

MORSELS FROM THE SAVIOUR

Precious Biblical Food Translated from our Old orthodox Lutheran Fathers.

Vol.1.

April 2013

No.1.

[**Editorial Note:** This is purely a private endeavour by the undersigned in order to assist faithful orthodox Lutheran Christians to grow ever deeper in Christian faith and knowledge in these last days. As often as we can we would like to place before our readers portions of translated Biblical material from our orthodox Lutheran fathers which to our knowledge is not at present available to our readers in English. Pastor B L Winter, ELCR.]

DEVOTIONAL

[From “**Der Lutherische Kirchenbote**” (The Lutheran Church Messenger) the official church paper of our former ELSA here in Australia, June, 7, 1917, Vol. 44, Number 12, Page 89, 90.]

Rich and Still Poor, Poor and Yet Rich

(by the late Dr Th Nickel¹)

For the 1 Sunday after Trinity.

“**There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day**” (Luke 16:19). According to the *judgement of the world* that is the *best* which can be said of a person. Whoever has much money and can enjoy the pleasures of this life according to his heart’s desire, the world regards him as a fortunate man. The name of the rich man is not given to us because **in the sight of God** he had no name; his name was not written in the *Book of Life*, for he was a man who was certainly rich in earthly goods, but yet he was not rich in God. By the world he was held in high regard. He had many friends who thought highly of him, who praised his name; but God did not use his name because he was godless. The Lord calls him simply “**a man.**” He also was a weak, frail creature who exists as dust and ashes. He was like a flower which blossoms early and is cut down in the evening and withers. And he “**was,**” he was once here on earth, but he is no longer here. His riches were not able to save him from death.

He Was A Rich Unbeliever But Outwardly Decent

This rich man was “**clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.**”(Luther translates: “lived splendidly every day and in enjoying pleasure.” BLW.) His clothing was also of royal splendour and his life was full of luxury and pleasure. He was a true man of the world who enjoyed his life in which ever day he had much fun and who heart enjoyed good things. How many people might have envied him on account of his riches, how many people might have praised him for his friendship. “**He fared sumptuously every day.**”² With these words the Lord identifies the character and the disposition of heart of this man. He does not say of him that he had lived in public sin and shame, nor that he had been devoted to sexual sin and unchastity, nor that he increased his wealth through fraud, usury and the oppression of the poor, the widows and the orphans, no, that rich man was certainly a respectable man of the world who also may have been held in high regard by those in authority among the people, the Pharisees and the Scribes,³ to whom the Lord here speaks. In the verses which stand before us in our Gospel the Lord says to the Pharisees, “**who were covetous ... and they derided Him**” (Luke 16:14): “**Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts... for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God**” (Luke 16:15). Therefore such a man also was this rich man who was held in high regard by the Pharisees.

¹ Dr Nickel (1865- 1953) graduated from Concordia Seminary, St Louis in 1888. From 1901 to 1923 he served in our former ELSA, being its president from 1903-1922. From 1924-1930 he was President of the Free Church of Saxony. He returned to Australia in 1935. He was an outstanding orthodox theologian of the Old Missouri type.

² An expanded translation of the original Greek of this verse reads: “*Now there was a certain rich man who habitually clothed himself in purple and fine linen, and joyously living in luxurious feasting and splendour every day.*” BLW.

³ German: “men learned in the Scriptures.”

The Lord does not also admonish him for the reason that he had eaten expensive food and worn magnificent clothing, for many Godly kings and Queens of former times have worn magnificent clothes as Solomon, Esther, David, Daniel, and a few others, but this the Lord rebukes that all these things had dominated the rich man's heart, that he had craved these things, depended on them and had obtained all his joy, enjoyment and pleasure in them⁴. He lived luxuriously and in pleasure **"every day."** Concerning people like him it is stated: **"Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant"** (Is.56:12).⁵ That was also the case of the rich man who clothed himself with purple and expensive linen clothes and every day lived luxuriously and in pleasure. Was he really rich? Let us hear what the Lord further says.

Lazarus Was Poor In Earthly Goods But Rich In Faith And God's Word.

