

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?*¹ by Dr. F. Pieper Part 3.



We Are Saved By Grace Without the Works of the Law. (Sola Gratia).

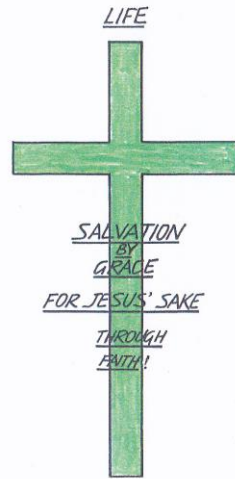
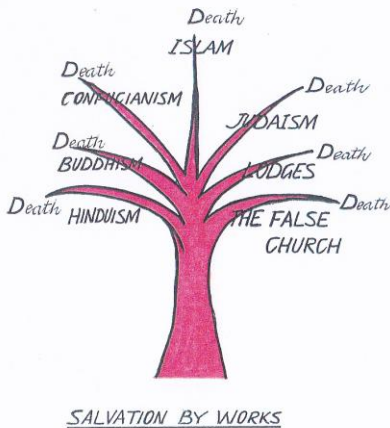
In the first place, let us remember this that **by nature** in all people, even in us, exists a religion which is completely against the **Christian Religion of Grace**, namely, the Religion of Works or the Religion of the Law. Where does this come from? It occurs in this way: All people still by nature know of the Law of God. Even after the fall of man into sin the Law is written in their hearts as St Paul says in Rom. 2:15 speaking of the Gentiles (heathen) that they, "**show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness.**" Furthermore, the Gentiles (heathen) also know that they have not kept God's Law; they have a bad conscience which accuses them of transgressing the Law. But now they still further think that they must and could reconcile God by their own works, namely, by their own worship of God which they have invented, by sacrifices and works which they attempt to improve their sinful life.

RELIGION OF LAW IN MAN BY NATURE.

Concerning this Religion, the delusion of the Law² (opinio legis³) as the **Apology of the Augsburg**

¹ 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.

The Two Religions of the World.



Confession says, "inheres by nature in men's minds" (Apology, Trig.197,144). All pagan religions because they are invented by men are religions of works. Among the heathen religions there is prevalent a great difference in regard to the works by which they think must be done to reconcile God. Sometimes the works required are quite contradictory.

Some people imagine that you can reconcile God by diligently going through religious washing

rituals and by torturing themselves (asceticism⁴); others think that they must achieve the same goal by refraining from all washing rituals and by being covered in filth and dirt. Some hold that the striving after moral improvement in their lives leads back to fellowship with the divine being; others have even been convinced that devotion (abandonment) to the lusts of the flesh is pleasing to the divine being and brings you closer to it. Among the heathen there is also no lack of fanatical ecstatic prayers by which they seek fellowship with the divine being. We must also admit that such prayers make a great impression on our natural feelings. A prayer to Brahma, a deity of the heathen in India, has been summarized in the following manner:

*Brahma, God of the Hind,
Master of cities holy,
Hear thou my prayer!
With thine own sacred stream
Do I mingle my tears.*

But all religions which seek reconciliation with God by way of their own works make a **great mistake**. They do not silence their evil conscience, that means, they do not remove their consciousness of guilt; rather they leave every person in doubt and in uncertainty of their salvation and thus in **despair**. Thus the Apostle declares in Eph.2:12⁵ when he says of all the heathen that **they have no hope**, and, namely, live in this world without God, **without a merciful God**. This is true of all the heathen without exception, also even of those who dedicated themselves to leading a respectable, virtuous life and who took their heathen worship seriously. The same is also naturally true of all those who live within the outer boundaries of visible Christendom and who regard themselves as Christians, but nevertheless before the Judgment rely on their own works and so they are practicing the Religion of the Law. They have no certainty of God's grace and

² The German that is used is "**der Gesetzeswahn**." It really means "the delusion of the Law."

³ Literally translated it means "**opinion of the Law**". It is the false idea that everyone can by nature save himself by the Law.

⁴ Acts of religious self-denial involving severe self-discipline and the avoiding of all forms of indulgence in order to pay for their sins.

⁵ Eph.2:12, "**That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.**" The diagram of the Tree and the Cross was used by the late Pastor F.G. Kleinig in the ELCR in his Blackboard sermons and Confirmation lessons to show this vital distinction between the False (Religion of the Law) and the True (Christian, Only Saving Religion). As a basis he used the following texts: Prov. 14:12; Rom.3:20; Gal.3:10,11 for the **False Religion** and John 14:6; Eph.2:8,9; John 3:16 for the **True Christian Religion**.

salvation. They retain an evil conscience and in trial and anguish of death they despair if they do not forsake the Religion of the Law and come to the (only saving) Christian Religion of Grace.

How does it occur that the Religion of the Law or the Religion of works leaves mankind embedded with an evil conscience? It occurs this way: That God has written **His Law** (that is: You shall love God and your neighbor, are not to lie, are not to steal, are not to commit adultery, etc) into the **heart of mankind** is not human opinion, imagination, an "acquired prejudice" as so-called atheists say, but God's Law, God's will, God's commands which have been inscribed, buried, engraven in our hearts and **our natural conscience** which judges and condemns our violation of God's Law, which accuses and pronounces us guilty, is God's Judgment and the handwriting of guilt in our hearts. And this divine condemnation in our hearts, this divine writing of guilt in our hearts does not give way to⁶ any human treatment, to any human attempt at redemption in thoughts, words or actions.



We could rather move the Rocky Mountains in the Western part of our country or the mountains of the Himalayas in Northern India from their places, than take the handwriting of guilt and the judgment of condemnation of the divine Law out of our hearts. Here no matter how respectable the human life, no matter how great the sorrow of the heart on account of the sins we have committed, no asceticism or self-torture, no shedding of animal blood or the blood of man, nor suicide, as people in India are crushed by the carts carrying their idols⁷, no poetry and fanatically calling upon Brahma⁸, there is nothing a person can do to save himself.

