

CONTENTS

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP - A LUTHERAN HYMNAL (WELS)	John Reim
THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL (Conclusion)	Winfred Schaller, Sr.
EXEGESIS: GALATIANS (Continuation) (Trans. C. M. Gullerud)	Dr. Joh. Ylvisaker

BOOK REVIEW:

Law and Gospel: The Foundation of Lutheran Ministry, by Robert J. Koester

(Reviewer: Stephen Kurtzahn)

Christian Worship—A Lutheran Hymnal (WELS)

John Reim

Introduction

Events which are particularly time consuming or energy consuming are, on occasion, said to be events "of Biblical proportions." It would be legitimate, therefore, to speak of the production of a hymnal in such terms. For such a project is enormous, as was the case with the new hymnal of the WELS, *Christian Worship - A Lutheran Hymnal*. It is the product of nearly a decade of work on the part of numerous committees.

Normally, an objective review of a hymnal would strive to avoid comparisons with other publications. In this case, however, a very direct comparison will be made between *Christian Worship* and *The Lutheran Hymnal*, since the former has been promoted as a revision of the latter. "The book we ended up with," writes committee member Mark Jeske, "might better be called the 'new/revised/same' hymnal, because quite a bit of the worship material in it is unchanged from *The Lutheran Hymnal*" (*Northwestern Lutheran*, November 1993).

Of main concern, of course, is whether or not a hymnal is "of Biblical proportions" with respect to its doctrinal contents. This two part study will focus primarily on the extent to which *Christian Worship* accurately reflects the Word of God. Part I will consider the hymns; Part II the liturgy.

The production of a truly edifying hymnal is a project of such magnitude because a hymnal is, in actuality, the harmonization of several different books into a single unit. A hymnal is, chiefly, a summary of Christian teachings. Its contents reveal the doctrinal position of the denomination which produces it. It is also a book of literature. The editors of hymnals strive to present Biblical thought within the framework of linguistic propriety and poetic grace. A hymnal is also a book of music. The gems of Biblical truth are worthy of the noblest musical settings, of glorious melodies with which to be adorned.

What follows are impressions which developed as a result of studying several hundred of the hymns in *Christian Worship* (hereafter CW), especially in comparison to the hymns of *The Lutheran Hymnal* (TLH).

A. *Christian Worship* as a Summary of Christian Doctrine

When producing or considering a hymnal, that which is of utmost concern to the confessional Christian is the text. Next to the Bible, of which every hymnal must be an accurate reflection, a hymnal influences thought more directly than any other form of publication. Due to the repeated use of hymn verses on a daily or weekly basis, the messages they contain quickly bond to the soul and become an ever present source of nourishment to the spirit. The ingredients of such spiritual food, therefore, must be Scriptural.

The seriousness with which the compilers of CW approached this aspect of the project can easily be seen. In comparing CW with its "parent" hymnal (TLH), a considerable number of alterations, deletions, and additions quickly come to the fore.

Alterations

Beneath many of CW's hymns, one finds the small letters "alt." This informs the reader that something in a former version of the text has been altered. And quite often the alteration appears to have been driven by the concern to remove doctrinally questionable words or phrases, as illustrated by the following:

"The Church's One Foundation"

TLH 473

"The Church shall never perish!

Her dear Lord, to defend . . .

Tho' there be those that hate her,

False sons within her pale . . ."

CW 538

"The Church shall never perish.

Her dear Lord, to defend . . .

Though there be those that hate her

And strive to see her fail. . ."

"All Glory Be To God On High"

TLH 237

"God showeth His good will to men,

And peace shall reign on earth again."

CW 263

"The Father's love, the Savior's birth,

Bring peace, good will, to all the earth."

"I Gave My Life For Thee"

TLH 405

"I gave My life for thee;
What hast thou giv'n for Me?"
(Would Jesus ever say that?)

CW 454

"I gave my life for thee;
Come, give thyself to me!"

Other alterations were apparently a result of the desire for consistency. The new translation of the Nicene Creed in CW speaks of Jesus as "God from God, Light from Light." So then, in "Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful" the words are altered to read "God from true God, and Light from Light eternal." (CW 55)

Additional alterations were made in order to replace certain phrases which might evoke an uncomfortable response on the part of the worshiper. "There is a fountain filled with blood, Drawn from Immanuel's veins" (TLH 157) is changed to "There is a fountain filled with blood -- Immanuel was slain." (CW 112) "The golden casket" TLH (294) was buried by the editors of CW.* For decades advent worshipers have come upon "the eyeballs of the blind" (TLH 66), but they are nowhere to be seen in CW.

* It is a mystery to me that many are uncomfortable with "casket" in TLH 294. Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary gives "a small chest or box (as for jewels)" as the word's primary meaning. What, then, is strange about the word of God as "the golden casket where gems of truth are stored"? - Editor.

A number of alterations, then, involve words which are not likely to be understood by the average reader. "The rod of Jesse" (TLH 62) becomes "the root of Jesse." (CW 23) "Succor speedy" (TLH 59) becomes "rescue speedy" (CW 93). It is somewhat surprising, however, to note that alterations of this type are not made with complete consistency. Still to be found are phrases such as "sepulchral stone" (TLH 166, CW 124).

Deletions

The deletions which are most noticeable, of course, are the deletions of hymns which were entirely removed. And any such cut will invariably arouse negative reactions, since different people develop a fondness for different hymns. It's only logical, however, that deletions of perfectly acceptable hymns be made in order to make room for hymns which are thought to be superior. The challenging question is whether or not the selected substitutions do, in fact, result in an improvement. For example, one could argue in favor of retaining a hymn such as "Thou, Whose Almighty Word" (TLH 508) instead of adding some of the new hymns found in CW.

What comes as more of a surprise is the widespread deletion of stanzas within the hymns retained. A large number of hymns have significantly fewer stanzas. Reducing the number of stanzas is, of course, a legitimate aspect of the editing process. The editors of TLH also "downsized." Many of the hymns in TLH include fewer than the original number of verses. But the practice in CW seems, at times, to be excessive.

Several deleted stanzas will likely not be missed. Did Christ's manger really shine brightly? (TLH 95) What Christian can honestly sing, "My heart from care is free, No trouble troubles me," (TLH 192)? On the other hand, absent from CW are some of the most powerful and poetic

verses written. The fifteen stanzas of "All My Heart This Night Rejoices" are leveled to a mere six. Gone are stanzas such as this:

"Guilt no longer can distress me;
Son of God, Thou my load
Bearest to release me.
Stain in me Thou findest never,
I am clean. All my sin
Is removed forever." (TLH 77:13)

From "Come, Your Hearts And Voices Raising" is removed

"From the bondage that oppressed us,
From sin's fetters that possessed us,
From the grief that sore distressed us,
We, the captives, now are free." (TLH 90:6)

The official reason for such deletions is listed among the principles used in the revision of hymns. "Hymns with very many verses would be pruned down to a 'comfortable sing,' usually no more than five or six verses, unless there are compelling reasons. For example, some hymns were left lengthy because some churches like to sing all the verses during communion distribution" (*Northwestern Lutheran*, November 1993). Though it is true that only five or six stanzas tend to be sung at one time in worship services, there could be great benefit in keeping available a full array of stanzas from which a selection can be made.

Additions

The production of any new hymnal provides the delightful prospect of making accessible to everyone sacred music which has already made its way into the repertoire of church choirs. Since the publication of TLH, a number of works have become increasingly familiar to Lutheran congregations, and cherished. Several such pieces are made available for congregational use by means of their inclusion in CW. Among the "classics" are "Break Forth, O Beauteous, Heavenly Light" (CW 44), "Lo, He Comes With Clouds Descending" (CW 29), and "Once In Royal David's City" (CW 50).

CW also includes a number of hymns written during the 20th century -- a century which has witnessed a resurgence in hymn writing. (Though published in 1941, TLH has very few texts written after 1900). Increasingly popular (and powerful) texts written in this century include "This Joyful Eastertide" (CW 160), "Thy Strong Word" (CW 280), "Rise, Shine, You People" (CW 556). A newly paraphrased version of the Te Deum (CW 277) is particularly well done.

There are also interesting "edition" additions. There are certain attempts at editing (or "Lutheranizing") hymns with a non-Lutheran background. And the results are mixed. A successful attempt is seen in "Hail Thee, Festival Day" (CW 179). The music of this hymn, composed by R. Vaughan Williams, is one of the finest 20th century hymn tunes. But several of the original stanzas are theologically rather weak. Two replacement stanzas by Mark Jeske add doctrinal strength, resulting in a fine additional hymn in the Pentecost section.

An example of a less successful attempt at "Lutheranizing" might be seen in "The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came" (CW 24). The melody is, to be sure, one of the finest of all hymn tunes. The desire to include it, therefore, is understandable. The common English text, however, was in need of help. Consequently, some fancy work with quotation marks was done in an attempt to shift the glory from Mary to God. But the success of this attempt is questionable.

Other additions are questionable on the basis of doctrinal weakness or thinness of content. One wonders how wise it is to see, as an objective of the transfiguration, the opportunity for Jesus to "seal his deity." (CW 97) Or one wonders how realistic it is for a Christian to say, in self-examination,

"Truthful in speech our reputation,
By selflessness shall we be known.
Unending love we pledge all people,
Our highest love for God alone." (CW 292)

"Silent Night" (TLH 646, CW 60) illustrates the inclusion of spiritual songs, not on the basis of profound theological insight or textual depth, but on the basis of broad popular appeal and deeply felt fondness. CW adds to "Silent Night" a few more hymns which would fall into that category (possibly dubbed "mood music"), such as "Away In A Manger" (CW 68) and "When Christmas Morn Is Dawning" (CW 48).

Further additions are found in the topical sections of the hymnal. CW triples the number of hymns which focus on the transfiguration. One also finds in CW a few more hymns under the heading "Baptism." The section entitled "Trust" is greatly expanded. And some entirely new sections are added, with benefit: Evangelism, Hymns of the Liturgy, and Social Concerns. Unfortunately, a stanza or two in the "Social Concerns" section might well raise many an eyebrow. Cf. CW 526:5.

B. *Christian Worship* as a Book of Poetry

From the Sunday School classroom, to the pulpit, to the deathbed, hymn verses are frequently used even without their musical adornment. These uses heighten the importance of the literary format and poetic design of hymns. A critique of hymns will ask whether or not the words which are used effectively communicate the thoughts of the text and do so with a gracefulness befitting the Gospel.

Translations

Translations of hymns are particularly challenging. And translations fill a significant portion of a Lutheran hymnal because of the European roots of Lutheran hymnody. Due to the amazing skills of translators such as Catherine Winkworth, this hurdle has been largely overcome. Room for refinements generally exists, however, and the revision of a hymnal provides the opportunity to make them. Some of the awkwardness of earlier translations has been nicely refined in CW. Other hymns, however, still sound translated.

Elizabethan English

All living languages evolve -- a feature of language which contributes to the desire for a revision of hymn texts from time to time. New words come into being. Old words take on new meanings. Other old words simply slip into disuse, such as Elizabethan era pronouns and their attendant verb forms: "Thou com'st", "Thou desirest," or from TLH 152, "God stoopeth."

The move to modernize such pronouns and verbs in hymns can, understandably, draw strong reactions from individuals who have worshiped a lifetime with the older forms of speech. There is, one may argue, a certain dignity which accompanies a set of words which is reserved for the house of God. And there is an element of beauty to the poetry of another era. Still, the

concerns which have fueled the many Bible revisions have now, logically, been extended to hymns.

Chief among such concerns is this, that the Gospel message be presented in the most approachable, useable and understandable way possible. When the "thees" and "thous" of the KJV were written, "thees" and "thous" were used in the daily speech of the common people. Today, of course, it's "you." Newcomers and visitors to a traditionally worded service might easily feel isolated by a form of English which sounds foreign. And hymn verses filled with archaic pronouns and verb forms can be awkward to pronounce even for the experienced tongue, and can, therefore, be distracting from the message. As a result, modernizations such as the following are offered.

TLH 130

CW 94

"On no proud steed Thou ridest,
Thou wear'st no jeweled crown
Nor dwell'st in lordly castle,
But bearest scoff and frown."

"You do not come displaying
Your power and renown.
You dwell in no high castle;
You wear no jeweled crown."

At the same time, it is interesting to note that the editors of CW did not make this change in all hymns. The explanation: "It was not always possible to do away with all the "thees" and "thous" without setting off a chain reaction of alterations that would have changed the stanza beyond recognition" (*Northwestern Lutheran*, Novovember 1993).

