture in the final chapter of the last prophet has the ring of a fearful threat, but at the same time points to God's grace through the promise of the Sun of Righteousness and the turning of the children to their fathers.

As the Law must never be preached apart from its relation to the Gospel, so also the Gospel must not be preached except in relation to the Law. The Gospel never stands alone as an independent entity by itself, apart from the preaching of the Law. The Gospel essentially

is preaching suited to the Law that precedes it. Every concept and point relating to the Gospel presupposes the Law and Law preaching, the demands and threats of the Law, the transgression and condemnation of the Law. Thus mercy, grace, Christ's incarnation, obedience, suffering, death, vicarious atonement — in short, everything about Christ and about the Gospel, taken as a whole and in all its parts, presupposes the concepts and things resulting from the Law, such as sin, guilt, and damnation. They presuppose also that these are factual and real, and as such fearfully affect man. The Gospel begins where the Law has fulfilled its work. It takes man out of the arms of the Law and cannot take hold of him in any other way. The Gospel can only approach a person who has been bound by the Law and locked up under it. Only to such a person does its authority and power relate. It has absolutely nothing to do with the righteous outside the Law. In the case of such it falls to the ground and becomes an absurdity. The Gospel essentially is a correlate of the Law. Apart from the Law there is no Gospel.

Now someone could draw Antinomian ideas out of this essential relation of the Gospel to the Law; could regard the special preaching of the Law as superfluous; and could imagine that "reproving of sin, repentance and sorrow is to be taught, not from the Law, but from the Gospel," (Triglotta, FC, p. 957.15). But our confession in a detailed exposition justifiably rejects this thought. For although it is true that the Gospel confirms the preaching of the Law, and that there can be no more fearful showing and preaching of the wrath of God over sin than the suffering and death of Christ, His Son, nevertheless all this, on the one hand, as long as it proclaims the wrath of God and terrifies man, is not Gospel and Christ's own preaching, but it is Moses and the Law upon the impenitent. On the other hand, the Gospel and Christ have not been instituted and given to terrify, nor to damn, but to comfort and raise up the fearful and timid (*Ibid.* Luther, 5 after Trinity). Even as ordination may confirm the call of a pastor but cannot replace it, even so the Gospel confirms the Law but cannot replace it and crowd it out. The showing and preaching of the wrath of God over sin from the suffering and death of Christ may deepen and ennoble the knowledge of sin gain-

ed from the Law in the case of the penitent, but it cannot bring forth in the impenitent the knowledge of sin achieved by the Law and the necessary desperate terror.

We therefore must not think that we can convert the heathen, the ungodly world, renegades, and backsliders in the congregation solely through the preaching of the Gospel. The command of Christ, "Preach the Gospel to every creature," is spoken a *potiore parte* and does not exclude the Law but includes it. Also the fact that natural man, also the heathen, still has the Law in his conscience and therefore also possesses a certain knowledge of sin does not render the special preaching of the Law superfluous. Because natural man's knowledge of sin is so limited and his understanding so perverted, therefore pride of wisdom, self-righteousness, love of the world, lust and sin have captured his heart to such an extent that, without the special proclamation of God's wrath, he lives on in carnal security, lulling himself to sleep with a thousand false hopes and scorning the Gospel as foolishness. No, the world does not even want to know its wretchedness from the Law as it is specially revealed and preached to it. The apostates of Israel have a face harder than stone and do not want to be converted. God smites them, but they do not feel it; He has troubled them, but they have refused to be corrected, (Jeremiah 5:3). The more they are stricken, the more they revolt, (Isaiah 1:5). How can the heathen without the special preaching of the Law be brought to that desperation which drives them into the pleading arms of the Gospel, inasmuch as they are people who themselves not only do what they know from the knowledge of God's righteousness to be worthy of death, but also have pleasure in those who do it, (Romans 1:32)?

God certainly would not have specially revealed the Law if He would not have wanted it to be specially proclaimed. He would then not have given the Law with so many signs of His earnestness and wrath over sinners and attached so many fearful threats and curses. And if He had so specially revealed it, He caused it to be specially preached again and again by His prophets. "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression and the house of Ja-

cob their sins," (Isaiah 58:1). John the Baptist must go before the Lord as a special preacher of the Law and prepare His way. The Lord Himself not only interprets the Law but pronounces woe upon woe on the hardened Pharisees and the cities which rejected His Gospel. Yes, the evangelical promise, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," has another side (Law), "He that believeth not shall be damned." And the commission of Christ to His apostles to preach the Gospel to the world is comprehended by Peter in this twofold declaration, "And he commanded us to preach unto the people and to testify that it is he which is ordained of God to be the Judge of the quick and the dead," - that is Law - and the other is the Gospel: "To him give all the prophets witness that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

We therefore find that there is no prophet or apostle who maintained silence regarding the Law and exclusively preached the Gospel. In Peter's first sermons in Jerusalem, which were typical examples for later times, as we note from the first chapters of Acts, the sharp preaching of the Law was inserted into the middle of Gospel preaching. So it was also with Stephen (Acts 7), and with Paul, in all his sermons and epistles.

All are therefore without excuse who are of the opinion that it is not necessary specially to accuse the unbelievers of their sins and to condemn their ways, since the Gospel alone is the power of God unto salvation, and that it therefore suffices to make this alone known to the world. This opinion is without ground in Scripture and is based on one's own wisdom. It is born out of fear of men and a shunning of the cross.

In the case of fallen and backsliding members of a congregation there appears to be much greater cause for withholding the special preaching of the Law. Have they not abundantly learned the Law in its revealed form and know it? Why the special preaching of the Law for them? Such conclusions are based on man's own wisdom. Where the impenitent are concerned - and here we are speaking only of them - we cannot brush aside the responsibility to picture their sin as it actually is and to proclaim

to the impenitent the wrath of God. He cannot be brought to repentance in any other way. It would be a denial of God's earnestness and holiness to keep silence and conceal the sin with the thought of winning over the impenitent with the sweetness of the Gospel alone. Concealing God's threat here would be hypocrisy, spiritual quackery. It would mean leading the man into carnal security instead of to faith and to cast the pearls before the swine. Under all conditions the impenitent need the Law, above all and first of all, and thereafter first the Gospel.

And there are presumably pastors - thank God, not among us - who regard all discipline in doctrine and life as legalistic and unjustified; who want to regulate everything only with the Gospel; who would excommunicate no one; who would endure everything, and cover and improve everything with the Gospel. That is not evangelical but a denial of the truth. The word applies to them: "They are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark," (Isaiah 56: 10). The result is that the congregation becomes a wild crowd, a Babel, like the state church in Germany, and souls are ruined.

No, no, not the Law alone - that will turn the impenitent only into Pharisees or despairing Judases; but also not the Gospel alone - that will only serve to confirm sinners in their carnal security. But the Law and the Gospel together, the one in a proper way always relating to the other - the Law as a taskmaster unto Christ; the Gospel as deliverance from the curse of the Law: that is the saving Word, the power of God unto salvation for all unconverted and lost.

