



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

I Timothy 4:15

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MARTIN LUTHER: 1483-1983

I.

In signalling, with this article, our interest in the approaching 500th anniversary of Luther's birth, we shall begin with remarks briefly introducing the debate regarding the date of Luther's real Reformation breakthrough. The quantity of research and variety of hypotheses regarding this matter are referred to by Harold J. Grimm: "Much research has been devoted to establishing the date of Luther's discovery of the real meaning of *iustitia dei*. Originally accepting the Reformer's own statement concerning the matter in 1545, scholars have found one reason or another for determining upon a number of different dates, ranging from 1508-1518."¹

One writer who argues for a late date is Lowell C. Green, whose book, *How Melancthon Helped Luther Discover the Gospel*, is reviewed by Robert Brinsmead in the May, 1980, issue of *Verdict*.² Brinsmead writes (p. 5): "Green shows that the theology of the pre-1519 Luther was still essentially Roman Catholic. ... 'Prior to 1518,' says Green, 'Luther's understanding [of justification] had been largely medieval. But then a total break with medieval conceptions of justification as inner renewal took place.'" He also (p. 7) quotes Green on the existence of a prior significant breakthrough on Rom. 1:17: "'Around 1513 Luther probably had a preliminary breakthrough in which he discovered that the righteousness of God is not merely punitive but also redemptive.'"

That the conclusions of Green are essentially the same as those of Uuras Saarnivaara is noted by Wilbert R. Gawrisch near the conclusion of an informative review of Green's book on Melancthon.³ In the succinct "Summary and Conclusion" of his *Luther Discovers the Gospel* (1951), Saarnivaara wrote:

After his entrance into the monastery, Luther experienced two great crises. The first was his conversion, or his coming to a personal faith in the forgiveness of sins in Christ. This occurred in the

year 1512, probably toward the end of October or in November. . . . Though Luther possessed a saving faith already in 1512, his conception of justification was not that of his mature period. He understood justification as a gradual process of religious and moral renewal, or healing of the human nature from the corruption of sin. . . . The second great crisis, the actual daybreak, in Luther's development, was his tower experience toward the end of the year 1518. It resulted or consisted in his discovery of the evangelical or Reformation insight into justification.

This conclusion regarding the tower experience is based on two groups of documents:

(1) Luther's *Preface* to his works, written in 1545, and scattered statements in his table talks of different dates; (2) Luther's lectures and writings. The first group of documents contains accounts of the nature and date of this discovery from the pen and mouth of Luther himself. The second group yields information concerning Luther's conception of justification in the early period of his life.⁴

Saarnivaara's carefully reasoned 146-page book provides excellent reading, and will surely contribute to our joy in the work of the Holy Spirit in leading Luther step by step to complete clarity on the Gospel and in thus making of him a man of whom Walther would say that he surpassed all other writers in making one sure of God's grace.⁵

II.

Although we may consider ourselves fortunate if we find the time to read only a few of the well-nigh innumerable works available on Luther and the Reformation, an overview of Luther research is still desirable. Some impression of the immensity of the effort being expended in Luther research may be obtained by glancing into *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*. Among the dozen or more articles in that set dealing with Luther is an 8½-page article, "Luther Research," in which scores of works are referred to. The last four of the eight sections

comprise the bulk of the article and deal with Luther research in various countries. The first four sections are: Backgrounds, The Luther Renaissance, Sources, and Bibliographical Aids. Among the bibliographies enumerated is Wilhelm Pauck's "Historiography of the German Reformation During the Past Twenty Years," *Church History*, IX (December, 1940), pp. 305-340, which is also cited in Appendix D at the end of Vol. III of Ewald Plass's anthology, *What Luther Says*.⁶

An earlier work, largely bibliographical, is Michael Reu's *Thirty-Five Years of Luther Research*, a volume covering the period from 1883-1917. The book opens with the following paragraph:

In connection with the preparation for the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of Luther's birth there began in the early eighties a period of research into the life of the great reformer which continues even today. In point of thoroughness, unflagging zeal, comprehensive and scientific character, this period has outdistanced every previous effort in the same direction.⁷

A recent survey we might do well to consult is "The State of Reformation Research," by Lewis W. Spitz.⁸

Uncounted hours during the last 100 years have been devoted to preparation of the definitive edition of Luther's writings in the original, the Weimar Edition, publication of which was begun in 1883, the quadricentennial year of Luther's birth. Now, nearly a century later, the set is finally nearing completion. A sketch of the make-up and history of this edition might be of interest.⁹

The first of the four sections of this set, entitled Writings, is comprised of volumes 1-58. It gives Luther's works in chronological order. (A few departures from this chronological principle became necessary.) The first multi-volume "volume" is volume 10, consisting of all of four sets of covers: Part III, appearing first in 1905; Part II, appearing in 1907; Part I - first half, appearing in 1910; and Part I - second half, appearing at last in 1925. Other such volumes in this sec-

tion are 17 (2 parts), 30 (3 parts), 31 (2 parts), 34 (2 parts), 39 (2 parts), and 40 (3 parts).

Volume 1 was published in 1883, volume 56 in 1938, volume 57 in 1939, and volume 58 in 1948. (Publication of the various parts of volume 55 did not begin until 1963; more on that shortly.) But between 1 and 56 many appeared out of sequence. Volume 47, for example (sermons from 1537-40), appeared in 1912, whereas volume 17, Part II (some 1525 sermons), did not appear until 1927. Volume 20 was published already in 1898, but volume 21 did not see the light of day for another 30 years (1928). 1897 saw the publication of both volume 19 and volume 7. No great effort of the imagination is required to conceive of the difficulties placed by World War I in the way of continued steady publication. Excellent progress had been made on volume 35 from 1910, the year in which work on it was begun, but then came the war, and publication was not finally achieved until 1923. Another volume which was begun before the war, 39-I, did not appear until 1926. The forewords of the post-war period contain repeated references to the immense difficulties which had to be overcome.

The second major segment of the edition is the German Bible. This contains all the material pertaining to Luther's Bible translation work. The most interesting "volume" of the set is found here, No. 67, which embraces 7 sets of covers: 67-I (*Deutsche Bibel* 9-1, 1939), 67-II (DB 9-2, 1955), 67A-I (DB 10-1, 1956), 67A-II (DB 10-2, 1957), 67B-I (DB 11-1, 1960), 67B-II (DB 11-2, 1960), and 67C (DB 12, 1961). Thus, 15 sets of covers comprise 12 German Bible volumes and 9 volumes (59-67) in the overall Weimar Edition. The first volume of this section was published in 1906, but, once again, the appearance of the volumes was not always in sequence.

The third major section is the Table Talk. This was the first part of the set to be completed. Its 6 volumes (68-73, *Tischreden* 1-6) were published in consecutive order from 1912-1921, E. Kroker being the sectional editor. The fourth and last major section is the Letters. Volumes 74-84 (*Briefwechsel* 1-11) appeared consecutively from 1931-1948. Additional material was gathered in three

more volumes (85-87, Br. 12-14) which were published in 1967, 1968, and 1969. The first part of the index (Br. 15) appeared in 1978, the second part (Br. 16) in 1980.