The word "man"

American society in the 1990s has become super sensitized with respect to gender references. There are those who insist that masculine forms of words not be used when referring to groups involving women. Although "man" has, for centuries, been used to refer to the entire human race, certain members of society have decided that such a use of that word is sexist. When a new Lutheran hymnal, therefore, is virtually devoid of this traditional use of `man' or `men,' it's easy to draw the conclusion that the pressures of the feminist movement may be involved. The *official* explanation for the adjustment presents another reason. "In the past the words `man' and `men' could be understood in two ways, referring either to an adult male or referring to people in general. That second use is fading fast from modern English. We don't say `all men' anymore when we mean `all people' so, where possible, our committee changed wording that would be confusing" (*Northwestern Lutheran*, November 1993).

There are those phrases in which a point does appear to be clarified by changing "men" to "people." Mary's magnificat is benefitted in this way. "Henceforth all men shall call me blest" (TLH 275) is changed to "Henceforth shall people call me blest." (CW 274). Nevertheless, there are odd inconsistencies in CW.

It appears that "man" is unacceptable when some activity is positive, and yet is perfectly suited for an activity that's negative. "People" (not "men") sing. "People" (not "men") are saved. But Jesus was rejected "by man" (CW 127). Another instance: It was apparently considered incorrect to refer to Jerusalem as "her" any longer. "Tell them that their sins I cover." (CW 11) Yet it was considered acceptable to continue viewing death as a male. "Knowing death has lost his power Since you crushed him in the dust" (CW 121).

Even more surprising with respect to the gender issue is the alteration found in "Hail, O Source of Every Blessing" (TLH 129, CW 87). The phrase "Sov'reign Father of mankind" is replaced by "Father to our human race," suggesting that a perfectly neutral word like "mankind" was still viewed as sexist because it begins with the letters m-a-n.

“He” or “he”

Purely editorial is the question of whether pronouns which refer to God should be capitalized. The editors of CW opted to restrict capitalization to the actual names of the Lord. This certainly does not indicate a reduction in reverence or respect. But perhaps it is unfortunate in that capitalized pronouns help the reader understand instantly that the pronoun is pointing to the Trinity.

C. Christian Worship as a Book of Music

It is difficult to be objective when reviewing the music of a hymnal, since the labeling of a piece of music as good or as bad is very much a subjective affair. Everyone’s musical taste is different. Very few “rights” and “wrongs” can be established. Furthermore, a detailed study of the musical components found in CW is better suited for a musical publication than for a theological journal. Since a review of the hymnal would be incomplete without some reference to the music, however, a few observations follow.

It could easily take a few worship services for someone to detect musical changes in the CW, for a large number of melodies (and many harmonies) have been left virtually unaltered from what is found in TLH. What is most noticeable is a new ease of singing. The editors of CW pursued a number of ways by which congregational singing might effectively be encouraged.

- + The keys of many hymns have been lowered by a half step or whole step, leaving the high notes of a melody less high.
- + Rhythmic adjustments were made, by which rhythmic momentum is enhanced. (cf. the first note of CW 19)
- + New ornamentations (such as passing tones) are found, adding gracefulness to the melodic line.
- + A number of folk tunes are included. Folk tunes tend to be easier to sing than formally composed melodies (see CW 7, 318, 552, 611).
- + Several hymn melodies are given alternative harmonizations which can contribute to a sense of musical freshness.

In other ways, CW presents itself as somewhat of a restoration project. Certain adaptations seen in the music of TLH are noticeably gone, apparently in the pursuit of authenticity.

- + Gone are certain accidentals, the absence of which restores the original modal flavor of a melody (cf. CW 271).
- + Almost entirely removed is the “Picardy third” (the raised third scale degree by which the final chord of a hymn in the minor mode is made to sound major).
- + Certain melodies and chants (which were never designed for a four-part chord-per-beat harmonization) are freed from the harness of such cantional settings (TLH 62, CW 23).
- + Some classic gems of ecclesiastical music are once again included (e.g., CW 178, Veni Creator Spiritus).

Whenever a new hymnal is being produced it must be a temptation to make sweeping revisions. CW, however, displays a considerable amount of restraint.

- + Relatively few hymn tunes from TLH were abandoned.
- + There is little evidence of harmonic change merely for the sake of change. The harmonic vocabulary is, for the most part, very tame.
- + The editors refrained from opening the floodgates in order to incorporate any and every style of contemporary Christian music.

This is not to suggest, however, that all the additions and changes will receive widespread applause. The focus with respect to musical style, in fact, may well be criticized for being too narrow. The German Lutheran chorale melody, already so prominent a feature in the hymns retained from TLH, is, quite often, not the most conducive to good congregational singing. There are the jewels. No melody is more invigorating than “Lasst uns erfreuen” (TLH 15),

none more contemplative than "Es ist ein' Ros" (TLH 645). But for many people, German chorales seem rhythmically clumsy and have melodies which are difficult to sing. It is unfortunate, then, that more of the same type of tunes were added. Among them are CW 22, 88, 575.

Although some advancement was made with respect to the inclusion of music from other ethnic backgrounds (cf. CW 146), the number of non-European and non-American hymns is sparse. Including more Christian music of differing ethnic origins would have been reflective of the fact that Christ's Church encompasses those of every nation.

With respect to the new music which was added, however, it does include some of the finest Christian music ever written (see CW 7, 44, 46, 52, 58, 179, 523, 579).

Conclusion

In recent decades several new Lutheran hymnals have been added to those already in use, and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod is scheduled to complete its own new hymnal project in 1995. Such publications receive much attention by the Christian community which is attuned to the manifold blessings of sacred music in the service of Christ's Church. It is always a challenge to decide whether it is better to retain the established or move on to the revised. Blessings will certainly follow a careful analysis and thoughtful decision as to which hymnal will, at any given time, offer the most useful material for worship. In this aspect of Christian life, also, Spirit-guided judgment will be of great importance as Christians continue to encourage one another in the singing of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs."

The Preaching Of The Gospel

Winfred Schaller, Sr.

Thesis IV

*Though its reception is by faith,
it is in no wise conditioned by faith.*

So preaching is the amazed proclaiming of the unconditioned gospel of Jesus Christ, the setting forth in human tongue of the wonderful and astounding works of God. By very far not the least amazing is this untrammled, unconditioned gospel in the unconditioned proclaiming thereof. In this its universality, in the universal dispensing of it in true grace and unreserved freedom, lies its universal power and strength. These works of God are to be proclaimed as being done for every single sinner, and having been done, to be proclaimed fully as belonging to him without condition and without price. Therein, therein lies the great and supreme difference between this gospel of the eternal God and all the religious concepts of man.

Thus the amazement of the preacher lies not only in the contents of the gospel itself, but also in this unconditional dispensing of it, which he is called upon to do. Small wonder that here most of all the influence of doubt and unbelief in the preacher himself finds fertile soil. For he sees before him every day the unbelief, the carelessness, the disregarding of this gospel, and it would seem either not sufficient or else not proper to thus freely dispense the eternal gifts of heaven. Small wonder that the evil foe bends every effort to prevent this free dispensing, and alas, how well has he succeeded in the course of the New Testament era, and how well is he succeeding today!

This hindering of the gospel of Christ takes on the most manifold forms, from the mildest and most unintentional to the grossest and most determinedly meant and believed. Its most insidious form can probably be seen in the unconscious setting of faith as a condition attaching to the having of this blessed gospel of eternal and sure hope. After presenting the wonderful

work of salvation wrought by Christ, the preacher is tempted to ask the now quite unnecessary question: "How can we have this great gift of God?" and promptly to answer: "If you only believe, if you only put your trust in it, it shall be yours." How innocent and correct does it not sound, and apparently entirely scriptural; and yet, into what despair can it throw a lost soul!

For, while it is true that the having of the blessing is called faith in the scripture, and the trusting in God alone and His promise is called believing, this faith, this trusting and believing is never given as a condition for having the blessings of the works of God. How contradictory indeed is it not, even to harbor the thought for a moment. For the proclaiming of the wonderful works of God, if at all completely done, included the proclamation: This was all done for you; it is finished now and all has been done for you. It is yours as it is all the world's, this justification of the sinners before God. So even the question: How shall this belong to me, is a denial of the full truth of the gospel just proclaimed.

No, this gospel's possession is not conditioned on anything else in heaven and earth. Just as little as it depends upon the goodness of my heart, the fairness of my deeds, the good record I might imagine to have before God, so little is it also dependent on believing. In His saving mercy the eternal Lord has set this gospel high, high above all human effect or affect, beyond the dependence of even the least sign of activity of man. He has done this to such an extent that even the extreme declaration: You are justified before God in Jesus Christ, whether you believe it or not, is perfectly true and is the very essence of the marvel of the salvation of our God.

Ah, if that were not so, what despair would be ours in the hour of tribulation. For just as Jesus was tempted by the devil to doubt: Are you truly the Son of God as your Father declared, so does he tempt us to despair by asking the question: Are you really a believer, and have you really the true faith? How desperate does the case of such a despondent sinner not become, and how deeply does it sear his soul as a rod of hot iron, when he then should hear proclaimed: If you believe, if you are a true child of God, the promise is yours. Ah, but that is just the very great trouble in which he lies. The terrible doubt assails him whether he truly believes as he sees his many sins and failures, his doubting and fearing and lack of trust in the Lord in so many things. Much comfort there would indeed be in this, that some one would thus encourage him to think of his faith.

There is only one surety for the despairing, sinful child of man: It is written, God has redeemed you from all sins, from the power of the devil, from the pangs of eternal death. Your faith may be all wrong, your trust may be wavering and doubtful, your service to God full of the grossest failings and shortcomings; but this gospel of Christ is complete in itself. There it is; it is your own; God so declares it upon His Word, His eternal, unbroken Word. "Fear not, I have redeemed you, thou art mine," He calls, and you, just you are the one He is speaking to; and so it is yours, though your own heart a thousand times say: it is not so.

Or would you inject: Is it then not necessary to believe? But no, this question could now hardly be asked, for it is a wrong question in itself. The very language of the human race is filled with doubt and the veriest unbelief. For truth to tell, if the question were exactly meant as it sounds: *It is not necessary then to believe?* the answer would have to be an unqualified "No." There is definitely nothing necessary beyond the work of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, and every such question immediately implies the need of something more, which always takes away the glory and honor that is Christ's alone and shall remain His only.

The question should probably read: Is then not faith involved in the having of this salvation? But then this question has already been answered: but of course it is involved, it is created by the very declaration of the Lord Jesus that his blessing, His forgiveness, His love, His eternal life is your own and is for you. Through His Spirit He leads the despairing heart described above to rest simply in this promise of the Lord, simply disregarding the question whether he has faith or not. And lo, this child-like resting on the promise of the lord, that is true faith indeed. It is the very negation of the thought: I must do something, or I must be of this or that nature. It is indeed the utter despair in anything, even faith, that Christ might be all in all.

Closely related to this unconscious conditioning of the gospel of Jesus Christ is the somewhat intensive urging to faith without properly and continually defining the term. This often takes the form of the searching query to the hearer: Are you a Christian, are you believing? Are you a believer? Without question such proclaiming, which is indeed a conditioning of the gospel of Christ, is in very many cases entirely well-meant, and no restricting of the gospel is intended at all. But it is, alas, the unhappy imperfection of human tongue which permits the effect of such words to be entirely misleading, driving the sinner either into despair, or into pharisaical self-satisfaction.

For there is indeed a vast difference between offering and presenting, dispensing and freely transmitting the full salvation of God on the one hand, and the insistent urging to take it now. The first act is truly complete in itself and suffers at most only a loving urging as one urges a hesitant child: Just put your trust and hope in it, it is the promise of God and is surely your very own. But the insistent, driving urge to have faith, to believe, has terrible implications for the sinner. On the one hand it creates again the doubt in the heart: Ah, it is not free at all and freely mine, I must do something anyway and I must put myself into a state of receiving it. On the other hand it leads him astray in the thought, that it is he who must do the converting, the turning about, as if he could reach out and grasp the gift of God.

Worse still is then the question: Are you a Christian? At best it would make the listener gently think: But that is hardly your business. Less good is the evil effect, that it creates a self-searching in the heart with desperate results: The hearer either cannot find that he is a Christian and then despairs; or he deceives himself, conjures up a picture, a deceptive one, of himself which conforms to his idea of what constitutes a Christian, and then is smugly satisfied with himself and the state of his soul.