"And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores" (Luke 16:20,21). Poor and moreover sick he is regarded by the world as a great case of misfortune⁶. The poor man of whom the Lord here speaks found himself in a particularly sad situation. He lay helpless before the door of the rich man. Wherever compassionate people had placed him, there he had to continue to lie. He had no lodging⁷ as is indeed the case among those who are poor in Palestine.⁸ He desired to still his hunger with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. He was not only poor and helpless, but covered with many ulcers for which no-one gave him relief. Rather the dogs came and licked his ulcers for him. In this way his pain was not reduced but increased. What a contrast between the rich man who lived there every day luxuriously and in pleasure and between the poor sick man who lay before his door!

While the name of the rich man is not mentioned, the name of the poor man is expressly stated. **"There was a certain beggar named Lazarus,"** the Lord says, **"which was laid at his gate, full of sores."** By this name which the Lord ascribes to this poor sick man He indicates his character and disposition of heart. Lazarus⁹ signifies one who trusts in God. Lazarus therefore was a man who, in spite of his poverty and helplessness and in spite of his serious sickness, placed his confidence in God and in his misery fixed his eyes on Him from whom help comes¹⁰. The world who went in and out from the house of the rich man certainly did not ask about the poor man who lay there before his door. But God knew him and his name was held in high regard in heaven¹¹ and was written in the Book of Life. Lazarus placed his hope in the Lord. When he indeed daily saw the wealth and had the prosperity of the rich man before his eyes, as this man enjoyed his life, he neither murmured nor envied that he did not have this man's prosperity, but in quiet patience he entrusted himself to the will of His God and waited for His salvation and help. God was his comfort. Was he really poor?

Whether the rich man had assisted poor Lazarus, it is not said. The crumbs which fell from his table he would have scarcely denied him, otherwise Lazarus would certainly not have been daily lying before the rich man's door. Yet he did not concern himself further about Lazarus, since he indeed every day lived luxuriously and in pleasure and therefore had no time to be worried about the misery of this poor man.

[Headings, emphasis and extra paragraphs have been added. To be continued BLW]

⁴ **Luther** says: "He set his heart upon it, he sought, he clung to it, he chose it, he had all his joy, desire, and pleasure in it, and made it his idol."

⁵ **Kretzmann** brings out the correct meaning forcefully as follows: **"Come ye, say they,** in the spirit which always characterizes their self-indulgence, **I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink,** in an orgy of bestial drinking; **and to-morrow shall be as this day and much more abundant,** literally, 'great, much more in excess,' a strong expression denoting the habitual and intentional indulgence in intoxicants, with all its accompanying bestiality." (OT Commentary, II, 331).

⁶ Or: "misery."

⁷ Place to stay out of the weather.

⁸ Lit.: the east or the Orient.

⁹ Lazarus comes from the Hebrew "Eleazer" meaning "trust in God."

¹⁰ By faith in the coming Saviour as revealed in the Word as we see from the context.

¹¹ By grace for Christ's sake through faith.

DOCTRINAL

LECTURES ON THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH THE TRUE VISIBLE CHURCH OF GOD ON EARTH by Dr. F. Pieper.¹²

FIRST LECTURE: God Wishes To Have Only One Orthodox Church On Earth.

What Does God's Word Expect Of Faithful Pastors

You all, my friends, want to become servants of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Office of the Ministry. Therefore, keep clear in your mind what the Lutheran Church demands and expects of you. The Lutheran Church expects of you that you are moved to belong to the Church, not merely outwardly and by means of external circumstances, but from your heart. It expects of you that you serve the Church not merely half-heartedly, or even with a bad conscience, but that you serve in its midst with great joyfulness. The Church expects of you that you do not look upon the service in its midst as a burden, but as a joy. You should think of it that with it God has bestowed upon you a great privilege that you may conduct the Office of the Ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church. It expects of you that if you had the choice between a small, poor Lutheran congregation which may only consist of manual laborers and meets in a barn-like building and between a big, rich, sectarian congregation which consists of nothing but people respected in this world and holds its religious meetings in a chapel made of marble and sparkling with other precious stones, that you would then without a second thought choose the service at the poor and small Lutheran congregation. Indeed, the Lutheran church expects of you that you would sooner part with life and limb than to become unfaithful in the service in the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Lutheran Church expects you to be **zealous** for the Lutheran Church, but not with a carnal, fanatical, party-spirit breathing zeal, but with an eagerness which is founded on a true knowledge and which the Holy Spirit inspires and maintains in the heart.