But also in the case of the CONVERTED, believers, pious, dear children of God, who in all earnestness work out their salvation, also they cannot dispense with the special preaching of the Law and Gospel. But is it not written: "The Law is not made for a righteous man but for the lawless," (I Tim. 1:9)? Yes, and we dare not let even the least of this be bartered away for us. We Christians have not only been redeemed from the curse (Gal. 3:13), but also from the slavery, from the coercion and pressure of the Law (Rom. 7:1-6; Gal. 3:25ff.).

We are no longer servants but children of God, and such as have come of age at that (Gal. 4:1-7). We have received the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father (Rom. 8:15f.). We Christians, as such, do not even need the outward Law as an instructor anymore, in order to teach us what pleases God and what displeases Him. By our conversion and enlightenment of the Holy Ghost we are all taught of God (John 6:45; Is. 54:13). His Law is written in our heart and given into our mind, so that no one need teach the other, but all from the least to the greatest know God (Jeremiah 31:33ff.). This has been given us through the Gospel, which teaches us again to know God by faith as the one and only great treasure, as the first commandment also pictures Him. — But this must not be forgotten, that this applies to us Christians only, IN SO FAR AS we Christians have been regenerated and are spiritual. This we are not altogether but only in part. We still have much of the evil flesh on us and in us, which does not want to know instruction from the Law, does not want to hear what it commands and forbids, but always wants to go the wrong way, do the opposite, yes, at all times resists the Law. Therefore we Christians cannot get along without the Law, whether it be instruction, or coercion, or curse, but the Law must always be fostered as special preaching among us. Nowhere do we find a better writing on this than in our Confession (Trigl. Formula of Concord, Art. VI, Ep. and Thor. Decl.): "Of the Third Use of the Law," to which we here now direct you. At the close of the Epitome and Thorough Declaration it is stated: "Accordingly we reject as a dogma and error and injurious to, and conflicting with, Christian discipline and true godliness that the teaching that the Law in the above-mentioned way and degree, is not to be urged upon Christians and true believers, but only upon unbelievers, non-Christians, and the impenitent." We would here yet direct your attention to this point that the Confession emphasizes strongly that the Law must be held up before us Christians, because of our Old Adam, and that, not only for the purpose of instruction and as a mirror to show our sin, but also as a force and threat (Trigl. FC, Ep. p. 807.3). "For the Old Adam, as an intractable, refractory ass, is still a part of them, which must be coerced to the obedience of Christ, not only by the teaching,

admonition, force, and threatening of the Law, but also oftentimes by the club of punishments and troubles, until the body of sin is entirely put off ..." (Trigl. FC, Thor. Decl. p. 969.24).

Therefore, regular public preaching in the Christian congregation must also include the preaching of the Law, already for the reason that hypocrites are mixed in with the outward Church and here and there also un-Christian people of the world appear and hear the sermon; but also because of the flesh of the dear children of God. They are continually in need of the instruction from the Law, in order that they may always better prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Yes, the Law must be exposed to its depths and set forth in its fullest extent. Our Christians must be brought to a thorough knowledge of the Law and not kept standing at the outward letter. Therefore, in our Lutheran churches special Catechism sermons have been preached from time to time, in which particularly also the Ten Commandments have been expounded. The Epistles of the Church Year offer frequent opportunity for sermons on the Law, and these by no means have to become sermons legalistic in character. There is a need among Christians for fostering an ever deeper knowledge and consciousness of sin, aiming toward greater humility and learning more and more to shun the sins that are so prevalent in the world. There is a need for nurturing tender sensitivity of conscience, which refuses to give consent to any sin and also regards the so-called little sins as great. This is brought about above all through the Gospel. But the knowledge as to what sin is comes from the Law. Therefore the Law must always again be set before the Christian as a mirror which shines into the most secret recesses of the evil heart, yes, exposes original sin as the prime abomination, so that daily repentance does not appear as something superfluous but always grows in earnestness and thoroughness. In all circumstances of life, in each station and calling, in their association with the world, amid all the false moralistic views that surround them, Christians should be fit to walk the right way, and in the midst of this perverse generation to shine as lights in the world. They are to devote them-

selves to the work of their inner sanctification, through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, and incessantly exercise themselves in all virtues. The strength for this comes from the Gospel. The Law as a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path points out the way to the Christian, who is not yet altogether spiritual.

In like manner, also the individual members of the congregation, including faithful Christians, need the instruction of the Law where they do not know the way. They need the reproof of the Law where they err or are careless. They need warning against sins, false doctrine, unbelief, and the fashions of the world. They need the threatenings of God's wrath and punishment where they are inclined to yield to the will of the flesh. Yes, God Himself may smite them with plagues and punishments, when they go astray, and He forces the Old Adam, who does not want to listen, at least to render outward obedience, which indeed as such is worthless before God, as the above-cited paragraph from the Formula of Concord indicates. So also the spiritual training of Christians unto perfection does not come to pass without the Law.

In the case of Christians, even more so than with the unregenerate, the Law dare not assume a greater role than that of a bondwoman. Whenever the Law steps above its function to instruct Christians after the flesh, where it would be more than a mirror, do more than warn and force obedience by threatening and plaguing, where it puts on airs as though it could produce spiritual fruit of any kind, there everything is brought to ruin. The proper essential preaching for Christians is the Gospel. From it they draw life and joy, sap and strength for their spiritual life. Yes, faith itself lives only by the Gospel, in no part by the Law. Therefore, much less so in the case of Christians than with the unbelieving world, the Law dare not be preached to them as the principal thing. As soon as the Law has shown Christians the way of godly living, the Gospel must come and give them willingness to do it. As soon as the Law has revealed sin, the Gospel must proclaim forgiveness and work repentance. Everything that is called Law can only make room for grace and must leave it to grace to exercise lordship over the Christian.