This entire questioning is unfortunately, consciously or unconsciously, based on a doubt in the efficacy of the gospel, as also on a doubt in its sufficiency, within the preacher himself. He must needs help this power of God along; the proclaiming of the wonderful works of God is not enough. Mayhap his preaching of the wonderful works of God has been rather stereotyped and ill-prepared, haphazard and incomplete, lacking within the personal amazement concerning these wonderful works, so that he instinctively feels the need of some powerful urge to cover up his ineptitude. But though it be this, it is still a doubting of the efficacy of the gospel itself, unless he is ready to confess that he has not preached the gospel at all. For a truly firm belief in the universality of the gospel and its free dispensing with unconditional words to all the hearers would make it seem ridiculous, afterwards to be insistently urging to be sure and take this salvation. To give to some one the highest treasure of heaven and eternity, and then to urge to be sure to take them too, borders on the ridiculous.

This is true even though we know that the natural heart of man automatically refuses this gospel and all its blessings. Or do we think that we can by other human words overcome this natural resistance of man to the gospel? Or do we believe that we can convert this resisting soul by an even greater power than the gospel, namely by our own puny urge to accept it? If we spoke before of a despairing soul which would be terribly harmed by a conditioned gospel, and can be only comforted and brought to trust by an unrestricted dispensing of the same, how equally true is this not of the hardened heart that refuses entirely to be moved. Again the word assures us: Preach the *gospel*. It is the only power of God that brings men to life from the death of their unbelief. And thank God, it is the power, is this power to such an extent that it is even unconditioned by the very faith which it can and does create.

Whenever we reach this power we realize, of course, how entirely inadequate we are to be the ambassadors of Christ. It is the unhappy heritage of our time also, that we are prone to dogmatize in our preaching, and find it difficult to proclaim the gospel as what it truly is: the recital of that which God has done and does do. It is also so much easier to repeat well-set, established, stereotype phrases which contain the true doctrine, than to set forth in glowing words of adoration the works of the inestimable mercy of our God. Ever more does it become glaringly apparent how we continually hinder the gospel even in our best efforts, and all depends upon His grace and mercy. But then, it must be so, and ever more become our constant con-

fession: We are unworthy servants, Lord, but Thou, Thou hast made us thine ambassadors, to submerge our persons and our whole beings into the blessedness of Thine atoning mercy, so that we may become more and more but voices, crying in the wilderness the ineffable glory of our redeeming Lord. In the untrammled freedom of an unconditioned gospel His church shall live.

Thesis V

*Though its reception is connected with repentance,
it is not in any wise conditioned by the same.*

The conditioning of the gospel becomes gross, of course, when it is restricted and conditioned by the suggestion: But you must repent first, there must first be deep contrition and sorrow, there must first be a complete renouncing of your former state, before you can call the blessings of Christ your own. In that we have a flagrant effort of the evil One to hinder the course of the gospel and its power. It rides on, clothed in the garb of apparent truth and earnestness; it clothes itself apparently in truths of the eternal word itself. It is, however, revealed as that which it truly is: A shameless beclouding of the truth of free grace and free salvation, and, remarkably enough, one little word does the revealing, the little word "but." Alas, with this cursed little word the foe has misled uncounted souls of preachers and hearers through all the centuries. For well we know from His word that there is no "but" at all possible after the proclaiming of the gospel, the wonderful works of God being complete and finished in themselves, and permitting of no "but" or "however" in any form or shape.

The cause of this error is apparent enough and a constant source of anxiety and humility for all true preachers of the word. It is not for nothing that the Lord declares: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not on thine own understanding." For it is perfectly true that the sinner coming to faith by the preaching of the gospel is truly repenting; his very coming to faith is repenting. He is also truly filled with contrition and sorrow over his sins and the shameful state in which he has lived. He also does indeed renounce the sinful life of the past; indeed his coming to faith is the very renouncing of the former life. And now, now the too wise mind of the theologian, so-called, takes the fatal step and manages to place this repenting, this sorrow, this renouncing before the coming to faith, divorces them from the same, whereupon the next and still more fatal step is readily made: they become required preliminaries to be in some way supplied by man, before he can come to faith.

Before we enter in upon the positive side of this question, we also note now, that the query directed to the apostle Paul: "Wherefore then serveth the law?" is at all times injected at this point to help becloud the issue still more, in righteous indignation. For it would seem that the all too one-sided command of Christ to his ambassadors would also upset all established understanding of repentance, of the causes and processes of the same, of the part the law plays therein, and of the very steps of conversion with its contrition and repentance and faith. It would also then seem as though the antinomians did indeed speak correctly, and that we have had a false understanding.

Thus also, before we continue, we must repeat: Christ does not say to his disciples: Do not preach the law. That is very important to hold, as the true antinomian makes the statement: The law is no good, we must not preach it or use it at all. This the Lord of His church has not only not commanded, but it is ridiculous even to consider the suggestion. The law is holy, just, and good. It endures forever, it is a part of the essence of God, and thus a delight to all His people at all times. But it is also equally true that not a righteous championship of the law causes the injection of its purpose at this particular point, but much rather the desire to bolster the unhappy conditioning of the gospel with the injection of the accusation of antinomian tendencies. At the proper time we shall then return to the thought.

First we return to the question at hand and take up the word repentance as a proper beginning. It would seem that the word has suffered somewhat in the course of time and in the

course of much controversy and false doctrine concerning it. It has so often and so variously been used as an activity of unconverted man, a process of thought and feeling through which he must actively pass, that it has received rather the slant of that part of conversion which unregenerate man must accomplish before he can receive the gospel of Christ. The term has been mixed with the tears of contrition, the despair in one's own self, the determination to seek other help, to such an extent that in many circles it has become again a sort of sacrificial work by which man makes himself a suitable subject for the merciful help of God.

Now it is evident after a careful study of the word and all circumstances connected with it, that this repentance of which the Scriptures speak so often is a much simpler thing than is usually assumed. We have probably let ourselves be misled by the dogmatic method of dividing and subdividing a subject, which then in these subdivisions becomes for us a process, a step-by-step procedure, which develops according to certain fixed rules and is produced by certain separate causes. Essentially the word has the simple meaning of "changing the mind," of turning about and going in the opposite direction, of discarding an old conception and having a new one. In the case of an unbeliever repenting, it is a turning away from false gods, from false hopes, from false conceptions of spiritual or supposed spiritual things to the true God, the correct hope, the true spiritual knowledge.

When the people asked Peter on the first Pentecost Day what they should do, he answered so simply: "Change your mind and let yourselves be baptized for the forgiveness of sins; for this gospel is for you and for your children." And further along he tells in explanation: "Let yourselves be saved from this sordid generation." He had told them the wonderful works of God, as He carried out His marvelous plan of salvation and had accomplished it. This recital went through their heart, and when they query: "What shall we do?" he simply invites them all to throw all their preconceived and ill-begotten ideas overboard and come to the baptism of forgiveness.

Very clearly does one see why the Master told His disciples: Preach the gospel. The one thing that was new to all these hearers was the accomplishing of their salvation and the offer of it, freely, without price, from the hand of God. This very gospel was entirely contrary to all their former thoughts and conceptions of the way of life. It reached their mind and there created only conflict and opposition; for dearly does man love that which he thinks he knows and will not surrender it lightly. But this gospel also reaches their hearts, and although it escapes us entirely how there could be a separate and distinct activity there, the events show that while their mind cries: These are drunk, their heart cries: What shall we do?

And lo, the efficacy of this gospel becomes very much visible this time: three thousand come to be baptized. They have repented, have changed their mind, or rather we should now say: God has changed their mind and their heart, their very innermost trusts and confidences, and they have turned to the Lord, their God. God gave them the salvation through the preaching of the word, and lo, they have taken it through the miraculous, life-giving power of the gospel, and are thus converted ones, repentant ones.

Certainly other emotions have played along during this change that God has worked. The disruption was enormous, the change is cataclysmic. One can hardly imagine any greater emotional upheaval, any more pronounced inner disturbance than this throwing over-board of deeply rooted religious fancies or supposed ideals in the mind and heart of man. The very fact that there is such a sharp contrast, such an absolute opposite to everything before known and believed true alone would be sufficient for much internal activity.

But on top of this comes also the conviction that the former ideas and the former state were evil, were not good at all, were obnoxious to God. This is contrasted in the mind and heart with the immensity of God's love in that He, knowing this, still brought him this salvation. The greater and the sharper this contrast becomes, the deeper and more moving is the distress, the regret, the sorrow over the blasphemous, the utterly selfish and weirdly self-righteous state before conversion.

But more: this coming to life, this having the kingship and priestly state in Christ has changed the thought of the soul to such an extent that the subject *now wants that which God*

wants. What a contrast to the former state does he see now: then a continual serving of selfish, evil desires, now a continual striving to do God's will. A whole former life stands there convicted and condemned, useless, aye, worse than useless, a destructive, evil thing. More and more deeply are the emotions of regret, of sorrow, of painful self-condemnation brought out.

Of course it is apparent that this has no effect on the coming to Christ, the believing and trusting in Him. That is fully established by the miraculous turning to Him, which God accomplished through the gospel. God has given Him forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, the treasures won for this particular man long ago, and now his conscious possession by the grace of God. Neither deep nor shallow sorrow, neither intensive nor light contrition, neither bitter nor gentle regret can either effect or alter this deeply blessed fact of life in Christ.

We have, then, not a process, not a step-by-step development, not a set of conditions to be fulfilled before conversion, and then the conversion itself, but much rather a conversion which is accompanied by various manifestations in heart and mind of the subject being converted.

So it is true, and ever must remain true that all glory belongs to God alone, and all our life and being, all our belonging to Him and serving Him are His work alone. The coming unto faith is truly connected with, and involves repentance, but never can it be thought and surely never said, that repentance is a condition of the having of the blessing. In the strictest use of language, *that* would produce the rather foolish sentence: "Your turning about to receive and have the blessings depends upon your turning about and receiving and having the blessings." But it would be far worse than foolish to make the efficacy of the gospel depend upon repentance in man. It would remove all comfort, all assurances, all life itself, and rob God of His glory, that glory which just consists in this very fact, that He in unmeasured love and grace has made the full and complete redemption of all an accomplished, historic fact, and also makes the reception of the same an accomplished, historic fact by means of the telling of this historic fact of our salvation from all our sin and all our curse. Small wonder that the apostle cries: "If any man or even an angel preach any other gospel, let him be accursed."

Thesis VI

*Though it is proclaimed by means of human language,
it is not to be conditioned by the legalism of the same.*

The gospel is to be proclaimed by human tongue, for thus the wisdom of the omniscient Lord has determined, and in this wisdom shows His great mercy over us. 'Tis futile to argue or debate why He did not create a new language to express the divine, but the contemplation that He did choose the language of man, and in so choosing found the tongues most suited to His needs and blessed for our souls, gives rise to praise and thankfulness to Him.

He chose the human language to speak of things divine: O miracle of the wisdom and knowledge of God! That which could not possibly be, that imperfect language should express perfection, that sinful words should declare divine holiness, that words circumscribed by time and space should proclaim the unlimited vastness of eternal glories, that words created by the legalistic heart of man should freely express the absoluteness of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ|this He accomplished through the verbal inspiration of His word. Human minds He chose, who thought the thoughts and chose the words, human minds restricted and circumscribed by all the limitations to which sinful man is heir, tainted with sinful thoughts, cursed with the legal attitude of craven fear against God, | human minds He chose to let them function as though they were writing *their* words, *their* thoughts, and yet proclaimed through their pen the stupendous plan of an eternally preordained salvation born in the unsearchable mind of God, the execution of the same through thousands of years of patience and loving-kindness, the eternal plan of the history of the billions of men to the end of time. Small wonder that the truth of verbal inspiration suffers the attacks of doubt and unbelief; the inconceivable has been accomplished by the glorious God of salvation and only a faith created by this same God could possibly believe and rejoice in it.

He chose of human tongues the two most suitable, the two most perfect of all human languages made by man. No, we shall not attempt a learned dissertation on the comparison of many languages to try to prove this point. No doubt this could readily be done by master of the Greek and Hebrew and would be most encouraging and full of joy to our souls. We could also adduce the loud and clear testimony of men of language fame and scholars great, who though not believing in His word, still attest to the truth that both these languages have of all tongues the smallest number of flaws and weaknesses, are possessed of the briefest form of expression and the clearest, and of all tongues the most beautiful. But over and above all such imperfect testimony of man, we hold the conviction of faith, that the very fact that these tongues were chosen gives them the crown among human languages, and history, the history of the word, affirms the fact that again the grace and love of God did rule and make His wonders come to pass. Through intricate circumstances of upheavals and disruptions it had come to pass that both these languages were, as it were, frozen in their perfect form, so that throughout the centuries it stands out bright and clear, that God in His mercy chose these human tongues so that His message of salvation might remain untarnished through the ages.