To summarize: nothing, nothing that a person himself does and can do: the handwriting of guilt remains in the heart without being eradicated and continues to exist in the conscience of man. Only God can remove the handwriting of guilt from our heart and conscience and in the place of the Judgment of condemnation pronounce the Verdict of being declared righteous or forgiven (for Christ's sake). A good conscience created before God is God's work, God's Work, as great as the Creation of the world.

TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION ALONE SAVES

And God alone does this work! But how? There is a beautiful red overflowing fountain which God, in His divine love for us and for all mankind and in His divine mercy for us sinners, has made to flow, and that is the **blood of His only begotten Son who became Man**, shed for the redemption of our debt and the debt of the sins of the world. Holy Scripture says, "**The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin**" (1 John 1:7). And this blood flows into our heart and conscience and there **removes** the engraven handwriting of guilt by the operation of the Holy Spirit when we **believe the Gospel of God** which **assures us of the forgiveness of sins and salvation for the sake of the blood of Christ.**

*"Thy Baptism, supper, and thy Word,
My consolation are, O Lord,
For they contain my treasure."*

(ALHB 317v6; Synodical Conference Hymnbook 306v 6).

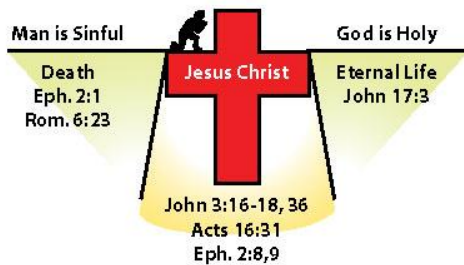
In Rom.5:1 ff. St Paul testifies on behalf of all those who have been **set free** from the Religion of their own Works and who believe in Christ: "**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we**

⁶ Or "is not softened by."

⁷ The English word *juggernaut* in the sense of "a huge wagon bearing an image of a Hindu god" is from the 17th century.

⁸ [Hindu](#) god of creation.

stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom.5:1,2). In this sense **Luther** called the Gospel that assures you of the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake without the works of the law, "The real and only treasure of the Christian Church," because the Gospel alone and nothing else and makes us certain of God's grace and salvation. And this is the faith of all who are actually members of the Christian Church. **This is the only-saving Gospel which has again been brought to light by the work of Luther.** This is the faith of which the Children of God, because He dwells in their hearts, also confess in their hymns, for example:



*"Salvation unto us has come,
By God's free grace and favour;
Good works could not avert our doom,
They help and save us never;
Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone,
Who did for all the world atone;
He is our one Redeemer."*

(ALHB 351v1; Synodical Conference Hymnbook 377v1)

And:

*" Not the labours of my hands
Can fulfil Thy Law's demands,
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone:
Thou must save, and Thou alone!"*

(ALHB 350v2; Synodical Conference Hymnbook 376v2)

GOOD WORKS ARE NECESSARY ONLY AS FRUITS AND PROOF OF FAITH

Of course good works also belong to the Christian religion. Just as Luther is the most powerful of all human teachers of faith in the Gospel for salvation, so he is also the most powerful of teachers of true good works (flowing from faith). He wants no-one to give up his good works (flowing from), as little as they may be, for the whole world. And that is a completely correct conclusion. The whole world will be consumed and burnt in the fire of the Last Day. However the good works of true Christians will not be burnt up, but will follow them into eternity and will be crowned with a glorious reward of grace⁹. Hence true good works are richly and closely connected with the Christian Religion (as fruits of faith). However they are required not as a sacrifice to pay for our sins and as a means for obtaining the grace of God, but as a **thank-offering for the grace** which has been purchased and given to us through Christ, as St Paul says in Rom.12:1, "**I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God (which are proven to us in Christ), that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.**"



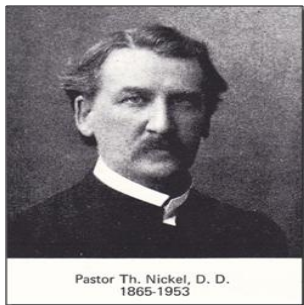
Max Müller, Professor at Oxford, England, has summarized in a happy hour in a lecture to the British Bible Society, the **difference between the Christian Religion of grace and the heathen Religion of Works** like this: "In the discharge of my duties for forty years as professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford I have devoted as much time as any man living to the study of the sacred books of the East, and I have found the one keynote, the one diapason, so to speak, of all these so-called sacred books, whether it be the Veda of the Brahmans, the Puranas of Siva and Vishnu, the Koran of the Mohammedans, the Zend-Avesta of the Parsees, the Tripitaka of the Buddhists, --- *the one refrain through all: salvation by works.* They all say that salvation must be purchased, must be

⁹ See Pieper "What Is Christianity and Other Essays", page 18, translated by Dr. J.T. Mueller.

bought with a price, and that the sole price, the sole purchase-money, must be our works and deservings. Our own Holy Bible, our sacred Book of the East, **is from beginning to end a protest against this doctrine.** Good works are indeed enjoined upon us in that sacred Book of the East; **but they are only the outcome of a grateful heart;** they are only a **thank-offering, the fruits of our faith.** They are never the ransom-money of the true disciples of Christ. Let us not shut our eyes to what is excellent and true and of good report in these sacred books; but let us teach Hindus, Buddhists, and Mohammedans that there is only one sacred Book of the East that can be their mainstay in that awful hour when they pass all alone into the unseen world. **It is the sacred Book which contains that faithful saying, worthy to be received of all men, women, and children, and not merely of us Christians, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."**

(pages 16-20 of the Original Essay)
(to be continued)

(Italicised emphasis is Dr. Pieper's. Headings have been added, paragraphs divided up and pictures added.)



"Blessed Are They That Have Not Seen, and Yet Have Believed"
(John 20:29).

