

# MORSELS FROM THE SAVIOUR

Precious Biblical Food Translated from our Old orthodox Lutheran Fathers.

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[**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.]

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### *What do we learn from Luther at Worms?*<sup>1</sup> by Dr. F. Pieper **Part 2.**



Now let us pay even closer attention to this **distinguished assembly**. There on the elevated throne sat Charles V, King of Spain, and for a year also Emperor of Germany, the most powerful prince of his time, in whose kingdom the sun never set<sup>2</sup>. Alongside of Charles sat his brother, the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, and on the other side sat Aleander, the representative of the Pope for the Imperial Parliament, in addition to the six electors<sup>3</sup> of the empire, 32 dukes and margraves<sup>4</sup>, 30 archbishops and bishops, the delegates of the German imperial cities, many princes and counts. Incidentally, please note, even Americans were there; because America was already discovered and belonged to the Spanish possessions. The Americans excited attention by their multicoloured clothes and their quaint headdress. These were probably Mexican Indians. Before this assembly, about which one can say that it represented the whole world, the monk of Wittenberg was called to defend his position. This can be viewed as a special dispensation<sup>5</sup> of God. God had chosen Luther to be the Reformer of the entire Church and now He saw to it that He had representatives from all over the world before Luther.

First of all, let us go over the details of the proceedings which started on 17 April and came to an end on 18 April. On the second day Luther was finally asked to give a short, plain answer whether he was prepared to retract everything or at least some of the things which he taught. There Luther gave the answer which made the name of the city of "Worms" well known<sup>6</sup> and by his answer proved that Luther was the Reformer of the Church who was ordained by God.

<sup>1</sup> Taken from "District Report, North Dakota-Montana, 1921, pages 9-47" which contained the original German Essay. This portion covers pages 13 to 16 of the original.

<sup>2</sup> This expression has been used to describe certain large [empires](#) that were so extensive that there was always at least one part of their territory that was in [daylight](#).

<sup>3</sup> Those princes of the Holy Roman Empire entitled to elect the emperor.

<sup>4</sup> A hereditary title of nobility ranking between a duke and an earl.

<sup>5</sup> arrangement of God.

<sup>6</sup> or famous.



by the Word of God. I can retract nothing, nor do I desire to do so, because it is not safe but dangerous to act against conscience."

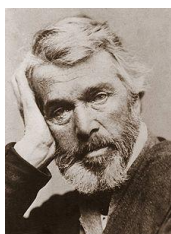
In the crowd which had then developed when he had spoken the last words: "Here I stand," etc., the Spaniards there cursed Luther, but the Germans wanted to protect him. These are the main events when we ask, "What has he said and done?"

The next matter we will now study is:

### **The Judgment or Verdict on Luther's Actions at Worms.**

We distinguish between two classes of judges. We ask:

- 1. How did the world judge Luther?** and
- 2. How did the Christians judge Luther?**



The judgment of the world, that is, the judgment of those who stand outside of the Christian truth, is expressed in Carlyle's words. The Englishman **Carlyle**<sup>7</sup> says of Luther at Worms: "**The bravest heart then living in this world**" - - and of the significance of Luther's appearance at Worms for all mankind: "**The greatest moment in the modern history of men**". And this judgment is justified. Yes, Luther was "the bravest heart," also viewed purely from a secular point of view.



It is true Luther was promised safe conduct. But that was also promised **Hus**, yet Hus was burned at the stake on July 6, 1415 at Constance (Konstanz). At that time they had persuaded Emperor Sigismund, "You are not required to keep your promise (of safe conduct) which you have given to a heretic." And so Hus had to burn at the stake in spite of the promise of safe conduct.

Luther had also made his will. He did not expect to return alive to Wittenberg. In this sense he had said, "Goodbye," to Melanchthon and the students in Wittenberg on April 2. Even the Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, was convinced that here it was a matter of life and death. That is why he had not wanted to summons Luther to Worms, but he wanted to leave the responsibility for the summons to the Emperor. As at the time of Emperor Sigismund at Constance, so also was Emperor Charles V influenced by the words of the Catholics that he did not have to keep his promise (of safe conduct) to Luther. Carlyle's statement about Luther having the "bravest heart" is **legitimate**. And also his other statement about Luther's appearance at Worms being: "The greatest moment in the modern history of men" is **justified**. Under the worldwide dominion of the papacy mankind was occupied by that which distinguishes man from animals, namely, **matters dealing with their own conscience**. The Pope claimed to be the highest authority in the state and in the church. He demanded that everyone in the state and the church bring to him, the Pope as the Vicar of Christ on earth, **the sacrifice of their own conscience**, or as the Pope describes it, "the sacrifice of intellect and conscience"<sup>8</sup>. But Luther, in

<sup>7</sup> **Thomas Carlyle** (1795 – 1881) was a very respected secular historian, but a rationalist.

<sup>8</sup> The Latin is "sacrificium intellectus et conscientiae.." This means that the Christian who obeys the Pope must keep his **spiritual intelligence from functioning** - he must sacrifice it to the Pope. He is told: "You must bring your **intelligence into captivity to the obedience of the Pope and accept the interpretation of the Church.**" In this way the Pope is **ruining the spiritual life** of his people. **According to the Bible whoever refuses to exercise private**

so far as he was convinced by his instruction (in God's Word), **set the conscience free from this slavery** by proving from the Scriptures that the Pope's supremacy was a fraud and pure arrogance, that neither in the state nor in the church did the Pope have the right to make commands, but **every person himself has to give an account of his actions before God**. Hence at Worms Luther led the cause of all mankind, and it has rightly been said that by Luther's Reformation **mankind has again become human**<sup>9</sup>.

But these benefits to the state and civil society are not the main fruits that God had intended by Luther for mankind. Even so, we still do not understand the *courage* which made Luther so resolutely faithful at Worms and for which the world admires him. Carlyle of course thinks that it was *natural courage*, especially German courage. He says: "*It was the shout of the awakening of nations. The quiet German heart, modest, patient of much, had at length got more than it could bear.*" No, it was not that! Luther's heart stood firmly in such a way, also it stood exactly the same at Worms, *that it sought nothing else in this world, but only desired heaven*. To understand **Luther's death-defying courage**, we must go back about thirteen years, direct our gaze away from the distinguished gathering at Worms and in spirit look into a small, dark cell of the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt. There we find Luther on his knees in the dust lying before God. What was it that had led him into the monastery, he who had been outwardly a pious youth before the world, he who was a young scholar before whom stood a brilliant career in the world? **Only one thing! Luther wanted to be certain of the forgiveness of his sins** if God called him by a sudden death to appear before Him - - - as had recently occurred with one of his friends. Again and again before Luther's soul appeared the great Day of Judgment at the end of the world. Luther wanted to be certain that on this Day he will not stand on the left, but the right hand of the Judge of the world. Luther wanted to obtain this **certainty of the grace of God** himself *by a holy life and good works*. Therefore, he said farewell to the world and entered the monastery because according to the teachings of the apostate church of the Pope the monastic life was believed to be especially holy and meritorious<sup>10</sup>.

The result is well-known. By the works in the monastery which he performed with great zeal Luther did not become certain of the grace of God, but in an increasing degree he became more uncertain of it. He learnt in his heart and conscience the truth of the words of Scripture: "**By the deeds of the law there**

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**judgment of the doctrine and practice of the pastors and teachers in the church on the basis of God's Word is in grave danger losing his soul.**

The Pope also demands of his subjects **the sacrifice of their consciences**. In the domain of morals they must accept the regulations of the Church as binding even though their conscience protests against some of them as not commanded by God and against some of them as immoral. **In the sphere of doctrine the same sacrifice is demanded**. According to the Bible it is for **the Christian it is a matter of conscience what he believes**. He accepts a certain teaching because his heart and conscience tells him that **Scripture teaches it** (John 8:31.32). He rejects a certain teaching because his heart and conscience tells him that **Scripture denounces it** (Mat.7:1; Ro.16:17).

"No," says the Pope, "you must not let your conscience bother you about doctrinal questions; those are Lutheran scruples. You may safely put your conscience into my keeping."

"No," declares Antichrist, "I am the lord of the conscience of man; you need not bother your heads about questions of right and wrong, true or false doctrine; I decide that for you; I am your conscience - **Sacrificium Conscientiae!**" The Pope is committing a fearful crime against their people. Training them to forego the right of private judgment, he is causing them to **commit spiritual suicide**.

A man who has **lost the sense of personal responsibility for his belief has lost his soul**. As long as there is spiritual life in a man, his conscience demands a hearing when matters of faith and morals are being decided. The man who suppresses the voice of his own conscience is **keeping his spiritual life from functioning**. It is a frightful condition. It is the conscience that distinguishes man from the brute. **Luther** cries out: "In the conscience God wants to be alone; **there His Word alone shall rule**" (XIX: 832, 1).

<sup>9</sup> What Dr. Pieper means is that it is **the ability of the intellect and conscience that distinguishes man from the animals or the brutes**. Where people are kept from forming conscientious convictions based on the Bible, they are being **dehumanized**. When we hear of a man who is under the complete domination of the Roman pope utter his belief, we do not hear the voice of conviction. It is the voice of a **parrot**. It is a **robot** speaking. So to use the powers of intellect in a God-given way to expound Scripture and to come to a conscience based conviction firmly grounded in Scripture is **enhancing mankind to become Christian human beings**.

<sup>10</sup> A way of earning your salvation.

shall no flesh<sup>11</sup> be justified in his sight" (Rom.3:20). He became certain of the grace of God when God so led him that he turned his gaze away from his own virtue and piety, and away from his own works and **firmly fixed his eyes on the Man who has become our Substitute before God, on the incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ**, who hung on the cross for all mankind and, by the shedding of His blood in which His Godhead participated, has completely reconciled entire mankind with God, as the Scriptures say: "**Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world**" (John 1:29). And again: "**The LORD (Father) hath laid on Him (Christ) the iniquity of us all**" (Is. 53:6). And again: "**God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself**" (2 Cor.5:19). Hence at this moment there are absolutely no works required on our part in order to reconcile God, but only **faith in the perfect work of Christ's reconciliation**, as the Scriptures teach: "**Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law**" (Rom.3:28). And the Scriptures say the following regarding the effect of this Gospel on the conscience: "**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ**" (Rom.5:1). Luther had experienced this teaching of Scripture as the only saving truth in his heart and conscience.



It is this doctrine that his opponents wanted him to retract at Worms, this doctrine of which he knew: **on this doctrine stands my salvation and the salvation of all mankind**. In spite of all the threats made against him he refused to retract this doctrine with the powerful words: "**Here I stand. I can do no other**"<sup>12</sup>. **God help me! Amen.**" From this, and only this, we correctly understand Luther's courage and the importance of the Reformation for the whole of mankind. Luther had confessed at Worms that on which the salvation of every individual person must be based until the last day. This is the real importance of Luther's work for mankind. Indeed, we are **not** to think that Luther was primarily raised up by God to help bring about the secular freedom of mankind. Also what Luther did for the secular freedom we recognize with gratitude. But the **most important thing** is and it still remains: Luther is the **Reformer of the Church**; he confessed the **only saving Gospel message** again before the entire world, he **freed the Church** from the Babylonian captivity.