Since fresh materials were discovered during the long period of time which elapsed, supplements to volumes 33, 32, 30-II, 30-III, 48, and 41 appeared in 1963, 1964, 1967, 1970, 1972, and 1974 respectively. A reworking of some of the material on the Psalms (originally volumes 3 and 4) is now being called volume 55, which had not yet been published. Of the four installments thus far printed, two appeared in 1963 (I-1a and II-1a) and two in 1973 (IIb and II-1b). What had originally been planned for volume 55 will now become volumes 59 and 60, consisting of supplementary material to the entire Writings section. Volume 60 appeared first, 1980. Combining the new volume 60 recently added to the Writings, the four installments of volume 55 which have thus far appeared, the six supplements to specific earlier volumes, the 16 volumes of Letters, six of Table Talk, 15 of the German Bible, and 68 of the Writings (58 minus the missing 55 plus 11 to be added because of multi-volume volumes), we arrive at a grand total of 116 books that have been published up to this point. Volume 59 (the second one) is yet to appear, as well as, so far as I can tell, further installments of volume 55. "Volume 58, containing an inadequate index to the 'writings,' will be replaced eventually by an index to the whole Weimar edition."¹⁰

From the external organization of the set, we turn more directly to its history. The first four volumes appeared in successive years, beginning with 1883. The forewords to these early volumes were written either by Knaake, who was the chief moving force at the outset, or by Kawerau. But information contained already in volume 3 regarding the severe personal difficulties with which Knaake was beset, and which greatly reduced the energies he was able to devote to the edition, is amplified in the foreword to volume 6, which was the next to appear (1888). In 1890, Paul Pietsch, who had already been appointed the head of the German Bible section in 1888, was assigned overall responsibility for the entire edition. Knaake continued to labor on the Letters section until his death in 1905, which was reported in the foreword to 10-III.

The first foreword written by Pietsch is to volume 12 (1523 writings and sermons), which came out in 1891. A service of great importance was rendered by him as the first real organizer of the work. He took seriously the responsibility of making the Weimar Edition a truly critical edition. During the 16-year period of his leadership from 1890-1906, 18 volumes appeared, and a 19th one (DB-1) was all but complete. His last foreword is in volume 32 (1906). Although he lived many more years, others took over his responsibilities; the first of the German Bible volumes (59, DB-1) came out with a foreword by him in 1906, and the second came out in 1909 with a foreword by him alongside one by Drescher, but the succeeding volumes of that section assign the prominence to men such as Koffmane and Reichert, and, of course, to still others in later years.

Karl Drescher succeeded Paul Pietsch as overall leader. The first volume with a foreword over his signature is 10-11 (1907). He labored diligently through the difficult war and post-war years. The first volume published after World War I (and the first since 1916) was No. 72 (T 5), 1919, the foreword to which, we might note, reports the death in 1918 of the eminent Luther scholar, Kawerau (he had directed efforts to the Letters section). In 1921, a section of the set, Table Talk, was finally completed. Karl Holl, whose help had been indispensable in advancing work on the edition in the post-war years, died in 1926 (reported in volume 48, 1927). Volume 21 (1928) reports the deaths during 1927 of Ernst Kroker and Paul Pietsch. Excluding a posthumous foreword to volume 64 in 1929, the last foreword by Drescher was that to volume 21. For on June 21, 1928, after seeing 47 volumes through the press in 22 years, Karl Drescher died suddenly. His place was taken in December of 1928 by Bebermeyer, whose first foreword is in volume 22 (1929), the volume which also reports his predecessor's death.

Bebermeyer expressed optimism in 39-II (1932); another major section is nearly complete. Similar optimism was expressed in 1939, in volume 57. But lean years again lay ahead. Only a very few volumes appeared between 1939 and 1954: 82 (1941), 83 (1947), 84 (1948), which are volumes 9-11 in the Letters section, and volume 58-I (in-

dex), also in 1948.

Reorganization of the work finally took place in 1950. An important foreword, and the first by Hanns Rueckert, is to be found in volume 66 (DB 8), whose appearance finally signalled a resumption of publication in 1954. Note is taken of the fact that the set has already reached its 70th birthday. The lines are sketched along which the work is now to proceed: "*Zum Praesidenten wurde der Unterzeichnete gewaehlt; G. Bebermeyer fungiert weiter, wie bis 1945, als Leiter der Ausgabe.*" ("The undersigned was chosen as President; G. Bebermeyer functions further as Leader of the Edition, as he did until 1945.")¹¹ The deaths of Otto Clemen in 1946 and George Buchwald in 1947 are reported. The efforts of the former had been directed to the Letters section (in many of those volumes, he has a foreword alongside one by Bebermeyer); the indefatigable labors of the latter in many areas, not least of which is the sermons of Luther, seem to have made his overall contributions to the set as great as, if not greater than, those of anyone else.¹² From 1945, steady progress was made and the various gaps were gradually filled in. With 67C in 1961 (foreword by Hans Volz), two milestones were reached: the German Bible section was completed, and the 100th volume was published.

A wealth of information is given in the second volume 60 (1980), for there the deaths of Gustav Bebermeyer (1975), Hanns Rueckert (1974), and Hans Volz (1978) are reported by Gerhard Ebeling and a survey of their lives and scholarly services is given. Sixteen volumes were published under Bebermeyer's leadership prior to 1945. Rueckert's services would be hard to overestimate, for he initiated the last great period in the production of the edition. His presidency extended from 1950-1969. And the hand of Hans Volz appears everywhere as the later volumes were brought to completion; forewords by him appear in the later volumes of both the Letters and German Bible sections, and only his death prevented volume 60 itself, on which he had labored mightily, from having a foreword over his signature.

III.

From the massive and prolonged efforts directed to

the production of such an edition, we turn for a moment to view with joy the blessed fruits that follow from reading Luther. Let us begin with John Bunyan:

But before I had finally gotten out of these temptations, I began to long greatly to see the experience of some godly men of former years, who had lived perhaps hundreds of years before I was born. Well, after I had talked to the Lord about this, He caused to come into my hands one day a book of Martin Luther's — his *Commentary on Galatians*. It was so old that it was ready to fall to pieces. I was very pleased that such an old book had fallen into my hands, and when I had read only a little I found my own condition was handled in such detail by this book as though I had written it. This made me marvel, for I realized that this man could not know anything of the Christians of my day, but was writing and speaking the experience of those of other years.

Martin Luther discussed carefully the rise of temptations such as blasphemy, desperation and such like. He showed that the law of Moses, as well as the Devil and death and Hell, had a very great hand in bringing them about. At first this seemed very strange to me, but after thinking about it and watching my own experience, I found that it was indeed true. I don't wish to go into other particulars at this time, except to say that (except for the Bible) I prefer this book of Martin Luther's on Galatians above all the books that I have ever seen. It is most useful to a wounded conscience.¹³

And Walther's statement is surely well known to us:

Let me present one more citation from Luther's incomparable treatise *On the Keys*. For myself I have to confess that it was from this treatise that I first learned what the Gospel is, at a time when I thought I knew it, but did not. I shall praise and thank God for this forever. When I became a Christian, you know, I got among the Pietists. The reading of Luther's writings brought me around to the pure doctrine.¹⁴

The well known experiences of Charles Wesley in reading in Luther's *Commentary on Galatians* and of John Wesley in reading Luther's "Preface to the Epistle to the Romans," as well as those of John Bunyan and "a certain William Holland," are reported by Philip S. Watson in his preface to *A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*. May such examples serve to give us a due sense of the greatness of the spiritual fruits which can be traced back to the gracious work of the Holy Spirit in providentially leading Luther from the anguish of despair to the utmost certainty of salvation in the merits of Jesus Christ, and in those merits alone.

In turning to our own day, we find abundant grounds for no end of dismay at the sad state of spiritual stupefaction into which so much also of modern American "Lutheranism" has fallen. But "the stones will cry out." With keen interest we watch the current turmoil in Seventh Day Adventism, discerning in the emergence of a group which is breaking from some of the traditional SDA tenets and rediscovering or approaching rediscovery of the Reformation truths of *sola gratia*, *sola fide*, and *sola scriptura* a phenomenon of no small spiritual significance.