We now come to another point. Law and Gospel must be separated completely from each other and dare not be mingled. No piece of the Gospel dare be mixed with the Law, and no piece of the Law dare be mixed with the Gospel. From what has been emphasized before, it is evident at this point that we do not have in mind the combining of Law and Gospel for the purpose of achieving repentance and sanctification. What is rather meant is that nothing of the nature of the Gospel dare be brought into the Law, and nothing of the nature of the Law dare be carried into the Gospel. The Law dare not have an evangelical tone and ring, and the Gospel dare not have a legalistic one. The Law dare lose none of its sharpness and the Gospel none of its sweetness. Something already is broken off from the hardness of the Law when its range or scope is narrowed, when one does not allow it to enfold all facets of conduct and all impulses of the heart, when one point or another is declared to be forbidden, or not forbidden which God Himself has not commanded or forbidden. "Thoughts are free!" — so goes the saying where man is concerned, but it is not so before God. Thus not only crass pelagianism and semipelagianism, but also the faintest synergism, which ascribes to natural man any kind of spiritual strength (whether it be only the Melanchtonian "*facultas se applicandi ad gratiam*" or Schmidt's "ethical personality" or Ohio's capacity of unregenerate man, under prevenient grace, through powers given him by grace, to determine to submit to grace, and to give up wilful resistance) is an un-Scriptural weakening of the Law, a denial of man's total corruption through original sin as clearly taught in the Law, a denial of man's total corruption through original sin as clearly taught in the Law, a denial of spiritual death and natural man's fierce hatred against God, which robs the Gospel of as much power and glory as it ascribes unto man, and removes man from the judgment of the Law. That is more than "breaking one of these least commandments"; that means rendering the judgment of the Law concerning natural man's unspiritual condition topsy-turvy, rendering Law and Gospel at this point ineffectual, dealing deceitfully with unregenerate man by referring him to his own spiritual powers, thus preventing him from despairing utterly in himself and causing him to place his confidence in a false, self-devised conversion. Syner-

gism differs from crass pelagianism, humanism, deism, rationalism, and the lodge religion, not in essence, but only in degree. It is a fine, subtle nullification of the Law and as such a corruption of the saving Word of God, whereas these are gross, open expressions of the same.

A weakening of the intensity of the Law belongs in the same field. Scripture has much to say concerning the wrath of God. God's wrath is directed against every sin, and also against original sin. His wrath burns down into the lowest hell. God has set death, temporal ruin, and eternal torment as the punishment for every sin, also the smallest sin, and, above all, for original sin. He has pronounced the judgment of hell upon all men without exception. Whoever depicts original sin as an innocent thing or regards it only as a trivial offense; whoever points to original sin as an excuse for actual sin or uses any sin as a cover-up for another; whoever believes and teaches that God is not so angry that He sets our iniquity before Him, our secret sins in the light of His countenance; whoever whitewashes sin, weakens sin, denies eternal punishment of hellfire, or inserts a purgatory between heaven and hell; whoever teaches that there exists a certain condition of development after death; whoever represents God, as though His threats were not to be taken seriously, as though He were much too kind and good to impose death and damnation upon man because of sin and unbelief, and as though God were satisfied if man at least in some measure made an honorable effort to be virtuous — he is mixing evangelical thoughts into the Law and nullifying both Law and Gospel. And we Christian preachers are especially in danger of mingling Gospel with the Law by offering false comfort to man who is too weak to fulfill the Law, offering Christ in the form of a sop, in this sense: Do as much as you can, and as for the rest, put your trust in Christ, Who came to save weak sinners. In line with this is the false comfort we like to give ourselves: That, so long as our life is generally Christian, we may serve this or that lust without incurring God's wrath, or that we postpone repentance with the thought that God will not close the door of grace already today. — In brief, whoever shaves off anything from the zeal, demands, content, or validi-

ty of the Law, either weakening it by pure human tampering, or through mingling of evangelical thoughts, is impeding the effectiveness of the Law and blocking the sinner's way to repentance. Impenitence touching one point of the Law is impenitence on the whole, and when the Law is stripped of its earnestness, it no longer is the two-edged sword, piercing and dividing soul and spirit, as Hebrews 4:12 pictures it. The Law must be preached as being so free of all grace, patience, leniency, and its unrelenting, demanding, damning special character so completely set forth that every hearer will have to say with David, "My flesh trembleth because of thee," (Psalm 119:120).

Much less dare a legalistic tone be injected into the Gospel, which would annul its nature and destroy its effectiveness. This occurs at once where the smallest condition is attached to the evangelical promises. It has been shown before that the Gospel in its essence dispenses unconditional grace, even as the Law pronounces an unconditional curse upon sinners. Also faith is not a condition to be met but rather the result of an unconditional absolution spoken through the Word. We want to repeat this briefly. The descriptive statement, "He who believes shall be saved," might be understood either in an evangelical or legal sense. It is evangelical only when it is placed in proper contrast to work-righteousness, and then it is not set before man as a condition of justification, but it is part of the doctrine which proclaims free, unconditional grace, without price, and is proof that without any effort or work on our part we are saved alone and completely by grace, as Paul argues in Romans 4:16: "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to end the promise might be sure to all the seed." The Law also promised grace but under the condition of obedience. This promise did not remain firm, because obedience was lacking, upon which the promise was based. If the Gospel were also a promise of a conditional nature, with dependence on human performance, it likewise could not remain sure. It can remain sure only if it is not dependent on human effort, but is of faith. And only then can righteousness come by grace, absolute free goodwill, if it is not of works, but imparted by faith.

One would have to be stricken with blindness if one did not see that here faith is not a legalistic demand, a condition of justification, but the means of appropriating to oneself the freely proffered righteousness, altogether unconditional, in contrast to any legalistic requirement as a condition to be met. Therefore righteousness must be of faith because it is unconditional in its nature and because the promise is to remain firm to all the seed. Whoever therefore preaches faith as a condition of righteousness is confronting the person to be justified with a demand, that is, he is preaching the Law, yes, the very first commandment, when he ought to be proclaiming unto him the pure Gospel, free, unconditional absolution. He has mingled the Law with the Gospel. He has set at nought the very essence of the Gospel, has destroyed its justifying, faith-achieving power, and hindered the engendering of faith by his legalistic demands. For faith cannot be produced by any demand, but only through the evangelical, unconditional, divine vouchsafing of grace, by the Gospel alone, uncontaminated by elements of the Law. And only by the Gospel can faith also be preserved and increased. As no one can be brought to faith by a conditional Gospel, so it also follows that no one can remain in the faith, if faith is always laid before him as a condition of justification. Faith essentially is trust, assurance. "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day," (II Tim. 1:12; Rom. 8:35ff.). In these words everything Paul says breathes Gospel. He wants to comfort himself and other troubled Christians, heavy-laden with sorrow. His anchor is the evangelical promises of God (consider especially the Romans passage). These promises are unconditional. God in His faithfulness has promised him and all His dear children through the Gospel: "Fear not thou; 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," (Isaiah 41:10). And this promise is not based on man's good conduct foreseen by God, his perseverance in the faith, on anything like that, but it rests entirely on God's free, voluntary mercy, grounded in Himself, in His gracious goodwill through Christ. Yes, it has been given us, in spite of God's foreknowledge of our evil

conduct over against His grace, as a comfort against all the perverseness of our flesh, the world, and Satan. "But thou hast not called me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel. Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings, neither hast thou honored me with the sacrifices ... but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins," (Isaiah 43:22ff.). This one word stands here as representing all evangelical promises and assuring us of our faith's preservation over against all the wiles of the devil, the world, and our own flesh. These assurances are unconditional, as all evangelical promises, all grace are. If that is true, I can also unconditionally place my trust in them. The assurance of faith - and this is here stated clearly and with special purpose - in its nature is unconditional, as unconditional as are the promises on which it stands. So also the assurance for the future, my preservation in the faith, which St. Paul in II Tim. 1:12 combines with the certainty of our present state of grace - the two really being the same thing - is unconditional, altogether unconditional, because God's promise to keep me unto the end is altogether unconditional.