Concerning the remark whether the judgment of Carlyle about Luther will not be disputed, the essayist replied: Yes, but only by Roman Catholic writers and by those who have a similar mind to Rome. In the latter group are included in our time writers from the Episcopalian Church<sup>13</sup>. Recently someone from this camp wrote: "Both Luther and the Pope were to blame, Luther certainly was somewhat less to blame." This is the consequence of the false teaching of the Episcopalians on the necessity of the "Succession of Bishops". The "liberals" for the greater part stand on Luther's side and they are represented by Carlyle. **Carlyle is rationalist**. He judges like a worldly man who uses his human reason. Before the Reformation everyone had to submit to the Pope. If this did not occur, then those who disobeyed the Pope were placed under the Bann<sup>14</sup>. Princes had to grovel<sup>15</sup> before the Pope, whole countries were inflicted with the interdict<sup>16</sup>. The Pope had successfully established the twofold crown: he ruled in the church and the state. Now it had been even tried, for example, at the three pre-Reformation councils: at Pisa in 1409, at Constance 1414 and at Basel in 1431, to curtail the power of the Pope, but without success. In the year 1517 at the Lateran Council, which came to a conclusion a few months before the publication of Luther's 95 Theses, the all encompassing power of the Pope was confirmed. **By the preaching of the Gospel of God's free grace in Christ Luther had set the conscience free from the Papacy**. All of us, we who by God's grace are Christians, have confessed the Gospel of grace. It is already even expressed clearly in the verse of the children's hymn:

<sup>11</sup> person.

<sup>12</sup> I cannot do anything else.

<sup>13</sup> Church of England.

<sup>14</sup> Excommunicated from the church.

<sup>15</sup> Grovel here means "to lie abjectly on the ground with one's face downwards" before someone.

<sup>16</sup> If a prince refused to obey the Pope his country could be placed under an interdict. This was a form of punishment by the Catholic Church in order to force the prince to submit. No baptisms, marriages, or funerals were to be performed by the priests and the common people were not allowed to obey their prince until the interdict had been lifted.

"Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness  
 My beauty are, my glorious dress;  
 'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,  
 With joy shall I lift up my head." (ALHB 345v1; Synodical Conference Hymnal:371v1).<sup>17</sup>

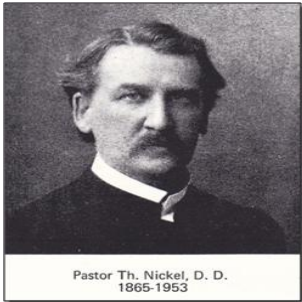
But we can never finish learning this truth and we must always be stimulated anew in our thoughts by this truth and grasp it in our hearts by faith, if it is not to become foreign to us: we are saved **by grace without the works of the law. (Sola gratia).**

(to be continued)

(Apart from the bolded and underlined emphasis, all other emphasis is Dr. Pieper's. Headings have been added, paragraphs divided up and pictures added.)

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### THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD - Part 3.



[From "Der Lutherische Kirchenbote" (The Lutheran Church Messenger) official church paper of our former ELSA in Australia, August 31, 1916, Vol. 43, Number 18, Pages 137-139; Conclusion of Series. By the late Dr. Th. Nickel<sup>18</sup>]

#### AT TIMES GOD PLACES SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES BEFORE CHRISTIANS TO HELP PREVENT THEM FROM SINNING.

Even in other ways God often guides and rules our actions and what we are allowed to do. When the people after the Flood first began to build a tower<sup>19</sup> whose top rose high up into the sky, then the Lord came down and **confused their languages** so that they were not able to complete their project (Gen.11). When

<sup>17</sup> This hymn was originally written by [Nikolaus L. von Zinzendorf](#), 1739 and entitle: "(Christi Blut und Gerechtigkeit". This was translated from German to English by [John Wesley](#) in 1740. It is Wesley's translation of the verse that is used.

The German reads:

" **Christi Blut und Gerechtigkeit,  
 Das ist mein Schmuck und Ehrenkleid.  
 Damit will ich vor Gott bestehen,  
 Wenn ich zum Himmel werd' eingehn."**

#### Translation:

" Christ's blood and righteousness,  
 That is my precious adornment and glorious dress.  
 In this before God I will stand,  
 When I will arrive at the heavenly land."

<sup>18</sup> **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.



According to the **Hebrew usage as well as Biblical Archaeology** the Tower of Babel resembled these Ziggurats or temple towers found in ancient Mesopotamia. The Tower of Babel recorded in Gen.11 was believed still to be in existence at the time of [Alexander the Great](#) who ordered it demolished around 331 BC. He wanted to restore it, but this was prevented by his death.

Pharaoh refused to let the Children of Israel go, then the Lord sent terrible plagues in order to force Pharaoh to obey God and finally **brought about the king's death** in the depths of the Red Sea, when he chased after God's people in order to lead them back to hard work and slavery (Ex.14:23-28). **Even today we have similar experiences.** It has occurred that a person is engaged in some kind of business, but because of all kinds of **insurmountable obstacles** placed in his way he must cease carrying on his business. Again, on another occasion, it is also easy to overcome the greatest obstacles, then if the heart of man agrees to go this way, yet it is still the Lord who alone gives him the direction in which he is to go. Therefore **Gerhardt** rightly sings:

"2. It stands not in the pow'r of man  
To bring success to any plan,  
Or gladness when it endeth:  
God's counsel only prospers sure,  
'Tis He who blessing sendeth."

"5 . How many in their fancy stray  
High over mountain peaks away,  
And ere they know it ever  
Down to the ground they fall, and vain  
Has been their great endeavor."

(Walther's Hymnal 274 verses 2 and 5).

Especially does the Lord watch over His children and **does not allow warnings to be absent when His children are in danger of being seduced by the world or of seeking to follow the lust of the flesh**<sup>20</sup>. Through all the different kinds of obstacles that He sends He wants to keep their feet from the path of sin. Every Christian can experience this if he only pays attention to this. When your life's journey takes you through the way of the world and you want to follow your evil desires, as it sometimes still occurs, then a friend visited you, an urgent business prevented you, a sickness or minor illness hindered you, or even the voice of your conscience has urgently warned you against doing so. Oh, that **we would always still take notice of these hindrances of God which come to us to us from the outside and from the inside** to every temptation to sin! We could have many blessings from this.

At a small place near the city of Hannover a man lay on his deathbed who urgently sent for his former master<sup>21</sup> who many years ago had dismissed him because he had been careless and lived an immoral life. Now he could not die without having once more spoken to him. When this man came to his deathbed, the dying man there took the other man's hand and wept bitterly. His old master (former employer) asked him why he then wept so miserably and if he had something on his mind? Then the dying man there confessed that he was the one his master had dismissed, that his heart had been full of bitter resentment. When he, several weeks after his dismissal, sat in that small place in the inn, there a rich farmer who was also full of hatred against him, his former master, sat down with him and offered him a hundred Taler<sup>22</sup> if he would take revenge on his master and burn his house down. He accepted this proposal with delight. On a Winter's evening he had made his way towards his employer's house. It had been around about half past ten. He moved quietly and secretly to the house in order to avoid being noticed. He waited at first until he thought they were all in a deep sleep. Yes, he had wished that his master would die in the fire. He had not as yet seen the light in the hall. Then he stepped behind the window and saw through it how the wife of his former master, together with the children and maidens, were sitting around the stove and were picking beans. Then the mother had said: "Now let us sing our evening prayer



<sup>20</sup> See 1 John 2:15,16.

<sup>21</sup> employer.

<sup>22</sup> This is a Bohemia, Joachimsthaler, 1525, picturing St Joachim. It was a [silver](#) coin used throughout Germany for a long time. this one contained **27.2 g of silver**, which at today's value of silver is worth about \$15.23. 100 Taler would approximately be \$1523. (*Thal* is German for "valley". A "thaler" is a person or a thing "from the valley". In the 1902 spelling reform, the German spelling was changed from "Thal" and "Thaler" to "Tal" and "Taler".) In the [Holy Roman Empire](#), the Thaler was used as the standard against which the various states' currencies could be valued. In colloquial German, "Thaler" persisted with the meaning of "three Marks" until the 1930s, as when the Mark system was introduced in 1871, one Vereinsthaler was revalued at 3 Marks. It is very difficult to estimate the value of a Taler as its value depended on the year when it was issued and the type of Taler.

and then we will go to bed."At first he couldn't wait to carry out his plan so much so that he was ready to hit the window with his fist. But he then thought deeply about it and this prevented him from carrying out his entire plan. So he then stood still and listened to the singing. But when they started to sing:

"All ungodly people bridle,  
Who the dark with crime infest!  
Should some soul by labors idle  
Seek to hurt us as we rest,  
Turn to naught his wicked plan,  
Hinder all the crimes of man;  
From all terrors else defend us  
Which the devil dares to send us!" (Walther's Hymnal 316v5 Gesangbuch  
920v5),

at first there he stood close behind the window as if he was unable to move, his hands clenched and, his face certainly distorted by anger. Suddenly one of the maids noticed him, looked at him and screamed out loudly. Then fear seized him and he ran away as quickly as he could run. But the words constantly remained in his ears:

**" All ungodly people bridle,  
Who the dark with crime infest!"**

Since that time, he had become a different person. To that farmer who had goaded him and tempted to commit this crime, he replied that **his soul** was worth more to him than a hundred Talers. Since that time he had **diligently kept on attending church**. But he could not die until he had asked his former employer for forgiveness. **He was certain that his Saviour received him in faith by grace**, but he also wanted to have forgiveness from his former employer.

**Hence the Lord directs the actions and lives of all people.** He guides what we think and do. But he also guides everything which confronts us and occurs to us.

### **GOD'S WONDERFUL GUIDANCE AND WORK**

Everything comes from God, when things go well and when disasters occur, life and death, riches and poverty. All these things --- that **Joseph** was sold into slavery in Egypt, that he was placed by Potiphar in charge of his entire household, that after the slanderous accusation of Potiphar's wife, Joseph was thrown into prison, that he there explained the dreams of the wine taster and chief baker, that Pharaoh had those amazing dreams, that Joseph was rescued from prison and made the prime minister and provider of Egypt, that then throughout Egypt came the seven fruitful years followed by seven years of famine --- occurred **according to God's wonderful guidance, counsel and work**. We see something similar happened to **Job**. His prosperity and good times changed to severe pain and trials, but this changed again to prosperity and blessing, also without Job himself having to do even the least to bring this about.

**Certainly our prosperity as well as our adversity is very often a result of our own conduct.** That **Jacob** had to flee before his brother Esau had its **basis** in this that he had obtained for himself the blessing (of the birthright), which certainly belonged to him and was, according to God's counsel and will intended to be his, **in a deceitful way**. That **Moses** had to flee from Pharaoh occurred for this reason that he **killed the Egyptian** who had cruelly mistreated an Israelite. Whoever over time has **saved money**, has money for financial emergencies, and whoever **works diligently** will not lack for bread, nevertheless **it is God who rules over all things**, who takes in His hand our self-inflicted disaster and directs it according to His counsel and will, and it is God who sends us prosperity who places work in our hands.

Whoever our parents are to be, when and where we are to be born, God has determined all that. That we have grown up among certain relatives, have enjoyed exactly this or that upbringing, all this God has

guided and arranged. Whatever befalls us, whether it is joy or sorrow, good or evil days, prosperity or adversity, that God has so controlled. He rules with complete authority. **He directs all things according to His counsel, He rules over everything.** No sparrow falls from the roof of a building and no hair falls from our head without His will, for He guards and watches over us, always caring for us so that we lack nothing (that is for our good).

Especially do we recognize God's wonderful rule in this that **He defends us against all danger, and guards and protects us from all evil**<sup>23</sup>. That we believe, that we confess, that we firmly regard as true, that we build on and trust in, in that we comfort ourselves in all trouble and danger, because God tells us and experience confirms it for us. Hence the LORD says: "**Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour**" (Is.43:1-3). The Lord will **defend** us from all danger, He will **guard** and **protect** us from all evil. No evil shall befall us, no plague shall come near our dwelling<sup>24</sup>. If a thousand shall fall at our side<sup>25</sup> and ten thousand at our right hand, yet it (danger) shall not come near us<sup>26</sup>. For the Lord has given His angels charge over us that they shall **protect us in all our ways**<sup>27</sup>, that they shall bear us up in their hands so that we shall not dash our feet against a stone<sup>28</sup>.