Sunday After Easter

[From **"Der Lutherische Kirchenbote"** (The Lutheran Church Messenger) official church paper of our former ELSA in Australia, April 12, 1917, Vol. 44, Number 8, Pages 57-59; By the late Dr. Th. Nickel¹⁰]



If there is an historical event which is well verified as true, then it is the **Resurrection of Christ from the dead.** During the forty days after His resurrection the Lord had spent time with His disciples; He had spoken with them, taught them, had eaten and drunk with them and had been seen by more than five hundred brethren at one time. So **certain** were the disciples of Christ of the Resurrection of their Saviour that they gave their lives into death on account of their faith in

His Resurrection from the dead. **Christ lives; He has truly risen; that is irrefutably true.** That there is still today a **Church** which confesses the Name of Christ, that in spite of all the opposition on the part of Satan and the world, **the Word of the Cross is still being proclaimed today,** that still today through the preaching of the Gospel thousands are converted to the Lord and so the Church of Christ is spread throughout the entire world, yes, that the Word of the Cross, which is an offence to the Jews and foolishness



¹⁰ **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.

to the Greeks¹¹, still today overcomes the world **proves quite clearly** that Christ did not remain in the grave, but **has risen** and rules over heaven and earth.

Nevertheless, although the world has the miracle of the spread of the Kingdom of God before its eyes, it does not want to know anything about Christ's Resurrection and impudently denies the Resurrection of the Lord. That is not to be wondered at, for the world in its supposed wisdom does not know God in His wisdom¹²; it loves darkness more than the Light, for its works are evil¹³. Also the children of the world know all too well, that if Christ is truly risen, then there is a resurrection, **then also they will rise, however actually not to eternal life, but to eternal condemnation, to eternal disgrace and shame**¹⁴. In order not to have to admit this, they blaspheme Christ, who is Risen and immediately deny the resurrection of the body.

But even among those who here desire to be Christian, there are such who doubt the Resurrection from the dead. How is it possible, they ask, that the body which has disintegrated into dust and ashes, or which has become the prey of wild animals can be brought back to life? Because they cannot comprehend this divine mystery with their human reason, they deny it, for what they cannot understand and fathom, that they do not want to believe. They are like **Thomas** who did not want to believe except he saw beforehand. There are a great number of such unbelieving Thomases. There are thousands who **do not want to take their reason captive and place it in obedience to Christ** and for this reason they plainly reject important truths of Scripture because they cannot comprehend them with their reason. **Aren't we also threatened by the same danger that we allow ourselves to be led more by our blind human reason than by the clear Word of God?** As a warning the Lord calls to us, "**Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed**" (John 20:29). By these words He teaches us that **here on earth we live by faith and not by sight**¹⁵ and that for this reason we are to keep on believing and to stop our unbelief¹⁶.

THE LORD APPEARS TO THOMAS

It was the evening of Easter Sunday when the LORD had already risen from the dead. At the time the disciples were gathered together in a house and the doors were locked for fear of the Jews. Then the LORD stood in their midst and spoke to them, "**Peace be with you.**"¹⁷ When He had said that He showed them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the LORD. Then Jesus said to them again, "**Peace be unto you. As My Father has sent Me, even so send I you.**"¹⁸ And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them: "**Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosoever sins ye remit**

¹¹ 1 Cor.1:23, "**But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock** (Greek: "death trap"), **and unto the Greeks foolishness.**" Kretzmann correctly explains this as follows: "(Paul) simply preached Christ crucified, announced the salvation of mankind through the merits of Him who died for all. This Christ is indeed, as revealed in this message, **an offense, a scandal, to the Jews**; they will not accept Him, and therefore **their perversity causes them to fall over Him as over an obstacle placed in their path.** And to the **Gentiles in general, not only to the Greeks**, Christ the Savior is **foolishness**, the way of redemption as taught in the Scriptures savors (distinctive quality or smell, Ed.) to them of madness."

¹² See 1 Cor.1:21.

¹³ John 3:19, "**That Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than Light, because their deeds were evil.**"

¹⁴ John 5:28,29: "**Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good** (those who showed that their faith was genuine by producing works of ;love, Ed.), **unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil** (those who had no faith, therefore showed no true works of love, Ed.), **unto the resurrection of damnation.**"

¹⁵ 2 Cor.5:7, "**For we walk by faith, not by sight.**"

¹⁶ John 20:27, "**Be not faithless, but believing.**"

¹⁷ John 20:19.

¹⁸ John 20:21.

(forgive), **they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.**"¹⁹ What Christ has obtained for the world by His suffering and death, He gives that to His disciples, namely, peace with God. Peace, forgiveness of their sins, this is the first thing which the Risen Saviour communicates to His disciples. He showed them the nail marks in His hands and the mark of the wound in His side in order to convince them that it was He, their Jesus, who had risen from the dead. And the disciples were glad when they saw the LORD.



But when they reported to Thomas who had not been with them that they had seen the LORD, then he would not believe it, but said, "**Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe it.**"²⁰. Why wouldn't Thomas believe what his fellow disciples reported to him? Because he had not himself seen Christ. **He trusted his eyes more than the Word of God.** What he did not accept as true with his senses, what he did not see with his eyes, that he would not believe. Therefore he was (spiritually) dead in sin, for here on earth **we (Christians) live by faith and not by sight.**

FAITH TAKES REASON CAPTIVE AND PLACES IT IN OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST

But there are also still today among Christians many who will not believe what they cannot understand. What is the reason why the visible church is so split up into different groups? Is it not **unbelief? One will not take his reason captive and place it in obedience to Christ and will not believe what does not agree with his reason. One does not accept God's Word as it reads, but interprets it on the basis of his blind reason.**

BAPTISM



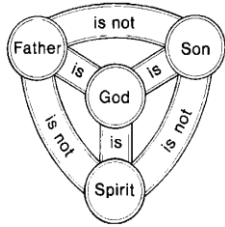
There is the doctrine of **Baptism**. That Baptism is the "**washing of regeneration**"²¹, that little children, because they need regeneration, are to be baptized, that they can believe²², **God's Word quite expressly teaches us all this.** But because this doctrine appears foolish to human reason, it will not be

¹⁹ John 20:23.

²⁰ John 20:25.