That is what the Lutheran Church **expects** of you as the future servants of the same; and that you can **achieve** this must be your own singular, ardent desire, because only in this way will you serve God rightly in the Lutheran Church and be happy in the Office of the Lutheran Ministry. But you will accomplish this only if you are by God's grace convinced that the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as it is presently called, is the orthodox church, or, what is the same thing, *the true, visible Church of God on earth*. Therefore, we will occupy ourselves in these evening hours with the proof that the orthodox, or the true, visible Church of God on earth, is the Evangelical Lutheran Church. But we must first take care of a few preliminary questions.

Modern theology, which is unionistic through and through, holds in opposition to us that the above-mentioned conclusion is not at all convincing. It says: "The Lutheran Church may for all that be the orthodox church, but God also wanted to have other tendencies¹³ alongside it in the church; therefore it does not follow, that one must set one's heart so completely on the Evangelical Lutheran Church." In order to refute this objection I direct your attention above all to the truth that

God wishes to have only one orthodox church on earth,

that is, one such church as believes and confesses all the doctrines revealed in the Holy Scriptures; that, on the other hand, heterodox church bodies which in certain points depart from the truth revealed in

¹² Dr. F. Pieper delivered these lectures to the entire student body of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in the so-called "Luther Stunden" or **Luther Hour**. He followed a tradition started by Dr Walther. In these lectures Dr Pieper deals with significant points found in Walther's outstanding book, "The Evangelical Lutheran Church the True Visible Church of God on Earth," and further explains them to his audience. This particular series began on Nov. 31, 1889 and was completed on June 12, 1891.

In Walther's book he is **not** stating that the orthodox Lutheran Church is the only saving church, but on the basis of Scripture **he is emphasizing that that church alone is the true visible church on earth which teaches God's Word in its truth and purity**. Walther is using the title "Evangelical Lutheran Church" in a specific sense, that is, he is referring to all those who realise that they are lost sinners and believing in Christ Jesus as their only Saviour, out of love to Christ want to abide by God's Word and nothing but God's Word.

¹³ These "other tendencies" is an ambiguous way of referring to the evil "Open Questions" Principle, that is, where error is allowed to exist alongside of truth without condemnation.

God's Word, will only be tolerated by God, as is every other sin. I draw your attention to the following main reasons why Orthodoxy is the outward form of the church ordained by God:

God's Word Commands All Teachers That They Are To Teach Only The pure Word.

In the first place, God commands all preachers, who mount the pulpit within His church, to preach **His** Word and **only His** Word; the preachers shall neither take away anything from His Word nor add anything to it. --- When, before His ascension to heaven, the Lord Christ gave His Church the command: "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature*" (Mark 16:15), according to the statement of the Evangelist Matthew He then added very explicitly to it: "*Teaching them to observe **all** things whatsoever I have commanded you*" (Matt.28:20). God further commands: "*He that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat?*" (Jer. 23:28)¹⁴ With these words spoken through the prophet Jeremiah God forbids all preachers to proclaim together with God's Word at the same time also their own thoughts, thus the word of men. According to the Holy Scriptures, it is the greatest praise for a preacher if he preaches God's Word, as it is revealed, undiminished and unfalsified. The Apostle Paul thus speaks of himself (2 Cor. 2:17), "*We are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God.*" And contrariwise, it is an offense before God if preachers take the liberty to corrupt the Word of God, that is, to take away from God's Word or to add something to it. Thus God speaks through the prophet Jeremiah (23:31,32): "*Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause My people to err by their lies, and by their lightness*¹⁵; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them." In Matt. 5:19 the Lord Christ Himself threatens all teachers: "*Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven;*" that means he will not even get into the kingdom of heaven. According to God's will false teachers have so little right to exist in the church that God in the Old Testament, where He dealt more with bodily punishments, gave orders to kill the false teachers. Hence we read at the noteworthy place, Deut. 13:6ff: "*If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; Namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die.*" (Deut.13:6-10).

In the New Testament God does not deal with bodily punishments like that anymore; indeed, He has specifically forbidden His Church to fight against the false teachers with physical punishments and with physical force in general. Through the Holy Spirit St. Paul must remind us: "*The weapons of our warfare are not carnal*" (2 Cor.10:4). But in the New Testament God has nevertheless very clearly described the business of the false teachers as the gravest sin, as a business upon which he lays His curse and threatens with temporal and eternal punishment. Thus writes the apostle Paul through the Holy spirit in Gal. 1:8: "*But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed!*" But we must now say: Since God's Word commands all teachers that they should teach only the right thing in the Church; and since God has most severely forbidden all false teachings, which depart from God's Word, it is thereby proven that God wants to have only one orthodox church and not also a heterodox church as well. That there are heterodox churches is merely a matter of God's permission, just as God also permits other sins.