How did the Israelites fare when they were pursued by the Pharaoh and they saw the Red Sea in front of them and their enemies behind them? The LORD divided the depths of the waters of the Red Sea and led them through on dry ground so that their feet did not even get wet, but the Egyptians followed them and perished. Then the **friends of Daniel** were thrown into the fiery furnace, the fire had been heated so much more (seven times greater), that it had previously consumed everything. But the angel of the Lord<sup>29</sup> was with them so that not even a hair of their head was singed. Then faithful Daniel was thrown into the lion's den, and yet no harm came to him for the LORD was with him and protected him.

Thus the LORD carries out His promise and proves that it is true: **He protects us from all danger and preserves us from all evil**<sup>30</sup>. Therefore the Church sings:

"Praise to the Lord, Who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,  
Who, as on wings of an eagle uplifteth, sustaineth." (ALHB 450v2).

And again we sing:

" We praise, we worship Thee, we trust,  
And give Thee thanks forever:  
O Father, that Thy rule is just,  
And wise and changes never:  
*Thy boundless power o'er all things reigns,  
Done is whate'er Thy will ordains:*

*Well for us that Thou rulest*<sup>31</sup>." (Walther Hymnal 1v2; ALHB 163v2).

Yes, in how many troubles has the gracious God not covered us with His wings<sup>32</sup>? Look at how the LORD rescued Lot from Sodom and Gomorrah, then He destroyed the cities. Look at how the LORD seized the

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<sup>23</sup> Nickel is using the words of Luther's explanation to the First Article of the Apostles Creed in the Small Catechism.

<sup>24</sup> Ps.91:10.

<sup>25</sup> Overcome by the attacks of the devil.

<sup>26</sup> Ps.91:7. **Kretzmann**: "Not be able to harm those who cling to the protection of the Lord in firm faith."

<sup>27</sup> Ps.91:11. **Kretzmann** correctly explains "in all thy ways " as: "As long as the believers walk on the ways of God's will and good pleasure."

<sup>28</sup> Ps.91:12.

<sup>29</sup> holy angel.

<sup>30</sup> A true Biblical evil is anything which may cause us to lose our salvation.

<sup>31</sup> The last three lines have been added to Nickel's quote because of the beautiful truths they contain.

<sup>32</sup> Or "protected us."



hand of Peter who had started to sink into the water, when he cried: "**Lord, save me.**" (Mat.14:30). Look at how He stood between His people and the Egyptians as they pursued the Israelites. In the same way the LORD also protects us in every danger; He reaches out to us His saving hand when we stumble and fall; He protects us against all our enemies and cares for us so that no-one is able to hurt one hair of our head

Who has not experienced this! Look at how many dangers in which we have been where only a hair was between us and death; then the LORD protected us. He who keeps (guards, protects) Israel does not slumber nor sleep<sup>33</sup>. His eyes do not close when evening comes upon us, because He remains wide-awake eternally and is like a Good Shepherd who also in the darkness of night watches over His flock. Yes, He guards and watches over everything; everything is under the control of His power.

[Headings, bolded emphasis and extra paragraphs have been added. BLW]

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## LECTURES ON THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH THE TRUE VISIBLE CHURCH OF GOD ON EARTH by Dr. F. Pieper.<sup>34</sup>

### EIGHTH LECTURE: EXPOSITION OF SCRIPTURE MUST AGREE WITH THE ORIGINAL TEXT

(Conclusion of this Lecture)



Our Thesis reads:

**“The Evangelical Lutheran Church recognises only the literal sense as the true meaning.” [C]**

#### LITERAL SENSE OF SCRIPTURE.

What do we understand by the literal (intended) sense or the *sensus literalis* (the intended sense), as our theologians express it? **This is the sense which has been uttered by the Holy Spirit through the inspired words and also is contained in the words which have been expressed.** If one declares that there is still another meaning of Scripture than the sense which occurs in the words of the expression<sup>35</sup>, then the guessing starts, then the floodgates and the door are opened to everyone's opinion about the text, then everyone can read from Scripture what he wants. **Therefore our Church says: If you want to find the meaning of the Holy Spirit, God's meaning, then you must pay attention to that which lies expressed in the literal (intended) sense of Scripture, in the words which have been given by inspiration of the Holy Ghost.**

Let us take as an example the first verse in Holy Scripture: **“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”**<sup>36</sup> In these words the creation of the world by God is stated and nothing more. Alongside this some claim to have discovered in this text yet another revelation. For example, the **Rabbis**<sup>37</sup> have said that here is revealed that the world will last for 6000 years. How do they then come to this

<sup>33</sup> Ps.121:4.

<sup>34</sup> **Dr. F. Pieper** (1852- 1931) delivered these lectures to the entire student body of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in the so-called “Lutherstunden” or **Luther Hours**. He followed a tradition started by Dr. Walther. On September 4, 1885 **Dr. Walther** stated: “We call these Friday evening lectures, which form, as it were, the conclusion of the week’s instruction, ‘Luther Hours,’ chiefly because in these lectures I let our beloved father Luther, the God-appointed Reformer and the common teacher of our church, speak to you.” (Walther, “Law and Gospel,” p. 344). 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.

<sup>35</sup> This is really the evil Open Questions principle in action.

<sup>36</sup> Gen.1:1.

<sup>37</sup> Teachers of the orthodox Jews.

conclusion? They say that if a person **does not remain firmly with the literal sense**, but pays attention to the **hidden** meaning, then one can show that the world will exist for 6000 years. In other words they say that the Hebrew letter **א** (**aleph**) occurs six times in the first verse of Genesis: “**אֵת שָׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:**” **בְּרָא שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים** (Bere'sit bara' \_'elohim \_'et hassamayim we'\_et ha'\_ares) ” and because **א** (**aleph**) with a line above it has the numerical value of a thousand, then they read from the first verse of the Bible that the world will stand for 6000 years. If such interpretation is permitted, then I can demonstrate anything from Scripture, **then the entire Holy Scriptures become unreliable (untrustworthy) to me.** Therefore our church confesses: “**Only the literal sense is the true sense of Scripture.**”

### **HOLY SPIRIT INTENDED SENSE OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE SHOWN BY SCRIPTURE ITSELF.**

In certain passages of Scripture there is also a *sensus rerum* (rare sense, BLW) or *mysticus* (Latin for mystical, spiritual, symbolical, hidden, allegorical meaning, BLW) sense, but the meaning is to be regarded only then as the **true sense of Holy Scripture when the words of Scripture reveal this sense to us.** Let us recall a well known example: In Exodus 12:46 in regard to the Passover Lamb the Israelites were commanded: “**You shall not break any bones of it**”<sup>38</sup>. This is the **literal sense** which also was clear to the Israelites at the time of the Old Testament, which stated that the Passover Lamb was not to be cut into pieces. But now we learn from other words of Holy Scripture that through this event in the Old Testament, something was already being *pictured off* in advance, namely, this, **that no bones of Christ on the cross should be broken.** We learn this from John 19:36<sup>39</sup>. However, if we did not have these definite words of Holy Scripture, then no one could know what this event in the Old Testament meant mystically (symbolically). **In a nutshell, we must have a text of Scripture for every teaching which we proclaim as a doctrine of Holy Scripture in which the meaning of the doctrine is expressed in the very words.** Other than this we dare not declare any other doctrine as being a teaching of the Word of God.

The **Apology** (of the Augsburg Confession) confirms this: "Also in such a way do the opponents refer to the *juge sacrificium*, that is, the *daily sacrifice*, as though the Mass were the sacrifice of the New Testament. If the matter could be settled with *allegories*, **everybody would find allegories serviceable to him.** But all intelligent persons know that in such very important matters before God **we must have the sure and clear Word of God**, and we must not by force adduce dark and irrelevant passages; such uncertain interpretations are not valid before God's judgment." (Art. XXIV, 35.)<sup>40</sup>

Furthermore **Luther** states: “As I have elsewhere and have often admonished and warned, so I will again warn and once more admonish that the Christian teacher should **apply the greatest diligence to find the sense** (as it is commonly called) which the letter indicates. This alone constitutes the whole essence of faith and Christian theology, and in tribulation and trial it alone endures and

<sup>38</sup> **KJV:** " In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof" (Ex.12:46). **Kretzmann:** "The fact that no bone was broken pointed forward to Christ, John 19:36."

<sup>39</sup> John 19:36, "**For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.**" **Kretzmann:** "The bones of Jesus were not broken because He is the true Lamb of God, the Passover Lamb, of whom all the lambs that were slaughtered on that festival of old were but types and figures, Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12." See Stoeckhardt's **Passion Sermons** (English, Pages 173- 176).

<sup>40</sup> See Walther **True Visible Church** translated by Dr. J.T. Mueller, page72. The **Triglotta** translates the Latin as follows: "They cite also the daily sacrifice (cf. Ex. 29, 38f.; Dan. 8, 11f.; 12, 11), that, just as in the Law there was a daily sacrifice so the Mass ought to be a daily sacrifice of the New Testament. The adversaries have managed well if we permit ourselves to be overcome by allegories. It is evident, however, that allegories do not produce firm proofs [that in matters so highly important before God **we must have a sure and clear word of God**, and not introduce by force obscure and foreign passages; such uncertain explanations do not stand the test of God's judgment]."[Page 397].

overcomes and takes captive the gates of hell together with sin and death, to the praise and glory of God. But the *hidden figurative sense* (which in Greek is called *allegorical*, that is, a *spiritual* meaning which the word does not have) is **uncertain and of no value to strengthen faith**; it is altogether unreliable as often it **rests upon human arbitrariness and delusion**, so that if anyone depends on it, he leans upon an Egyptian staff of reed (Ezek. 29:6)<sup>41</sup>. “ (*Exposition of Deuteronomy* [1525], III, 2047 f.; SL III, 1389 f.)<sup>42</sup>

If we do not want to introduce human thoughts into Scripture, then we must furthermore observe this principle that the **literal (intended) sense is only one**.

Our thesis reads: “**The Evangelical Lutheran Church maintains that there is but one literal sense**<sup>43</sup>.” [D].

### **THERE IS ONLY ONE HOLY SPIRIT INTENDED SENSE OF EACH VERSE OF SCRIPTURE**

Outside of their relationship to their context most words have several meanings; however, **as soon as the words exist in a definite context, they always have only one single meaning**. If the words of Holy Scripture had a variety of different meanings when used in regard to a specific text, then they would have

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<sup>41</sup> **Kretzmann** comments on Ezek.29:6: "The latter's (the people of the Kingdom of Judah) dependence upon Egypt as a trusted ally **proving hurtful to the Lord's people instead of beneficial**; for not only was the might of Egypt unequal to the task of protecting Judah against the mighty Eastern empires, but the **idolatry** spread by the Egyptians was a downright curse to the people of the Lord." When they relied on Egypt's help instead of repenting and trusting in the Lord, disaster overcame them. Hence this is an expression which means that **such an action is unreliable and results in disaster**.