He chose the human tongue, the motive force that dominates all action and all happening in the world, His love being the sole cause for it.

This love the living force,

His will that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth the determining factor,

He clothed the wisdom of the heavens in human tongue, that no one should ever doubt or ever have one moment's uncertainty concerning his eternal life.

Though tongues of angels would have been far more suitable to tell of the heavenly glory of God's love, we never should have known whether we of earthly mind could have understood aright and never would have been able to say: I know in whom I have believed. With perfect clarity, with child-like simplicity, in simple exactness the wisdom of the mighty God did seal our salvation to us, to all men. In this also we cry in humble devotion: To Whom be glory and dominion now and forever.

In human tongue it is proclaimed by God; in human tongue it is proclaimed by His devoted followers through all the centuries, that all the elect in all generations may be found and gathered into His kingdom. It is another revelation of His grace and love that, once established in the human tongue, it should be possible to translate it into a thousand tongues and still retain it in unsullied purity. Yet so it is, and though the many tongues have very imperfect and wholly inadequate facilities, it still is made possible after that one example of the love of God, to proclaim in any human tongue the glories of His righteousness and wonders of His love. Indeed, whenever we speak of the wonderful works of God, at whatever point we approach them, it always leads to new marvels of His greatness, Who alone doeth wondrous things. Blessed be His glorious name forever.

Small wonder that we strive with all determination to be at one with Him and hinder not by the weakness and the imperfection, the ineptitude and the remarkable futility of the human language, the power and the glory of the gospel of salvation. We fear the weakness of the human tongue the more, because its misuse in unbelief and doubt is almost the sole cause of the perpetuation of false doctrines and false creeds which have sprung up in tiresome and unhappy repetition throughout the centuries. For though it was the unbelief, the stiff-necked pride of man in his ability of mind, that created the false doctrines, it is the human tongue, so well suited for all things false and untrue, which froze the lies into a mold and held them there to plague a future generation, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children. And so, of all evils and sins, the most terrifying will ever be the conditioning and thus the altering of the gospel of Christ by way of the legalism of human tongue.

We could, of course, make short work of all that follows by saying: When preaching the gospel of the wonderful works of God, use the language of the Bible itself and all will be well. This is certainly correct and perfectly true, so that it should be sufficient for all preachers of the Word. But alas, the human mind in its frailty is a fearfully corrupt thing and can make black

appear white and white black to itself. Errors are repeated from generation to generation in the weak human tongue and only the mercy of God is able to move us away from expressions which have become established facts for men, although they contradict His plain and simple words. Just among the devoted followers this can be so readily the case, that churches of the true word and gospel have managed in a few generations to lose the purity of the doctrine.

So it would not seem amiss to remind ourselves of certain weaknesses inherent in the language of man, which prove the stumbling-blocks that lead to heavy falls. It was, for example, the sinfulness of man that made him coin the modal verbs: I can, I want to, I must, I may, I should, and I like to, for they expressed all his restrictions because of his sinfulness and imperfection, and all his desires and lusts, which conditioned his every act. In his revolt against God he boastfully cries: I can do anything when, in truth, he is impotent; stiff-necked he resisted God's every command with his: I want to do it my way; trying to cover his badge of slavery, he ever avers his freedom with: I may do anything; despairing in weak moments he admits: I would like to do something but I cannot; and then falls prone before the eternal force, nevertheless controlling him, with his mournful plaint: I should do this, though I do not want to, and I must bow under the laws of nature, whether I will or not. The modal verbs, a badge of man's helplessness and sinfulness, are an example of the weakness of his language also. Very correctly Rueckert exclaims:

Ich kann, ich will, ich soll, ich muss, ich darf, ich mag, Diesselben nehmen mich in Anspruch jeden Tag;

but he also adds correctly:

Nur wenn Du stets mich lehrst, weiss ich, was jeden Tag Ich kann, ich will, ich soll, ich muss, ich darf, ich mag.

This latter is indeed true, as by the alchemy of the gospel of Christ these words of weakness are translated into their proper place, filled with their proper meaning, supplied with their proper background, which is God and our entire dependence on Him. What havoc is worked, however, when these words of weakness are carried into the proclamation of the gospel of Christ and the life in His kingdom. Monstrosities of falsehood and perversions of the very heart of the gospel are created, though often with the best of intentions. "Jesus has redeemed all men from the curse," cries one pious preacher, and then, fearing that he has been too easy on the hardened sinner, adds, "but you *must* believe," destroying the free grace with that single word. "Jesus has redeemed all men," cries another. "If you only *want to* have His redemption, it is yours," thus placing the security of the salvation into the puny strength of man. In his zeal to help the gospel's effectiveness, the first confuses may with must, the second confuses want to have with the simple statement of fact: *It is yours*. Both have falsified the gospel. This can be multiplied almost at will, and almost every false doctrine in the Protestant and Catholic church is expressed with these restricting and conditioning words.

The human, in his weakness, was also forced to create the conditional clause, because he found all his actions and plans conditioned by so many factors beyond his control or guidance, and disturbing all his plans and hopes. The conditional clause is also utterly canceled out by the gospel of Christ, and there is no place at all therein for any conditioning clause. How fatal then, when, with the best of intentions, pious preachers of all times have still injected it into the mercies of God, which are so sure. With clumsy feet this human conditional has entered the Holy Place where His sure promise dwells, and has trampled upon it by declaring: If you, then, are truly sorry for your sins, if you have truly examined yourself, if you have truly repented of your sins, then rest assured of your forgiveness in the sacrament. With clumsy and rude hands the earnest and determined preacher reaches even to Calvary's Hill, where all the grace of God abounds freely, and besmirches the blessed countenance with his: If you, then, are willing to accept this Christ, then the justification of Christ is yours, and if you are not, it will not be.

In his contradictory state of resistance, man has made for himself, for generous use, the little word *but*, and with the same he has come into the kingdom of Christ to rob Christ of His honor as the only Savior. "The blessings of Christ," he preaches, "are won for all men, *but* you must serve Him, obey His commandments, walk in His ways, or you cannot comfort yourself

with His salvation." "In baptism you have received the seal of His adoption, *but* if you fall from grace you cannot comfort yourself with this seal of adoption any more." "The grace of God is sufficient for all men's salvation," cries another, "*but* if you do not give properly to the church, and do not come to church often, and lead a holy life, it is not sufficient for you any more." Not to speak of the too many times heard and repeated: "Christ has atoned for all men's sins, *but* you must have true contrition, true repentance, and believe before it can be your possession." Thus with the accursed little word "but" does the evil foe try to rob men of their heritage in Christ.

Yes, even with the use of language for oratorical effect do men continually condition and restrict the everlasting gospel. One clear example is the rhetorical question which has caught many unawares, and led them into the grossest legalism without their realization of it. It has almost become stereotype for many to preach the gospel of the free salvation, and then lead over to the so-called application with the question: Friend, have you accepted Christ? Are you willing to take His salvation? To this is usually added a stirring plea or a solemn warning, as happens to suit the preacher. The intention is, of course, to create thoughtfulness and consideration and personal application of that which has been heard. Yet, however good the intention may be, it never fails to become a conditioning of the gospel of Christ. For to the human ear, and for the human mind, it must always sound as though the free and unconditioned justification is, after all, still dependent on the attitude of the sinner, upon his willingness, upon his clear recognition that he is truly a believer, or even upon his ability to accept the Savior. That it is an unconscious aping of the sectarian revivalist does not make it worse, but ought to show the unwary that it is of less than doubtful usefulness.

This becomes far worse, however, when the rhetorical question is shifted to apply to the supposed Christians in the group, and is formulated like this: "My friend, do you find a proper willingness, a proper repentance, a correct contrition within yourself?" Now, curiously enough, this happens to preachers of Lutheran persuasion who draw their information from the Word, and yet never find anything of this nature in that Word. It is indeed a conditioning of the gospel that leads to despair, or else to pharisaical self-righteousness. It is the old torture which almost doomed a Luther in his striving to reach a certain degree of perfection in the service of God. On the other hand it is axiomatic that no one ever could have the *proper* contrition and repentance, and it should be equally axiomatic that no amount of contrition, repentance, or willingness, whether great or small, could either add to, or detract from, the eternal fact that God was in Christ, reconciling man unto Himself. In the final analysis, this probing into the minds and hearts of the hearers is ever based on the assumption on the part of the preacher, that the gospel is not quite the power of God it should be, and the urging of the preacher is required to complete the work.

Thus we would be about to close a vicious circle again which man has ever made in the history of the church, only to lose thereby the free gospel of salvation. It is that last move | after the gospel has been preached for a generation without enthusiasm, without a burning zeal and a confident belief in its efficacy, resulting in a worldliness and laxness, lack of zeal, of knowledge, of willingness on the part of the hearers to serve the Lord with gladness, | that last move after this has taken place, is that the leaders of the church attempt to make things better, to frighten the wicked Christians, to measure their faith, contrition, repentance, in order to improve its quality, and to find ways and means of determining whether they are really repentant or whether it is make-belief. Alas, the realization is then lacking that only because of the preacher's lukewarm preaching of the gospel, his deadly repetitions, his tiresome doctrinalism in the pulpit, and his conditioning of the gospel, is this apathy created in the hearers, as also his legalistic teaching of his catechumens in instruction, and his laziness in preparing for his work in Bible-class, have created the conditions. It seems an inevitable curse attending on a shabby treatment of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, that such becloud and hinder the flow of the blessed Word more and more.

The cure for all the ills of preaching the gospel is, thank God, not complicated or difficult at all. Surely it does not lie in some ten commandments of "don'ts" and "do's" set up by ex-

perienced preachers. Such examples indeed can only serve to show how far and in what measure the gospel has already been hindered and restricted. Oh no, our task is far more blessed and filled with blessing than anything that man could think to add to it or aid it with. Our help must come, does come with greatest abundance and supreme encouragement, from that same gospel itself. For it is indeed the power of God unto salvation, especially for us who are to proclaim it ever. The ever deeper contemplation of the miracle of our salvation, the ineffable glory of His love, the incomprehensible patience and loving-kindness shining forth from His word in ever greater brightness, this finally alone can cancel out from our minds and hearts the foolish fancies and the futile wisdom with which we try to aid that which is as far above our aid as the highest heavens.

We may indeed ever again return to our original thought: We are the ambassadors of Christ to preach, to proclaim the gospel of the glorious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to proclaim His wonderful works among the children of men, to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Though the darkness is deep and great, that is nothing new; but the marvelous light, that is ever new and ever filled with greater glory. Then we shall find neither time nor inclination to seek other material to speak upon, and surely never seek something more efficacious to help men to the road of life. In every theme and part, in every word and paragraph the guiding thought shall ever be: The wonderful works of God, so that every hearer shall surely be convinced: This man is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation.

The Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Galatians

Exegesis by Dr. Joh. Ylvisaker

Luther Seminary, Hamline, Minn. 1905

Translation from the Norwegian by C.M. Gullerud

PART VI

Chapter IV (Continued)

At this point the apostle pauses in his presentation of the argument. It is as if the apostle is breathing from a sorrowfully hard-pressed heart. In verses 8-11 he expresses his surprise over the fact that the readers had so willingly returned to their former state of slavery and his concern over the possibility that he may have been laboring in vain. He begs them, so earnestly, to give careful thought to their situation as he reminds them of their previously expressed love for him as their teacher, warning them against the deceivers who were only looking out for their own selfish advantages (vv. 12-20).