Luther's "Lectures on Galatians" taught Brinsmead the Reformation meaning of righteousness by faith as being justification alone. Previous to this point, he had thought that righteousness by faith meant imputed and imparted righteousness. Hence, his eschatological perfection was the end (albeit by grace) of a gradual process of sanctification. But now he learned the Reformers' concept of righteousness by faith. He saw that righteousness by faith and sinlessness in the believer were mutually exclusive.¹⁶

And articles in *Christianity Today* report: "The reason Ford has grown so popular among some Adventists is that he is throwing all that out the window, telling Adventists they can indeed be happy and sure of salvation because Christ finished his work on the Cross, where their sins were forgiven and the eternal punishment due them erased."¹⁷ "Another young minister, who asked not

to be identified, says he's known Adventists who for years have never had assurance about whether they'll get to heaven."¹⁸ "Over the past decade or so, a number of [Adventist] biblical scholars and younger clergy have emphasized the finished work of Christ on the cross, and the response in the churches has taken on revival characteristics."¹⁹

Let us welcome the 500th anniversary year of the birth of Martin Luther. May the occasion be fresh stimulus for us to pursue studies in the Reformation, and to renew, broaden, and deepen our acquaintance with the work and writings of a great instrument of God. May God grant that such study abound to the glory of Jesus' name.

R. E. Wehrwein

NOTES

1. Julius Bodensieck, ed., "Luther Research," *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church* (Augsburg Publishing Co., 1965), Vol. II, p. 1447.
2. "How Melancthon Helped Luther Discover the Gospel — A Book Review," *Verdict*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (May, 1980), pp. 4-9.
3. *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 79, No. 1 (Winter, 1982), pp. 79-80. The candid reaction after a second reading is this (p. 79): "Reluctant as this reviewer is to set aside convictions of long standing, he must admit that the evidence Green marshalls is impressive."
4. Uuras Saarnivaara, *Luther Discovers the Gospel, New Light upon Luther's Way from Medieval Catholicism to Evangelical Faith* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1951). The quotations are from pp. 121 & 122.
5. Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), Vol. III, p. 252: "All Luther's writings are characterized by their clear distinction of Law and Gospel. For this reason Dr. Walther used to say that no writer makes one so certain of God's grace as does Luther."
6. Individuals to whom I've had the privilege of introducing this valuable and useful 3-volume anthology have told of the blessings which they received from reading in it. There is hardly a better gift that could be

given, and I believe it is well adapted to use in family devotions. Don't overlook the appendices. That any anthology needs to be used with some care is quite true, and a sharply critical review by George Forell in *The Christian Century* (Oct. 29, 1958), reprinted in *Faith-Life* (Vol. 31, No. 11 - Nov., 1958, pp. 14-15), a review with which we find ourselves quite out of sympathy, dwells on this point. Nevertheless we heartily recommend the set (CPH, 1959).

7. J. M. Reu, *Thirty-Five Years of Luther Research* (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, 1917), p. 1. This 155-page volume is a fine survey of Luther research in the period covered.
8. *Concordia Journal*, January, 1978, pp. 6-15.
9. *Lutherforschung Heute*, edited by Vilmos Vajta (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1958), and containing material presented at the First International Luther Research Congress at Aarhus, Denmark, in 1956, has a chapter by Hanns Rueckert (pp. 111-120) entitled: "*Die Weimarer Lutherausgabe: Stand, Aufgaben und Probleme.*" Five areas of work are listed: finishing the German Bible, finishing the Letters, re-issuing the first lectures on the Psalms of 1513 to 1515, preparing an index, and issuing volume 55 with its contemplated supplements to the Writings. The original work of Kawerau on "*die erste Psalmenvorlesung*," vols. 3-4, though commendable for its day, was no longer adequate; already before World War II a decision had been made to replace it. Rueckert acknowledges frankly that the course chosen by O. Clemen in producing the Letters (he had his eye on the shortness of life) resulted in a product which could not be considered the standard edition. He further reports that the problem of an index caused more "*Kopfzerbrechen*" (p. 116, bottom) than anything else. (Parenthetically we note that the original work of Buchwald in this direction, which became 58-I, only barely survived WWII.) He also candidly concedes the existence of "*zahlreiche Fehler und Luecken*" (p. 118) in the Weimar Edition and pleads with everyone to report any errors discovered, that attention might be given to them in connection with vol. 55 (later changed to 59 & 60). A sixth area needing attention is the matter of republishing scarce earlier volumes; a thorough reworking of them is to be foregone.

- Reu's discussion (*op. cit.*) of the Weimar Edition is on pp. 27-29. The state of affairs in the early 1960's is briefly given in Helmut Lehmann's article, "Luther's Writings in the Original Languages and in English Translation," *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, Vol. II, pp. 1476-1477.
10. So writes Lehmann, *op. cit.* (footnote 9), p. 1476. But I get a different impression from statements in Rueckert's report (Vajta, *op. cit.*, p. 117): "*Jede Abteilung der Weimarer Ausgabe erhaelt ihr Sonderregister, wie es fuer die Tischreden schon besteht und wie es fuer die Briefe schon im ersten Teil meines Referates besprochen wurde. Der Gedanke eines Gesamtregisters zur ganzen Ausgabe, der dem gleich nach dem Kriege erschienenen Band 58, 1 zugrunde liegt, ist fallen gelassen worden. Es handelt sich also in diesem Teil meiner Ausfuehrungen nur um das Register zum Haupt-Corpus der Ausgabe, zu den 'Schriften' Luthers, zu dem, was in Band 1 bis 57 steht zueglich der noch ausstehenden Nachtragsbaende und der Neuedition der 1. Psalmenvorlesung.*" Cf. also p. XVII ("Vorwort") of the second vol. 60: "*Was schliesslich die Register betrifft, so ist zur Abteilung Briefe in Bd. 15 und 16 (Personen- und Ortsregister) der Anfang gemacht. Fuer die Abteilung Schriften soll das Ortsregister im Jahre 1983 die Reihe der von da an nach wohldurchdachtem Plan und, wie wir hoffen, zuegig erscheinenden Registerbaende eroeffnen.*" On the same page, there is a statement regarding vol. 55: "*Fuer den einzigen Sonderfall, die Neuedition der ersten Psalmenvorlesung in U.A. 55 I und II (zuvor in U.A. 3 und 4), wird z.Z. der Plan eines gegenueber den bisher vorliegenden Lieferungen erheblich reduzierten Verfahrens verfolgt, um auch damit beschleunigt an ein Ziel zu gelangen.*"
 11. Foreword to vol. 66 (DB 8), p. VI.
 12. Hans Volz would refer to George Buchwald as the "king of the Weimar Edition." (See the second vol. 60, p. XIII.) In speaking of Buchwald, Rueckert (Vajta, *op. cit.*, p. 117) says that he is "*bekannt als einer der fleiszigsten und verdientesten Mitarbeiter der Ausgabe.*"
 13. John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners, Rewritten in Modern English* (The Moody Bible Insti-

- tute of Chicago, 1959), pp. 48-49.
14. C. F. W. Walther, *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, reproduced from the German edition of 1897 by W. H. T. Dau (CPH), p. 188.
 15. A revised and completed translation based on the 'Middleton' edition of the English version of 1575 (Fleming H. Revell Company). Lest we underestimate the magnitude of the revival in 18th-century England, we might do well to consult F. R. Webber's *A History of Preaching in Britain and America*, Part One (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1952), especially the chapter entitled, "The Period of Apathy."
 16. Geoffrey Paxton, *The Shaking of Adventism* (Wilmington, Delaware: Zenith Publishers, Inc., 1977), pp. 103-104.
 17. Tom Minnery, "The Adventist Showdown: Will It Trigger a Rash of Defections?", *Christianity Today*, Oct. 10, 1980, p. 76.
 18. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
 19. Edward Plowman, "The Shaking Up of Adventism?", *Christianity Today*, Feb. 8, 1980, p. 64. For information about a new SDA journal, *Evangelica*, one might consult the news item by Martin Westerhaus on pp. 69-70 of the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 79, No. 1 (Winter, 1982).