But here an objection that appears so great may be raised: Is it not also written: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," (Rev. 2:10); "Hold that fast which thou hast that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God," (Rev. 3:11f.); "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," (Phil 2:12)? Does not Paul, in addition to II Tim. 1:12, also say: "I have fought a good fight ... I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day..." (II Tim. 4:7-8)? "He that endureth to the end shall be saved," (Matt. 10:22). Is not the promise of salvation in these and a thousand other places a conditional one, salvation promised on the condition of faithfulness, wrestling, perseverance? We reply: Yes, obviously! Yes, but does that then not also necessarily make all assurance of salvation conditional, the condi-

tion being the Christian's faithfulness? We say: NO, a thousand times NO! Whoever says "Yes" here reveals thereby that he does not know how to separate Law and Gospel, that he is not aware of the fact that he is mingling Law with Gospel, thus corrupting the one through the other. He has committed the fateful mistake of regarding so-called evangelical admonition as pure evangelical promise. On this point a widespread lack of clarity prevails in all Christendom, and tragically also in many parts of the Lutheran Church. For clarification we wish to state the following: There is a threefold form of divine doctrine. The first is the Law with its absolute demands and condemnation, which is to be preached to all the unregenerate and also to Christians, insofar as they still are unregenerate. - The second is the absolutely acquitting and absolving Gospel, which is to be proclaimed to all terrified by the Law, whether they are yet unconverted or are already Christians, in order that they may believe and be assured of their salvation, and - properly understood - become absolutely sure. - The third form is evangelical admonition, by which Christians are to be encouraged unto sanctification. It consists of a combination of Law and Gospel corresponding to the present state of a Christian. A Christian in this life, concretely understood, is a combination of flesh and Spirit; he is new man and old man in one and the same person. Insofar as he is Spirit, regenerate, born of God, of divine and spiritual nature, he is in need of no Law at all. He lives purely by the Gospel through faith. But insofar as he still is flesh, the Gospel is pure poison to him; he needs pure Law and nothing but the Law. Being at the same time Spirit and flesh, he needs both: Gospel and Law properly combined, though always cleanly separated from each other. But now a Christian is not flesh and Spirit in equal halves, but the Spirit predominates in him, is the ruling, controlling principle, while the flesh, though still very strong, does not control him, but still adheres to him and makes him sluggish unto all good. But now, in order that the Christian, who in the main is spiritual but still is burdened by the flesh, may more and more be perfected in sanctification, it is God's will that His twofold word, Law and Gospel, be applied to him as admonition; that is, in this wise, that the Law show him, insofar as he still is flesh, how he is to

walk, what he is to do, what the object of his striving is to be, and unto what he is to apply the spiritual powers that are in him; and that the Gospel give him, insofar as he is ruled by the Spirit, continuing joy and strength for all good works, unto which the Law directs him. The earnest but evangelical warning and threat which Paul addressed to Christians, e.g. in the following passage, rests on the same level, the same ground, and serves the same purpose: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die"; to which the admonition in the form of a promise is immediately attached: "But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live," (Rom. 8:13). Also the warning and threat so precisely set forth in the Formula of Concord ("club of punishments and troubles") is no different.

Therefore, in the case of a Christian, God combines His Law and Gospel unto evangelical admonition, warning, chastisement, in order that we may attain unto His sanctification and more and more be perfected in the fulfilling of the Law. But mark now well: evangelical admonition is neither mere Law nor mere Gospel, but a peculiar combination of both. It is not its purpose to assure the sinner terrified by the Law of his salvation, but rather aims at his sanctification, the fulfilling of the Law. Evangelical admonition does not necessarily take on the form: "This do, and thou shalt live." "Be thou faithful unto death, and (then)..." "If ye do mortify the deeds of the flesh, (then) ye shall live." The sense is exactly the same when Paul says in Romans 12:1: "I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice holy and acceptable unto God." Here as there, and there as here, the thing prescribed is Law; the motive for doing it is the Gospel. Or Philippians 2: "Work out your own salvation ... for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Here consider also the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount. It is all evangelical admonition - Law in what is prescribed, Gospel in its motivation, with this difference in the last point, that grace which should move us unto doing in one instance lies in the future, in another in the past, and in the third instance in the present.

And now, because of the promise form in which the

evangelical element of admonition often appears, people let themselves be misled into the fateful error of believing and affirming that the Gospel itself is a conditional promise, because it is written: "He that believeth and is baptized, (he) shall be saved." Again: "He that endureth unto the end, (he) shall be saved." "Be thou faithful unto death, and (then) I will give thee a crown of life." Therefore, they say, the assurance of salvation cannot be other than a conditional one. But aside from the first passage: "He that believeth ... etc." (which cannot be put in the same class with the others mentioned, because it is pure Gospel in direct opposition to salvation by works), we are faced here with a misconception, namely this: The half-Law-and-Gospel character of evangelical admonition is mistaken for pure evangelical promise. The Law portion, which a Christian needs because of the Old Adam, is smuggled into the pure evangelical promise, which is unconditional. The unconditional Gospel is made conditional. And then this corrupted Gospel, which is not Gospel at all anymore, is misused and made to serve a false purpose. Instead of applying this peculiar Law/Gospel combination in evangelical admonition as admonition to the spiritual but also still fleshly Christian as encouragement and inducement unto sanctification, it is offered as comfort against sin trouble and against the danger of perdition in which the frightened soul finds itself. And so, due to pure lack of understanding in regard to the character, function, and office of the Law and Gospel, and because Law is mixed into the Gospel, the result is a conditional Gospel, a conditional absolution, a conditional comfort, grace and assurance of salvation dependent upon one's own conduct and faithfulness, which will never allow a sinner to come to faith and find assurance and peace for his soul, but will forever let him hover in doubt and trial between heaven and hell.

We summarize: The proper separation of Law and Gospel is a great and necessary art of an evangelical preacher. If he has it, he can be a faithful servant and an effectual instrument of Christ for the salvation of many lost souls. If he does not have it, then all his preaching and pastoral activity is quackery, which spoils everything. Therefore we need to learn this art.. It is

an easy and at the same time a difficult one; easy, because the Holy Ghost works it in us through the Word, which is brighter than the sun, without any adding on our part; difficult, because reason cannot grasp it, and the flesh would always go the wrong way. Ask, and it shall be given you. Seek — in the Scripture — and you shall find. It (the proper separation of Law and Gospel) involves a threefold operation: 1. Preaching the Law with its absolute demands and condemnation to all the unregenerate, and also to the regenerate, insofar as they still are unregenerate, to shatter them. 2. Preaching the absolutely acquitting and absolving Gospel unto all who have been terrified by the Law, both unregenerate and regenerate, unto the engendering of faith and an unconditional assurance of salvation. 3. Combining the Law with its demands and the Gospel with its promises unto evangelical admonition, warning, threat, only for the spiritual children of God, who, however, still are burdened with the flesh, for the working of sanctification.