²¹ Titus 3:5: "**Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He** (Context: God our Saviour) **saved us, by** (by means of, through) **the washing** (the bath = Baptism is here described according to what it brings about; Compare: Eph.5:26; 1 Cor.6:11; John 3:5) **of regeneration** ([1] Bengel: 'the washing of regeneration, which is a *periphrasis* for Baptism into Christ.' A *periphrasis* is a figure of speech where a number of words are used to describe something rather than its expressed term: here Baptism is, for emphasis sake, described by what it brings about, namely, **regeneration**" [2] Baptism is **the bath or washing** that **brings about** or **effects regeneration** (Stoekhardt, Wessel), **and** (explanatory: it connects **regeneration** and **renewing**; and the **renewing** is a further explanation of **regenerating**) **renewing of the Holy Ghost** (The washing of regeneration is at the same time a **renewing of** the Holy Ghost. Through Baptism we are born again. In Christ, since the Holy Spirit has worked faith in our hearts, we are also new creatures who walk in newness of life by the Holy Spirit. Where does Baptism receive its power? From the Holy Ghost. It is not mere water. In and with the water the Holy Spirit is connected. The Holy Spirit works the regeneration and renewal)."

²² Mat.18:6, "**But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.**" In Mark 10:14 God emphatically states: "**For of such is the kingdom of God.**" Here Jesus tells us that **infants who as yet cannot use their reason are believers in Christ by Circumcision.** Since **Baptism has taken the place of Circumcision** (Col.2:11-13) and such infants are covered by Christ's command to make disciples of all nations by baptizing them (Mat.28:19), then baptized infants also believe in Christ. How it occurs we leave to God.



accepted by many. For this reason the Baptist church body²³ rejects the Baptism of infants.

TRINITY

That **God is Triune**, three Persons in one undivided divine essence, that the Father is true God, that the Son is true God, and that the Holy Spirit is true God, but yet there are now not three gods, but only **one God**, no person can comprehend how that can be with his human reason. **We are also not to comprehend it, but believe it.** It is by using their reason that the Unitarians deny the Trinity.

ABSOLUTION AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

When a **Reformed** person hears, as the **Absolution** is read out in our church and the forgiveness of sins is pronounced, then he asks: Who can forgive sins but God alone? He rejects the doctrine of the Office of the Keys because he will not believe it that God has given such power to His Church on earth to forgive and to retain sins²⁴. In a similar manner they deny that Christ's true body and His true blood are given for Christians to eat and to drink, in, with and under the bread and the wine, in the **Sacrament of the Altar**, because one cannot grasp how such can occur. They say with Thomas, "**I will not believe it.**"

But that is a serious sin. Whoever only believes that which he can grasp and comprehend with his human reason makes his reason his god and in His Word **God punishes lies. It is God's will that we live by faith and not by sight and that we believe His Word even when we cannot understand it. "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding"** (Prov.3:5), say the Scriptures, and Christ says, "**Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed**" (John 20:29). Yes, because the world in its wisdom knew not God, in His wisdom it pleased God **by the foolishness of preaching** to save all those who believe²⁵. What God has revealed to babies He has hidden from the learned and wise of this world²⁶. So that is God's arrangement that here on earth **we are to live by faith and not by sight.**

GOD LEADS US IN WAYS IN WHICH OUR REASON CANNOT GRASP BUT ARE BEST FOR US

That also applies with respect to **the way which God leads us.** When **Abraham** received the command from God that he should sacrifice his only son, Isaac, then he could easily have gone astray from the faith; for how could the promise, that from Isaac **the Messiah was to be born**, be fulfilled if he killed his son? According to human reason this command stood in direct opposition to the promise of the Messiah. When God commanded **Noah** to build an Ark on dry land because He was going to destroy the entire world by a great Flood, then Noah could easily have asked this: Where was all the water to come from to drown all the creatures? How foolish the instruction of Christ must have seemed to the **servants at the wedding in Cana**: "Bring it to the manager of the feast," namely, the water they had just then drawn out.

23 Nickel uses the word "sect." Today the general meaning of "sect" refers to **an anti-Christian group deviating from the vital doctrines of the Christian faith, like the Mormons or Jehovah's Witness. But when Pieper uses the term he is referring to another Christian church body with false teachings.**

²⁴ John 20:23.

²⁵ 1 Cor.1:21.

²⁶ Mat.11:25, "**At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes.**" To those who in childlike faith humbly seek to grow in Christ's Word, even though they are despised by the world as "ignorant babes," the Lord graciously continues to give them an ever greater knowledge and understanding of the doctrines of His Word. But to those proud Pharisees of the world who think themselves wise and learned, who seek to save themselves and who reject the Gospel of Christ, God's judgement is to hide these precious truths from them even though these truths are so simple and plain. See Luke 10:21.

When the Lord commanded His disciples, "**Make the people recline on the grass,**" -- there were five thousand men not including women and children in a deserted place --- even though there were only five loaves of bread and two small fish, then human reason could easily have asked: "Of what use is that? What is that among so many?" **But it is God's will that we take our reason captive and place it under obedience to Christ and believe His Word.** As long as we live here on earth we walk by faith and not by sight. But faith is a sure confidence in that which one hopes and does not doubt when one does not see it²⁷. Therefore Christ states: "**Be not faithless, but believing**" (John 20:27)²⁸.

THOMAS TAUGHT NOT TO DOUBT BUT TO BELIEVE GOD'S WORD

In this way the LORD spoke to Thomas eight days after He had appeared to His disciples for the first time. After He had greeted His disciples with the greeting of peace, He spoke to Thomas: "**Reach hither (here) thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing**" (John 20:27). How friendly a manner He admonish His disciple! He called his doubt "unbelief", however He did not disown him, but takes his doubting soul in a friendly way and seeks to heal it of its unbelief. And when Thomas fell at His feet and said, "**My LORD and my God**" (John 20:28), then the LORD answered him: "**Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed** (John 20:29). That is an earnest Word of God.

Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. Faith alone saves; but unbelief damns and doubt is unbelief. **It is God's will that we believe His Word and not doubt His promises,** whether or not you now understand God's Word, yet believe what He says to you. Once when Peter did not understand the LORD when He washed the feet of His disciples, then the Lord said this to him: "**What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter**" (John 13:7). Also it is the same **concerning** our reason when dealing with the truths of salvation which God has revealed to us in His Word that even though we cannot comprehend these truths, they are never *against* reason. Faith just deals with invisible, incomprehensible things, therefore we are to believe the LORD and take Him at His Word.