CHAPEL ADDRESS FOR THE CLOSE OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Rev. 3:22 *"He that hath an ear,
let him hear what the Spirit saith
unto the churches."*

Fellow students of the Word:

Permit me to digress from the usual form of chapel talk and present this recall on our "hearings" at chapel during this past school year.

Thanks
be to God
We've been blessed
with another year
of hearing!

He gave us
ears to hear
what His Spirit
has said to
the Church.

Oh, what sounds!
Sounds of life
in a world
long dead
in trespass
and sin.

The sound of
our God walking
in the garden
giving Words
of hope
of life
when all
was lost.

That gracious
Word of promise
"A Seed"

was oft repeated
and given substance
by prophets
divine.

And then ... hark!
At the fulness
of the time
angelic voice
proclaimed:
"Unto you
this day
a Savior
Christ
the Lord!"

Here is
Immanuel!
God with us!
To Him we bent
our ear of faith
we listened
carefully
and heard.

We heard sadness
as Jesus wept
o'er Jerusalem.
Days of grace
neglected
salvation rejected.

We heard joy
 as Jesus entered
 Jerusalem.
 But short-lived
 "hosannas"
 changed so soon
 to a cry for
 His doom!

We heard Jesus
 concerned
 about His own.
 He instituted
 the Holy Supper
 to assure
 believing sinners
 "My body
 for you!
 My blood
 for you!
 Forgiveness for
 your sin!"

We heard
 His groan ...
 His agony
 as the cup
 of suffering
 the wrath of God
 o'er all the sin
 of all the world
 loomed realistically
 before Him.

We heard
 the crass denial:
 "I know Him not!"
 The look of Jesus
 the prayer of Jesus
 that faith fail not,
 and ... it didn't.

We heard
 hollow words

of justice tempered
 by expediency.

To Jesus' Words:
 "Everyone who is
 of Truth
 hears My Words"
 Pilate prattles
 "What is truth?"

Pilate judges
 "I find no fault."
 They cry
 "Crucify! Crucify!"
 They warn,
 "Not Caesar's friend!"
 Pilate washes
 his hands
 not his heart
 and concedes
 "You take Him,
 You crucify!"

O blessed Truth
 divine!
 The Innocent
 for the guilty
 as foretold.

From the cursed
 tree made cross
 we heard
 "Father, forgive."
 We heard the plea
 of faith from
 the dying one,
 "Remember me!"
 And Jesus' reply,
 "Today
 with Me
 in paradise."

In the midst of
 thick darkness

we heard
 the agonizing
 but atoning cry:
 "My God, why ...
 why so far from Me,
 forsaken!"

A desolate
 separation from
 the eternal Father
 as Jesus paid
 in terms of
 everlasting torment
 the price
 for the world's
 sin and guilt.
 Yet, in it all
 we heard
 His Word of
 absolute trust,
 "My God!"

And in His torment
 we heard
 the dry rasping
 "I thirst!"

Then, O most
 blessed Truth,
 we heard
 our suffering Savior:
 "It is finished!"
 Love that redeemed,
 justified, reconciled,
 had accomplished
 all! All was
 finished.

O sinners
 sigh in relief
 fear not, be glad!
 Sin and death,
 Satan and hell,
 all have been

confronted
 and conquered,
 all ... for us!

We heard
 the Words of relief
 the sigh of rest
 from work completed,
 "Into Thy hands
 My Spirit."

Just then
 we heard
 the rip of
 the Temple veil
 the quake of
 the earth
 the opening of
 the graves
 the visible
 audible, miraculous
 evidence of the
 suffering Servant's
 success!

Now ... everything
 is silent
 no sound
 no voice
 no Word
 the tomb stands
 silent
 sealed until ...

Easter!
 We heard again
 angelic voice:
 "He is not here
 He is risen
 as He said!"
 What living Words
 of lasting joy,
 "Because I live
 you live also!"

We heard Him
 along the way
 to Emmaus.
 We heard Him
 with disciples
 with Thomas.
 And the sounds of
 His ascension
 His return in glory
 from whence He came.
 Mission accomplished!
 Work done,
 Life restored!

We now recall
 hearing:
 "I go to prepare
 a place for you ...
 I will come soon
 to take you to
 the Father
 that where I am
 you will be
 alive forever!"

O loving Father,
 Obedient Son,
 Convincing Spirit:
 for all these
 "hearings"
 of this year
 (thus blessed
 at ILC)
 we praise and glorify
 Your saving love!

May our ears
 ever echo
 love's great
 commission:

You are My
 witnesses.
 Share this
 Word of Life
 with the dying
 who surround you.
 Witness, tell,
 show, teach
 the things which
 you have heard!

Dear Savior,
 keep us ever
 in this faith,
 in Your Word
 and service
 until we share
 Your love
 face to face
 in paradise
 with You!

Amen.

Lutheran Hymnal 52:

Almighty Father, bless the
 Word which thro Thy grace
 we now have heard. Oh, may
 the precious seed take root,
 spring up, and bear abundant
 fruit!

We praise Thee for the Means
 of Grace as homeward now our
 steps we trace. Grant, Lord,
 that we who worshipped here
 may all at last in heav'n
 appear! Amen.

Gordon Radtke

PAGING THROUGH THE QUARTALSCHRIFT

"We hope that our *Quartalschrift* receives a friendly reception, and we hope no less that it obtains helpful co-workers who will gladly labor together in our spirit for its success. Above all we hope for God's blessing. To Him may the periodical be commended. May He promote it according to His good pleasure and to the glory of His name. Amen."

With these words on page 3, Prof. Adolf Hoenecke brought to a conclusion the foreword to the first issue of the *Theologische Quartalschrift*, dated January, 1904. The theological writings produced for this periodical in the first quarter century of its existence have justifiably elicited words of high praise from various sources. It is well to quote some examples.

"It was a blessed season when Pieper, Koehler, and Schaller were writing for the *Quartalschrift*." That simple statement is found in *Faith-Life*, the periodical of the Protestant Conference, Vol. 30, No. 3 (March, 1957), p. 8. Similar sentiments, expressed at greater length, appear from time to time in the pages of this periodical (e.g., Vol. 23, No. 9 [September, 1950], pp. 12-13).

Leigh D. Jordahl, in his introduction to J. P. Koehler's *The History of the Wisconsin Synod* (St. Cloud, Minnesota: Sentinel Publishing Company, 1970), writes on p. xvii: "The Wauwatosa Theology was to make an effort to return to the fundamental genesis of Luther's theology in order to recapture Luther's insights and apply them to the new historical situation. This would compel the Wauwatosa men to study the Scriptures directly and thus to elevate exegesis and history in the effort to return to the primary sources of Christian faith-life." And on p. xxii we read the following: "The Wauwatosa Theology at its best was always interested in applying the fruits of the historical-exegetical method also to the contemporary task of self-analysis, criticism and reorientation."

The recently re-published *Biblical Christology* by John Schaller (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House,

1981), contains a foreword in which Loren Schaller writes: "There are those who say the call [of J. Schaller to replace A. Hoenecke] was prompted because the administrative ability Schaller had demonstrated at DMLC would be a steadying influence at the Seminary between the two temperamental titans of theology, J. P. Koehler and August Pieper. At any rate, his coming proved to be a gracious act of God, for Schaller became a sort of catalyst that sparked a rare combination, an almost 'awesome threesome' that impacted Lutheranism for over a decade with a unique brand of distinctive Scripture-based scholarship dubbed the 'Wauwatosa Theology.' To verify this you have only to read the *Quartalschrift* produced during those years" (p. 10).