God Commands all Christians Without Exception To Hear The Pure Word.

But further: That God wants to have only one orthodox Church follows not only from the command God has given to the **preachers** who have to teach in the Church, but it necessarily follows also from the command God has given to all **Christians** without exception. God commands all Christians without

¹⁴ Luther: What has chaff in common with the wheat?

¹⁵ Heb. proud boastings.

exception to hear only such preachers as preach God's Word undiminished and unadulterated. In John 10:27 the Lord Christ Himself says: "*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow Me.*" He says in John 8:31, "*If ye continue in My Word, then are Ye My disciples indeed.*" And it is said in praise of the congregation at Jerusalem in Acts 2:42, "*And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine.*" On the other hand, according to God's explicit and earnest command, the Christians should **avoid** such preachers as falsify God's Word. In John 10:5 the Lord says of the Christians: "*And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him.*" He Himself commands in Matt. 7:15, "*Beware of false prophets.*" He commands through the Apostle Paul, Rom. 16:17, "*Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to¹⁶ the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*" He commands through the Apostle John (2 John 10), "*If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine [namely, the teaching of Christ], receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed [namely, as your brother in faith].*"

In the Holy Scriptures it is very often impressed upon the Christians to bear with each other's weaknesses, but you can read through the entire Holy Scriptures from beginning to end and you will find no place where God commands Christians or even only allows them to bear with or tolerate **false teachers**; Christians should turn away from false teachers, avoid them, flee from them, and have nothing to do with them. **So if God expects all His Christians to listen only to the true teachers and to avoid all false teachers, then it is therewith proven again that God wants to have only one orthodox Church.** Admittedly, since there are, in fact, many Christians even in the heterodox church bodies, there are, therefore, also many Christians who really do **not** follow the command of the Lord to avoid all false teachers. We Lutherans, we who claim that the Lutheran Church alone is the orthodox Church, admit with thanks to God and on the basis of God's Word that there are also true Christians in heterodox church bodies, true children of God, namely, insofar as essential parts of God's Word are still proclaimed, even if mixed with errors. But in this we stand firm, that for all Christians, even for those Christians within heterodox church bodies, the command of God to avoid all false teachers remains in force. That Christians do not comply with this command is and remains a sin, which, of course, will be forgiven them, as long as they sin out of weakness and lack of the right knowledge.

In The Church God Commands All Christians To Be Completely United In Doctrine

Thirdly: All Christians, according to the Holy Scriptures, should be completely united in the faith presented to them by God. There are many differences among Christians, and there must necessarily be many differences. Firstly, in the natural sphere. According to skin color there are black Christians, white Christians and yellow Christians; there are educated and uneducated Christians; there are Christians who live in republics and there are also Christians who live in monarchies. These and other differences we find among Christians in the natural sphere. Then there is also a difference among Christians in the area relating to the church, namely, in all matters that are not determined by God's Word, for example, in church ceremonies. These things the church of every locality and in every country may arrange as it seems best to them. So the church in America may have different ceremonies from the church in Germany, and the church in Germany may have different ceremonies from the church in Africa and in Asia.

But in **one** point all Christians must be in agreement, whether they are white or black, educated or uneducated, whether they are Germans or Americans or Chinese or Indians - - in **one** point they must all agree, and there cannot be the slightest difference among them: That is in the faith, or in the doctrine. Thus writes the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 1:10 in the well-known passage: "*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing (hina to auto legeete pantes), and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (en too autoo noi kai en tee autee gnoomee)*" Therefore, in regard to the doctrine, Christians should use the same words and specifically in the same sense; that is, in the doctrine, or in the faith, they should be in agreement. If there are different opinions or divisions in the doctrine, then it is against the expressed will of God.