It is certainly wonderful that infants who still cannot use their reason can believe (in Jesus), but the LORD expressly states that. Even if we cannot understand the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit (in working faith) in a child's heart, yet we are still to believe that God, with whom nothing is impossible, has also brought about His work (of faith) in the hearts of little infant children. Certainly no person can grasp with his reason how Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar gives us His true body and His true blood as food for our soul, but we are to believe it because **faith holds firmly to God's Word** and the LORD says: "**This is My body; This is My blood.**"

TO US GOD'S WAYS ARE INCOMPREHENSIBLE BUT FOR OUR GOOD

In a similar manner God's ways are also incomprehensible, and His judgments are unfathomable²⁹, but will we for this reason doubt the wisdom, righteousness and goodness of our God? How many things are

²⁷ This is a reference to Heb.11:1. **Dr Walther** correctly states on this text: "Does not Holy Scripture say: '**Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen**'? Heb. 11, 1. (Luther translates: '**Faith is having a *sure* confidence regarding things hoped for and not doubting things unseen.**')" [Law and Gospel, p.139].

Walther explains this further on page 203: "Heb. 11:1 states: *Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* **We have here a definition of faith.** If faith is what is here stated: **a firm, reliant confidence, not doubting, not wavering,** it is self-evident **that faith dare not be based on sight, feeling, and sense.** If it is, it is built on sand, and the entire structure thus set up will soon collapse. Pity the person who has become accustomed to regarding himself as pardoned while he has pleasant feelings. As a rule, these pleasant feelings vanish in the hour of death, when the final agony drives them away. Happy the man who in that hour can say:

— I cling to what my Savior taught

And trust it whether felt or not."

²⁸ The original Greek is more emphatic: "**Stop your unbelief, but keep on believing.**"

²⁹ Rom.11:33, "**O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!**"

there in the realm of nature which we cannot explain and which don't they yet appear marvelous to us³⁰? Who would have thought a hundred years ago that today (1917, Ed.) one is able to speak to other people who live at a distance of many hundreds of miles away! What a mystery is the wireless telegraph! What a wonderful invention is the phonograph and now even X ray machines with which one can look through the body of a person! Yet there are many things which we confidently ridicule because they are not seen by the eyes.

What wonderful ways God led the patriarchs of the Old Testament and in particular Joseph! Has God made a mistake with someone in any way? Certainly not! **God has never made a mistake in His government of the world; no, what He does and permits to occur that always comes to a good conclusion.** In the same way God today still leads His children in a wonderful way. He takes away from a poor widow her only son who has been her support in her old age; He tears a mother away from her infant child; He allows a youth to die in the prime of his life; and the elderly who long for the end He permits to groan for years under the burdens and hardships of old age. You ask: "Why?" **God says: "For this reason."** And when God says that He has His reason for acting, you are **not** to ask, "Why?" It is not the responsibility of children that they ask, "Why?" when their parents command them to do something; they are to do what they have been commanded. In a similar way you yourselves are simply to **obey the Word of Your God** whether or not you can now grasp it with your reason and you are to follow the path on which God leads you even if it seems incomprehensible to you. The Lord states: "**Be not faithless, but believing**" (John 20:27). God's ways are nothing but Good and True which you are to believe even when experience seems to teach the exact opposite. Adhere firmly to God's Word. **Be not faithless, but believing.**

BLESSEDNESS OF BELIEVING GOD'S WORD

"Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Whoever does not believe is a miserable person. Behold, the anxiety which was found in the disciples as long as they were not sure of the Resurrection of Christ. They kept themselves behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. And so it still occurs today with all those who doubt God's Word and will not believe what it teaches; they do not have any peace. True peace is found and enjoyed only by those who have here learnt to trust God's Word in child-like faith. While the other disciples rejoiced in the Resurrection of Christ, Thomas had remained completely troubled in his heart. But when he had learnt to confess, "**My Lord and my God,**" when he had learnt to be ashamed of his unbelief, then he was happy since he also had found true peace. And so it is still true today that **it is a consequence of doubt and unbelief** when people have troubled hearts and lack true peace. The stronger one's faith is the more happier and more confident Christians they are. Faith takes hold of the Word and even though the heart says, "No," a thousand times, yet the Word is more certain to him.

"Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Here we walk by faith, but one day we will see what we here have believed. If God's thoughts to us also seem incomprehensible and His ways appear unfathomable, in eternity in heaven it will be clearly evident that they have been the thoughts of peace which God has had towards us and we will recognize that for those who love God **all things have served to work for our best spiritual welfare**³¹. Therefore, "**Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.**" With Paul Gerhardt we confess:

*"Upon thy mouth then lay thy hand,
And trust His guiding love;
Then firm as rock thy peace shall stand,
In earth and heaven above."* (Hymn 339v18 Walther's Hymnal)

[Headings, bolded emphasis, paragraphs added. BLW]

³⁰ In other words there are many things that occur in nature that are beyond our reason to grasp or understand, yet we take them for granted and do not question why they occur.

³¹ Rom.8:28, "**And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.**"

Foreword to Homiletic Magazine³² by Prof. Günther.³³

[Editor's Note: Because of the vital importance of **faithful doctrinal preaching of the pure Word rightly divided into Law and Gospel** and since such preaching is in **drastic decline** as Lutheranism departs more and more from God's Word, and since we are **living in the last days** when many people no longer want to hear faithful preaching, it has been decided to have a special section on it from our old faithful Lutheran fathers based on God's Word.]



THE SERMON THE MOST IMPORTANT TASK OF THE PASTOR.

Just as the **public sermon** is the **most important task** among all the official duties of the Office of a Pastor, just so it is without doubt also **the most difficult** -- it is a work which constantly leaves a pastor without rest; it **requires unceasing diligence** and **continuous study**. That is why the Apostle Paul calls such faithful preachers "**they who labour** (the Greek is: **οἱ κοπιῶντες**³⁴) **in the word and doctrine**" (1 Tim. 5:17³⁵), who exert such great effort and become weary with work, yet without becoming exhausted, who work there when they teach and who work when they themselves prepare the doctrinal message so that it all takes place correctly.