Verses 8 and 9 detail the readers' subjective situation. These verses must be considered as a period introduced by *αλλα*, which initially points to *επιστρεφετε* as the principal verb. In verse 9, *αλλα* introduces the sharp contrast between the prized sonship of verse 7 and their present condition: "Your condition is quite different from what it should be in view of the glorious sonship with which you had been vested." The following points to the Gentile Christians among whom were most of the readers of this letter. *τοτε μεν* does not mean before, *normals*, but "that time," "then," and refers back to *ουκετι* in verse 7, consequently to the preChristian time when they still were *δουλοι* and not *υιοι Θεου*. *ουκ ειδοτες Θεου*, "ye did not know God." It is said of the Gentiles not only that they did not know God but also that they were without God (cf. 1 Thess. 4:5; 2 Thess. 1:8; Eph. 2:12). But in Romans 1:21 Paul says that they knew God. Rambach harmonizes these seemingly contradictory statements by showing that in Romans 1:21 Paul is indicating how the Gentiles should have conducted themselves in view of the privilege with which they had been provided, which was to be regarded as an entrusted pound. Here in Galatians, as also in 2 Thessalonians 1:8, he is setting forth the factual condition of the Gentiles. Light was certainly provided in the revelation in nature; but this divine revelation did not

take any active shape in the Gentiles. They closed their hearts and minds to the light. Instead of radiating the truth, they extinguished its rays. Thus it became an occasion of darkness to them. They descended into a night of ignorance which they had brought upon themselves. Paul in Romans 1 speaks of the natural knowledge of God, which everyone possesses, and of a revelation in creation which is available for all to read. But the natural knowledge of God and the revelation in creation say nothing about God as the Savior God in Christ Jesus. As such, the Gentiles do not know Him and cannot acknowledge Him except through the revelation contained in the gospel. The *ουκ ειδότες Θεου* shows how the Gentile Christians in Galatia were *δουλεια* under idols during the time when the true God in Christ was unknown to them. The aorist *εδουλευσατε* sets forth their state of slavery at that time without reference to its endurance in time. *φουσει μη* - this reading by Tischendorf is the correct one. Textus Receptus has *τοις μη φουσει*. This reading would indicate the complete nullity of the idols, while Tischendorf's reading permits the idol's reality to stand but denies their reality as gods. They may have an existence as things, whether they are celestial bodies or are animals or human beings or pictures; but they are not gods, as the corrupt thoughts and speech of men make them out to be (cf. 1 Cor. 8:5).

Verse 9. *νυν δε*, "but now." "Now one would expect something better, but you insist on returning to slavery." The fact that the chief thought is expressed in the form of a question shows the apostle's deep indignation over what has happened. *γνωτες Θεου*, namely through the preaching of the gospel, which has not only brought them knowledge of what God is in Himself but also what He is for them. *μαλλον δε* is the Latin *immo vero, ut rectius dicam* (Winer). *γνωτες Θεου* presents assuredly the exact opposite of *ουκ ειδότες Θεου*, but *νυν δε* shows that here the reference is to the reader's Christian status, and this shows again that *γνωτες Θεου* points to the Christian knowledge of God. Therefore it is that the apostle does not use *ειδότες* but *γνωτες*, which is not simply a theoretic knowledge, a mere matter of the mind, but a knowledge that is effective, filled with interest and love and is community-oriented. "God and divine truths are known only insofar as they are loved." God's *γνωσκειν* is likewise not a simple theoretic knowledge, an omniscience which pertains to all people. God's *γνωσκειν* is a matter of the will, not merely mental but a spiritual acknow-

judgment, like the Hebrew $\Upsilon\Upsilon'$ in a similar context. To be thus known of God means that one has become an object of His acceptance. The expression $\mu\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\nu \delta\epsilon$, "yea, rather," sets up God's knowing as a supreme thing from which an active knowledge of God flows. God must first acknowledge us before we can acknowledge Him. The aorist points to a preceding act of God. This is essentially the view of Luther, who says: "If we will carefully consider the matter, then we will see that all depends more on God's knowledge of us than on our knowledge of Him. For all we can do is to keep still and let God deal with us as He wills, giving us His Word which we are to grasp by the faith which He also creates in us by the Holy Spirit, thus making us His children. So the meaning of this passage is this: You are known of God. He has visited you with His Word. You are pardoned through faith and the Holy Spirit through whom you have been renewed" (cf. 1 Cor. 8:3; 13:12; 2 Tim. 2:19; Matt. 7:23; Luke 13:25; John 10:14,15). $\pi\omega\varsigma$, "how," introduces a question which indicates surprise. The question concerns a moral possibility, "how is it possible that . . ." $\pi\alpha\lambda\iota\nu$, *iterum*, refers only to $\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\sigma\tau\epsilon$ and not to the following. Their $\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\sigma\tau\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ is not only an apostasy from the true knowledge of God, but it is also a slighting of His grace. $\sigma\tau\omicron\iota\chi\epsilon\iota\alpha$ is nothing else than the Mosaic law with its many ritualistic and ceremonial requirements. This law is weak, namely with regard to salvation; it is unable to place man into the right relationship with God, which is possible only by the gospel. It is furthermore $\pi\tau\omega\chi\alpha$, "poor, lacking in content." It does not possess any part of the kingdom of grace. It cannot communicate the Spirit and cannot therefore create life. It cannot impart forgiveness of sins and cannot therefore bring peace to the heart of man. Both words therefore serve in expressing the relatively imperfect content of law in comparison with the gospel. $\pi\alpha\lambda\iota\nu \alpha\nu\omega\theta\epsilon\nu$, "again," "anew." After having just been freed from slavery by the gospel do you again desire to be in the earlier service of slavery? What foolishness!

Verse 10. This verse shows how their slavery-status had its beginning. They started by observing the Jewish feasts with such a painstaking care as was worthy of a much better object. $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\tau\eta\rho\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\epsilon$, as distinguished from *simplex*, expresses a continuing and precise observance: *diligenter attendo, sedulo observare*. The days here mentioned are sabbath days and the months refer to the new moons and specifically to the preferred holy 7th month of the year (cf. Lev. 23:24). Then was brought the

burnt offering which was the festival offering on the 7th month. The year refers to the sabbath year which occurred every 7th year (cf. Lev. 25:1-7), and the times are the individual festivals: Easter, Pentecost, feast of the tabernacles, the Jewish מועדים (Lev. 23:4). The tenth verse is a cry of disapproval coming from a sorrowing heart. Luther, with good reason, takes from this verse the opportunity to develop the true teaching regarding Sunday. If we compare this verse with Romans 14:5, we will see that Paul spoke differently to Christians concerning these matters. In the case of weak Christians he had patience, even though they could not at once detach themselves from the special days. But in this instance he was not dealing with weak Christians but with those who insisted on the observance of these festivals and days as necessary for salvation. In this case he must pass judgment as he does here and in Colossians 2:16 and must express his fear that his work among them had been in vain.

Verse 11. "You must not believe that your present situation is of small consequence." The apostle here censures the serious nature of their observance of the law. "I am afraid" — I am greatly worried about you. *μηπως* as a conjunction is equal to *ne quomodo, ne forte*, (a) in sentences indicating purpose, (b) after *verba cavendi, timendi* with aor. conj. (cf. 1 Cor. 8:9; Acts 27:29; 2 Cor. 11:3). The perf. indicative indicates that the apostle fears that what had concerned him has already occurred, as they have given a willing ear to the false teachers. Paul understands that they are in great danger. "*Lacrymas Pauli haec verba spirant*, thus Luther. *ει υμας*, "upon you," insofar as the apostle's labor had extended over the congregation. They had been the objects of his faithful labor of love. He had not spared himself on their behalf. Now they were in the process of accepting a false doctrine with the consequence that the entire truth of the gospel would be destroyed.

Verse 12. In this verse the apostle earnestly exhorts them to return to the truth. *γινεσθαι* here has the same force as *ειναι*, "be as I am," share with me freedom from the law as law. *οτι καγω* — here one must supply *εγενομην* which is taken from the preceding *εγενομην* which is taken from the preceding *γινεσθε*, "for I am as you." "Out of consideration of love for you I divested myself of the Jewish ways when I came to you preaching the gospel for you Gentiles. I can say that I lived *εθνικως*" (cf. 1 Cor. 9:21). Here the apostle is speaking in love out of a wounded heart. "Brethren, I beseech you." It is an appeal to

their hearts, an appeal that is made with great earnestness. He misses the love which had existed between them. He now reminds them of it with *ουδεν με*. They had not offended him personally or done him any harm. On the contrary, they had shown him great love.

Verse 13. They knew very well that their former relationship with him had been entirely different. They also knew of his condition, when for the first time, he proclaimed the glad tidings in Galatia. *δι' ασθενιαν* is rendered (in KJV trans.), "through infirmity." *δια* is thus rendered in ancient and modern Greek. This rendition is also used in the NT, (cf. Rom. 2:27; 4:11; 2 Cor. 5:7,10; 2:4, etc.), but always with the Genitive giving the attitude under which the individual did or suffered something. *δια* with the accusative designates place, time, distance, under which something occurs or the reason for it, *ratio qua aliquid fit*. This must be the case here. And so not *per* but *propter carnis imbecilitatem, infirmitatem*, because of the weakness of the flesh. The weakness of his flesh is cited as the reason for his preaching of the gospel to the Galatians at that time. We take it that Paul became ill when he arrived in Galatia. This sickness hindered him from going further without delay. He had to remain there for a time, and this unplanned stay was devoted to the preaching of the gospel to them. No mention is made concerning what kind of illness he had. Some have suggested that he suffered from the results of persecution for the sake of the gospel. It could also be that he suffered ill effects as the result of his vigorous travel schedule. *το προτερον* does not here mean "formerly" but "for the first time," thus showing that when Paul wrote this letter he had preached the gospel in Galatia at least two times. He does not speak of experiencing any love or joy on the part of the Galatians in his second visit. From this we may be right in assuming that his experiences in his second visit to Galatia had not been the most joyful.

Verse 14. *και του* is dependent on *οτι*. Lachman and Siefert place a colon after *εν τη σαρκι μου* and refer the following to *με*. The translation would then read: "ye know how . . . (v.13) how I in my flesh was tempted; ye despised me not and did not with disgust reject me; but . . ." This method of combining material is unnatural and is not accepted by others. Tischendorf on the basis of many good manuscripts reads *πειρασμον υμων*. The meaning, then, is this that his illness which lay in his flesh was a trial or a testing for them. It was a despicable

temptation, a disgusting thing for him. Because of the repulsive nature of the malady and because this illness could so easily cause them to doubt the divinity of his call, it was for them a testing. *εξουθενειω* is the Latin *prorsus contemno*, a strong expression for despising. *εκπτω* is *expro, respuro, sperno*, "disgusting." Textus Receptus has *πειρασμον μου*. According to this reading, the meaning would be that the illness was a test for the apostle which God had laid on him and this they had not despised. Tischendorf's reading seems to be more appropriate. *αλλα* - the exact opposite; far from despising him and being disgusted by reason of their trial they, on the contrary, welcomed him as an angel of God. They gave him such honor as if he had been Christ Himself. It is apparent that Paul was speaking from their Christian viewpoint when he said that they accepted him as an angel of God, yes, as Christ Jesus.

Verse 15. The reading *που, quo in loco*, although strongly supported in the manuscripts and followed by Lachman and Tischendorf, nevertheless is considered by nearly all of the better interpreters as a gloss added by ancient exegetes for clarification. It does not, however, fit in with the following testimony in *μαρτυρω. τις* must here be supplied: "what, how great was not your blessing!" The sentence expresses surprise. *υμων* is the subjective, not the objective, genitive. They praised themselves. It was not Paul who praised them. According to Siefert the sentence expresses a sorrowful question: "Of what nature was your praising?" Philippi takes a somewhat similar view: "How flighty, how temporary it was." But this does not fit in with the following sentence which clearly shows how the first is to be understood. They would have gouged out their eyes for him if that had been possible. To have given him their gouged-out eyes would have been of no benefit or use to him. This was not even possible, but had it been possible they would have done so with joy and gratitude. Eyes are pictured in Scripture as the dearest and most prized possession we have (cf. Matt. 18:9). Paul gave them the testimony that they were willing to bring the greatest sacrifice at that time. *εδωκατε* appears without *αν* because the matter is to be presented in the most definite manner.

As an exegetical curiosity, it must be mentioned that interpreters have expressed the thought that Paul suffered from an eye ailment as a result of his experience in Damascus. The thought has even been expressed that this ailment is referred to in 2 Corinthians 12:7.

Verse 16. But what has now happened? "I have become your enemy because I speak the truth." *ωστε, c. indic. de re facta.* *γεγονα* is the perfect, expressing the fact of what has taken place and is even now effective. *αληθευων* is the present, contemporary with *γεγονα*. It could not have reference to the absolute present because they had not yet read his epistle. To explain it as if Paul was saying what the result would be after they had read the letter is out of the question. Neither could it have reference to the first visit, for then they were happy and joyful. Paul must, therefore, be thinking of his subsequent visit in Galatia (cf. Acts 18:23). This change of attitude took place at that time. It is not unlikely that Paul has then noted a tendency toward Judaism. This he had to call to their attention and so he was regarded as an enemy. They no longer regarded him as a friend but as an enemy in the passive sense as in Romans 5:10,11,28; consequently there existed an enmity in contrast to the previous love. His testimony concerning the truth, which should have increased their love, rather invoked their hatred. We may here be reminded of the words of Terenz: "*obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit,*" as well as the saying of Lucian: "*οργιζονται απαντες τοις μετα παρησιας ταληθη λεγουσι.*" There are interpreters who have taken the word *εχθρος* in the active sense, "one who wishes evil upon you," but with this interpretation the contrast would be lost.