<sup>42</sup> [The following is not included in Pieper's lectures, but it is **contained in Walther's book**. I am including it because of the **excellent points** he makes, BLW]

**Pfeiffer** (1640-1698): "The literal sense is **that which the words have in their proper and original meaning**, although this at times does not express what the speaker has in mind. Thus the statement: 'Herod is a fox' means in its **literal sense**: 'Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee, is a howling four-footed beast.' But **the proper so-called literal sense is that which by the inspired words the Holy Spirit really means to convey**. Thus the statement: 'Herod is a fox' means according to its intended sense: 'Herod is like a fox in his cunning and malice.' . . . Hence the literal sense is not always and everywhere the original meaning of the words, that is, the sense which the words have in their proper meaning. The original meaning of the words is not always that intended by the Holy Spirit, which commonly we call the literal sense. Here namely we must not only regard the meaning, but also the **usage of the words... Every passage of Holy Scripture has a literal sense; that is, every one has a definite meaning, which the Holy Spirit really intended and which is the literal sense no matter whether the words are to be taken properly or figuratively**. We prove this by assuming that it would be absurd for the Holy Spirit to use words without intending to express something by them or without meaning. No one of a sound mind would express sounds without sense....

"Only the literal sense is fit for proof; that is, only the literal sense of Scripture, if it is rightly taken from it, can supply firm, effective, and convincing proof.... The **mystic or spiritual meaning** of Holy Scripture is, to speak accurately, **either the literal sense or it is no sense at all**; that is, it is either so constituted that it coincides with the literal sense, namely, wherever the suggested spiritual mystery is expressed by the words, or it cannot at all be called the meaning of Holy Scripture, as, for example, where it is not expressed....

"Thus the passage: 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn' (Deut. 25:4) is **applied by Paul figuratively** in 1 Cor. 9:9 to the **teachers of the church**, whose support must not be denied them. This application of Paul in the **latter passage is the literal sense of Holy Scripture itself**. But in the passage used by Moses **this figurative meaning is not the literal sense**, but an application of a commandment which is revealed not here, but elsewhere by the Holy Spirit." (*Thesaur. herm.*, chap. III, pars. 3, 4, can. 1, 6, 9, 10, pp. 112 if.) ." (Walther **True Visible Church** translated by Dr. J.T. Mueller, pages 73 ff.).

<sup>43</sup> Walther **True Visible Church** translated by Dr. J.T. Mueller, page 73, 74.

absolutely no sense at all for us, because there is no *specific* meaning. If you put a question to the children when catechising them, and this question can have a double or triple meaning, then your questioning is faulty, for the child does not know what it should actually answer. It is just as good as if you had not even asked the question. To sum up, **all words which are to be used for communication so that we understand the sense, also in ordinary business, must have *one* definite meaning.** If someone uses words which have several meanings, then there are **two causes**: either the **words have been used carelessly**, and that often takes place when out of carelessness we express ourselves ambiguously; or on the other hand there is **deceit being concealed**: such a person speaks ambiguously with the intention of deceiving someone.



As you know this was the way in which the **Delphic oracle**<sup>44</sup> spoke. She intentionally gave such information by which **one could understand it in different ways** in order to protect herself in every case. Croesus, the king of Lydia, when he wanted to march against the Persians, consulted the Oracle in regard to the advisability of such a military expedition. The Oracle answered: “If you cross the Halys<sup>45</sup>, you will destroy a great empire.” Croesus crossed the Halys, made war on the Persians and was totally defeated. When he afterwards complained to the Delphic Oracle, he was given the reply: “We meant that you would destroy *your* kingdom, not the kingdom of the *Persians*.”

### **DOUBLE TALK, AMBIGUOUS LANGUAGE, EVIL "OPEN QUESTIONS" BY THEOLOGIAN'S IN SCRIPTURAL MATTERS FROM SATAN**

This is an example of words which have more than one meaning. **Such ambiguous speech is not to be sought in Scripture, for ambiguous language cannot be found in the Holy Scriptures either due to carelessness or due to deceit. The Words of the Holy Scriptures are the Words of the Holy Spirit.** Therefore we adhere firmly with our Church to the following: **There is only *one* literal (intended) sense.**

The Reformed have asserted that the words: “Eat” and “Drink” in the words of the Institution of the Holy Supper have a **twofold meaning**. They claim that the word “eat” **on the one hand** means only to “eat” the bread and then **on the other hand** they claim it also means “to believe” in the body of Christ which, they claim, is absent (from the Sacrament), but found only in heaven. That is foolishness! In the words of Scripture, “**Take and eat,**” the word “eat” **has only *one* meaning**, namely, to eat with one’s mouth. The Lord required His disciples **to eat with their mouths** when He gave them the bread and said: “**This is My body which is given for you.**” Also in the Words of Institution one is required to **believe**, but not in the word “eat,” but in the words: “**which is given for you,**” and in the words: “**this do in remembrance of Me.**” If there is not only *one* meaning contained here, then there is *no* meaning *at all*.

<sup>44</sup> In Greek mythology the oracle at Delphi was a priestess who supposedly delivered messages from Apollo to those who sought advice; the messages were **usually obscure or ambiguous**. The Delphic [oracle](#) was established in the 8th century BC

<sup>45</sup> The Halys was a river that divided the empires of the Medes and the Lydians; it was the boundary of nearly the whole of southern Asia minor from the Mediterranean in the neighbourhood of Cyprus to the Black Sea; he needed to cross this river to attack the Persians,

**Luther** emphasises this forcefully that the words of Scripture always have only *one* intended sense, for example: “The Holy Spirit is the simplest Writer and Speaker in heaven and earth; therefore His words *can have no more than one very simple meaning*, which we call the written (*schriftlich*) or literal sense of the language. But that the *things* signified simply by His simple words should signify something more and another thing, so that one thing should signify the other, *there words stop* and languages cease. That indeed all other things do, which are not named in Scripture, since all are the works of God, and the creatures are merely God’s *living* signs and words, as Augustine and all teachers say. ***But for this reason we must not say that Scripture or God’s Word has more than one sense.*** A painted picture represents a living man without words or writing. But that does not mean that you may say *the word ‘picture’* has two meanings, namely, a literal sense which signifies the picture, and a figurative one which *signifies the living person*. Hence, although the *things* which Scripture describes may signify something more, ***Scripture must not be said to have a twofold sense, but only the one which the words express.*** This sense the words retain and then grant the enthusiasts<sup>46</sup> a furlough to hunt and search out the manifold interpretations of the suggested *things*. But they should take care and not go astray nor climb too high, as do the hunters of mountain goats; that also happened to Origen. It is much surer and safer to ***adhere to the words and their simple sense***; there is the true pasture and home of all spirits.” (*Reply to the Super Christian Book of Emser*, XVIII, 1602 f.; SL XVIII, 1307 f.)

[Walther **True Visible Church** translated by Dr. J.T. Mueller, page 74.]

[Delivered by F. Pieper on 17 Jan., 1890]

[Only the italics are Pieper’s. Other emphasis has been added. All Bible texts have been bolded for emphasis. Larger paragraphs have been broken down into shorter ones.]

(To be Continued.)

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**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, pages 53- 56.)

**58. What must a pastor do in order to work against such contempt for the Lord's Supper**

a.) Above everything else, the congregation is to be **instructed**:

- (1) that it is God's will to partake of the Lord's Supper (often).
- (2) he must extol the great blessings of partaking of the Lord's Supper (worthily and often).
- (3) he must show them how necessary such strengthening of faith is (especially in these evil days).

b.) **Lovingly encourage** and appeal to them; and in particularly

- (1) do not act **legalistically**, do not use force to pressure them to come to the Lord's Supper, do not place before them as if their attendance at the Lord's Supper were a (good) work on their part.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> fanatics.

<sup>47</sup> **Triglotta** (page 763, Large Catechism):

"42] Now, it is true, as we have said, that no one should by any means be coerced or compelled, lest we institute a new murdering of souls. Nevertheless, it must be known that such people as deprive themselves of, and withdraw from, the Sacrament so long a time are not to be considered Christians. For Christ has not instituted it to be treated as a show, but has commanded His Christians to eat and drink it, and thereby remember Him.

43] And, indeed, those who are true Christians and esteem the Sacrament precious and holy will urge and impel themselves unto it. Yet that the simple-minded and the weak who also would like to be Christians be the more incited to consider the cause and need which ought to impel them, we will treat somewhat of this point.

44] For as in other matters pertaining to faith, love, and patience, it is not enough to teach and instruct only, but there is need also of daily exhortation, so here also there is need of continuing to preach that men may not become weary and disgusted, since we know and feel how the devil always opposes this and every Christian exercise, and drives and deters there from as much as he can.

(2) but **act evangelically**.

**Note:** The pastor must not also require "a higher degree of faith" for the worthy partakers of the Lord's Supper and must not force on them "blessed feelings" which the communicant **must** have.

c.) **warn** them beforehand of the sin of despising the Sacrament.

**Note (a):** All this is to be done

(1) **Publicly**, through the sermon. Maundy Thursday. Confessional Address.

(2) **Privately**. In this way he seeks, as a medical doctor, to investigate the reason for the spiritual illness through friendly conversation, to teach the weak Biblical knowledge, to arouse spiritual hunger for the Sacrament to the fullest extent and to strongly encourage those who are suffering trials.

**Note (b):** Also the false teachings of the Reformed and their objections are to be refuted.

**Note (c):** Especially here the pastors is to pay attention to the youth.

**Note (d):** The pastor himself must lead the way with a good example.

**Note (e):** Those with whom all admonition is fruitless are finally to be taken into church discipline.

### **59. What is to move a person to go to the Lord's Supper regularly.**

(a) **God's Command.** "This do." He does not say: "This leave alone." His command is an invitation to the Table of Grace and there it is not difficult to do. He is to come for God's sake.

(b) **God's Promise:** I want to refresh you with the great benefit and the blessing of the Sacrament.

(c) **Our need.** Who does not gladly want to get rid of a difficult weight or be healed of an illness. For our own sake.

(d) **Confession of Faith.** If a person otherwise had no need for the Sacrament he should attend regularly the Sacrament at least still thereby to confess his faith publicly.

(e) We are to go to the Sacrament regularly also in order to give others a **good example**. For the sake of our neighbour.<sup>48</sup>

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45] And we have, in the first place, the clear text in the very words of Christ: *Do this in remembrance of Me*. These are bidding and commanding words by which all who would be Christians are enjoined to partake of this Sacrament. Therefore, whoever would be a disciple of Christ, with whom He here speaks, must also consider and observe this, not from compulsion, as being forced by men, but in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to please Him."

<sup>48</sup> Walther "**Brosamen**" (Pages 115, 116) ["**From the Master's Table**" Translation by Joel Basely, Pages 60,61):

"That apostle, my friends, demands of all communicants that by their receiving the Lord's Supper they are also '**proclaiming**' the **LORD's death**, so he is, in the first place, obviously demanding that they want to celebrate this holy Supper, though above all **for their own sakes**, yet, also, **for the sake of their neighbours**, both among their brothers and those in the world, that they should, indeed, be preaching and commending to them all, in this way, **the atoning death of the LORD**. The altar at which the holy Lord's Supper is celebrated should, therefore, **be to the laity like their pulpit, to proclaim the virtues of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light**. If the preacher has ended his sermon in the pulpit, then from among those who have listened in the believing congregation those communing must now step up and through the public reception of the holy Lord's Supper, **proclaim by their act before the whole world the crucified Christ**, who had been preached in Words, and they thereby prove that they are the Church. That is, if Christ had only instituted the office of preaching and not also the holy Sacrament then no one could know where they could, then, find the Church or the congregation of believers to join. For people also hear preaching who do not want to be believers and to whom the crucified Christ is still foolishness and offensive. So that is why those who through the preaching of the Gospel have come to faith in Christ, who already through Baptism have publicly departed from the world, have entered into the Church of believers and have sworn to Christ eternal faithfulness, and **now must also appear, time and time again, at the altar of the LORD, thereby giving witness that they still keep in mind their covenant and are disciples of the crucified One, remaining true to Him, and so, here is the Church**.