-- In more recent times reference is made to the variety of **gifts** the different countries and individual teachers possess, as justification for the difference of belief in the church. Quite often one hears the

¹⁶ Greek: alongside of.

expression that the special characteristics of countries and their teachers must necessarily also lead to a difference in faith. This is, however, a wisdom which is described by God's Word as folly. In Eph. 4, where the Apostle Paul deals with the varied gifts bestowed upon the church, he says that the different gifts were given to the church for the purpose that all Christians may come to the **one** faith and to the **one** knowledge of Jesus Christ (eis teen henoteeta tees pisteoos kai tees epignooseoos tou huiou tou theou). Now we again draw the conclusion: **If all Christians are indeed to have only the one faith revealed in God's Word, then God also wants to have only one orthodox Church.** To speak of different directions with equal rights within the church is against the clear Word of God. According to the Scriptures, only one direction is authorized, namely, the direction that stays with God's Word in all points; all others, whether they depart from God's Word a great deal or a little, are forbidden in God's Word. All Christians should belong to the orthodox church; that is the will of God expressed in God's Word. Luther, the angel with the everlasting Gospel, the Reformer of the Church, the rebuilder of the orthodox church, has been sent, according to Revelation 14, to all who inhabit the earth and to all heathens and nations and languages and tongues.

That God Wants Only One Orthodox Church Follows From The Names God Gives the Church in the Scriptures.

And finally: That God wants to have only one orthodox church also follows from the various names that have been given to the Church in the Holy Scriptures. I call to mind here only a few of them. The Church is called the "house of God" in the Holy Scriptures (1 Tim. 3). It is called the house of God because it belongs to God and God lives in it as a spiritual house. Just as in a household on earth, all is well only then when the word of the head of the house reigns, therefore, only then is all well in the Church, the House of God, when only the Word of God, the Head of the House, reigns. Insofar as the word of man is taught in the Church, one deposes God, the head of the house, and the church is no longer God's house.

-- The Church is further called the "kingdom of Christ" (John 18), and in fact, it is called the Kingdom of Christ because the truth revealed by Christ is preached in this Kingdom; if, however, something other than Christ's truth is preached and believed in this Kingdom, to that extent Christ will be deposed as the Lord of this Kingdom. To that extent it is then not the Kingdom of Christ anymore, but man's kingdom.

-- Further: The church is often called the "Kingdom of Heaven" in the Holy Scriptures. But the Church is only called the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth because in the Church **God's Word** is to be preached. When the Saviour Himself preached God's Word on earth, He said: "*The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*" Here on earth we have only so much from God as we know of Him from His Word. God only approaches us here on earth in the veil of the Word, not directly. Where, therefore, God's Word is preached, there God comes to us, there is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Where the word of man is preached, however, to that extent there is not the Kingdom of Heaven, but a kingdom of the world, a kingdom of men.

-- And finally: The Church is often called the bride of Christ. The Church is the bride of Christ in this way, that it hears, believes and follows only Christ's Word; insofar as the Church turns its ear towards someone else and therewith also gives its heart to someone else, the Church falls away from Christ and it becomes a spiritual adulteress. The apostle also warns the Corinthians to be on guard against all false teachers, for this reason, that he might preserve the Corinthian congregation as a pure bride for Christ. In short, we may look in Holy Scripture wherever we want; everywhere the truth confronts us, as one revealed in the Scriptures: According to God's will there shall only be one orthodox church on earth.

Luther writes on the words of 1 Peter 4:11, "*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God*": "That is a very necessary doctrine in the church. And if it had been maintained until now, the world would not have been filled with Antichrist's lies and deception.... For in **Christendom** affairs are not so conducted as in an **earthly government**, and in those things which concern external matters and goods. In the latter, men rule as **they** understand it, and as their reason teaches. They have the right to establish law and order and, in accordance with these, command, punish, receive and give. But in the Church we are dealing with a spiritual government where consciences are bound by God. And what is spoken, taught, commanded or done there, must be carried out in such a way that you know that it is valid and stands in God's sight; yes, that it proceeds and moves before Him, so that you can

say: God Himself has said and done that. For in this house, where He lives and rules, He should and will, also as the rightful Master, say and do everything Himself, even though He uses the mouth and hand of men to accomplish it. Therefore, first and above all things, both preachers and hearers must here see to it that in matters of doctrine there be clear and sure proof that everything is really in accordance with the true Word of God, revealed from heaven to the holy patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, confirmed by Christ Himself, and commanded by Him to be preached. For it cannot by any means be tolerated that the doctrine is handled as each individual pleases, or to suit his own fancy and to harmonize it with his human reason and understanding, or to toy and juggle with Scripture and God's Word, so that it is explained, directed, stretched and patched at will for the sake of the people or for the sake of peace and unity. For in that case there would be no sure and abiding foundation on which the consciences could rest." (Luther SL XII,48-50,58; translation from "The Distinction Between Orthodox and Heterodox Churches" by Dr F. Pieper, found in *The Faithful Word*, 1976, XIII, 1-2).