Verse 17. The apostle's thoughts now turn to the deceivers who were the cause of this change in relationship. He does not name them; the readers will know who they are. The same is true in 5:10, where no name is mentioned. *ζηλουσιν* has as subject the *ταρασσουντες* who are mentioned in 1:7 and 5:10. They are zealous as are the Pharisees mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 23:15 and as the false teachers are in general, but their zeal is ignoble, selfish. "They work to shut you out, to separate you from others who do not belong to their party, especially from me, in order to prevent you from being influenced by others rather than by the false teachers themselves." By breaking down the respect the congregation had for Paul they sought to isolate them. *ζηλουν* is construed partly with *τινα* as in 2 Corinthians 11:2, showing zeal for a person, partly with *τι* as in 1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:1,39, showing zeal for a cause; partly also with *εν τι*, as in the following verse, showing zeal in a cause. *τινα* states the false teachers' purpose and that was to win over the Galatians for their side, to tie them to their own persons. They were motivated by a spirit of self-love. *ζηλουτε* cannot be the

Attic future but must be the present indicative, and *ινα* must be the particle of purpose not a particle of place, since this would not be suitable; and, furthermore, *ινα* is never used as a particle of place in the LXX or in the NT. *ινα* with the present indicative is not found in classical Greek but appears frequently in the more recent Greek and in several places in the NT (cf. Gal. 6:12; 1 Cor. 4:6; John 17:3). The pretended pious zeal and eagerness was the sheep's clothing with which the false teachers invested themselves. They have many who follow their example.

Verse 18. Since the activity of the false teachers had influenced the Galatian Christians, Paul had to remind them how praiseworthy it was to be zealous in a good cause at all times and not only in his presence. *εν κλω* is not specified but Paul is no doubt thinking especially of the gospel which he had proclaimed and of the truth which he had preached to them. The expression, "not only when I am present," suggests that they had shown zeal as long as he was with them. Though there may have been those who regarded him with ill-will, they pretended to be zealous for his doctrine. *ζηλουσθαι* must, with Winer, Wicseler, Meyer and others, be regarded as the impersonal passive and not in the middle voice. Siefert takes it as the personal passive, designating a personal object of zealousness. Paul would then be saying that they should realize how good it was for them that he had made them the object of his zeal, not only when he was present with his personal influence but also when he was absent, namely by his prayers for them, by the admonitions and instruction contained in his letter, etc. But this does not fit the context.

Verse 19. The Galatian Christians had changed in their relationship to Paul. This he had to say in the preceding section. But as for himself, his relationship to them had not changed; his love for them was the same. This he could say now. He was animated by a fatherly feeling for them. They are his dear children. But in this loving address the apostle also expresses his concern for them as the following shows. Tischendorf has the reading *τεκνα μου*. Some manuscripts have *τεκνια*, an address which John often uses (cf. 1 John 2:1; 2:12,28; 3:7,18; 4:4; 5:21), but usually without *μου*. Paul does not otherwise use this form of address and therefore some have regarded it as an addition to bring the expression into closer connection with the following predicate. However, Paul does use the synonym *παιδια*, which is also peculiar to John. Here we must say that *τεκνια*, "little children," suits very well because

they have shown themselves to be weak and easily influenced, which is typical of small children. οὐς παλιν ὠδίνω, "whom I again travail with pain." Paul otherwise presents himself as father to those whose Christianity was created by his preaching of the gospel (cf. 1 Cor. 4:15; Philemon 10; Phil. 2:22; 1 Thess. 2:11). This was a picture which also the Jewish teachers used to portray their relationship to their disciples. Here Paul compares himself to a mother for a special reason. A Christian teacher's influence is shown first and foremost in this regard that a life of faith must be created in the hearts of the hearers. That this goal may be reached, the teacher will strive to such an extent that it may be compared to a woman's labor in giving birth to a child (cf. 1 Cor. 4:15). Paul's work in the Galatian congregation had involved arduous and painful labor when he in his first visit mediated their Christian status through the preaching of the gospel. Now he has a further ministry which must continue until the victory for Christ is won. Here the birth is pictured as a process, continuing until the child reaches maturity. Until this goal is reached the birth pains will continue. Christ, who is put on in baptism and lives and abides with us in faith, must live in them in fullest measure (cf. 3:27; 2:20). As it was with them, so it should be with them, that Christ should be their all in all. But this was lacking among the Galatian Christians at this time. They were, in truth, in the process of wiping out the picture of Christ by their inclining to the works of the law as being necessary for salvation. μορφου is the Latin *formare*. μεχρις is *usque ad, donec*, and means the same as αχρις, with this difference that αχρις points to the height, *bis hinauf*, while μεχρις points to the length, *bis hin*.

Paul is here a good example for all preachers. Bengel has pointed this out in these striking words: "*Christus, non Paulus, in Galatia formandus.*" Many strive to get their hearers to cast themselves in their image. A true preacher will point to Christ as the true image for them.

Verse 20. δε, "but." Paul presents the contrast between the travail which he must suffer for them even in his absence and his wish to be personally present with them. ηελου is the imperfect and can either express a wish fulfilled, as in Acts 25:22, or a wish unfulfilled. The context must determine how it is to be understood. Here it must be referred to a wish unfulfilled. If ηελου is used with αυ it always refers to a wish unfulfilled. αρτι, "now," while he is writing. What was it that moved him

to have such a wish? He desired to change his voice. *αλασσειν την φωνην* has been variously interpreted. Some have understood the apostle as saying that he desired to be personally present in order to adjust his speech according to the circumstances, sharper or milder as it was necessary. Grimm says: "*Variare vocem h.e. pro varia animorum affectione varie loqui, modo lenius cum iis versari.*" Bugge prefers this interpretation. He offers the following paraphrase: "How earnestly he desired to be present with them in order that he might see what tone he should use in speaking to them in accord with the situation and that in every moment he might strike the strings which would resound with the best response in their hearts." Thus also Gerlach. Others have maintained that Paul wanted to use a different form of speech than he had been accustomed to, for instance, in this letter—thus Bengel ("he writes *molliter, sed mollius loqui vellet*")—or different from the form of speech he had used the last time he had been with them. Meyer, Siefert, Zoeckler and others hold to the view that while he had, according to verse 16, found it necessary to speak hard words which had shocked them, he now wanted to use milder language. But there is no indication that there had been an improvement in the situation in Galatia. Wieseler says that instead of exchanging words with them by means of a letter, Paul wanted to be with them in person; so that he could thereby more easily answer their objections and arguments and so would be able to dispose of them. Luther has given the right interpretation when he says: "Paul desired to be present with the Galatians in order that he might personally arrange and adapt his speech in accordance with how they took it to heart and were persuaded . . . for the dead letters cannot have any other sound or meaning than what has been written. On the contrary the living voice is to be reckoned as an empress which can be raised or lowered according to the circumstances . . . and as necessity demands" (editor's own translation). This explanation agrees with the words, "I stand in doubt of you." *απορου* is in reality to be an *απορος* (from *α* and *πορος*) in middle voice with passive meaning, to be in doubt or perplexed. *εν* says that this doubt has adhered to them and is the cause of his perplexity.

With verse 7 Paul appears to have completed his dogmatic argument. Here there is a pause. But since he has opened his

heart to the readers and has spoken to them from heart-felt love, he now adds yet another proof to those already given. Proof for the soundness of his doctrine is also shown from -

VI. THE ALLEGORIES OF HAGAR AND SARAH,
SINAI AND JERUSALEM. 4:21-31.

Verse 21. Paul does not here use any particle of transition. Without any delay he addresses the whole group of Galatian Christians who have been saturated with Judaism. Having been led astray by the perverters, the Galatian Christians were of the opinion that faith alone was not sufficient for salvation but that faith must be completed by works of the law. They desired to be under the law and had already made a good beginning in this direction by starting to observe days, months, times and years. *θελοντες* indicates their strong, energetic will (different from *βουλομαι*). They desired it, as one might say, with power and might. And that which they desired, in the final analysis, was to be under the law, to let the law rule over them. Paul now asks them, *του νομου ουκ ακουετε? ακουειν* literally means to pick up sound with the ears. If this is the meaning here, then Paul is indicating that the law was being presented by the Jewish heretics both in the synagogues and privately in the homes. It is thus interpreted by Meyer, Philippi and others. But this interpretation does not fit into the context. *ακουειν* is also used with the meaning of listening to, in the sense of giving attention to what is being said (cf. Matt. 13:13). This must be the meaning here. Luther gives the right sense when he takes the word to mean "view with diligence." The word *νομος* here as in other passages has a double meaning (cf. Rom. 3:19). In the first place, it speaks of the law as an institution as when it is said that one is under the law; and then it is used to designate a part of the Old Testament canon, as when it is used in Luke 24:44 to point out the divisions of the Old Testament: the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms. The law, then, is the same as the Pentateuch, which the Jews call Torah, book of the law. The point of the apostle's word here is found in this that the very part of the Old Testament which presents the law (the Pentateuch) argues against the Galatians and in favor of his presentation. The meaning, then, is this: If you who want to be under the law would give close attention to it, you would find that it testifies against you and in my favor and in support of my preaching.

Verse 22. γεγραπται γαρ. With this γαρ Paul begins his defense of his right to pose the question in verse 21. This is the γαρ *declarandi* and is best translated "yes" or "namely." η παιδισκη is the definite and well-known bondwoman, Hagar (Gen. 16:3). The word παιδισκη can in the LXX (cf. Ruth 4:12) and in classical Greek be used to designate a free woman; but in the New Testament it always refers to a bondwoman, a slave (cf. Luke 12:45; Acts 12:13). That this is the usage here is seen from the contrast, η ελευθερα, which designates the definite, well-known free woman, namely Sarah.

Verse 23. αλλα presents the sharp contrast. Both boys were sons of Abraham. Consequently there was a definite similarity, but beneath this similarity there existed an essential difference—αλλα. Their birth took place in response to ways of birth. The son of the bondwoman took place κατα σαρκα, "after the flesh." This expression has a different connotation than in Romans 1:3; 9:5, where it says that Christ is of David's seed according to the flesh and is of the father "concerning the flesh." There "flesh," σαρξ, refers to the human nature of Christ with a rational soul and a true body. Here the term κατα σαρκα says that the birth took place in a natural way through the natural power of reproduction; for Hagar was not sterile. γεγεννηται is the perfect and takes the historical event and brings it up for consideration in the present, letting it be seen from the viewpoint of the present. The son of the free woman was born δια της επαγγελιας. We might expect κατα πνευμα (after the Spirit) as a contrast to κατα σαρκα, but this first comes in verse 29. Here it is "by promise," the definite, well-known prophecy (cf. Gen. 17:16, 19; 18:10). In fulfillment of prophecy, Isaac was born. Sarah was sterile and Abraham was old (cf. Gen. 18:11; Rom. 4:19). Without this prophecy (which Abraham believed) Isaac would not have been born. His conception and birth occurred by a special act of God. His origin was, on the one hand, of natural means and, on the other hand, due to supernatural causes (cf. Gen. 21:1; Rom. 4:19-21). Balduin: *Secundum promissionem nasci est admirando modo et supra naturam nasci, vi promissionis divinae de tali partu editae.*