**60. Often.** We are to partake of the Lord's Supper often and be diligent in our use of this Sacrament.<sup>49</sup>  
1 Cor.11:26, "**For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come.**"<sup>50</sup>

**Note (a):** In this way the Lord's Supper is distinguished from Baptism.

**Note (b):** We should yearn for the Lord's Supper as a bride yearns for her bridegroom, as a deer craves for fresh water.

*"Ah, how hungers all my spirit  
For the love I do not merit!  
Oft have I, with sighs fast thronging,  
Thought upon this food with longing,  
In the battle well-nigh worsted,  
For this cup of life have thirsted,  
For the Friend who here invites us  
And to God Himself unites us."* (Walther Hymnal 210v4; ALHB 314v3).

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**How gladly we must, therefore, come eagerly to the holy Lord's Supper!** How we must also, then, especially in our age of unbelief let that motivate us to come often to the table of the LORD, not only to proclaim the death of the LORD to our brothers, but also to the unbelieving world and **thus to let the world know that the Church of the crucified One has not yet disappeared**, not yet died out, not yet been defeated, but that there are yet **hearts that will always believe in Him, who find in Him their salvation and love Him as their highest good!** So the thoughts with which we rush to the altar should be as those expressed by a recent poet:

*"If all depart, unfaithful  
Yet steadfast let me be,  
That gratitude in this world  
May never die to Thee."*

Yet, my friends, when the apostle writes in our text: "**As often as you eat this bread and drink of this cup, you shall proclaim the LORD's death until He comes,**" when he, thus, at the same time, declares that the reception of the LORD's Supper is a **congregational act of faith and a congregational confession of faith**, so he demands of us and of others, thereby, that **we must only celebrate the holy LORD's Supper with those who confess with us the one and the same faith.** Were the holy Supper only instituted for the goal of our orally eating the true body of Christ and orally drinking his true blood then we could and we should certainly enjoy it altogether wherever the same is rightly administered according to Christ's institution. But when Paul says that through it we "**proclaim the LORD's death until He comes,**" that means **we must confess.** So it would obviously be **against Christ's will if we would celebrate it where our confession of faith is denied.**

Wherever it is celebrated, the **holy LORD's Supper is the banner and flag of the church or congregation in the midst of which it is received.** As one publicly enlists in the army to whose flag he pledges allegiance and finds peace and a rallying point in war around that flag, so every Christian enlists in his congregation, in whose midst and in whose fellowship he enjoys sharing holy Communion. **Now if the congregation confesses the true faith, so the communicant also confesses that same faith by appearing at her altar with her. But if the congregation confesses a false faith, so the communicant also confesses her false faith through his partaking of her celebration of Communion, and publicly gives evidence by his actions that he denies the true faith.**" (bolded emphasis added).

Walther **Epistle Sermons** (German: Page 176; Donald Heck translation: page 182):

"Therefore, how gladly we should be to be diligent in going to Holy Communion! How this very age of unbelief should drive us to come to the Lord's Table often, preach the Lord's death not only to our brethren but also to the unbelieving world, and let them know that the Church of the Crucified has not yet disappeared, nor died out, nor gone under, but that there still are those who believe in Him, find their salvation in Him, and love Him as their highest good!"

<sup>49</sup> See Triglotta page 763 in Footnote 35.

<sup>50</sup> **Dr. J. H. C. Fritz** has an excellent tract entitled, "Why Should a Christian Partake of the Lord's Supper Frequently."  
**Dr. P.E. Kretzmann** has an excellent booklet entitled, "This Do Ye Often."

**Note (c):** Will a bride say: "I first saw my bridegroom a quarter of a year ago; I no longer need to see him again today?"

**Note (d):** We are to get into the regular practice of attending the Lord's Supper, but not in such a way that it becomes a mere **habit**.

**Note (e):** Those who are troubled and afflicted, those who feel their sins and God's wrath will come to the Lord's Supper often.

**Note (f):** God has not prescribed how often one should go to the Lord's Supper, as He did with the Passover, Num 9:5<sup>51</sup>. Therefore we are also not to make laws about this<sup>52</sup>.

**Note (g):** Luther's expression: "One time or four in a year"<sup>53</sup> means one times four or four times in number. One should not fall behind the general practice.

**Note (h):** The frequent attendance at the Lord's Supper still does not make a person a Christian.

**Note (i): History:**

(1) At the time of the Apostles because of many trials Christians had to endure they went to the Sacrament daily<sup>54</sup>.

(2) In the First Century they went to the Sacrament several times each week.

(3) Luther celebrated it about every fourteen days<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> Num.9:5, "**And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even** (in the evening) **in the Wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.**"

<sup>52</sup> **Triglotta** (Preface to Small Catechism, Page539):

"For if he believed that he had so much that is evil, and needed so much that is good, **he would not thus neglect the Sacrament**, by which such evil is remedied and so much good is bestowed. Neither will it be necessary to force him to the Sacrament by any law, but he will come running and racing of his own accord, will force himself and urge you that you must give him the Sacrament.

24] Hence, **you must not make any law in this matter**, as the Pope does. **Only set forth clearly the benefit and harm, the need and use, the danger and the blessing, connected with this Sacrament, and the people will come of themselves without your compulsion.** But if they do not come, let them go and tell them that such belong to the devil as do not regard nor feel their great need and the gracious help of God. 25] But if you do not urge this, **or make a law** or a bane of it, **it is your fault if they despise the Sacrament.** How could they be otherwise than slothful if you sleep and are silent? 26] Therefore look to it, ye pastors and preachers. **Our office is now become a different thing from what it was under the Pope; it is now become serious and salutary.** Accordingly, it now involves much more trouble and labour, danger and trials, 27] and, in addition thereto, little reward and gratitude in the world. **But Christ Himself will be our reward if we labour faithfully.** To this end may the Father of all grace help us, to whom be praise and thanks forever through Christ, our Lord! Amen

**Martin Luther** ("Receiving Both Kinds in the Sacrament," Luther's Works, Vol. 36 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), pp. 256-57. ): "I wish, and it ought to be so, that no mass (Sacrament, BLW) at all would be celebrated except at such times as the people were present who really desired the sacrament and asked for it, and that this would be only once a week or once a month. **For the Sacrament should never be celebrated except at the instigation and request of hungry souls, never because of duty, endowment, custom, ordinance, or habit.**"

<sup>53</sup> Jacobs translates, "**Ein mal oder vier im Jahr**," from the Preface to the Small Catechism: "(At least) three or four times during the year." (Vol. I, 362). **Triglotta:** "(At least) some four times a year" (537).

**David Webber** states: "As a matter of principle, Luther refuses to get specific in telling believers how often they should receive the Lord's Supper. If pressed he would probably say, no more than 'daily,' and no less than 'around four times a year,' but he would not go beyond that." (Communion Frequency in the Lutheran Confessions and in the Lutheran Church, Webber, p.27).

<sup>54</sup> Walther **Gnadenjahr** (Page 209); **Year of Grace** (Donald Heck translation Page127):

"The Holy Supper has always been esteemed by the true Church as a great, precious, sacred thing.

The first Christians **celebrated it almost daily, especially during periods of persecution**, in order to be **ready every day for death**; thus they showed an inner love, rich and poor, great and humble gave each other the kiss of peace as brethren. The Holy Supper was viewed as the most glorious divine arsenal in which invincible weapons were received for the spiritual battle; it was looked on as the best travelling expense money for the journey into the dark valley of death."

<sup>55</sup> **Webber** (Ibid, p. 29): "It is reported of Luther, during the time of his sojourn at Coburg Castle in 1530, 'that he went to the Lord's Table every fortnight; and that he followed up this custom also in after years.' Dietrich reports that 'it was Luther's practice always that he generally went to the sacrament every 14 days or at least every 3 weeks and desired absolution beforehand...' [ Taken from Veit Dietrich, Trostsprüche (1548) (quoted in D. Martin Luthers



(4) The Council of Trent decided once a year, at Easter.

(5) In the Episcopal Church (here in Australian it is the Church of England, BLW) the Lord's Supper nowadays is celebrated sometimes daily.

**Note (j):** Examination: How often do you go? Der Lutheraner (The Lutheran) (Vol. 91, p.83).

**61. The Worthy.** The question, "Who is worthy to partake of the Lord's Supper?" a person must ask himself before he goes to the Lord's Supper. **True worthiness does not consist in anything in ourselves<sup>56</sup>, it does not consist**

(a) in our own works. Not even one of us is worthy in himself to partake of the Lord's Supper.

(b) in our experience, wealth, wisdom.

(c) in our own preparation for the Lord's Supper. We cannot make ourselves worthy.

(d) in our own feeling of devotion.

(e) in our fasting and self restraint.

(f) in our humble bearing.

(g) in respectable clothes.

**Note (a):** Such preparation is an excellent but outward training.<sup>57</sup>

**Note (b):** A distinction must be made between a worthy communicant and whether one is worthy of the Lord's Supper<sup>58</sup>. We are never worthy (or deserving) of it.

Since true worthiness comes *from above* and since **only Christ's merit<sup>59</sup>** can make us truly worthy<sup>60</sup>, then those are truly worthy guests at the table of the Lord who

(a) from the heart believe in Jesus, for only faith (brought about by the Holy Spirit in the Gospel, BLW) apprehends (grasps hold of) Christ's merit. If you believe that from the bottom of your heart --- then you are truly well prepared to partake of the Lord's Supper.

*"If thy heart this truth professes  
And thy mouth thy sin confesses,  
His dear guest thou here shalt be,  
And Christ Himself shall banquet thee."*

(Walther Hymnal 205v9; Synodical Conference Hymn Book (1941) 311v8.)

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Werke [Weimarer Ausgabe] 48:326) (translated by Mark DeGarmeaux). See also Hans Preuss, "Luther as Communicant," p. 198. ]

<sup>56</sup> *"Unworthy though I am, O Savior,*

*Because I have a sinful heart,*

*Yet Thou Thy lamb wilt banish never,*

*For Thou my faithful Shepherd art:*

*Lord, may Thy body and Thy blood Lord,*

*Be for my soul the highest good!"* (Walther's Hymnal 202v3

<sup>57</sup> Triglotta Page 557, Small Catechism; Lord's Supper.

<sup>58</sup> **Dr. Drewes'** explanation of Luther's Small Catechism states that "**no-one is deserving of the Lord's Supper**" (P.86). Then he points out that only he is truly worthy (here meaning "**well prepared**") "who has faith in these words: 'Given and shed for you for the remission of sins.'" He then quotes Luther: "But he that does not believe these words, or doubts is unworthy and unprepared; for the words: 'for you,' require all hearts to believe." (Pages 86 and 87).

<sup>59</sup> The forgiveness of sins, life and salvation earned for the whole world by Christ's atoning sacrifice on Calvary and which is ours solely and alone by faith in Christ and this faith is brought about in us by the Holy Spirit working through the Gospel.

<sup>60</sup> *"Naught have I, O Christ, to offer,*

*Naught but Thee, my highest Good.*

*Naught have I, O Lord, to proffer*

*But Thy crimson-colored blood.*

*Thy death on the cross hath Death wholly defeated*

*And thereby my righteousness fully completed;*

*Salvation's white raiments I there did obtain,*

*And in them in glory with Thee I shall reign."*

(Walther Hymnal 249v6; Synodical Conference Hymn Book (1941) 366v6; ALHB 218v5).