Or (to put it another way) the Christian doctrine may be comprehended in these three sentences: 1. You are damned! 2. Your sin is forgiven! 3. Therefore, go and sin no more! The first part is pure Law; the second is pure Gospel; the third is evangelical admonition. Each part is to be preached in its proper place. Then Law and Gospel are properly separated and combined, and many souls will be saved.

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mer "free conferences" such as those sponsored by Dr. C. F. W. Walther and others like him, nor can it be said that this convocation is purely academic or, indeed, secular. One would scarcely term it a cooperation in externals. It is a joint commemoration which is predicated upon a common purpose and goal which is spiritual and religious in character and function. How this can be carried on outside a framework of fellowship relations is difficult to see.

C. M. Gullerud

TO WHAT EXTENT MAY WOMEN SERVE
IN OUR
CONGREGATIONS AND SYNOD?*

It was at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848 that a general declaration was made demanding rights for woman. This began the long struggle to gain suffrage and political equality for women. In 1869 the National Woman Suffrage Association was formed to work for the adoption of a constitutional amendment, and also the American Woman Suffrage Association was organized to work with the state legislatures. Wyoming was the first state to grant suffrage to women, giving them the right to vote in 1869. In 1920 the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was passed, guaranteeing that the right of citizens to vote shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex. The women's rights movement has advanced to the present stage where women liberationists are looking forward to the adoption of the so-called Equal Rights Amendment. Thus the women's rights movement, to an ever increasing extent, is changing' the place and role of women in society.

At the same time it has had its effect also on the place and role women have in the church today. In many Protestant denominations women have been given an equal voice and vote with men in the determination of church policy and the management of church affairs. Today we are seeing women pastors in virtually every Protestant denomination, something largely unheard of before the modern women's lib movement. The Lutheran Church has not been immune to these influences either, both the Lutheran Church in America and The American Lutheran Church having enfranchised their women some time ago. The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod at its Detroit convention

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as long ago as 1965 granted women in their synod "limited suffrage," including the right to attend voters' meetings, to voice opinions, and to vote. Their suffrage was limited to those matters where the office of the Keys or doctrinal matters are not involved. The guidelines for their position on woman suffrage in the church are contained in a "Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations" which was adopted by the LCMS at its Denver Convention in 1969. Those guidelines have never been rescinded.

But how does this concern us of the Church of the Lutheran Confession, and more immediately, TO WHAT EXTENT MAY WOMEN SERVE IN OUR CONGREGATIONS AND SYNOD? Was this paper assigned so that we might reexamine our stand on women's service in the church for the purpose of modernizing it in tune with the times? Or was it assigned to quell some CLC women's-liberation-in-the-church movement? Neither! There is no desire for the former nor a need for the latter, we can confidently assert. Yet Scripture warns, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall!" (I Cor. 10:12). The formerly staunch Missouri Synod today denies the Scriptural position in the matter embraced by Dr. C. F. W. Walther, Dr. John H. C. Fritz, Dr. Georg H. Stoeckhardt, Dr. J. T. Mueller, and Dr. Francis Pieper. Among us questions of casuistry can arise which set one to wondering and studying what the Scriptural principles are that are involved in this matter. Typical casuistry questions which would lead us into a study such as this essay proposes might be: "Is it permitted for women to vote in congregational meetings? To speak at Church Council meetings? To serve on a School Board and vote? May a woman serve as lector or reader in a regular church service? May a lady teacher present an essay before a mixed teachers' conference, a pastoral conference, or a synod convention?" A question asked at a recent pastoral conference was, "May a young girl or woman serve as usher in the church service?" These and similar questions might well be summarized under the essay question, "To what extent may women serve in our congregations and synod?"

For the answer to that question we turn, as always, to our Scriptures and the principle to be found there and

applied to our questions.

I. THE HIGH CALLING GOD HAS GIVEN TO WOMEN

Despite all the creatures God had made for Adam and the perfect world, there was something lacking to make life really complete. All the animals had their companion mates, but there was none found for Adam among them. Then it was that God took one of Adam's ribs and made from it a creature possessing the characteristics perfectly suited for Adam's mate. Nothing else in all God's creation was so perfectly suited for this role as the woman God had created. God clearly indicated the woman's role when He said, "I will make him an help meet for him," (Gen. 2:18). The word "help" clearly indicates the subordinate role that the woman was to play, according to God's order of creation. Man was to exercise leadership, and woman was to be his helper to assist and support him. God did not have to apologize to the woman for this arrangement, nor did the woman ask Him to. It was perfect and good, as God had planned; and the man and the woman were perfectly happy. The fact that her position from the beginning was subordinate in no way detracted from its importance. Her vital place in the order of creation is evidenced by God's statement, "It is not good that the man should be alone." In the age of innocence the man's will and the woman's will were in perfect harmony and conformity with God's will; and as they went about the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it and together as mates to exercise "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth," each perfectly fulfilled his respective role toward the other.

But then occurred that tragic event which changed the course of the world. It took place when Eve left Adam's side to listen to Satan's offer of equality — not simply equality of the woman with the man, but equality of both the man and the woman with God! "You shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," (Gen. 3:5). Without any consultation with the head, the helper exercised the franchise and voted for this "opportunity" of improving her status in life and "took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and

he did eat," (Gen. 3:6). The head voted with the majority and made it unanimous for mankind: equality in knowing evil and doing evil. This was a vote which indeed changed the whole world, from perfect harmony and happiness to sinful discord and dissatisfaction. From this time on there would be a natural, deep-seated resentment of the woman toward her role as auxiliary helper to the man. And the man naturally would no longer look on the woman as a gracious gift and blessing of God whom he should lead in loving respect and gentleness. Thus the breakdown of the harmonious, blessed fellowship between God and the man and the woman, because of sin, was accompanied by a simultaneous breakdown in the harmonious relationship between man and woman, as well as between man and his fellow man. What a tragedy indeed, the effects of which are evident in the home, state, and church today!

But our Lord in His grace provided a happy ending with the promise of a Savior Who would crush Satan's power and restore harmony between God and man. That Savior was the Son of God Whom God sent into this world as payment for the insubordination of every man and woman. This was the good news that created new life and hope for Adam and Eve in the face of the curse. This was the good news that so gladdened their hearts toward their Lord that they wanted to subordinate themselves to Him again, in love abiding by His order of creation.

And this is the good news that motivates men and women to want to subordinate themselves to their Savior in His Word, also in that Word by which God has established His order in creation. As children of God, born again through faith in Christ Jesus, godly women of all times have struggled against temptations to overthrow God's order and have found joy and satisfaction in their God-given calling. Concerning the role and place of women in the church, they recognize God's expression of His will regarding the extent as well as the limits of their activity in His church. In faith and love they do not look upon their God-given role as a yoke to be shaken off, but as an arrangement of God, established in His infinite wisdom for the welfare of His church, within which they will find opportunity for the expression and exercise of

their Christian faith.