But what is it that moves a faithful preacher to apply *all* diligence³⁶ to (prepare) the sermon and to think about it day and night?

HOLY REVERENCE FOR GOD'S WORD

Above everything else, it is the (very important) thought that it is God's Word which he is called to explain. Since it is right for everyone to bow in humility and awe when the LORD speaks, Isaiah 1:2³⁷;

³² Jan. 1877, Vol. No 1 Pages 1,2.

³³ Martin Günther was born in 1831 in Saxony Germany and died in 1893. After graduating from St Louis Seminary in 1853 he pastored several congregations before being called to be a professor of Symbolics (Studies in the Lutheran Confessions as well as teaching the Doctrinal Differences between other church bodies and the orthodox Lutheran Church), Homiletics (sermon preparation) and Catechetics (principles involved in teaching the confirmation classes) at St Louis Seminary in 1873. He did this until his death.

The Concordia Cyclopedia (1927 edition) states of him: "He was a master of the art of saying much in a few words, particularly of bringing out the truth of the saving doctrine and of refuting error in terse and lucid language" (pages 306-307).

³⁴ **οἱ κοπιῶντες**; is a present active participle from **κοπιῶω**. **Prof. Wuest** correctly gives the full force of this expression when he states that it refers to "those who are **laboring with wearisome effort**." (Wuest **Word Studies** on 1 Tim.).

³⁵ **Kretzmann** also correctly states on this verse: "But the apostle singles out those that are **engaged in the hard labor**, in the **toil connected with the teaching of the Word**, in proclaiming Christian doctrine. These men, whom we now designate as **pastors or ministers**, are not only engaged in the **arduous work** of overseeing the flock of Christ, but also have charge of the **fatiguing labor** of teaching, both publicly and privately, in public sermons and individual pastoral application."

³⁶ Or "to make every effort."

66:2,5³⁸, then it is also right for a **preacher** to be filled with **holy reverence** when he desires to proclaim this Word. That is why the Apostle Peter requires, "**If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles³⁹ of God**" (1 Pet 4:11)⁴⁰. By these words the Apostle means to say that a **preacher is to preach only God's Word**, not his own thoughts but God's truths, does not add to it or take anything from it, but teaches it purely, plainly and unfalsified, that he is not to give away even the least of the **honour due to God** when He speaks to us in His Word and he is *not* to diminish the Truth even *in one part*. Therefore without any doubt the Apostle,

³⁷ **Is.1:2** (comments by Kretzmann): "**Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth**, the witnesses who were present at the giving of the Law, Deut. 4:36, were to hear the complaint of the Lord, as He entered into judgment with His people after seven centuries, cp. Dent. 32:1; **for the LORD hath spoken**, the very words of Jehovah, the self-existing and unchangeable God, being quoted here."

³⁸ **Is. 66:2,5** (comments by Kretzmann): " **2. For all those things hath Mine hand made**, everything that men might offer to Him was His even by virtue of His creation, **and all those things have been, saith the LORD**, heaven and earth with all their creatures having been brought into being by the word of His power, wherefore the hypocrites and believers in name only have nothing upon which they might pride themselves; **but to this man will I look**, such a one the Lord will regard with favor, **even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit**, whose heart is filled with genuine repentance, and trembleth at My Word, who stands in awe of God's holy Word and will..... Upon such a person the Lord looks with merciful compassion, him He accepts with a full and free expression of His grace.

"5. Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His Word, in a wholesome awe, in the reverence engendered by a childlike faith."

³⁹ "Oracles of God" here means "the divinely inspired Word of God." Luther's translation: "So jemand redet, daß er's rede als Gottes Wort" (If anyone speaks, let him speak as the Word of God).

⁴⁰ **Luther** has some outstanding comments on this verse. He states: "But in the **Church** we are dealing with a **spiritual government** where consciences are bound by God. And what is spoken, taught, commanded, or done there, must be carried out in such a way that you know that it is **valid and stands in God's sight**; yes, that it proceeds and moves before Him, **so that you can say: God Himself has said and done that**. For in this house where He lives and rules, He should and will, also as the rightful Master, say and do everything Himself, even though He uses the mouth and hand of men to accomplish it. **Therefore, first and above all things, both preachers and hearers must here see to it that in matters of doctrine there be clear and sure proof that such teaching really is the true Word of God, revealed from heaven to the holy patriarchs, prophets, and Apostles, confirmed by Christ Himself and commanded by Him to be taught**. For it cannot by any means be tolerated that the doctrine is handled as each **individual pleases**, or to suit his own fancy and to harmonize it with his human reason and understanding, or to toy and juggle with Scripture and God's Word, so that it is explained, directed, stretched, and patched at will for the sake of pleasing the people or for the sake of peace and unity. For in that case there would be no sure and abiding foundation on which the consciences could rest."

Again **Luther** states on this verse: "If anyone wants to speak, **let him keep his own words to himself**; let them count for something in the earthly government and in the home. **Here in the Church he should speak nothing but the Word of the mighty Master of the house: otherwise it is not the true Church**. Therefore the rule must be: **God speaks**. It has to be that way on this earth. If a prince wants to rule, then *his* voice must be heard in his country and home. Now if that is the case in this miserable life, so much the more should we let the Word of *God* be heard in the *Church* and in eternal life. All subjects and governments must be obedient to the word of *their lord*. This we call administration. Therefore **a preacher is God's steward by virtue of His command and office, and dare say nothing else than what God says and commands**."

Again **Luther** says: "For you should and must rather believe Christ and the Apostles, so that **you speak God's Word, and do as St. Peter and Christ the Lord here declare: Whoever holds to My Word, there is My dwelling. There is the Master Builder: My Word must remain in it, or it shall not be My house**. Our papists want to do it better; let them therefore remain in the danger. Christ says: 'We will make our abode with him,' and there the *Holy Ghost* operates. It must be a people that loves Me and keeps My commandments. That, in brief, is what He wants."