The *Lutheran Spokesman*, Vol. 8, No. 6 (November, 1965), contains an article by Winfred Schaller, Jr., entitled, "Remember the Days of Old - IV, The Wisconsin Heritage." From p. 12 of that article, we quote the following: "But during these years the energies of these men [Koehler, Pieper, Schaller] were directed to creative Gospel work. The *Quartalschriften* of this period contain some of the best theology since Luther's day. ... They [the three men] brought fresh light from the Scripture on every doctrinal problem. They did not give pat answers. They cheerfully disagreed with Luther and Walther and any other church father, when this was necessary. Above all, they brought self criticism into the Synodical Conference and removed all idols from their illegitimate thrones."

But though nostalgic glances will continue to be directed toward this rich body of literature, it is to be feared that the considerable effort required to go beyond such mere glances is only rarely made. The result is that this valuable part of our God-given Lutheran heritage remains to a great extent *terra incognita*. It is with the aim of taking at least a faltering step or two in the direction of remedying this undeniably regrettable state of affairs, that a series of articles under the above heading has been conceived. Our modest object is to make at least some sort of overview of this subject matter possible also for those who do not have the avenue or the time to dig for themselves in this mine, and at

the same time to offer enough specifics so that the reader may feel that he is getting real insight into what the "Wauwatosa Theology" is all about.

In harmony with the emphasis upon history in this periodical, our approach will be chiefly historical. Certain divisions have suggested themselves: 1904-1908; 1909-1912; 1913-1916; 1917-1920; 1921-1929; 1930-1943. The end of the first period coincides roughly with the death of Hoenecke (Jan. 3, 1908). Primary subject matter here is election and the analogy of faith. Three 4-year periods follow. The first is marked by Pieper's writings on Church and Ministry. The second is exceptionally rich in material on Law and Gospel. The third is taken up with the Reformation anniversary, the World War, and ensuing subjects. Another death marks the end of this period, that of John Schaller in 1920 (Feb. 7). The period beginning with 1921, especially the later years, would have to be viewed in the light of the Protes'tant controversy. One is reading the *Quartalschriften* of this period with an eye shut if he is unaware of the elements of this controversy. The last article by J. P. Koehler appears in the last issue (October) of 1928. The end of this decade is marked by the death of Prof. William Henkel (July 5, 1929). A discussion of his life and work appears in the last number of 1929. Finally, 1943 has been chosen as the conclusion of another period because the third (July) issue of that year contains the last product from the pen of the still living August Pieper. The promised "Fortsetzung" never came. (Pieper died on Dec. 23, 1946. The *Lutheran Cyclopædia* [1954] erroneously gives 1947 as the year of his death.)

Considerable effort over the years has been expended in translating into English many of the articles of the early *Quartalschrift*. Perhaps a service is being rendered by gathering into a convenient list all such translations as are known to me. For the material which has been rendered into English is sufficient to give one rich exposure to the work of our esteemed fathers embodied in the periodical which is the object of our explorations.

May the blessing of Christ's Spirit rest upon these, our joint explorations.

R. E. Wehrwein

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(To be continued)

==== PANORAMA ====

AN OPEN LETTER TO STUDENTS AND ALUMNI OF NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE

During the month of May one receives the annual invitations and announcements concerning the various graduation and commencement activities of the season. One of such invitations and announcements came from the officers of the Alumni Association of Northwestern College, the pre-theological training school of the Wisconsin Synod (WELS) and the Alma Mater of many pastors of the CLC. Together with the usual announcement of commencement activities was enclosed a publication entitled *Northwestern Today*, dated April, 1982. This publication, presumably written and published by the students of Northwestern College, presents articles and pictures concerning past, present, and future events taking place on campus. Of particular interest to members of the CLC is an article entitled "Faculty-Student Discussions," appearing on the first page. We quote the item in its entirety:

"In an effort to inform Northwestern collegiates of certain significant events in the history of the Wisconsin Synod's history [*sic*], the Dormitory Council and Dean Lindemann have set up three convocations on recent conflicts in our church and asked three knowledgeable men in the Synod to speak about these conflicts.

"The first two convocations have already been held, the first on January 20. Professor Friedrich of the Seminary addressed the college on the Protes'tant Controversy, a struggle that began in the 1920's and resulted in the suspension of a number of people from the Synod and the formation of their own group called the Protes'tant Conference. The Protes'tants are still in existence today. Any hope for a reconciliation between WELS and the Protes'tants, however, seems unlikely.

"On February 17 the college was privileged to hear an address by the Rev. Carl Mischke, president of our Synod, on the Church of the Lutheran Confession: This group broke away from the Wisconsin Synod in the late

1950's during the controversy over fellowship with the Missouri Synod. These people claimed that the Wisconsin Synod didn't break fellowship with LC-MS soon enough; and as a result they formed their own church body, the CLC. Unlike the Protes'tants, they set up their own worker-training school. Now, two decades after WELS' break with LC-MS, they are still unwilling to rejoin the Synod.

"This month Northwestern is looking forward to hearing Professor Carl Lawrenz of the Seminary, who is to explain the details of our break with LC-MS."

We are not acquainted with William Tackmeier, who is identified as the author of this report. We assume that he is a student who is giving a factual (though very brief) report of what was presented, or what he believed to have been presented, at the two convocations held prior to the time of writing. We furthermore make the assumption that *Northwestern Today* was published with the knowledge and approval of some member of the Northwestern faculty and, at the very least, under the aegis of the officers of the Northwestern College Alumni association.

We will leave it up to the Protes'tants to determine whether or not they were given fair treatment in this report of Prof. Friedrich's presentation. But we do feel that an attempt ought to be made to examine what the report quotes Pres. Mischke as stating about the origin and present status of the CLC *vis-a'-vis* the WELS, and then to respond to it. Our reason for doing so is not merely to engage in polemics in regard to a student report or, for that matter, to take issue with Pres. Mischke over his presentation. No doubt Pres. Mischke had more to say on the subject assigned to him than what was reported. In fact, we are sure that he was thorough and fair in his presentation and did not seek to present the members of the CLC as schismatic or as having no basis for their actions. However, we have noted over the years that what is repeated in the item by Mr. Tackmeier has become a convenient way for members of the Wisconsin Synod to dismiss the formation and existence of the CLC: "These people claimed that the Wisconsin Synod didn't break fellowship with LC-MS soon enough; and as a result they formed their own church body, the CLC. ... Now, two decades af-

ter WELS' break with LC-MS, they are still unwilling to rejoin the Synod."

What this really amounts to is an accusation that the members of the CLC have been and are schismatic — that they are like children who refuse to play because their playmates do not want to play the game they want, when they want it! We have said it again and again, and we will now repeat it once more: We have never been concerned with a timetable. If that were the case, we could not have formed a church body, for those of us who became members of the CLC did not all come out from the Synodical Conference at the same time and as one man. (Indeed, we certainly did not all come out from WELS; consequently it is specious to speak of "rejoining" WELS!)

What is important, rather, is the Scriptural basis for separation from heterodox individuals and/or church bodies! The reason for withdrawing from fellowship is vital, whereas the time at which individuals may come to an awareness of the Scriptural necessity for withdrawing may depend upon a variety of factors, not least of which may be an unwillingness to face facts or even simple disobedience to God's Word.