- (b) therefore feel their sins, seek to get rid of them, are truly penitent and hunger after God's grace.
- (c) want to amend their lives.

**An Objection Some Raise:** If faith is sufficient for true worthiness, why then is there still a need to regret our sin and amend our lives?

**Answer:** Because without showing that we regret our sin and want to amend our lives such a "faith" is not true faith<sup>61</sup>.

**Note (a):** Yet one cannot receive grace either by his sorrow for sin or by outwardly amending his life.

**Note (b):** Those who are weak in faith, even if their faith is the size of a mustard seed, are truly worthy (well prepared) to partake of the Lord's Supper. They are exactly the ones who are invited.<sup>62</sup>

Psalm 22:26<sup>63</sup>: "**The meek** (German: die Elenden) **shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.**"<sup>64</sup>

Is.42:3: "**A bruised reed** (das zerstoßene Rohr) **shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.**"<sup>65</sup>

**Antitheses:** We reject the false teaching of the Catholics who assert: "Faith is still not yet enough for true worthiness.

(To be continued.)

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### **Essential Features of Luther's Principles of Hermeneutics<sup>66</sup> Collected from Luther's Writings**

(by P Hoppe)[Lehre und Wehre 1882, pages 58]

- *The Scepter of His Kingdom* whereby He rules over the whole world until the end is **the Word**.
- *The holy prophets comforted and prepared the people in times past for the coming of Christ, while the New Testament teachers prepared the faithful believers for the coming of Christ their Saviour on the last day.*
- *In the Old and New Testaments existed the same holy Church, the believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.*

<sup>61</sup> A person who truly believes in Christ regrets the sin he has committed and out of love to Christ seeks to amend his life.

<sup>62</sup> **The Formula of Concord** Article VII Of the Holy Supper (Triglotta, Page 997):

" 68] But it must [also] be carefully **explained who are the unworthy guests of this Supper**, namely, those who go to this Sacrament without true repentance and sorrow for their sins, and without true faith and the good intention of amending their lives, and by their unworthy oral eating of the body of Christ load themselves with damnation, that is, with temporal and eternal punishments, and become guilty of the body and blood of Christ.

69] For **Christians who are of weak faith**, diffident, troubled, and heartily terrified because of the greatness and number of their sins, and think that in this their great impurity they are not worthy of this precious treasure and the benefits of Christ, and who feel and lament their weakness of faith, and from their hearts desire that they may serve God with stronger, more joyful faith and pure obedience, **they are the truly worthy guests for whom this highly venerable Sacrament [and sacred feast] has been especially instituted and appointed;** 70] as Christ says, Matt. 11, 28: *Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Also Matt. 9, 12: *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that be sick.* Also [2 Cor. 12, 9]: *God's strength is made perfect in weakness.* Also [Rom. 14, 1]: *Him that is weak in the faith receive ye [14, 3], for God hath received him. For whosoever believeth in the Son of God, be it with a strong or with a weak faith, has eternal life* [John 3, 15f. ].

71] And worthiness does not depend upon great or small weakness or strength of faith, but upon the merit of Christ, which the distressed father of little faith [Mark 9, 24] enjoyed as well as Abraham, Paul, and others who have a joyful and strong faith."

<sup>63</sup> **Eckhardt** means Ps. 22:26 because "Die Elenden" is found there and not in verse 27.

<sup>64</sup> **Kretzmann's** explanation of this Ps.22:26 is excellent: "**The meek**, the poor sinners who realize their own unworthiness and desire only the grace and mercy of Jehovah, **shall eat and be satisfied**, partaking of the fullness of Christ's redemption; **they shall praise the Lord that seek Him**, full of the deepest gratitude for the benefits given by Him; **your heart shall live forever**, kept by the strength of the Redeemer in the Gospel."

<sup>65</sup> Again **Kretzmann's** comment is superb: "The Savior would make use of true pastoral mildness in dealing with hearts which are broken and contrite, not only by not driving them to despair, but **by seeking them and caring for them with His full Savior's love.**"

<sup>66</sup> Rules of Scripture explanation.



**Theses 6:** A Lutheran candidate can, in good conscience, accept as valid and legitimate the call to be the pastor of a congregation only if the congregation states: 1. that it wants to be served as an orthodox, Evangelical Lutheran congregation; 2. that it therefore confesses the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be God's Word; and 3. that it publicly confesses the symbolical writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (specifically Luther's Small Catechism and the Unaltered Augsburg Confession) to be its confession and wants to know that the office is conducted accordingly in it; as well as that it wants: 4. to conform to the confessional ceremonies of the orthodox Lutheran church; 5. to introduce pure church and school books; 6. to announce in advance for the holy Supper; and finally, 7. in general to give free course to the Word of God (whether it is presented publicly or individually) in doctrine, admonition, comfort, and rebuke, and to subordinate itself to it.

**NOTE 4**  
(Continued)

The one called owes it to the congregation to be bound to God's Word and to the Confessions of the Church, as *a guarantee that he will not preach his own wisdom but the pure Christian doctrine*. This obligation is a great advantage for the one called into carrying out of his office, for *he can appeal to it against the attacks of false spirits that arise in the congregation* and so can nip in the bud many unnecessary and harmful disputes. Concerning the origin and the meaning of the binding of the pastor to the Lutheran Symbolical Books in the Lutheran Church see also the essay on the Question: "**Why Should Our Pastors, Teachers and Professors Subscribe Unconditionally to the Symbolical Writings of our Church?**" in the proceedings of the Fourth Session at the Convention of the Western District of the Missouri Synod in 1858. A separate copy of this essay appeared and it can be obtained from the Bookstore of the Synod at St. Louis, Missouri. The same essay is found also in volume 14 of "**The Lutheran**" (Der Lutheraner).(\*)



[(\*) **Walther's Footnote:** Incidentally it was not the Lutheran but the Zwinglian Church which at first obligated its teachers to the doctrine which they taught. **Ranke**<sup>68</sup> reports: "Then (after the disputation in 1523 held at Zurich) the pastors were commanded not to preach against the article that had obtained the victory in the disputation. Zwingli wrote a manual for those who were well-known to the public authorities, and it may be looked upon as the first of all symbolic books of the Protestant Church." (**German History in the Age of the Reformation**. Vol.III, 63.)]

**NOTE 5.**

In the Seventh Article of the **Augsburg Confession** it is stated: "To the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the **Gospel**<sup>69</sup> and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies instituted by men, should be everywhere alike. As Paul says: One faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all,' etc., Eph. 4, 5,6." (Trig. p.47).

Hence it is further stated in the Tenth Article of the **Formula of Concord**: "Therefore we believe, teach, and confess that *the congregation of God of every place and every time* has, according to its circumstances, the good right, power, and authority [in matters truly adiaphora] to change, to diminish, and to increase them, without thoughtlessness and offense, in an orderly and becoming way, as at any time it may be regarded most profitable, most beneficial, and best for [preserving] good order,

<sup>67</sup> 1811-1887.

<sup>68</sup> **Ranke** (1795-1886), a professor at Berlin, was an important German historian and founded the school of historians.

<sup>69</sup> Used here in the wider sense, **the entire Word of God**, as a number of articles by faithful Lutheran theologians have proven.

[maintaining] Christian discipline [and for *eutaxia* worthy of the profession of the Gospel], and the edification of the Church. Moreover, how we can yield and give way with a good conscience to the weak in faith in such external adiaphora, Paul teaches Rom. 14, and proves it by his example, Acts 16:3; 21;26; 1 Cor. 9:19 (Trig., p.1055)".

According to Article VII of the **Augsburg Confession** and **Article X of the Formula of Concord**, it would be **thoroughly unevangelical and un-Lutheran if a candidate wanted to accept the call of a congregation only on the condition that it accept all the ceremonies and institutions that had ever been customary in the Lutheran Church.** (\*\*)

[(\*\*) **Walther's Footnote:** Our orthodox theologians number among the adiaphora customary in our Evangelical-Lutheran Church: pictures, holidays, organ music, chanting, the liturgy; at Baptism: applying the water three times, Baptism by lay people in emergencies, the sign of the cross, the Baptismal gown, the renunciation of the devil, the exorcism, the sponsors confessing the faith, etc.; at the administration of the holy Supper: unleavened bread in the form of wafers, the distribution of the bread without breaking it, placing the elements into the mouth, kneeling at the reception, the private Communion of the sick, etc.; with respect to the preaching office: vestments, private confession, etc.; Latin songs; the bowing of the head when the name of Jesus is spoken; the system of pericopes; candles and the crucifix on the altar; the division of the Ten Commandments with three in the first table and seven in the second table; the beginning of the Our Father with word order *Vater unser* and saying *Erloese* (Deliver, BLW) *uns vom Uebel* in the Seventh Petition, etc.].

[Drickamer's Note: In the **Our Father** (the Lord's Prayer, BLW), Luther retained the traditional word order, *Vater unser*, "Father ours," which had become archaic already in his day but had been hallowed by long usage. Bowing the head when the name Jesus is spoken is a sign of worshipping Jesus, a confession that Jesus is true God and true Man in one Person. It is a confession against the Nestorian tendency of the Reformed to separate the Son of God from Jesus, claiming to worship God the Son without worshipping Jesus.]

That would be Papistic, Anti-Christian; as it then states in the **Apology**: "The adversaries in the Confutation make a great ado concerning the desolation of churches, namely, that the altars stand unadorned, without candles and without images. These trifles they regard as ornaments to churches. [Although it is not true that we abolish all such outward ornaments; yet, even if it were so, Daniel is not speaking of such things as are altogether external and do not belong to the Christian Church.] It is a far different desolation which Daniel means, 11:31; 12:11, namely, **ignorance of the Gospel**. For the people, overwhelmed by the multitude and variety of traditions and opinions, were in no way able to embrace the sum of Christian doctrine.... "

"Candles, golden vessels (tapers, altar-cloths, images), and similar adornments are becoming, but they are not the adornment that properly belongs to the Church But **if the adversaries make worship consist in such matters, and not in the preaching of the Gospel, in faith, and the conflicts of faith, they are to be numbered among those whom Daniel describes as worshiping their God with gold and silver**, Dan.11:28." (Trig., pp.399,401,403.)

But a case can occur in which the institution or removal of an adiaphoron would **indirectly deny the truth**. We have an example in the history of the Apostle Paul. *He circumcised Timothy for the sake of the weak*, when it was still a free adiaphoron (Acts 16:3). But he would absolutely not let himself be moved by the false teachers to circumcise Titus as if it were something necessary. He did that, he wrote to the Galatians, "**that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you**" (Gal. 2:3-5).

If the enemies of pure doctrine insist, as something necessary, that the orthodox either remove or institute a free adiaphoron, it is not a matter of the adiaphoron alone but of **the truth of the Gospel**, especially the **doctrine of Christian freedom**, which the enemies are attacking and which they are tempting

the orthodox actually to deny. Anyone who yields to them in that case is not using his freedom but surrendering his freedom.

When **Carlstadt** insisted on doing away with the elevation of the host as something necessary, **Luther** wrote: “Although I intended to do away with the elevation, I will not do it now for a while in spite of and against the fanatical spirit [*Schwaermergeist*] because he wants to forbid it and declare it a sin and deprive us the freedom. For before I would yield a hair-breadth or an **eye-wink [the least space or the least time]** to the spiritually murderous spirit, to give up our freedom (as St. Paul teaches in Gal. 5:1), I would sooner become yet tomorrow such a strict monk and hold firmly to all the cloistered life as I once did. **Christian freedom is no joke here. We want to hold it as purely and wholly as our faith. It cost our dear, faithful Savior and Lord Jesus Christ too much.** It is also all too necessary for us. We cannot give it up without losing our salvation” (“Against the Heavenly Prophets”; Walch XX, 255; Erlangen, XXIX, 194f.). [Luther means that giving up Christian freedom would be returning to work righteousness and losing the Gospel, the teaching of salvation by grace alone through faith alone. KKM]

(Thanks to the late Pastor K. K. Miller for his help. Bolded emphasis is editor’s. All other emphasis is Dr. Walther’s.) (To be continued.)