Finally **Luther** says: "Christ tells you and me something far different, namely, **that is My Church where My Word is preached and maintained pure and unadulterated**. Therefore St. Paul warns that we should **flee and avoid** those who want to lead us away from *God's Word*. For whoever **defiles God's temple**, which we are, him shall God in turn destroy, 1 Cor. 3:17. Now St. Peter also says, 1 Peter 4:11: Watch yourself, if you desire to preach, then **you should preach nothing but God's Word, otherwise you will defile God's Church**." (Taken from Pieper's Essay on **Distinction Between Orthodox and Heterodox Church Bodies**).

however, also *requires* that a *pastor preaches this Word* just as the *majesty of the divine Word demands, with holy reverence and awe.*

Just as certainly, therefore, as those who do **not keep** the reverence for God before their eyes **want their own skill** to be seen in their sermons by others, so certain it is that those who do this are completely unconcerned about the **form** of their sermon. **Holy reverence for God's Word** will keep the preacher in a constant state of faithfulness, filling him with God-pleasing concern, and constantly move him day and night to study God's Word diligently and to think about how God's Word may be expressed correctly in the sermon. For although he had studied sacred theology before taking upon himself the Office of the Ministry, yet he still knows that **he can never learn enough of God's Word** and that even in regard to the nature and manner (of presentation of) of the sermon based on the divine Word, he can never be perfect, but always still has much to learn.

PASTOR IS CONSTANTLY, THOROUGHLY TO STUDY GOD'S WORD

He agrees with what is said when **Luther** writes: "Therefore it [Scripture] says: *'Be vigilant! Study! Attende lectioni! Attend to your reading, 1 Timothy 4:13. Most assuredly you cannot read too much in the Scripture, and what you read you cannot understand too well, and what you have understood well you cannot teach too well, and what you teach well you cannot live too well. Experto crede Ruperto!* [Trans.: Believe him who has experienced it.] It is the devil, it is the world, it is our own flesh that rage and storm against us. Therefore, dear sirs and brethren, *pastors and preachers: pray, read, study, be diligent! Surely there is no time for being lazy, snoring, and sleeping in this evil time.* Make use of the gift which has been entrusted to you and make known the mystery of Christ. (Erlangen Edition, Bd. LXIII, 370-372. [P. E. Kretzmann's translation TM, V, p. 67...].).

PASTOR ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD FOR WHAT HE PREACHES

Then the *thought which the pastor has of being accountable to God* for what he says which he must first show in his work, which preserves him in this blessed concern, moves him **constantly to study tirelessly**. Our Lord Jesus Christ says "**that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment**" (Mat.12:36). Hence then there is no doubt that also every preacher must be accountable for what he has taught, *whether he has taught God's Word, and only God's Word and how he has taught it*, whether he has with all the ability which God has given him, and with all the diligence, with all the zeal meditated upon it in order to explain God's Word in the same worthy manner. Oh, how will those preachers one day stand with shame who, unconcerned about the content and form of their message, have directed their thoughts to other matters and have died without repentance!

(to be continued)

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

Essential Features of Luther's Principles of Hermeneutics⁴¹ Collected from Luther's Writings (by P Hoppe)[Lehre und Wehre 1882, pages 59]

- *The believers of the Old Testament believed in the same Lord Jesus Christ as we do in the New Testament, and were accepted by God not on account of their own holy life, but solely by grace for Christ's (through faith).*
- *Their entire Christian life consisted in faith and in love (which flowed from faith).*
- *Good works serve as the proof for faith, not in order to obtain righteousness.*

⁴¹ Rules of Scripture explanation.

LECTURES ON THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH THE TRUE VISIBLE CHURCH
OF GOD ON EARTH by Dr. F. Pieper.⁴²

NINTH LECTURE: (A) CONTEXT DETERMINES THE MEANING.
(B) LITERAL SENSE INTENDED SENSE UNLESS
COMPELLING REASONS TO TAKE THE TEXT
FIGURATIVELY.



As I have already mentioned Holy Scripture is so constituted that **the true doctrine not only can be drawn from it, but must be drawn from it**, as long as one remains with the words of Holy Scripture. A person must first set **aside (ignore) the clear words of Scripture or do violence** to the same, before one can some how fall into error in a doctrine.

**FALSE DOCTRINE ARISES FROM THE DELIBERATE PERVERSION
OF CLEAR BIBLE TEXTS.**

The history of the Christian Church also confirms this, particularly the history of **individual false doctrines** which in the course of time have found their way into the church. Actually no false doctrine and no heresy has arisen in this way that one had misunderstood the words of Scripture in which the particular doctrine was revealed. On the contrary, **the origin of every false doctrine** occurs this way: a person reads the clear and plain words of Holy Scripture and understands their sense very well. But he there finds a meaning **with which he does not agree**, a meaning which is **offensive** to his own interests, to the interests of his **proud human wisdom**, to the interests of his cosy, comfortable life and of his purse (bank account). Also in many cases his *bias* asserts itself by resisting the **plain and easily understood meaning** especially when he has grown up in a heterodox church body. So he now seeks another meaning than the one that he had learnt from the words of Scripture, **a meaning which is in agreement with his own personal interests**. In short, he arranges for himself *a doctrine according to his own thoughts under the guise of the words of Holy Scripture*. However, now he brings his own opinions to the fore in the doctrine which has been produced from his own thoughts and from the reputation of others. How? It would not do that he says to himself and to others: "Here I have a doctrine which does not stand on Scripture which I have absolutely invented myself." But he acts this way: he searches for Scripture texts by which he can force upon them the doctrines which he invents with some outward show. From here on he then perverts the proper **sedes doctrinae** (proof passages) for himself and for others. After this **manipulation** he finally takes his stand as if he has created his doctrine absolutely from Scripture and cannot budge from it for the sake of Holy Scripture. This is the genesis of all false doctrine, the formation of which we have more details to report.