We have reason to believe that at one point in time the Wisconsin Synod officially recognized that our two church bodies had an honest doctrinal difference, not merely a difference of opinion over whether or not the break from LC-MS was "soon enough." As evidence, we quote from the 1972 resolution of the WELS in its 42nd Biennial Convention:

Whereas a joint meeting of our Commission on Inter-Church relations with the Board of Doctrine of the Church of the Lutheran Confession in July, 1972, produced no positive results on questions dealing with the doctrine of Church Fellowship (specifically, the matter of dealing between church bodies when error or false doctrine has arisen); and

Whereas our Commission agreed with the conviction expressed by the CLC representatives that continued discussion on this matter at that meeting would

serve no purpose; and

Whereas no further arrangements have been made for doctrinal discussions with the CLC Board of Doctrine; therefore be it

Resolved,

- a) That we express regret over the failure at that meeting to reach agreement on the doctrine under discussion; and be it finally

Resolved,

- b) That we ask our Commission on Inter-Church Relations to avail itself of any new opportunities to resume discussions with the CLC Board of Doctrine, as conditions may warrant.

Point a) of the adopted resolution clearly states that there was "failure ... to reach agreement on the doctrine under discussion," namely "... the doctrine of Church Fellowship (specifically, the matter of dealing between church bodies when error or false doctrine has arisen)."

One needs to examine the official record of what took place in the Wisconsin Synod during the 1950's in order to determine the extent of the doctrinal disagreement that exists between WELS and the CLC. In 1955, based upon both the Report and the Supplementary Report of its Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union, the Wisconsin Synod convention unanimously passed the following statement and resolution:

In view of these facts your Floor Committee, together with the Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union, affirms "our position that the Missouri Synod ..." has brought about a break in relations and that our Synod, bound by the Word of God, should now declare itself on the matter. ... A church body which creates divisions and offenses by its official resolutions, policies, and practices not in accord with Scripture also becomes subject to the indictment of Romans 16:17-18. The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod has by its official resolutions, policies, and practices created divisions and offenses

both in her own body and in the entire Synodical Conference. Such divisions and offenses are of long standing." (1955 *Proceedings* of the WELS.)

This resolution clearly states that it was the unanimous belief and recognition on the part of the delegates representing the Wisconsin Synod in its 1955 convention that, on the basis of Romans 16:17-18, the LC-MS had been marked as a church body that was causing divisions and offenses. God's Word is clear as to what the Christian is to do over against such: avoid them; that is, have no fellowship with them. Yet, with a two-to-one majority vote, the Wisconsin Synod delegates decided to postpone the decision to sever fellowship relations with the LC-MS!

For corroboration of this bit of history we need only turn to two official interpretations that were published that same year within the WELS. The *Post-Convention News Bulletin*, published to interpret for members of the Wisconsin Synod the meaning of the synodical resolutions, reported, in part: "Agreement on the fact that Romans 16:17-18 applied to the situation in the Missouri Synod was almost unanimous. [Actually, the record indicates that the vote was unanimous.] The divisions and offenses are clear. There was an honest difference of opinion on whether it was necessary to break relations completely with the Missouri Synod now or whether we, in the words of our President, 'still have an unpaid debt of love to those whose fellowship we cherished so many years.' The body, by a vote of two to one, decided to wait a year." This article certainly made it clear that the WELS had determined that the judgment of Romans 16:17-18 applied to the LC-MS "because of its persistent adherence to its unionistic practices."

The second of the two official interpretations was published in the *Northwestern Lutheran*: "The preamble (of the 1955 resolution), which reiterated the 1953 charges of our Synod and applied Romans 16:17-18, was unanimously adopted. All were firmly convinced and fully agreed that the charge of unionism against the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod was valid and that the Romans passage is applicable, even though some could not agree

that action be deferred until the next meeting of that Synod."

It was from this point on that it became evident to many in the WELS that the synod was taking a position which could not be defended from Scripture; namely, that even though a church body with which WELS had been in fellowship had been clearly identified and marked as causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine, it was not necessary to avoid that church body at that time, with the plea that by delaying the decision to avoid one might be paying "an unpaid debt of love."

So many protests arose from the synod's failure to act in accordance with Romans 16:17-18 that a "Protest Committee" was established to deal with the matter. This committee reported its findings of the situation to the 1957 convention of the Wisconsin Synod. The report did not differ in any way from the interpretations already cited, and it was adopted by the convention, with no objections recorded in the *Proceedings*. Thus, even as late as 1957, the WELS acknowledged: "While there exists in our midst confusing divergence of opinion regarding the interpretation of Romans 16:17-18, especially with regard to the meaning of the expression 'avoid them'; while essays were delivered and it would appear were officially or tacitly accepted in our midst, which are not in harmony with one another; yet the Synod did speak a very clear language concerning this passage at the Saginaw Convention in 1955 when it passed a resolution unanimously, stating that the passage did apply to the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, though the voting on the break was delayed, for the reasons given, for another year."

By 1958, however, the Protest Committee and the leadership of the Wisconsin Synod began to speak another language. A line of argumentation developed by Professor Carl Lawrenz of the WELS Seminary at Mequon, Wisconsin, was beginning to prevail. As presented by the Protest Committee, it was now argued that the 1955 convention of the WELS did not "conclusively" apply the judgment of Romans 16:17-18 to the LC-MS at that time, but, rather, postponed its entire judgment on the matter. As has been shown, this new interpretation was very different from

what had been the official interpretation at the time the 1955 resolution was adopted. The Protest Committee was forced to acknowledge this also, for in its "Letter to the Protesting Brethren" of the WELS, dated June 27, 1958, after quoting Professor Lawrenz' interpretation, the committee declared: "It is true that many did not understand the resolution in that way originally. The members of your Protest Committee will need to admit that they did not understand it that way at the time."

It was this, then, that accounted for the Wisconsin Synod's willingness to practice a "vigorously protesting" fellowship with the LC-MS even after having identified that church body as causing divisions and offenses (Romans 16:17-18). It was further explained in 1959, when the WELS convention of that year accepted as correct the statement: "Termination of church fellowship is called for when you have reached the conviction that admonition is of no further avail and that the erring brother or church body demands recognition for their error." Later, this situation was described by the WELS as the conviction that "an impasse has been reached." This incorrect interpretation of Romans 16:17-18 has now become the very fabric out of which the Wisconsin Synod theology of church fellowship has been woven, and it has given rise to many difficulties.

For Romans 16:17-18 simply does not contain any instructions of the Lord that one must reach a "conviction that admonition is of no further avail," etc. The key to an awareness of whom and when to avoid is found in the passage itself: "... σκοπεῖν τοὺς τὰς διχοστασίας καὶ τὰ σκάνδαλα παρὰ τὴν διδασχὴν ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε ποιοῦντας — mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Those who in an on-going way cause divisions and offenses by their doctrine and/or practice contrary to the teaching of our Lord are to be spiritually avoided. When? When they are causing divisions and offenses! There is nothing in the passage which instructs the Christian to observe the course of admonition and base his decision as to avoiding on the possible results of that admonition. This is not to deny that one must carefully ascertain that the errorist is teaching or practicing incorrectly

in an on-going way; that is to say, that his error is not an inadvertent slip. Admonition may serve to reveal the situation in its true light, especially in difficult cases. However, the situation may be made equally clear in other ways.

When the continuation of the practice of fellowship with errorists is based upon hoped-for results of admonition ("when you have reached the conviction that admonition is of no further avail"), then human judgment is being substituted for the judgment of God. When, therefore, the WELS withdrew the hand of fellowship from the LC-MS in 1961, it did not do so because the LC-MS was guilty of causing divisions and offenses contrary to the Word of God. After all, that judgment had been unanimously made by Wisconsin's convention in 1955, and separation had not come about. No, the reason that WELS separated from the LC-MS was plainly and simply that by 1961 a majority of the representatives at the WELS convention of that year were convinced that admonition would be of no further avail and that "an impasse had been reached." The present writer attended the 1961 convention of WELS and can still vividly remember the argumentation on the floor. No one really attempted to show that LC-MS was causing divisions and offenses; rather, spokesmen for the WELS' official committees attempted to persuade the delegates that admonition had gone as far as it could and that an impasse had been reached. It was on that basis, then, that a majority of the delegates were persuaded, although many were not, as the vote indicated. Thus Wisconsin's break from LC-MS did come about, but on the wrong basis and without true Scriptural justification.