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### MINUTES

of the free Pastoral Conference involving both Synodical bodies of the Australian Synod and the Immanuel Synod which was held on 29 and 30 June, 1887 at Bethany<sup>70</sup>, South Australia. (Taken from KB Jan. 1888 page 7) [Continued from August-September 2014 Issue of **Morsels**].

### Thursday, 30 June, 1887 – Morning Session

The illness of Pastor Strempe<sup>71</sup> made it necessary on this day to delegate the position of recording the minutes to Pastor Ey<sup>72</sup>.

The debate was resumed on Theses VI and VII<sup>73</sup>.

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<sup>70</sup> This was at the church of **Pastor George Heidenreich** (1828-1910) who studied at Hermannsberg Mission Institute, Germany (1862-66). He was pastor at Bethany, South Australia from 1866. In 1902 he was expelled from the ELSA for his support of the Finke river Mission in Central Australia run by the Immanuel Synod and of Hermannsberg in Germany.

<sup>71</sup> **Pastor Strempe** (1832-1908) was one of the faithful pastors of our old Lutheran Church here in Australian who was trained by Pastor Fritzsche (himself trained by the orthodox Lutheran Dr. Scheibel in Germany). He graduated in 1855. When our church came under the influence of the old Missouri Synod in the 1880’s he eagerly saw in it a faithful orthodox Lutheran church body and became a “Missourian” in doctrine and practice. He was president of our church at the time of these discussions (1897-1903).

<sup>72</sup> **Pastor Johannes Martin Rudolph Ey Snr.** (1837-1893) was born at Zellerfeld, Harz, Germany. He arrived in South Australia in 1855. At first, he was a **teacher** at Klemzig, Mt. Torrens, Blumberg, Carlsruhe, Hahndorf in South Australia. Then He studied for the ministry under Pastor Oster, who himself had been trained by Pastor Fritzsche. He was ordained into the pastoral ministry at Rosenthal, South Australia, on 16 July, 1868. He served at Carlsruhe from 1868 to 1876 and at Lobethal from 1876 to 1893. He was at Lobethal when these discussions took place.

<sup>73</sup> **Thesis VI** reads: “**We confess our allegiance to the Book of Concord of 1580 not merely “in so far as,” but for this reason, *because* it agrees completely with God’s Word.**”

**Thesis VII** reads: “**We confess our allegiance to the Book of Concord in this manner that we regard as binding not only the doctrinal content which is given in it, but also the phrases which are used in it by which the doctrine is expressed.**”

This is also stated by our faithful orthodox Lutheran fathers in the **Introduction to the Book of Concord of 1580** where they state (and may we hold steadfastly to the same): “Therefore we also have **determined not to depart even a finger’s breadth** either from the **subjects** themselves nor from the **phrases which are found in them**, but, the Spirit of God aiding us, to persevere constantly, with the greatest harmony, in this godly agreement, and we intend to examine all controversies according to this true norm and declaration of pure doctrine.” (Triglotta, p. 23).

Pastor Kaibel<sup>74</sup> communicated the answer, to which the pastors of the Immanuel Synod had agreed, in regard to the essay which had been read to the gathering by Pastor Dorsch<sup>75</sup> yesterday afternoon. This answer read as follows:

"They (the pastors) could not say that they did not agree with the **principles** which were expressed in the essay; but they had found so many texts in Holy Scripture which were related to future (prophecies) that had not been sufficiently dealt with or explained, respectively. As a result because we want to be in complete earnestness with the acknowledged following principle agreed to by everyone: that the Symbols **are not the Judge over Scripture**<sup>76</sup>; we must explain that we certainly agree from the heart with what is contained and laid down in the Symbols. But (since we have committed ourselves to the Holy Scriptures in the first thesis<sup>77</sup>) we want to know the freedom the above mentioned Scripture texts guarantee us even if the meaning of same texts go beyond the statement of the Symbols in the area of the practical work of the ministry involved."

While the reasons for the individual points of the above explanation were stated by speakers, the more often one objected from the other side stating the sentence: **The Holy Scriptures are not to be explained according to the Symbols**; whereupon Pastor Dorsch replied that **this sentence definitely does not mean that we (Lutherans) do not accept everything which is firmly based on the Scriptures, even if it is not written in the Symbols**<sup>78</sup>.

Pastor Kuss<sup>79</sup>, on the other hand, said that it was **wrong** to state that such were not faithful Lutherans who could not agree with some parts of the Symbolical Books. Pastors Koschade<sup>80</sup> and Kaibel now alleged as a particular example that in the doctrine of the Antichrist the Symbols do not explain enough from Holy Scripture, that only on one page they explained the doctrine of the Antichrist. To this, on the other hand,

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<sup>74</sup> **Pastor Kaibel** (1850-1918) studied at Neuendettelsau (the home of the evil "Open Questions" principle) from 1873 till 1876 and was ordained in 1877 at Light Pass Straight Gate, South Australia. He was Vice-President of the Immanuel Synod from 1900-1918.

<sup>75</sup> **Pastor Dorsch**: (1858-1916) studied under Dr. Walther and Dr. Pieper at St. Louis, USA and was ordained in 1881 at Adelaide, South Australia. He was the first of the Missouri trained pastors to serve in our old once orthodox ELSA. He was a brilliant man, an outstanding theologian and he served our church well.

<sup>76</sup> To see in what sense our old Lutheran Church meant this read **Thesis 3**: "**The writings referred to are not to act as a judge like the Holy Scriptures, but are only a witness<sup>76</sup> to and an explanation of the Faith as a short and a plain confession produced for the unanimous, universal Christian Faith and Confession of the Orthodox and faithful Church.**"

<sup>77</sup> **Thesis One**: "**The Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments as the revealed Word of God are the only rule and standard to which at the same time all teaching and teachers are to be examined and judged.**"

<sup>78</sup> Our position as well as that of our old ELSA here in Australia was the same as that of **The Brief Statement of 1932**: " 45. We accept as our confession all the symbols contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580. -- The symbols of the Lutheran Church are not a rule of faith beyond, and supplementary to, Scripture, but a confession of the doctrines of Scripture over against those who deny these doctrines.

46. Since the Christian Church cannot make doctrines, but can and should simply profess the doctrine revealed in Holy Scripture, the doctrinal decisions of the symbols are binding upon the conscience not because they are the outcome of doctrinal controversies, but only because they are the doctrinal decisions of Holy Scripture itself.

47. Those desiring to be admitted into the public ministry of the Lutheran Church pledge themselves to teach according to the symbols not "in so far as," but "because," the symbols agree with Scripture. He who is unable to accept as Scriptural the doctrine set forth in the Lutheran symbols and their rejection of the corresponding errors must not be admitted into the ministry of the Lutheran Church.

48. The confessional obligation covers all doctrines, not only those that are treated ex professo, but also those that are merely introduced in support of other doctrines.

The obligation does not extend to historical questions, "purely exegetical questions," and other matters not belonging to the doctrinal content of the symbols. All doctrines of the Symbols are based on clear statements of Scripture."

<sup>79</sup> **Pastor Ludwig Ed Kuss** (1859-1940) trained at Neuendettelsau, Germany (1877-80) and was ordained in 1881 and served in the Immanuel Synod and later the UELCA. He was at Murray Bridge at the time of these talks.

<sup>80</sup> **Pastor Carl Koschade** (1848-1939) studied at Neuendettelsau from 1873-1877. He was at Yorketown at the time.

Pastor Dorsch and Oster<sup>81</sup> immediately replied: "The expression 'do not explain enough' is a vague and indefinite expression. One must say that they (the Symbols) are either true or false doctrine; it cannot be an adiaphora."

After some discussion about if it was not advisable to discontinue completely the present method of discussion and in the debate go into detail concerning the doctrine of the Antichrist, Pastor Kaibel declared himself ready to continue to discuss the explanation just read on the part of his synod. The question was addressed to him by the chairman<sup>82</sup>, whether they (the pastors of the Immanuel Synod) so understood the words "**agree from the heart**" in their statement that they regard as correct the explanations **which the Symbols** give in the parts concerned and that they regard as correct these parts **insofar** as they give the same.

Pastor Kaibel then answered after he had read a passage from the **Smalcald Articles**, in which it is stated: "Now, it is manifest that the Roman pontiffs, with their adherents, defend [and practice] godless doctrines and godless services. And the marks [all the vices] of Antichrist plainly agree with the kingdom of the Pope and his adherents" (Triglotta, p.515)" --- **he did not agree with the Symbols in this part**; the Papacy has not indeed denied that Christ has come in the flesh<sup>83</sup>. In addition Pastor Kuss still added that he having just read this section from the **Smalcald Articles** could himself no longer confess the words in their statement: "agree from the heart."

(To be continued)

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## THE PSALMS (Johann George Starke -- pages 17-19)

### Psalm 1

#### A Description of the Very Different State of Affairs (Condition) of the Pious and the Godless.

[1]The Detailed Introduction – verse 1-5.

(I) The Blessed Condition of the Pious is Described.

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<sup>81</sup> **Pastor Oster** (1830-1897), who emigrated from Germany as a result of persecution, after 15 years study, was one of the three men whom Pastor Fritzsche trained and ordained in 1855 here in Australia. As well as being a faithful pastor, and as one who embraced the orthodoxy of the old Missouri Synod with grateful thanks to God, he was also President of our old ELSA here from 1873 until 1897.

<sup>82</sup> Pastor Oster.

<sup>83</sup> **Dr. Pieper** once correctly stated that a person can know and believe that Jesus is true God and true Man in the one Person. But if he does not believe that **Christ as the God-Man is alone our Saviour and Redeemer who kept the Law perfectly and suffered and died in order to reconcile the world to the Father** he is lost. This knowledge does not benefit him. He still trust in his works.

This **spiritual blindness** shows that such cannot see **how dangerous the Papacy is to the Christian faith** because: (1) of its attack on and cursed placed upon the vital doctrine of Justification by grace through faith in Christ's work of redemption without any works of man whatsoever; (2) of its attacking God's Word, suppressing it and supplanting it with its own authority.

Together with **The Brief Statement of 1932** we as well as our old ELSA confessed the same doctrine concerning the Antichrist:

" 43. As to the Antichrist we teach that the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures concerning the Antichrist, 2 Thess. 2:3-12; 1 John 2:18, **have been fulfilled in the Pope of Rome and his dominion**. All the features of the Antichrist as drawn in these prophecies, including the most abominable and horrible ones, for example, that the Antichrist "as God sitteth in the temple of God," 2 Thess. 2:4; that he **anathematizes the very heart of the Gospel of Christ**, that is, the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins by grace alone, for Christ's sake alone, through faith alone, without any merit or worthiness in man (Rom. 3:20-28; Gal. 2:16); that **he recognizes only those as members of the Christian Church who bow to his authority**; and that, like a deluge, he had inundated the whole Church with his antichristian doctrines till God revealed him through the Reformation -- these very features are the outstanding characteristics of the Papacy. (Cf. Smalcald Articles, Triglot, p. 515, Paragraphs 39-41; p. 401, Paragraph 45; M. pp. 336, 258.) **Hence we subscribe to the statement of our Confessions that the Pope is "the very Antichrist."** (Smalcald Articles, Triglot, p. 475, Paragraph 10; M., p. 308.)"