Verse 24. ατινα εστιν αλληγορουμενος. ατινα, quippe quae, provides a more detailed description of the matter. The detailed facts are of such a nature that they have an allegorical significance or they belong to categorical facts which have such a meaning. αλληγορειν appears only here in the NT. The word is a combination of αλλο and αγορευειν. The meaning is really

this: *αλλο μεν αγορευω αλλο δε νοεω, aliud verbis, aliud sensu ostendere* (to exhibit). That is to say that the works have another meaning than what they ordinarily have, a meaning that is covered under the words. Interpreters cite the following definition of an allegory of Hesychius: *αλληγορια αλλο τι, παρα το ακουομενον υποδεικνυουσα. αλληγορειν* may also mean to furnish opportunity for an allegorical interpretation. But then we would expect either *αλληγορειται* or that an adjective, *αλληγορετος* would be used. But none of the old translations have rendered the word with this meaning (cf. Th. Zahn). *αλληγορουμενα* must likely be equal to *τυπολογουμενα, τυπικως λεγομενα*, indicating a deeper, figurative, prophetic sense. Since Paul expresses himself as he does, we must take it that the designated facts had an allegorical meaning from the beginning. God had from the beginning ordered it so that the history of Sarah and Hagar and their sons was to be understood thus. And now led by the Spirit, Paul speaks thus of these things. It is not so that Paul adopted the allegorical interpretation as a result of rabbinical training. It comes close to blasphemy when Meyer writes: "*Fuer den nicht mit Rabbinischer Bildung zusammenhangenden Glauben faellt das Argument gaenzlich.*" With even more coarseness Bauer writes: "*Es kann nichts ungereimter sein als das Bestreben den Interpreten die Argumentation des Apostels als eine Objektiv wahre zu rechtfertigen.*" Sound Lutheranism has drawn out the hermeneutical canon, which must be noted against Jewish and Catholic theology: *non nisi typus innatus est argumentativus* or that *sensus allegoricus* only then is *argumentativus* when it is *innatus* or a *Spiritu Sancto ipso traditus*. This is also Luther's interpretation when in his explanation of Genesis 18:2-5 he says that Paul's argumentation "*ist zum Stich zu schwach.*"

αυται εστιν. These two women, Hagar and Sarah, portray the two covenants. In the words following *για νεξ*, the apostle gives an explanation of the covenants, what they are, and how they are typified by the two mothers. Presentation of the second covenant appears to be missing; but then in verse 26 it is presented in a different form. *μεν* after *για* should have a corresponding *δε*, but this is missing because the structure is changed. The first covenant is from Sinai where it was established and from where it springs forth. This is the covenant of the law which genders to bondage. Through the parallelism with Hagar this covenant is pictured as a mother who bears

children. But this covenant bears children to be slaves, born into personal slavery under the law which lies as a restricting yoke about their necks. *ἥτις ἐστὶν Ἀγάρ*, "which is Hagar." *ἥτις*, *quippe quae*, is subject and not predicate, which is typically pictured in Hagar. The Sinaitic covenant is that which is allegorically typified by Hagar, or, in other words, the real Hagar is the Sinaitic covenant, and the Sinaitic pact is allegorically that which Hagar is in the history of Abraham. The apostle's right to make this identification is two-fold. (1) The son which Hagar bore for Abraham was born simply as a result of natural powers of reproduction. Thus man, under the law, has no other power than that which he has by nature through means of which there is only slavery and no freedom. (2) Hagar bore her son into her own status as slave. Thus the law engenders bondage. It brings forth Ishmaelites but not Isaacs of equal birth.

Verse 25. Here the apostle provides proof that Hagar is a picture of the law covenant of Sinai which genders to bondage. Textus Receptus reads: "*τὸ γὰρ Ἀγάρ εἶνα ὄρος ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ.*" Siefert accepts this reading, as do our translations. Accordingly, Paul is saying: For Mount Sinai is called Hagar among the Arabians. This peculiar similarity of names between the bondwoman Hagar and the mountain where the law covenant was instituted is pointed out by the apostle not as an accidental thing but as something that occurred by the will of God and it is thus found as a basis of the conclusion of verse 24. The interpreters who have adopted this reading call attention to the Arabian *ἤλιπ*, meaning "stone," (but the reading is not *ἤλιπ*) and to the naming of Sinai with Arabian Hadschar (which cannot be proved). The best-attested reading and unquestionably the correct one is the one accepted by Tischendorf, who here omits the reference to Hagar (cf. the textual apparatus in his *Critica major* and *minor*). The meaning of the verse would then be: Mt. Sinai, located in Arabia, outside of the holy land, and, well to be noted, in Arabia, where the foreigner Hagar, the progenitor of the Arabians, had her home. The Arabs are often called the children of Hagar and the land, the land of the Hagarenes (cf. Ps. 83:6; 1 Chron. 5:19). By her foreign background, more specifically, Arabian, mother *διεθνη* of Sinai in Arabia corresponds to mother Hagar, the Arabian progenitor; neither one of them has original residence in the holy land but both have found place, "incidentally," in the history of salvation. Thus it is shown that the reference to the locality where

the law covenant was instituted is foreign to the covenant of promise. Th. Zahn says correctly: "*Nicht im Verheissenen Lande, sondern in der arabischen Wueste, welche Israel von Kanaan trennte, is das Gesetz gegeben Worden. Damit ist auch gegeben, dass die sinaitische Diatheke nicht Erfuellung der Verheissung gebracht hat, die dem freien Sohn der Verheissung galt, dass sie vielmehr ihre Untertanen zu Knechten macht.*" If the Mosaic law would be able to bring salvation, as the Judaizing opponents maintained, then it could not be given on Sinai in Arabia but on Mt. Zion in the holy land; for the whole covenant of promise is most closely associated with this land. Calvin had called attention to this when he said: "*Hoc est extra limitis terrae sanctae, quae symbolum est aeterna hereditatis.*" In addition to Zahn, this explanation has been adapted by more recent interpreters, Besser, Wieseler, Zoekler, V. Hofmann, Bugge, etc. V. Hofmann says: "Located outside of the land of promise was Mt. Sinai, not a place for the fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham and his seed. But it stands over against Zion even as Hagar stands over against Sarah, a contrast which carries with it the fact that the Sinaitic pact effects a relationship to God who gave it, similar to the relationship to Abraham, a relationship into which Hagar bore her son." We notice how Paul gives attention to every individual part of the holy history. He is certain that the seemingly insignificant part has an important meaning. *συστοιχει δε*, "which corresponds to." *δε* introduces the following thought: "Although Mt. Sinai lies outside of the borders of the holy land, it nevertheless corresponds to the present Jerusalem." Sinai must here be regarded as subject and not Hagar; for this word is located so far away and can only be drawn into this sentence by an unnecessary force. *συστοιχειν* is to stand on the same level with, to correspond to. The apostle is saying, then, that the present Jerusalem stands on the same line with Sinai and he bases this contention on the fact that it is in bondage with its children. Regarding the Sinai pact, he said that it engenders to slavery. This helps us to understand what he means with the expression: "Jerusalem that now is," namely when it stands in opposition to Jerusalem *ανω*, "the Jerusalem above." This is not the city of Jerusalem in the geographic sense; but Paul here sees Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish people in a religious sense, as the visible central point for the Israelitic peoples' outward religious community. Jerusalem rejected the one who came to deliver mankind from the

law and its curse (3:10-13). The Israelitic community as an outward religious congregation chose to stay under the law; therefore its inhabitants or its members remained in bondage with its children (cf. Matt. 23:37). The Sinaitic covenant engenders to bondage. Jerusalem is pictured as adhering to the covenant of Sinai, maintaining it in bondage.

Verse 26. After the demonstration of the difference between the two covenants which began with verse 24b, we now come to the second part. Corresponding to the first part one would expect to find the following: *δευτερα δε απο ορους Σιων εις ελευθεριαν γεννησασα η τις εστιν Σαρρα. το γαρ Σιων ορος εστιν εν τη αγια γη (οι εν τη γη της επαγγελιας) συνστευχει δε τη ανω Ιερουσαλημ ελευθερα γαρ εστιν μετα των τεκνων αυτης.* But instead thereof the apostle at once presents the concrete wherein the second covenant has its factual reality. In verse 27 the apostle speaks of the present Jerusalem where the Sinaitic pact finds its actual reality, and thus the apostle takes occasion to make a break from the regular beginning of the contrast. *η ανω Ιερουσαλημ.* "Jerusalem which is above," is not the old Jerusalem, Melchizedek's Salem (thus Michaelis, Paulus, etc.), nor Mt. Zion which indeed Josephus call *η ανω πολις* (thus Rambach, Moldenhauer), but it is the heavenly Jerusalem which is spoken of in Hebrews 12:22 (cf. usage of *ανω* in Col. 3:12; Phil. 3:14; and on the whole matter: Eph. 2:6). This is the gathering of the people who stand in the second covenant, the NT congregation or church, not the church subsequent to the Lord's return, the victorious church, but the church here on earth, the militant church wherever it is found in the world. This is called Jerusalem which is above, which Jesus calls the heavenly kingdom because all is here heavenly. It comes from heaven like the great sheet which descended from heaven (Acts 10:11f.). It has Jesus Christ in heaven as its head (Eph. 4:10,15). Its goods and gifts are heavenly (Eph. 1:3). It has its citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:20). It prepares for the heavenly and has many of its departed members in heaven. It places its hope in the direction of heaven and shall ascend into heaven as the linen sheet which was raised into heaven from which it had descended, all in order that it might be transformed into the victorious Church to remain in the full sense, the heavenly Jerusalem (cf. Rev. 3:12; 21:2,10). This Jerusalem is free in contrast to the present Jerusalem which is in bondage (v. 25). The NT church is free from the compelling power and curse of the law, serving the Lord in a freedom similar to Sarah's relationship to

Abraham. *ἥτις ἐστίν*, "which is." This free Jerusalem, not the enslaved Jerusalem, is the mother of Jewish and Gentile Christians. The church possesses Word and Sacrament, the means through which life is created and maintained. Therefore God's children are fed from the congregation's bosom as far and wide as the boundaries of the church extend. *μητηρ* stands here without the article because the quality of motherhood is to be emphasized. Now when this free mother gives birth to children, she bears them into freedom, since she bears them into her own status. And if it be so that she is our mother, then we are all born into freedom and unto freedom, and it would be a shame for children to flee from their own mother and bring disgrace upon her. This should give the Galatian Christians something to think about.

Verses 27 and 28 are tied to the foregoing by *γάρ*, "For." The apostle wishes to give proof for the contention which he advanced in verse 26. He advances this proof by showing from Scripture how we Christians are such children that God has promised to this Jerusalem "which is above," so that this Jerusalem has us as children as Sarah had Isaac. The passage (v. 27) is quoted from Isaiah 54:1 which is cited according to the LXX, which is here faithfully transmitted from the original text. It is messianic. The prophet is viewing Israel's deliverance from exile in close connection with the delivery of God's people from the slavery of sin. He views the messianically restored Jerusalem which by faith is based upon the Redemption in Christ, as the redemption which is portrayed in Isaiah 53 with such living colors. He addresses this Jerusalem, the Christian communion consisting of Jews and Gentiles, and says, "Rejoice, thou barren." This Jerusalem is barren and is thus similar to Sarah, who is mentioned by the prophet in Isaiah 51:1-3. The addition, "that bearest not," *ἣ οὐ τίκτουσα*, reports a characteristic description of this mother. She is a stranger to the conception of birth. *ἣ οὐ τίκτουσα* is the negative expression for the positive *στειρα*. But when she is called upon to rejoice over the large number of children, she cannot be rejoicing over them as a fruit of her own power to conceive but as a result of a higher power. The church in itself does not have power to bear children—and much less can children bring about their own birth. The church in itself is sterile and desolate, *στειρα* and *εἰρημος*. The natural power of giving birth has been destroyed. Here God must be the only effective power. The same free grace which prophesied that the barren would rejoice over children,

will be active in bringing it to pass. We are reminded of what John says of these children, namely that they "were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13). But it is not enough that the barren and the desolate one will get to rejoice over children, but she shall even get to see a more numerous flock of children than a woman who has a husband. But who is that husband? This is a question that has occupied the minds of many interpreters. Luther says that by the husband is meant the law which the present Jerusalem adhered to. Other interpreters like Meyer say that the husband is Jehovah who had the OT congregation as wife. But does not the NT congregation, the Jerusalem which is from above, have this husband? We believe with Zoeckler that one must not press the picture beyond the point of comparison. To be fruitful and to have a husband is a picturesque designation of being in possession of natural conditions for childbirth, in contrast to being barren and desolate. But, although the congregation of the new covenant lacks the natural conditions for childbirth since it is *στειρα* and *ερημος*, it shall nevertheless have a much more numerous offspring than that of the covenant of the law, even though it is a thing accomplished by grace alone; all of which is similar to the case of Sarah whose offspring was more numerous than Hagar's. Thus everything falls into place as it came forth from the family history of Abraham: Hagar—the Sinai pact—the present Jerusalem. On the one side: one's own natural power, but also bondage, lacking promise of anything permanent, without promise of inheritance of land! On the other side: Sarah—the covenant of Zion in Jesus' blood—Jerusalem which is from above, but also liberty with promise of permanency, with promise of inheriting the prophesied land!