We are given abundant examples of such God-fearing women in Scripture. Sarah is one such example, whom Peter extols as the paragon of all Christian wives, and women in general: "Your beauty should not be anything outward - braiding the hair, putting on gold ornaments and dresses - but the person you are in your heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit; this is very precious to God. And this is how long ago the holy women who trusted God used to make themselves beautiful: they submitted to their husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him lord," (I Peter 3:3-6, - Beck). And to the more mature women Paul expresses God's will to Titus thus: "Tell older women: Behave as holy women should behave. Don't slander; don't be slaves to much wine. Teach what is good, in order to train young women to love their husbands and their children, to use good judgment and be pure, to keep house, to be good, to submit to their husbands, so that people don't slander God's Word," (Titus 2:3-5, - Beck). How busy the Christian housewife and mother will be in the opportunities of her calling as helper to the family she alone knows. Her holy busy-ness opportunities are listed in detail by Solomon in his Proverbs, verses 10ff. of chapter 31. Let no one, not even the homemaker herself, underrate the dignity and worth of her calling from God. This is her highest service in the Lord's church, for which she was created.

But the Lord has not limited women's service in the church to those of her own home, certainly. We think of the example of the Shunamite woman of II Kings 4:8, who sought out opportunities to serve the church in other ways. When Elisha the prophet passed through her town, "she constrained him to eat bread" with the family whenever his travels would bring him that way. And she further persuaded her husband to make a room for Elisha so he would have special lodging as well. The Christian woman serves the church and her Lord whenever she extends such hospitality. We think here of those who have accommodated the students of our Immanuel College in their homes; we think of those who have accommodated pastors and teachers at conferences, or at conventions in earlier

years; we think of those who host the ILC choir on tour. This is Christian service, a work borne largely by the Christian woman of the household. And how far such women are ready to go in their hospitality is typified in the widow of Zaraphath, who virtually took the food out of her own son's mouth to feed Elijah (I Kings 17:8).

The Gospels record the services of "Mary called Magdalene ... Joanna ... and Susanna, and many others who ministered unto Him (Jesus) of their substance," as He went throughout every city and village preaching and teaching (Luke 8:2-3). At the cross of Jesus the women were faithfully present to witness their beloved Savior's suffering and death. They accompanied Nicodemus to the graveside and noted how Jesus' body was laid (Matt. 27; Luke 23). Then on Easter Sunday, very early, they went with the prepared spices to complete His burial - services of love for the Lord of the church. We trust that it is not inappropriate at this time to point to the Christian services rendered the church by CLC women, particularly of Messiah congregation of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, toward our departed sister in faith from Nigeria, Bertha Udo. Faithfully helping her with her housework, watching her daughter, serving meals, washing dishes and clothes, reading letters of encouragement from Christian friends, writing responses, watching and praying late with her - these are surely ministrations rendered to the Lord, Who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," (Matt. 25). This is Christian service of the highest order rendered by our Christian women as they visit the sick, the dying, the shut-ins, the imprisoned, the helpless.

Since this is a joint session of pastors and teachers, we dare not neglect to mention Eunice and Lois and their Christian education of Pastor Timothy in his youth. Here was a task that his mother Eunice had to carry out virtually alone with only the help of Grandmother Lois, since Timothy's father was a Greek and evidently a heathen Gentile. So Eunice did what every faithful Christian mother and Christian teacher does; she taught him the Holy Scriptures from his youth. Little did she realize, perhaps, how far-reaching Timothy's training would be,

that it would go with him to the ends of the earth, as he accompanied the great missionary apostle in evangelizing the world. How many of us would be here now, humanly speaking, in the high position of the public ministry God has given us, were it not for the helping hand and service given us by a Christian mother and Christian teacher in Day School, Sunday School, and Saturday School? Next to being a wife and mother, the greatest, most influential role that a Christian woman can have is that of being a Christian teacher in Christ's church.

Lydia, the prosperous business woman of Philippi, a seller of "purple," serves as an example of yet another kind of Christian service of women to the church. A convert to Judaism, she and a few others of the Jewish faith were regularly meeting together for prayer on the Sabbath at a quiet spot outside the city on the banks of the river. When she heard of Paul and Silas the good news that the Messiah promised in the Old Testament Scriptures had come in the person of Jesus, Paul reports: "... she was baptized and her household; she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us," (Acts 16:15). As others before her, she gave of her wealth for the support of the ministry. When Paul was at Thessalonica, the Philippian congregation twice sent a gift to him, and again later, when he was prisoner in Rome. One commentator suggests that Lydia set the congregation an example of generosity also by contributing generously toward these congregational gifts. No doubt she did! There are also such Christian women today, either unmarried or widowed, like Lydia, or even married career women, whom the Lord has blessed financially to give large gifts to His church. We know of a certain widow, not obviously blessed financially like Lydia, who lived a frugal life, supporting herself by cleaning housekeeping cabins and cooking meals. She wore hand-me-down clothes and walked two miles to church when a ride was not available. When she died of cancer at the age of 85 years, she surprised the congregation by bequeathing to it her entire estate of \$15,000.

And can we refer quickly and finally to Tabitha, also called Dorcas, renowned in Scripture for her works of

charity? "This woman was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did," (Acts 9:36). She sewed coats and garments for the widows and other needy, using the talents God had given her in Christian service for the Lord's glory. Here we can make mention of our women's societies in the church and the variety of ways in which they serve. When there are meals to be served for Mission Festival and Church Anniversary and Dedication, for conferences and conventions and youth camps, our women have faithfully come through with Christian service. Mention could be made, too, of the work that our women do in the church, visiting the sick and shut-ins, sending cheery greeting cards, making hospital favors, cleaning church and school. Our women's societies in Minnesota congregations meet together annually to promote Christian fellowship and to encourage one another in Christian service projects.

What a wealth of opportunities there is available for Christian women to serve their Lord in His church, expressing their appreciation for His goodness and mercy, and making significant contribution to the growth and welfare of the church. The Lord looks for and expects Christian woman to use the talents and abilities He has given to them in their role to the fullest possible extent in His church, as good stewards of the manifold gifts of God.

There is an area, however, where God has placed a restriction and limit in the women's sphere of service in the church. To that consideration we now turn.

II. THE LIMITATIONS GOD HAS PLACED ON WOMAN'S ACTIVITY IN THE CHURCH

The limit the Lord has placed on the woman in her activity in His church may be seen from two key passages. The first is I Corinthians 14:33-35:

As in all churches of the saints, let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their hus-

bands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

The context of this passage shows that Paul had been concerning himself with the preaching and teaching in the public assemblies of the church. The Corinthian men had been given the gift of speaking in unknown tongues, unintelligible to the average person, but there were accompanying gifts of interpreting those tongues, as well as gifts of proclaiming the Word. There was a problem of the speakers becoming disorderly with too many different speakers holding forth at one time; or sometimes some would speak in tongues but none would be present who could interpret them. The threat was that there would result confusion and disorder. So Paul counseled them, "if there be no interpreter, let him (the tongue speaker) keep silence (σιγάω), in the church; let him speak to himself and God," but not to the assembly.