When one is dealing with an individual who has "trespassed against thee" (Matthew 18:15-18), then, as the passage plainly sets forth, the course and effect of the admonition is all important in the procedure. "If he listens to you ... but if he does not listen to you ..." Here, of course, the context shows us that we are dealing with the Office of the Keys, opening or shutting the gate of heaven. The obdurate failure on the part of the individual to heed Christian admonition on account of his sin can only result in his eventual excommunication. When the Wisconsin Synod attempts to insist upon this proced-

ure when dealing with a church body, it can only cause confusion and error; it is impossible for one church body to excommunicate another. God does not expect or demand such action. Rather, He requires only that we take note of and identify the one or many who cause divisions and offenses in an on-going way by their false doctrine or their false practice, and then terminate our fellowship relations with them.

The last of several meetings between representatives of the WELS and the CLC was held July 18-19, 1972. In that meeting it became very clear to both sides what the point of our controversy (*status controversiae*) is. To sum this up, we shall repeat what we have previously observed (*Journal of Theology*, December, 1977, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp. 39-40):

The result of the meetings? It has become clear and accepted among us that there is no difference in the doctrine and practice of our two church bodies in applying the teachings of Scripture on termination of fellowship to individual errorists. The difference lies in the application of the principle to church bodies. As the resolution adopted by the CLC in 1974 declares: "The doctrinal difference is summarized by our president in his report to the convention: 'Your Board of Doctrine presented the simple proposition that Scripture calls for a termination of fellowship with any church body that is teaching error. The representatives of the WELS offered the judgment that this could not always be done when a church body was infected with error, because of the concern that must be shown for those in that body who were not supporting its official position.'"

Wisconsin defends the maintaining of a fellowship relationship with a false-teaching church body for two purposes: (1) To offer opportunity to determine what the confessional position of a church really is, because of controversies existing within that false-teaching group itself; and (2) To offer opportunity to bring testimony to those individuals within the false-teaching group who do not themselves

espouse the error(s). This WELS calls being *in statu confessionis* (in a state of confession). The CLC responds that admonition can better be brought outside of the framework of practicing fellowship, and that such admonition is certainly not eliminated by the application of Romans 16:17-18 ("Avoid them") to a false-teaching church body. While we, also, recognize the urging in Scripture to deal gently with the confused and weak and unlearned, and to make earnest efforts to preserve the bonds of fellowship between brethren, yet we find in these pleadings of the Holy Spirit no instruction that would allow us to disobey God's clear instruction in Romans 16.

For further amplification on this point, the reader is urged to read the article entitled "WELS and CLC — Is There Still a Difference?" in the Panorama section of the *Journal of Theology*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (December, 1972), pp. 36-39.

And thus the situation rests. Our two church bodies have gone separate ways and have done so for the very proper reason: We are not in agreement in the doctrine of Church Fellowship. Both church bodies have, however, declared themselves willing to hold further discussions. One hopes that God-pleasing discussions between us may take place in the future — not with the wish to become stronger through external union, but, rather, that the truth of God's Word be served and defended! The present writer expressed such a hope back in 1977 (Cf. the *Journal of Theology* article in Vol. 17—previously referred to): "The only key to a resolution, if it be possible, of the difference in doctrine that still exists between our church bodies lies in a continued, on-going study of God's Word. It is our hope and prayer that we of the CLC and also our former brethren of the WELS and ELS will not give up in this matter, but will study Scripture and the Confessions for guidance." The personal opinion was then also stated that perhaps free conferences, properly constituted, might provide the best avenue for such an approach. However, to be beneficial, discussion must center on and remain centered on the *status controversiae*.

One is, of course, troubled over the always present

danger that in the intervening years diverging streams of practice have brought about a wider separation between the CLC and the WELS than we have been aware of. For example, the WELS at present seems far from recognizing the sinful unionism involved in membership in certain fraternal life insurance associations (such as the Aid Association for Lutherans and Lutheran Brotherhood).

John Lau

LUTHERAN WORSHIP – A NEW HYMN BOOK

In 1941 a new hymn book was introduced in the synods of the Synodical Conference. For the past forty years *The Lutheran Hymnal* has been in general use in those synods which formerly constituted that church federation. Now another hymn book has come off the press and is being offered particularly to Missouri Synod congregations. *Lutheran Worship* is the title, and it is being offered by the Missouri Synod Commission on Worship in fulfillment of a directive given by the 1979 convention of that church body. The production of *Lutheran Worship* came largely as a result of unfavorable reactions to a hymn book put out by an Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship. While indeed Missouri had participated in the Inter-Lutheran endeavor, the results received quite a wide-spread negative response. But there seemed to be a general agreement that a new hymn book was needed, and so *Lutheran Worship* appeared on the scene and is being promoted.

It could be expected that the reception has not been a hundred per cent favorable. The replacement of an old stand-by which has proved its worth through several decades of use hardly ever receives whole-hearted acceptance. This is especially true of such a common and regular instrument of worship as a hymn book. Even though there would be no substantive defects such as doctrinal aberrations or light and frivolous settings, still one could expect vociferous objections to be raised to any change. While some of these objections may be of the flesh, yet

others cannot be passed off so lightly. When we are dealing with the worship life of the Christian community, we are confronting an area of great sensitivity and are touching the heart string of great emotion. When we consider what it means to become accustomed to singing treasured hymns that have been committed to memory, one can well understand how upsetting it would be if those same hymns appeared in a new translation or, indeed, if they did not appear at all.

Granted that translations can be improved, and granted that some hymns may be better suited to worship than others, yet one is well advised not to be too hasty in taking them out of the worship life of a child of God, all other things being equal. And how upsetting it may be if a treasured hymn is offered with a tune wholly unfamiliar and not even intended for the hymn by the poet. These are all considerations which come to mind when confronted with a new hymn book. While one must be open to change in matters that are classed as adiaphora, and while one must guard against legalism in clinging to old forms, yet there are legitimate concerns which cannot be lightly ignored and disregarded. We venture to say that it takes at least two or three generations to feel at home with a new and different hymn book. Having said all this by way of introduction, let us take a look at *Lutheran Worship*. While it has not been in our hands long enough for any evaluation of the doctrinal content of its hymns or liturgical forms, some general observations and reactions may be in place. At least it will suggest to our pastors and teachers that this is a book which should be purchased and studied with care. Frankly, there are some things that we like about the book and other things of which we disapprove. But that was also true of *The Lutheran Hymnal*.

The first 368 pages are devoted to material related to the orders of service, prayers, psalms, and confessions of the Church. This, compared with 167 pages of such material in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, suggests that the worshipper is confronted with a great deal more material in the new hymn book. This can be both good and bad. It is not good for the uninitiated who try to find their way through the various forms of worship. With three orders of ser-

vice (one of which has two different settings), the congregations are offered four choices, which could result in liturgical chaos, and this certainly does not serve any good purpose. Moving from one congregation to another, adjustments could become rather difficult when different choices are made. While one might argue that a mechanical use of the liturgy might be avoided by changes in the liturgy, still one needs to feel at home and comfortable with a service order which is designed to contribute to the devotion and worship of the individual. Also, it could be upsetting for congregation members to be confronted with too many choices.