**Dr. F. Pieper** correctly stated: "But every teacher in the Christian Church who is familiar with the historical phenomenon called the Papacy and still does not recognize in this **Papacy the Antichrist prophesied in 2 Thessalonians 2 is weak in Christian theology.**" (Dogmatics III, 469).

(1) With Literal Words.

(a) The Blessedness: "*Blessed is the man.*" Verse 1.

(b) The Pious People who are blessed are further described:

(i) The way of the people who are blessed is described in the Negative: "*that walketh not,*" etc.

(ii) The way of the people who are blessed is described in the Positive: "*But his delight is,*" etc. Verse 2.

(2) With Figurative Words, by which the blessed condition is deduced from a tree, seeing it in

(a) the planting: "*he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water,*" etc. Verse 3.

(b) the fruitfulness: "*that bringeth forth his fruit in his season,*" etc.

(c) its excellent appearance: "*his leaf also shall not wither,*" etc.

Verse 3.

Verse 3: And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The Blessed Condition of the Pious is Described: (2) With Figurative Words, by which the blessed condition is deduced from a tree, seeing it in

(b) its excellent appearance.

"his leaf<sup>84</sup> also shall not wither<sup>85</sup>":

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<sup>84</sup> **his leaf**: **RULE**: When in a verse two words, in themselves different, yet both expressing a similar truth, are used together, then both words combine together to emphasise the one general truth. e.g. fruit and leaf, e.g. Ps.91:2: refuge and fortress. **Stoekhardt** : "Leaf and fruit are considered as a unit, as the leaf does not wither so the fruit bearing goes on till the end. **The righteous always remains fresh in his spiritual life and always remains productive as a tree of the Lord.** He never ceases to bear the fruit of good works. A believer's strength never abates, but keeps on performing good works, because he thrives and draws his strength and life from the Word. **By the leaves of the tree you recognise his state of health. As the leaves of the righteous do not wither, he ever enjoys good spiritual health, producing fruit at all age levels.**"

Even though the text does not directly call this tree a date palm, yet many commentators like **Luther** do. Let us for a moment see how the date palm tree would find its application here: **Use of Date palms**:

(1) **The chief job of its leaves is to make food for plants.** This food-making activity, called photosynthesis, occurs mostly in fully grown leaves. Leaves help make the air breathable. They release oxygen during photosynthesis. People and animals must have oxygen to live. Without the activities of leaves, the earth's supply of breathable oxygen would probably soon be used up.

(2) **Date palms and their fruit are incredibly useful.** The single grooved seed of a date fruit yields **oil**. The seeds also can be ground up for a **coffee substitute or for camel feed**. The trunk and the sturdy midribs of the leaves are used to **make crates and furniture**. The leaves are woven into **baskets**. Date cluster stalks are made into **rope or burned for fuel**, and the fibre makes good **packing material**. Mature leaves are also made into **mats, screens, baskets and fans**. Processed leaves can be used for insulating board. Dried leaf petioles are a source of cellulose pulp, used for walking sticks, brooms, fishing floats and fuel. Leaf sheaths are prized for their scent, and fibre from them is also used for rope, coarse cloth, and large hats. **The sap is drinkable. It can also be boiled down to make palm-sugar candy. The bud tips can be eaten as a salad.**

(3) **The date palm tree is an important resource** to people living in the desert because it provides **food and building material** to people. It also signals to people travelling in the desert that there is fresh water available in a particular area.

(4) In verse 3 a tree is used **to picture the true believer's dependence on the Word of God and the blessings which flow from it.** The life of a tree is dependent on a continual supply of water. Trees absorb hundreds of gallons of water from the ground and return it to the atmosphere through their leaves. **Just as the life of the tree is dependent on a supply of water, the spiritual life of the true believer is dependent on the abundant supply of the Word of God.** As our Lord Himself said, quoting from Deut. 8:3, "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God"(Matt. 4:4).





Prov.11:28, "**He that trusteth in his riches shall fall; but the righteous shall flourish as a branch**"<sup>86</sup>. They will not shrivel away, nor fall off, as little as the palm leaves also fall off in Winter as long as the tree has moisture.

**Notes:** The leaves however are a picture of the proper conduct or a practice, then therefore it is not only possible, but also necessary to be given the ability to recognize the proper behaviour in a believer, 1 Pet 2:12<sup>87</sup>. On the other hand, however, even a mere respectable conduct is no proof of a good tree or people who are believers, Mat.21:19<sup>88</sup>

### Practical Application of Verse 3.

16.) The righteous so blossoms that he brings forth good, ripe, prosperous fruit, Isaiah 60:21<sup>89</sup>. But the godless are resplendent only with flowers which all fall off and with leaves which shrivel up. Therefore he is cut down. Mat.3:10<sup>90</sup>; 21:19.

17.) If the righteous are like a permanent green palm tree whose leaves do not shrivel away, if they are like cedar trees, which the Lord Himself has planted with many fresh roots on a high mountain, then no scoundrel is capable of tearing them out and destroying them. What glorious comfort for the pious (faithful)!

**"and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper"**<sup>91</sup>: Everything which he will do which is in the Name of and which he asks for by the power of God, or even of the fruits he brings, that prospers well; that will succeed well. All his actions which are brought about by the Holy Spirit both inwardly and outwardly, even the work

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<sup>85</sup> Its "**leaf does not wither**". Therefore, it keeps its beauty and health. So, the tree remains fruitful, beautiful and healthy. **This is a picture of vitality, of being green, healthy plants in spite of conditions.** A plant which is planted by streams of water has the capacity to endure ([Jer. 17](#)). Brown, dead, withered leaves are signs of death and dryness. The righteous man does not have these signs of death and dryness; his "leaves" are green and alive. **PEK:** "not be affected by the drought of hostility or adversity."

**Dr. Carl Manthey-Zorn** comments: "That's how a righteous man is; he is always green, always blooming, always fruitful and fresh (Psalm 92:12-15)" (**The Psalms** p. 2.)

The Hebrew scholar **Dr. Allen P. Ross** comments: "Third, '**its leaf does not wither.**' If the tree is carefully planted so that it can grow and is well-watered, it will not only live, but also **flourish**. Likewise one would expect to find the **spiritual life alive and flourishing if nourished by the Word of the Lord.**" (Commentary on Psalms Vol. 1, pages 190-191).

<sup>86</sup> **German:** "Aber die Gerechten werden grünen wie ein Blatt" = "But the righteous are green as a leaf."

**Kretzmann:** " like a green leaf, like luxurious foliage."

**K&D:** "The clause וְעֵלְהוּ לֹא בִּבְלוֹל is the other half of the relative clause: and its foliage does not fall off or wither...."

<sup>87</sup> 1Pet.2:12, "Having your **conversation** (conduct) **honest** (excellent as it conforms to the will of God) among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, **they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.**"

<sup>88</sup> Mat.21:19, "And when He saw a fig tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, 'Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever.' And presently the fig tree withered away."

<sup>89</sup> Is.60:21, "**Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, a true garden of Jehovah, owing everything to His grace (Kretzmann), that I may be glorified.**"

<sup>90</sup> Mat.3:10, "**And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.**" Mat.21:19, "**And when He saw a fig tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, 'Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever.' And presently the fig tree withered away.**"

<sup>91</sup> **Stoeckhardt:** " '**In all that he does he prospers.**' With these words the Psalmist returns from the picture to reality. As the righteous keeps on working in the service of the Lord till the end, God grants him success. He is constantly by his side, strengthening him and directing all his efforts to a proper and successful end. Such a man is truly a blessed person of the Lord." (Psalms, p. 16).

**Kretzmann:** "With a **prosperity at least in the sight of God**, no matter how little the world thinks of his success. Not an outward good fortune in amassing the riches of this earth counts in the sight of Jehovah, but the **possession of a trusting faith abounding in real good works.**"

of his calling, will succeed well for him, and God will not permit him to lack for anything good in his fellowship (with God). Ps.34:9,10<sup>92</sup>; 37:18,19<sup>93</sup>; 128:1 ff.<sup>94</sup> It will also result for him in a gracious reward in eternal life. Dan.12:3, "**And they that be wise, the true teachers of the people, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, in a wonderful glorification, and they that turn many to righteousness, by instructing them in loyalty and faithfulness in the midst of the tribulations of the latter days, as the stars forever and ever, this statement being rightly applied to the work of faithful preachers of the; Gospel in these latter days of corruption and apostasy.**" (Comments by **Kretzmann**.)

Mat.16:27, "**For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to His works** (of love flowing from faith)."

### Practical Application of Verse 3.

18.) Here is the promise of God that it shall not be in vain that one serves Him. Already here in this world will He prosper the pious (faithful); He will further the work of their hands. Josh.1:7,8<sup>95</sup>, give them physical food and the necessities of life, Mat.6:33<sup>96</sup>, raise them up in adversity, Ps.94:19; 119:50, 92, finally transform death itself into a deep sleep. John 8:51, "**Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death.**"; John 11:11.

19.) Just as everything on a palm tree is useful, what is on it, leaves, wood, fruit, so it is also the same for a Christian: everything which he does in faith is to redound to the honour of God's Name and for the welfare of his neighbour. John 3:21; 1 Cor.10:31, "**Whether, therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.**"

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<sup>92</sup> Ps.34:9,10 "**O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him**, they have the fullness of all they need. **The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing**, that is, it will sooner happen that the irrational animals, for whom the providence of God provides so regularly, Ps. 145, 16, will suffer hunger, than that those who strive after the true fellowship with God will be in any kind of need. So much all believers should learn from the deliverance which David experienced in Gath." (With comments by **Kretzmann**). Starcke has verse 11 but verse 10 fits better.

<sup>93</sup> Ps.37:18,19: "**The LORD knoweth the days of the upright**, carefully watches over them, lovingly orders all that befalls them; **and their inheritance shall be for ever**, they will be given the blessings which He has intended for them, here in time and hereafter in eternity. **They shall not be ashamed in the evil time**, objects of mockery because of their being forsaken by the Lord, **and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied**, their wants being supplied in accordance with God's gracious and good will." (With comments by **Kretzmann**).

<sup>94</sup> Ps.128:1-5: "**1. Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord**, his entire life being arranged in conformity with God's holy will, in childlike reverence; **that walketh in His ways**, his entire behavior agreeing with the Word of the Lord.

**2. For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands**, being, by God's blessing, supplied with the fruits of his industry, especially the produce of garden and field; **happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee**, real good fortune being found in a house which thus enjoys the blessing of Jehovah, where temperance and frugality are combined with contentment, and no one is compelled to eat the bread of charity.

**3. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house**, not on the outside, however, in club and society life, but in the rear, the inner rooms of the house, not a mere clinging vine, but a sturdy plant, leaning on her husband and happy in the midst of her family; **thy children like olive-plants round about thy table**, known for their luxuriant strength and promising rich returns at the time of their maturity.

**4. Behold that thus shall the man be blessed**, with the rich blessings of God's kindness, **that feareth the Lord**, whose faith works in him the true reverential regard for Jehovah and the willingness to walk in the path of His will.

**5. The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion**, the throne of His gracious presence in the midst of His people, just as He now lives in the midst of His congregation, in His Word and Sacraments; **and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life**, witnessing both the temporal and the spiritual blessings which the Lord grants to His Church and its members. Every true believer takes part in the well-being of the Church, the gift which God dispenses in His mercy. (With comments by **Kretzmann**).

<sup>95</sup> Josh.1:7,8: "**7. Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper withersoever thou goest**. **8. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.**"

<sup>96</sup> Mat.6:33, "**But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**"