In this same context, then, using the same verb, Paul addresses himself also to women present in the public assemblies and says, "Let your women keep silence (σιγάω) in the churches." The fact that they may have had the genuine gift of tongues and prophecy (I Cor. 11: 5) made no difference; in fact, Paul's prohibition is intended for just such (Cf. Lenski). Such speaking (λαλεῖν) in the public assemblies with the men present was not permitted to them (ἐπιτρέπεται αὐταῖς, literally, "turned over to them"); they were not authorized and so do not have the authority to do such speaking. On the contrary (ἀλλὰ), they are commanded (ὑποτάσσω) to be under obedience (ὑποταγή). And this was not merely Paul's opinion and practice and that of all the other churches of the saints, but this is also what the law had said — God's law, as stated in I Timothy 2:11-14. This restriction of silence was by God's arrangement. And no man, no woman, and no church has the right to set aside this divinely established order. So important is the orderliness that Paul tells the men regarding the women, "and if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

The principle set down by Paul in this passage, then,

is: The woman is not to be in a position of publicly teaching men God's Word. Women are permitted, yes, commanded to teach other women (Titus 2:4) and children, but not the men publicly.

Our passage from I Timothy 2:11-14 speaks similarly of the limitations God has placed on His women in the church:

Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

Here again the context shows that Paul had been instructing Timothy about the public worship. In verse 8 he had indicated that the men were to be leading in public prayer. With verse 9 Paul begins to instruct young Timothy regarding the woman's role and activity in public church life, *i.e.*, that they adorn themselves in modest apparel, with sobriety, and with good works from the heart. Part of that spiritual adornment is the posture of being a learner in the public assembly, learning in silence (the outward manner) and with all subjection (the inner spirit).

Paul says, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp the authority over (ἀυθεντέω) the man, but to be in silence." ἀυθεντέω means, in its simple sense, "to have power over," or "to exercise authority." The word could also include a usurpation or forceful taking or assuming of power. The woman is simply not to have authority over the man in the church. This is not merely in teaching him, but in any sphere of activity she is not to be over him, either by her own power grab or by man's offer. It is to be this way, not because of Paul's opinion and practice, but because, first of all, the Law says so — God's Law, His principle: "for Adam was first formed, then Eve." God could have created man and woman simultaneously, but He did not; Adam was created first in order before the woman.

The second reason given why the woman is to be subordinate is that "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." The woman was the one whom Satan tricked and Adam followed along knowingly. Both were guilty of violating God's command, as well as their respective positions toward each other: Eve, her position of subordination, and Adam, his headship. Eve became the head in the Fall, and Adam became the feet that followed.

The principles set forth, then, in these key passages, are these: 1. The woman is not to be in a position of publicly teaching God's Word to men; and 2. The woman is not to be in a position to exercise authority upon the man, but to be in subjection. On the basis of these Scriptural principles, questions of casuistry may be answered and God-pleasing practice preserved among us. We can think of only one exception to these principles, and that is, if in subjecting herself to the man, the woman would in some way be denying or compromising a teaching of Scripture. Here the principle applies: "We ought to obey God rather than men," (Acts 5:29).

III. SOME PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE PRINCIPLES

It surely is self-evident that women who serve in the public ministry as pastors in a congregation are acting contrary to the principles of Scripture. Pastors, though they indeed are servants of the church, are public teachers in the church and exercise authority in their office over other men. The Lutheran Church in America and The American Lutheran Church, together with most Protestant denominations, have ordained women pastors in their church bodies. The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod has not yet taken that step, but they have commissioned campus counselors and chaplains who, though women, are to function in a position of authority spiritually and otherwise over men. This is contrary to the Scriptural principles previously set forth.

Another violation of the principles occurs when churches permit their women to vote in the church alongside the men, either as voting members in the congregation, or on the Church Council, or on boards, or as del-

egates to conferences and conventions of the synod. The LCA and TALC and many other denominations permit this. The Missouri Synod has permitted a limited franchise to its women since 1965. Its Commission on Theology and Church Relations (doctrine committee) observed in 1969:

1. We find nothing in Scripture which prohibits women from exercising the franchise in voters' assemblies.
2. Those statements of Scripture which direct women to keep silent in the church, and which prohibit them to teach and to exercise authority over men, we understand to mean that women ought not to hold the pastoral office.
3. Such passages, we hold, indicate that women ought not to hold any other office in the church whose function it is to assist the pastor in the exercise and administration of the office of the Keys.
4. The principles set forth in such passages, we believe, apply also to holding any other kind of office in the institutional structures of the church which might involve women in a violation of the order of creation.
5. We find no statement in Scripture which prohibits women from holding office on the boards and committees of Synod whether such offices are filled by election or appointment.
6. We conclude that the Synod itself and the congregations of the Synod are at liberty to alter their constitutions and their practices to conform to these declarations if they believe that such changes are in the best interest of the congregation and of the church at large.

With these declarations the 1969 LCMS convention at Denver removed that church body from its 122-year-old historic position on woman suffrage in the church and rejected the Scriptural theologies of such faithful teachers as Dr. C. F. W. Walther, Dr. John H. C. Fritz, Dr. Georg Stoeckhardt, Dr. J. T. Mueller, and Dr. Francis Pieper. The right of vote involves the equal exercise of authority by men and, if given to women, produces a situation in which women are exercising authority independent of or even in opposition to men. This is not opera-

ting "under subjection" to men, as Scripture teaches.

In determining cases of casuistry, *i.e.*, specific cases with their own set of circumstances, one needs to move very carefully. He will need to have the principles of Scripture clear, and all the facts of a particular case. A congregation or pastor will not want to move ahead and initiate something new without loving consultation with fellow pastors and sister congregations so that offense may not be given or taken.

The following quotation is offered for your consideration:

Before God there is neither male nor female, but we are all one in Christ Jesus. Neither men as such nor women as such please Him. God is pleased by whoever is in Christ through faith, regardless of sex. He who preaches legalistically will prefer to extol the superiority of man and an inferiority of woman; Scripture hasn't given man the public office of teaching and ruling in the Church because he is perhaps a nobler, more capable, and more worthy creature than woman. God has assigned to men a different position in the public life of the congregation than to woman because their gifts differ, and both should be good stewards of their gifts. They should use them where they can accomplish the most with them and work the greatest blessing. The gifts of both are precious and given for the Gospel's sake; therefore they should not be wasted but used, each one directed to its fitting sphere of activity. What Scripture teaches about the duty of woman in church life is an elaboration and practical application of I Peter 4:10: "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." And so this also belongs to the evangelical treatment of our question, that one preaches that the instructions which Scripture gives to woman for her church activity only want to show her how she can attain the goal which she, as a Christian, has according to the new man set for herself, namely, to serve God in His kingdom there where she can accomplish the

most with her gifts and produce the most fruits for her Lord.