In paging through the fore part of the hymn book, we notice that many psalms are omitted which were included in *The Lutheran Hymnal*. For the worshipper who is accustomed to read psalms in preparation for the worship service, these omissions will not be appreciated, nor will they be appreciated by the pastor who chooses to have a well-known psalm read responsively but finds that it is not included in the service book. On the plus side, we note that *Lutheran Worship* has included Luther's Small Catechism (the *Lutheran Hymnary* of the ELS even has the Augsburg Confession.) Especially appreciated is the fact that the text of the Catechism appears in the old familiar translation which strikes a responsive note with those who were brought up with it. Those of Norwegian extraction and those who are familiar with the liturgy as conducted in many German Lutheran congregations of former years, will feel quite at home with the chanting of collects, the Lord's Prayer, and the Words of Institution of the Lord's Supper. The tone settings for these are included, as well as for other chants of psalms, introits, graduals, and canticles. Whether or not you appreciate this addition will depend on your background. Another plus is the much better arrangement for matins, vespers, etc. The forms for Baptism and Confirmation are also included in the fore part of the hymn book. These, then, are some general observations which could be expanded upon by those who have made a special study of the liturgical forms of the Church.

Before passing on to some observations regarding the hymns, we may record a reaction to an item in one of the

orders of service which struck us as rather strange and unrealistic if not bordering a bit on the pietistic. The Divine Service II (second setting) p. 178 (2) calls for a period of silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination. Certainly no one can object to such reflection and self-examination before the confession of sins, but it strikes us that this is asking for more time than the average service will allow, and furthermore who is qualified to decide how much time should be set aside for such silent reflection and self-examination? It could be very upsetting if the pastor should decide that enough time has been allowed and so proceeds when the worshipper may be in the midst of his reflections.

As we pass on to some observations regarding some of the more familiar hymns, we find that in some cases new translations are being used, and in others changes have been made here and there throughout the hymn. Take for instance the precious Luther-hymn, "Dear Christians, One and All Rejoice." By and large the translation is left as we have learned to know it, but along the way changes occur which can be upsetting to one who has committed it to memory. Especially is this true of the last two stanzas of this hymn.

Take another example, the familiar Paul Gerhardt hymn, "Commit Whatever Grieves Thee." This precious hymn comes in a new translation, "Entrust Your Days and Burdens," and presents only six stanzas of a twelve-stanza hymn. The worshipper will miss a stanza such as this:

Thy hand is never shortened,
 All things must serve Thy might;
 Thine every act is blessing,
 Thy path is purest light.
 Thy work no man can hinder,
 Thy purpose none can stay,
 Since Thou to bless Thy children
 Wilt always find a way.

How many distressed and tried souls have found comfort in this stanza even as the blessed words poured out of a tried and tested Gerhardt! And we know of many who would sorely miss that inimitable Easter hymn of Kingo, "Like a Golden

Sun Ascending." Also missed was Landstad's Advent hymn, "When Sinners See their Lost Condition." We were glad to see included "I pray You, dear Lord Jesus, My Heart to Keep and Train" and "I am so Glad when Christmas Comes," both with translations by Norman A. Madson, Sr., who was himself no mean poet. But when we came to Luther's "From Heav'n Above," we again encounter a new translation. Which rendition of a favorite stanza do you prefer?

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
 Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
 Within my heart that it may be
 A quiet chamber kept for Thee. TLH

O dearest Jesus, holy Child,
 Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
 A holy shrine, within my heart,
 That You and I need never part. LW

Lutheran Worship has made the same mistake as was made in *The Lutheran Hymnal* when it offers "God's Word is Our Great Heritage" to the Reuter tune instead of the tune of "A Mighty Fortress is our God," (as we have it in the *Lutheran Hymnary*) and when it offers "On My Heart Imprint Thine Image" to the Johann Koenig tune instead of the Louis Bourgeois 1551 melody. We were glad to see that the translation of "A Mighty Fortress is our God," No. 298, was left untouched so that users of *Lutheran Worship* can at least sing this song from memory without being tripped up with a new translation. We note that some of Catherine Winkworth's translations have been altered, which doesn't help those who learned to sing those hymns as we have them in *The Lutheran Hymnal*. Some of the new translations may be better than the old, but this doesn't help those who have fastened the latter into their memories. It is quite evident that choices in hymns, translations, and melodies show the influence of the *Lutheran Book of Worship*, 1978, in which the Missouri Synod played a part before it decided to go its own way because of dissatisfactions with it. One can't escape the judgment that it would have been better to have included some of the hymns which have been treasured by our churches instead of some of the songs of a lighter and less doctri-

nal nature.

Any evaluation of a hymn book is bound to be somewhat subjective, reflecting personal preferences and that is true also of the notes here recorded. There is no doubt that our pastors and teachers and organists will find *Lutheran Worship* of good use in their ministry, but we are not predicting any wide acceptance of it in our circles. Rather, the time may be at hand when we should consider a supplement to be used alongside *The Lutheran Hymnal* to include hymns that were left out when it was produced some forty years ago. If nothing more, it could be a word edition. The musical setting can be furnished by our church organists who would draw upon the hymn books containing the melodies.

Lutheran Worship, published by Concordia Publishing House, can be purchased through the CLC Book House at \$10.00 per copy.

C. M. Gullerud

BOOK REVIEW

Analytical Greek New Testament, ed.
by Barbara & Timothy Friberg (Grand
Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981). 854
pages. Hard cover. \$19.95.

The Foreword of this book identifies the work as "a result of the creativity and energy of Timothy and Barbara Friberg," who are missionaries to Southeast Asia associated with Wycliffe Bible Translators. Both of them have earned advanced degrees in linguistics. While a candidate for a Ph.D. degree, Mr. Friberg developed, with the aid of his wife, a "computer-stored research database" in the course of preparing a dissertation on the word order of the New Testament. As his work proceeded and the database expanded, there were many requests from biblical scholars and others interested in the study of linguistics for access to this material. These requests became so numerous at the computer center of the University of Minnesota, where the study was carried on, that it was

decided to make the material available in book form. Baker Book House has now made arrangements to publish not only the present work, the *Analytical Greek New Testament*, but also three additional books: two concordances, one organized lexically and the other grammatically; and an analytical New Testament lexicon. All books in the series are, of course, computer generated and will be available also on magnetic tape, from the University of Minnesota Computer Center, for New Testament scholars desiring computer assistance.

We quote the following from the book jacket: "The feature that sets this Greek New Testament apart from all other editions is the grammatical analysis located immediately below each word of the text. Both beginning and advanced students of Greek will find this an invaluable tool. It enables one to read the text more quickly, seeing at a glance the grammatical relationships between words. It serves admirably as a reference tool, allowing one to check in a moment the accuracy of his own analysis of a word. And it proves most helpful to those looking for creative ways to review and improve their knowledge of Greek. The analytical 'tag' beneath each Greek word consists primarily of capital letters, abbreviations for the pertinent grammatical information. The grammatical tag for a noun that is nominative, feminine, and singular, for example, is N-NF-S. In many cases there has been added to the basic analysis of a word's form a secondary analysis of function. This results in a complex tag such as the following for *huios* in Matthew 1:20: N-NM-S□N-VM-S. The tags for words that can legitimately be analyzed in more than one way reflect that fact. . . . The Greek text in this edition is that of the most recent editions of the United States Bible Societies' *Greek New Testament* (3rd ed.) and the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* (26th ed.)."

One difficulty that this reviewer notes is that, until one gets used to it, there will be trouble memorizing all the tags used for grammatical analysis. To spare one the necessity of turning back constantly to a full page of abbreviations and symbols while using the book, a specially printed card containing the same information has been included. With good fortune, one will have the symbols memorized by the time this card has been lost!

John Lau

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