In The Church Only God's Word Is To Rule.

If it had always been borne in mind that God wants to have nothing else but His Word taught in His Church here on earth, then there would have been more opposition against the lies and deception of Antichrist. God has given man liberty concerning law making in the worldly realm. Therefore, a Christian too can submit to the many different regulations in the kingdoms of this world: if a Christian is here in America, then he observes the American laws; if he is in Germany, he observes German laws, which are of quite a different nature; if he is in China, he observes Chinese laws, which again are much different sounding. Here God has given no definite command. But it is different in the Church, in the spiritual Kingdom of Christ. Whether a Christian resides in America or in Germany or in China, he is always bound and ruled as a Christian by only **one** law: God's revealed Word. According to this law and testimony a Christian must believe and live wherever he may find himself on this earth. In His Church God uses sinful people as His "mouthpieces," but these spokesmen must be very careful that they do not speak anything else in the Church of God than what God in His Word has commanded them. Not even **one** thought, not even the smallest part of a doctrine must they reserve for themselves, but in regard to every thought with which they come before God's people, they must be able to say: "*Thus says the Lord.*" This is contained in the words of 1 Peter 4:11, since it says precisely that: "*If any man speak* (in the Church of God), *let him speak as the oracles of God* (the Word of God)." (ei tis lalei hoos logia theou).

If a preacher is still in doubt about it whether a thought he would like to express in a sermon is indeed based on God's Word, he should leave this thought unsaid for the time being. He should only have the courage to appear before the congregation with this thought after he has convinced himself: Yes, that is the divine truth. A preacher should preach no opinions, but only the absolute truth, namely, the truth revealed in God's Word.

That is also one of the meanings of the preacher's robe of office. For this reason we also retain the robe of office, the surplice (chorrock) or clerical gown (talar) of the preacher to show that the preacher when he stands in the pulpit, completely steps back as far as his own person is concerned and stands there only as a mouthpiece of God; he should only speak what God has instructed him. Personal opinions in the sermon are completely out of the question (Ed. lit. are not to be offered for sale). That is the same significance as when the judges of the Supreme Court of our land are clad in black robes. It signifies that the judges should not administer justice according to their subjective opinion, but only according to the written law. Their person is covered as an indication that they are not considered as private persons with their personal views, but as the mouthpiece of the law.

We call heterodox church bodies **churches**, insofar as in them there are still parts, essential parts of God's Word being preached; insofar as the heterodox church bodies depart from God's Word, they are sects. It makes no difference for a church body to say: "Here is the church, we are the church." For a church body to be considered the Church, the house of God, it has to prove it by this, that God's Word sounds in its midst. (Delivered on 1 November 1889. Translated BLW. Proofed KKM)

PRACTICAL

(The following is translated from the **Real Lexikon**, a series of 8 volumes summarising the sermons, essays, etc., of the old former Missouri Synod and the Synodical Conference drawn up by Pastor Eckhardt.)

The Lord's Supper (Abendmahl) -- The Words of Institution.

1. Importance. The importance of this doctrine¹⁷ follows from this that

- (a) Christ earnestly desired this meal and in addition instituted it in the last hours before his death as His last institution.
- (b) the words of institution are stated four times in Scripture.
- (c) Paul furthermore had specially received it from the Lord.
- (d) it is a Testament of the Lord.
- (e) it is so very much attacked by the devil.

Note. The Lord's Supper is one of the Sacraments.

2. Names. The Lord's Supper is called

- (a) Breaking of Bread. Acts 2:42.
- (b) The table of the Lord. 1 Cor.10:21.
- (c) Communion. 1 Cor.10:16.
- (d) Evening or Night Meal. 1 Cor.11:20.
- (e) Thanksgiving. Eucharist. Ignatius.
- (f) Mass. Luther. Augsburg Confession Article 24¹⁸.

3. Source of Knowledge. Principium.¹⁹ The pure doctrine of the Lord's Supper cannot be known from reason, but only from God's Word.

4. Types. As types of the Lord's Supper the tree of life and the Passover are known to have been considered. Many find a hint at the Lord's Supper in the following texts: "*The meek shall eat and be satisfied*" (Psalm 22:26²⁰).