But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk . . . Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. . . . Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God, (I Cor. 7).

James Sandeen

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P A N O R A M A

SOME THOUGHTS ON
BIBLE VERSIONS

During the last two decades, as never before, our churches and schools have been confronted with the need to make decisions regarding the choice of a Bible version to be used in the worship services and in instruction classes. Our fathers did not have this problem, although the language question was perhaps just as critical for them as the choice of a Bible version is becoming for us today. Feelings ran high in those days, even to the point of bringing forth threats here and there to sever relations if the English language were introduced into the public services of the congregation on a regular schedule. Some even went so far as to consider the transition a threat to the orthodox Lutheran confession. The present generation can hardly appreciate the agony that went into the decisions that had to be made, on the one hand; and the patience that it took to bring upset members into balance lest over-reaction disturb the work of the kingdom, on the other. The analogy here may not be completely apt, and still reaction to a possible change of Bible versions may easily be carried to some of the same extremes.

Whether we like it or not, the problem of making choices in the matter of Bible versions is here to stay, and certainly the solution is not to be found in passing a synodical resolution restricting congregations to the use of one version in preference to another. Provided that we have a text that is basically reliable, it certainly cannot be made a doctrinal issue. And still decisions on the local level need to be made with wisdom and forbearance and with due regard for fellow believers. This takes patient instruction, with an eye to the welfare of the kingdom. And this brings us to the question itself.

What about all the versions that are now available and being pushed by competing publishing companies? The question becomes all the more critical and timely as one version follows another, each one calling for support and

favorable response. The latest of these is the New International Version (NIV), now just off the press and ready for mass distribution. This version follows practically on the heels of two others which have received favorable reviews in Lutheran circles: The New American Standard Bible (NASB, 1971) and An American Translation (AAT, 1976), sometimes referred to as the Beck Bible. These three followed the Revised Standard Version (RSV, 1952), not to mention the Good News Bible (GNB, 1976) and The Living Bible (LB, 1971), the latter two of which do not appear to have much of a following in Lutheran circles because of serious defects which cannot be detailed in this brief overview. Besides all these there is also the New English Bible (NEB, 1970), which is a British translation. To attempt a satisfactory if not a scholarly review of all these versions would constitute a gargantuan task that could hardly be accomplished in a lifetime of study. Finally one must also here begin to narrow the field of inquiry, and even then it is only possible to come to some rather general conclusions. For who is equal to the task of examining all the passages and comparing the various translations with the original?

As such who have been brought up on the King James version (KJV), we have come to love the majesty, the dignity, and the rhythmic flow of this time-honored translation of 1611. It is certainly to its credit that it has served so well and so long over the span of three and a half centuries in spite of language changes from one generation to another. But do we dare to make of this version such a fetish that we close our eyes to the possibility of an improvement in language presentation and in some places also in translation? And still this reviewer believes that we are best served in preserving as much as possible the majestic presentation of the KJV, which served so long a time with a minimum of language difficulty. For pedagogical and other practical reasons it would seem to involve a major adjustment to change to a more colloquial form of expression. For study purposes, yes; but for worship purposes and memorization, this would call for sober and careful consideration before such a change would be made. These considerations would lead one to narrow the field to three versions: RSV, NASB, and now the NIV. We do not intend to bypass the

AAT, which needs to be considered as a translation produced by a dedicated man who was committed to the verbal inspiration of the Bible and certainly the translation is reliable. We are happy to read that in a forthcoming revision the AAT will revert to the time-honored translation of "grace" for χάρις instead of the first Beck translation of "love," and that δικαιώσω will be rendered "justify" instead of the first rendering, "to make righteous." These were defects which certainly needed to be repaired. However, with its contractions and colloquial usages, etc., the majesty and literary flow, as well as a familiar literary contact with the KJV, has been lost. Granted that the RSV has made some bad choices in translation (i.e., the much discussed translation of "young woman" for *ALMAH* in the text, with "virgin" contained only in the footnote, etc.); granted that the NASB has some rather stiff-sounding renderings of the tenses in an admirable attempt at reproducing them accurately; granted that the KJV is defective in such passages as Ex. 7:13 (which is translated "he hardened Pharaoh's heart" instead of "Pharaoh's heart became hardened"); granted that the NIV has opted, for instance, for the translation "with the help of the Lord" instead of "the Lord" in Gen. 4:1 - nevertheless, one cannot for these reasons alone rule these translations out and make an issue of their use in our circles.

Considering, then, the familiarity we have with the KJV in oral, liturgical, written and literary form (one thinks of all the precious devotional and theological writings, as well as textbook materials), it would seem that it would be the better part of wisdom and judgment to adhere either to the KJV or to a version similar to it. This reviewer has a special love of and attachment to the KJV, which does not have as many difficult passages as one might think. However, if a change is to be made, our preference at this point is the NIV, and this represents a shift on our part from the NASB. If one is looking for a version which young children and young people will the more readily and easily be moved to read, then the AAT would, I believe, be one's choice. With all the deficiencies in translation which one might be able to point out, the Holy Bible is of such a marvelous character that the precious message of salvation through

Christ by grace alone comes through, in spite of failings to be found in versions at hand. All in all, if the various versions have the ultimate effect that more people will be encouraged to read the Holy Scriptures, then one can hardly deplore the proliferation of translations, however confusing this may seem to be.

C. M. Gullerud

**A TRANS-LUTHERAN
CONVOCATION**

An invitation has been received to attend a convocation for pastors and laypeople commemorating the 450th anniversary of the Large and Small Catechisms. The event is under the auspices of The International Center of Lutheran Confessional Studies at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana. The invitation carries the title: "Congress on the Lutheran Confessions." The center states the following as its purpose: "The Center conducts seminars, convocations, and forums for confessional studies within the Lutheran Church. It seeks: to provide evangelical direction for Lutheran pastors and laypeople; to demonstrate the validity and relevance of scriptural and confessional truths for the modern age; to encourage a strong confessional stance on the part of all Lutherans; to maintain a true and firm Biblical and confessional base for the Gospel ministry within Lutheran churches; to develop a united front for all Lutherans to be guided honestly by confessional theology; to provide guidance for resolving critical problems of theology and missions; to involve Lutherans in effective and constructive decision-making processes."

This convocation not only crosses synodical lines but also congregational lines in its appeal to laypeople as well as pastors. Among other considerations, one wonders where the doctrine of the Call comes in. Nothing is said about worship services, although a singing of Catechism hymns is included as a part of the proceedings. There is no indication from the titles that doctrinal differences separating the participants will be discussed. The set-up is definitely not after the order of for-

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