When the apostle expresses himself as he does with *πολλα μαλλον πλειονα η*, he is thereby saying that the mother who has a husband shall indeed have many children, but she who has no husband will have many more.

Verse 28. *δε*, "but," introduces the application of the allegory to the condition of the readers. This verse must therefore be carefully connected with verse 27. *υμεις*, "ye," thus Tischendorf. According to this reading Paul here addresses the Galatian Christians, saying that as Christians they are a part of the progeny which descended from the spiritual Sarah, the heavenly Jerusalem. Textus Receptus reads *ημεις*; thus Paul includes himself. We are all, Jew and Gentile Christians alike, as

Isaac was, *κατα*, children of promise. He was a child of promise, even so are all Christians. They became Christians not by fleshly descent, nor by natural powers of reproduction, but alone by promise (*επαγγελιας*), which word is placed at the beginning to give it emphasis. This is in contrast to man's own power, which therefore is omitted. But the promise in the OT is equated with the gospel in the NT. In the language of the NT it would read: "By the gospel," which James specifically calls the means of regeneration (James 1:18). Luther says: "We are children of promise even as Isaac was, that is, children of grace and faith, conceived and born by promise alone." But if we are children of promise, then we are children of the free woman; for she gives birth alone by the power of promise, which means that we ourselves are free, and this must be considered a break from the natural order which would have put us under the law and therefore under the yoke of slavery.

In the following verses Paul reminds his readers that the evil, hate-filled attitude which the fleshly Israel, the children of the law covenant, the children of bondage, showed toward spiritual Israel, Christianity, as well as the punishment for it, namely exclusion from the inheritance, was all typically represented in the history of Hagar and Sarah and their children. From all this Paul concludes anew that the Christians are not children of bondage and therewith slaves but children of the free woman and therewith free.

Verse 29. *τοτε*, "at that time," namely when those things took place which had such an allegorical significance. "He that was born after the flesh," that is to say, he who was born by the power of the flesh, by the natural power of reproduction, namely Ishmael. The opposite is "after the Spirit," *κατα πνευμα*, born in the power of the Spirit, namely Isaac. Earlier (v. 23) it was said "by promise." Spirit is the objective Spirit, the Holy Ghost. He it was who was active through the word of promise and vitalized Sarah's dead womb (Rom. 4:19). Ishmael persecuted Isaac, says Paul. From what source did Paul draw this information? Some have pointed to Genesis, which says that Ishmael was a mocker (cf. Gen. 21:9). For this reason it has been said that Paul in this instance departed from the Scriptural saying and followed tradition which gave more information on this matter. A number of interpreters who hold this view, refer to a passage in Breschit Rabb. (53:15), "*R. Asaria dixit: Dixit Ismael Isaaco: eamus et videamus portionem nostram in agro et tulit Ismael arcum et sagittas et jaculatus est*

Isaacum, et prae se tulit, ac si luderet." But is this admission necessary? Absolutely not. It is not even necessary to show that Paul never cites from tradition or Jewish writings, for it does not even fit into the context. Surely Paul has a right to label the designated mockery and its content as persecution. Calvin is right when he says: "*Nulla enim persecutio tam molesta esse nobis debet, quam dum impiorum ludibriis videmus labefactari nostram vocationem.*" οὕτως καὶ νῦν, "even so now" - thus also now the law-slaves persecute the children of promise. Law-slaves are all those who wish to have their relationship to God determined by deeds of the law, all those who wish to earn something from God, however small, by natural powers, consequently both the coarse and the fine slaves of the law. They have always persecuted the free sons, the children of the gospel covenant, namely those who let their relationship with God to be determined by grace alone. It could well be so that the persecution does not take place with force and brutality but with subtlety, with flattery, enticement, misjudgment, distortion, slander, lying, hidden and open disturbance of every type. This was happening now in Galatia, as it was taking place with Paul, this brave herald of free grace, and as it has taken place down through the years in the church until this very day. There are plenty of followers of Ishmael. "If you would be the world's enemy, just preach the gospel," says Luther. The depravity of nature has a way of attacking that which ought to be the most precious to sinful man.

Verse 30. ἀλλὰ, "But," the sharp adversative. But the preceding condition shall not continue. There will be a change. The apostle introduces the comfort of Scripture in the form of a question. It is in reality Sarah who utters the words which the apostle now cites (Gen. 21:12). He attributes this to Scripture. This he can do since God sanctioned the word of Sarah (Gen. 21:12). And not only that, but God has caused the sanctioned words to be written in Scripture; thereby they have become a witness to the will of God, a legitimate witness for God's people for all time. The written word is applicable and normative for all time (Rom. 15:4). Now, according to verse 24, Hagar is associated with law and Ishmael with slavery of the law. The meaning is this: Break completely with the law and banish the slaves of the law and this shall be done because it is most assuredly true that the slaves of the law shall not share in the inheritance of the free woman's children. They have no part in the gifts and blessings which God has prepared for His true

children. They are expelled from the house of God, the kingdom of heaven. κληρονομία is the collection of the gifts of God's kingdom (cf. 3:18, 29). The LXX here has the reading κληρονομησει, as Paul also quotes it. This future in Genesis points to the inheritance which would be obtained at the death of Abraham; typically referring to Christ's coming for judgment, when the heavenly inheritance shall be distributed. Now we have found three conceptions which correspond with each other, namely υιοθεσια, sonship; ελευθερια, liberty; and κληρονομοια, inheritance; all of them mediated by faith and not by the deeds of the law.

Verse 31. "*Dies ist Schlusstein und Endergebniss der bisherigen Rede,*" says Siefert. Since, according to the preceding, we Christians do not identify with Ishmael but to Isaac, therefore we are not and cannot be children of the bondwoman, but of the free, and it is this truth that is to be impressed and imprinted upon the readers. Bugge, following V. Hofmann, refers this verse to the following chapter. But it nevertheless refers naturally to the foregoing section, since Paul is still referring to the allegory; and we can easily understand that he would nail it down to the thought which engaged him in the section beginning with verse 21. Therefore, as Siefert says, we can hardly escape from considering this verse as the conclusion to the allegory. But with that which is here stated Paul has provided a transition to the third chief part of his epistle.

(To be continued)

BOOK REVIEW

Law and Gospel: The Foundation of Lutheran Ministry, by Robert J. Koester.
Milwaukee: Northwestern, 1993.

This 234 page paperback, the last so far in an apologetic "Impact Series," includes the subtitle, "With Special Reference to the Church Growth Movement." Koester shows that, like charismatic renewal of the 1970s and early 1980s which crossed denominational boundaries, the Church Growth Movement has an insidious nature and contradicts foundational Lutheran (Scriptural) theology.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I is entitled, "The Lutheran and Evangelical/Reformed View of the Gospel." Part II is called, "Theology and Theory in the Church Growth Movement and in Lutheran Ministry." In Part I Koester lays the groundwork for what he will talk about in Part II. Part I compares the Lutheran and Scriptural teachings on the gospel, justification, the kingdom of God, grace, and conversion with the Evangelical/Reformed positions. We would especially point out the excellent discussion of the kingdom in chapters 2 and 5. Throughout Part I the author correctly points out that Lutheran and Evangelical/Reformed teachings on these subjects are very different from one another. In fact, using the terminology of Luther, they have two different spirits. "Lutheran theology correctly views man's main problem to be the guilt of sin; the gospel is nothing other than that in Christ, God has justified the world. Reformed theology is skewed in the direction of making the goal of Christianity the REMAKING of people into more moral individuals" (p. 33,34).

Part II begins with a brief history of the present-day Church Growth Movement, and how it began under Donald McGavran and C. Peter Wagner at the Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. Koester also mentions other Church Growth proponents as Win Arn and Robert Schuller.

In speaking of how the Church Growth Movement fits so nicely with Evangelical/Reformed theology, Koester writes: ". . . The goal of growth becomes the center, rather than proclaiming the gospel. What leads Church Growth into this emphasis? I believe it follows from the Evangelical/Reformed understanding of the gospel. First, they resolve the paradox of why some are saved and not others through an Arminian emphasis on man's ability to decide for Christ by his own power. In this way, they free themselves from the paradox, and give themselves a theological position on which to insist on growth as something people CAN achieve and will want to achieve if they love God. Second, when the gospel shifts off center to mean a moral regeneration of some sort, the spiritual limits imposed on the gospel by its corollary teaching of 'by grace alone' are stripped away. In other words, when the gospel is viewed as the power to 'turn one's life over to God and keep his law,' the growth of the church taps into a natural desire that the unbeliever has|the desire to overcome problems which he sees coming from his sins. Once this is done, man does indeed have the power to devise methods to make the church grow. As a result, missionaries are more easily drawn away from their message and concentrate on methods that tap into the latent power in man to come to faith" (pp. 131,132).

A great deal of time is spent on the "felt needs" theory of Church Growth. "Felt needs" can be summarized in the maxim of Robert Schuller of Crystal Cathedral fame, "The secret of success is to find a need and fill it" (p. 152). In commenting on the book, *The Contagious Congregation*, by George Hunter III, Koester explains what "felt needs" are all about: "For those who are more life-oriented and less death-oriented and are looking for meaning in life, Hunter says, '[We] commend this message: In Christ and his mission through the church you can find your meaning! Christ is the clue. Following him leads to meaning.' For those who are alienated the message is, 'you are known and loved.' To those who are alienated from their world, 'we must proclaim that there are Christian causes to which you can give your life, causes that are of the essence of the kingdom of God, and if you'll give your life to those causes you can make a difference.' Notice that in the process of speaking to the needs of people, the message of forgiveness is not a factor. Rather, whatever emphasis in forgiveness may have been present...is supplanted by those 'facets of the gospel' that speak to people's current need. This is the Evangelical/Reformed gospel . . ." (p. 156).

Koester does mention Lutheran synods by name. He speaks of many pastors in the Missouri Synod (LC-MS) as having "delved deeply into Church Growth thought" (vii). He states that his own church body, the Wisconsin Synod (WELS) "has worked with Church Growth ideas, always within the context of trying to 'Lutheranize' them" (viii). In speaking of the Lutheran understanding of the gospel, namely, that it is the announcement of the forgiveness of sins in Christ, he writes, "The largest block of churches that held to it were those of the Synodical Conference, composed of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LC-MS), the Wisconsin Synod (WELS, of which I am a member), and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS). With the demise of the Synodical Conference in the early 1960s, one might argue that some in the Missouri Synod have made a shift toward the Reformed emphasis. This is true in spite of the fact that many LC-MS churches continue to hold to their traditional stance. The WELS and ELS today are wrestling with these issues and as of this writing remain united around the proclamation of God's general forgiveness of the world, calling people to faith in God's forgiveness and through it to the hope of eternal life" (pp. 47,48).

It is unfortunate the Pastor Koester fails to mention the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) in this listing. The majority of our pastors, teachers and professors—as well as our members—have their roots in the Synodical Conference. The CLC also remains united around the proclamation of our justification before God in the blood of Christ. For those who have accused us of being otherwise, of being a "one-issue church," or of having a "legalistic spirit," they should have attended our General Pastoral Conference last summer. If anyone is "evangelical" in the Scriptural sense of the word, it is the CLC.

Pastor Koester says "that theologically we are what we read" (p. 203). In our zeal to share the Word, in our desire to relate the Gospel to the unbeliever, we may find ourselves reading and absorbing books and literature from the Reformed/Evangelical perspective and get sucked into the trap of the Church Growth Movement ourselves. As we go about our work of preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments as we know God wants us to from Scripture, and then we look out and see how the church down the street is growing by leaps and bounds, we may start to feel somewhat insufficient for the task of the ministry.

“Why isn’t my congregation growing like that? What am I doing wrong? Have I missed something? What do those people have that we don’t?” We look for answers, not in God’s Word, the Bible, but in man-made books about surveys, “felt needs,” and public relations. Whenever we find ourselves with such a mind-set, we should read and re-read the following: “Whenever the church focuses on numerical growth, or sanctification, or renewal, or on any of the by-products of the gospel, it runs the danger of losing the very treasures it is striving to keep. Whenever it uses methods that tap into a person’s natural desire to reap the benefits of a moral life, it jeopardizes its chance of reaching that person with the real gospel and may inoculate him against real Christianity for the rest of his life” (p. 218).

If we are to read and study, may it be in the Word, the Lutheran Confessions, and such Lutheran and Gospel-oriented books as *Law and Gospel: The Foundation of Lutheran Ministry*.

- Stephen Kurtzahn