Psalm 111:4, "*He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered.*" Psalm 23:5, "*Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of enemies.*"

5. Sedes Doctrinae.²¹ As with every doctrine so also here in the Lord's Supper a person must go back to and use the true original seats of doctrine.²² These are

¹⁷ **Walther** "Epistle Sermons" (German, p.177, 178; English, p. 183,184): "Is the Lord's Supper so important that we should set aside a special day for commemorating its institution along with the other great deeds of God for our redemption?" The whole sermon deals with "The Importance of the real presence in Holy Communion for the Christian life."

Walther "Gospel Sermons" (German, p.147; English, p.142): "Or, is the true doctrine of the Holy Supper actually so important, that we cannot yield? That we must hold fast to it in inviolable faithfulness no matter what the results might be? Yes, my friends, we dare not, we cannot, yield as dear as we hold God's Word, Christ's majesty and honour, our salvation, and the salvation of all men." Walther then deals with 3 reasons why we are faithfully to hold fast to the doctrine of the Holy Supper.

¹⁸ See Der Lutheraner Vol.1, p.70: "So the Mass (Ed. here meaning the Lord's Supper) remains among us in its legitimate usage, as it was retained by the church in previous ages, as can be proved from St. Paul, 1 Cor.11, and also many writings from the fathers" (Augsburg Confession Article 24) (Triglotta, German page 66). The English on pages 67,69 is taken from the Latin.

¹⁹ Bible passages from which the Lord's Supper is taken.

²⁰ Psalm 22:27 in Luther's Bible.

²¹ Proof passages for the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

²² Bible texts on which the doctrine of the Lord's Supper is based.

(a) not **John 6**; for

(i) Christ had spoken these words well before the Lord's Supper was instituted.

(ii) According to John 6:53 all those who do not partake of the Lord's Supper, e.g., our little children who are Christians, would be denied salvation.

Note. For this reason the communion of little children occurs in the Greek Church and the Irvingites.²³

(iii) According to John 6:54 every communicant would have eternal life, which a person cannot say of the Lord's Supper.²⁴

Note (a). John 6 deals only with spiritual eating and drinking, of faith.

Note (b). The Reformed likewise base their doctrine on John 6:63: "*The flesh profiteth nothing,*" referring it to Christ's flesh.²⁵

Note (c). Even recent theologians, e.g. Ohlshausen, want to explain the words of institution from these and other texts.

Note (d). The falsification of the **doctrine** of the Scriptures always results in the falsification of the principle that the Scriptures alone decide in matters of faith and life.²⁶ Either the opponents are obliged to prove their doctrine from the texts which do not deal with the Lord's Supper, John 6, or however from the so-called "totality of Scripture," the doctrine of Christ's ascension into heaven, etc.²⁷

(b) but the words of institution. Mat. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19,20; 1 Cor.11:23-25.

Note. We prove the real presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper not from the doctrine of the Person of Christ nor from the omnipresence of His human nature.

Objection (a). The words of institution cannot come into consideration because they are in dispute.

Answer: If that were the case then one could never quote a Bible text as proof, since they are all in dispute.

Objection (b). The words of institution first come into consideration in the second analysis after the doctrine has been established from other texts (which do not deal with the Lord's Supper?).

Answer: That is equal to constructing the doctrine and then bringing in the Scriptures.

Objection (c). Paul was only giving the proof for the accuracy of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.²⁸

6. Words of Institution.

(a) These occur **four times** in the Scriptures. In this way these words are all the more certain for us.

Note (a). **Paul** received the doctrine of Lord's Supper by divine revelation. Christ Himself gave Paul an authentic account of the first celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Antithesis: The apostles told Paul everything. Hofmann, Kahnis, Nebe.

²³ Irvingites, followers of the Rev. Edward Irving (b. at Annan, August 15, 1792; d. 1834). He was a Presbyterian minister who in 1831 believed he had the gift of tongues. He also erred in regard to the human nature of Christ. For these reasons he was expelled from the Presbyterian Church and founded his own religious group called "The Holy Apostolic Church," though they were often popularly called "Irvingites." (Concordia Cyclopaedia p. 368, 1927 edition.).

²⁴ See 1 Cor.11:27,29.

²⁵ In **Der Lutheraner** (Vol.1, p.45) we read: "Zwingli asserted that the words, 'The flesh avails nothing' (John 6:63), should refer to Jesus' flesh in order to attack the Lord's Supper, which is obviously a **horrible blasphemy**, which must still occasionally be heard. Christ says of His flesh, 'The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.' (John 6:51). And should that flesh, then, be so useless?"

²⁶ Der Schriftprinzips.

²⁷ What is meant here is that the Reformed say: "How can Christ's body, which they believe since His ascension to be locally in heaven, be present in the Lord's Supper when it is celebrated all over the world?"

²⁸ What the Reformed are falsely saying is that in 1 Cor.11:23-25 Paul was not teaching the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ's true body and blood in the Lord's Supper, but merely stating accurately the wording of the Lord's Supper.

Note (b). John mentions the Lord's Supper in 1 John 5:8: "*There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood.*"

(b) They are clear and plain²⁹. Zwingli and Calvin themselves admit that.

Note. As soon as a person takes them figuratively, they become dark.³⁰

(c) They do not agree word for word in the different accounts.

Note (a). While Christ was around the table in the company of His disciples, He could have used this form once, another time that form.³¹

Note (b). In spite of all the differences³² we still have received again and again the same doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

Objection: Because the words are so different, one can not so much depend on the words.³³

(to be continued)

Walther Pastorale – Divine Call.

Thesis 4: Since "no one should teach or preach publicly in the church, or administer the sacraments, without a regular call," as the XIV Article of the Augsburg Confession says in accordance with the Word of God (Rom. 10:15. Jer. 23:21. Jas. 3:1. Heb. 5:4,5, see also the opening verses of nearly all the Epistles of St. Paul), the first requirement for ministerial work acceptable to God and under divine blessing is, next to due preparation for the ministerial office, that the pastor be regularly called to such office and be certain of it.

NOTE 1

Concerning the necessity of the Call, in the first place, for God-pleasing ministerial work in general **Luther** writes: 'For a great work a divine call is necessary and not merely one's own devotion or one's own prompting. Even those who are certain that God has called them will find it hard to do and accomplish something that is worth while, though God is with them and is granting His blessing; what, then, can those senseless fools do who undertake something without such a call and seek but their own honor and praise? For it cannot be otherwise: he who does something without being called by God seeks his own honor; **for he is his own god**, teaches himself what to do, and thinks that he is not in need of God and His Word. Therefore such people are also unhappy, and instead of going ahead, they fall back, as one can daily see and experience. I, Dr. Martin, have been **called and compelled** to become a doctor without my own will, just in sheer obedience; I had to accept the doctorate and swear and promise that I would faithfully teach and preach my most beloved Holy Scripture in all its truth and purity. While I was so doing, the Pope crossed my path and sought to prevent me; but as can be seen, he did not fare well, and he will fare still worse and shall not be able to stop me. In the name of God I shall tread upon the lion and the adder and the young lion and the dragon and shall trample them under my feet; I shall begin it in my lifetime, and after my death it shall be accomplished.' (Comments on the presumptive royal edict. Walch. Tom. XVI, 2061.) [from Fritz Pastoral Theology, p. 33.]

(to be continued) [Responsibility for all translation is taken by Pastor B. L. Winter of the ELCR.]

²⁹ See Walther "Gospel Sermons" (German, pages 147-149; English, pages 143-145). Referring to the words of institution Walther states: "Do not these words express so clearly that Christ's body and blood are really present in the Lord's Supper and received in, with, and under the bread and wine, that it cannot be expressed more clearly?"

See also Walther "Year of Grace" (German, pages 211-213; English, pages 128-130).

³⁰ Obscure, unclear.

³¹ Of wording in the four accounts when Jesus distributed the Lord's Supper.

³² In the wording when the Lord's Supper was distributed by Jesus

³³ **Dr. F. Pieper** deals with this excellently in his Dogmatics (English pages 349-352): Pieper quotes **Luther** who says: "The Holy Ghost purposely so arranged it that no Evangelist coincides with the other in these words." Then **Pieper** states: "Christ did not always use the same words at the first distribution of the elements to His twelve disciples, but varied them somewhat in the course of the distribution." But showing that **the doctrine is the same in all accounts Pieper** says: "Comparing the wording of the records, we find that in the words pertaining to the *bread* all four accounts bring out the essence of the Lord's Supper. They all declare the body of Christ to be the gift of the Sacrament." In regard to the *cup* Pieper correctly states: "The statements in Matthew and Mark also pertain directly to the essence of the Lord's Supper, that is, they directly name the blood of Christ as the gift of the Sacrament." With reference to Luke and Paul, **Pieper** rightly affirms: "The words regarding the cup state the purpose of the Lord's Supper as means of grace, namely, the New Testament, or the remission of sins."