ZWINGLI ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

Let me briefly show you **two examples**. In this way *the Reformed doctrine of the LORD's Supper* originated. Zwingli and his disciples could not avoid the **clear sense** of the words: "**Take and eat, this is My body which is given for you**" and "**Take and drink, this is the blood which is shed (poured out) for you.**" They **knew**: In this text these words state that **in the Holy LORD's Supper Christ's true body and blood are present**. That they knew this to be the correct meaning is indicated by this that they sought to get

⁴² **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.

rid of the true meaning contained in these words. They argued: "**How is it possible** that Christ's true body and blood are present in the LORD's Supper?" Indeed, they asked further: "For what **purpose** is the real presence of Christ's true body and blood in the Sacrament?" After they had so decided *among themselves* that the real presence of Christ's true body and blood in the LORD's Supper **was neither possible, nor of any benefit**, they sought an excuse for their doctrine in the Scriptures. They appealed to the passage in John 6: "**The flesh profiteth nothing** (The flesh is of no benefit)" (John 6:63), **where neither the Lord's Supper, nor the flesh of Christ is referred to.** They also appealed to the text in 1 Cor.10: "**Christ is a Rock**" (1 Cor.10:4), where **Christ is here expressly called a spiritual Rock**, whereas in the words of the Holy LORD's Supper **Christ's body is not described as a spiritual body, but as the true, real body in the words, "the one which is given for you."**

MELANCHTHON'S FALSE DOCTRINE ON SYNERGISM

In like manner, *synergism*, the doctrine of man's cooperation in his own conversion, has originated. Melancthon, the father of synergism inside the Lutheran Church, arrived at his doctrine **not through misunderstanding the clear words of Scripture which deal with conversion**, but by putting forward his own opinions. Holy Scripture says that every natural human being is **dead in sins**, so that just as little as it can be said that a dead body can cooperate in its own resurrection, so little can it be said that a man can cooperate in the work of his own conversion. Furthermore, Holy Scripture at all times, when it speaks of the cause of conversion, **states that conversion occurs alone by God's grace and God's almighty power**, Eph.2:5,6; Eph.1:20; Phil.2:13; 2 Cor.4:6.

Now how did Melancthon then come to this position of man being able to cooperate in his own conversion? It happened this way. When a person accepts what Holy Scripture says about **conversion** a certain **obstacle (difficulty) arises for human reason**. If a person adheres firmly to the truth that **God alone works conversion and man in no way cooperates in the bringing about of his conversion**, then he **cannot understand** the universality of God's grace, why not all are converted. **Luther** decided to put off the solving of this difficulty until eternal life. Just so the eleventh Article of the Formula of Concord shows that Melancthon did not believe that he was obliged to wait so long. For this reason, he, **against the clear words of Scripture, accepted the doctrine of man's cooperation in his conversion**. Thus he explains the origin of his teaching: "Because the **promises are universal** and there are not two contradictory wills in God, then there must necessarily *be a cause in us* why a David was accepted (saved), a Saul was rejected (lost)." As you see: he did not misunderstand the words of Holy Scripture, but by his own wisdom (cleverness) Melancthon arrived at his synergism.

Therefore if we want to remain on the correct path and continue as **faithful members of the orthodox church**, then we must watch ourselves so that we **never think about the Scriptures according to our human thinking** as "possibility," "usefulness," "knowledge of worthiness," etc. Also we must not desire to close the apparent gaps in the divine Revelation (**solve what God has not given the solution to**). Human thoughts which are inserted into Scripture work like dynamite as we see from Melancthon's synergism. Let us pay attention to this still further, as Holy Scripture expounds itself.

CONTEXT DETERMINES THE MEANING.

A further thesis reads:

"The Evangelical Lutheran Church is guided in its interpretation by the context and purpose."
[E].

We have already heard earlier: the meaning of individual words and manner of speech are determined by the context, while outside the context they are mostly ambiguous. **Therefore by the context and the purpose also the meaning of the words and the manner of speech of the Scriptures are determined**. Whoever in expounding the Scriptures takes no notice of the context, he interprets the Scriptures in an arbitrary manner, **instead of letting the Scriptures interpret themselves**. Therefore you

must **examine all passages of Holy Scripture in their context**, which you quote as proof for a doctrine; **words quoted out of their context (torn out of their context) prove nothing**. The proof which a person seeks to show by words which are quoted out of context is always only an **appearance of proof** (imaginary proof) whereby a person deceives himself and others. Therefore it is of vital importance when reading the Scriptures **always to pay attention to the context**.

EXAMPLES OF FALSE INTERPRETATIONS BY IGNORING CONTEXT

In Deut.28:66 we read about the Jews being scattered among the nations: **"Thy life shall hang before you"** (German). [KJV: **"Thy life shall hang in doubt before you"**.] Augustine referred these words to the crucified Christ, as if it were stated here: Everywhere, where the Jews would be found, there in the preaching of the Gospel would also be found before them Christ, the Crucified, their life. That is one meaning which does not contradict the Analogy of Faith. Everywhere, wherever the Gospel is, there is Christ, the Crucified, with the life that He has earned for us. **But that meaning does not occur in this passage**. The **context** shows that what he is here speaking about is **something entirely different**. In its context you read: **"And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning!..."** (Deut.28:65-67(a)). According to the context, the words, "Thy life shall hang before you," have the meaning: **Your life shall be constantly in danger, you will not be safe from danger for a moment**⁴³.

Let us study a further example from the present time how people **call into question the entire Christian doctrine by not observing the context**. The well-known Rev. Blumhardt in Bad Boll remarked on the words of Christ, **"This do, and thou shalt live"** (Luke 10:28), that from this text salvation was not by faith alone, but also works came into consideration, for the Lord here answers the question of the man learned in the Scriptures: **"What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"** with **"This do, and thou shalt live."**

That this meaning is **completely false** already arises from the context. Indeed, the man learned in the Scriptures asks this question as a **self-righteous man**: What must I do to inherit eternal life? And **to the self-righteous man the Lord gives an answer from the Law; not in order to tell him how a poor sinner can be saved, but in order to lead this self-righteous man, who at this moment thought that he could keep the Law, to the knowledge of his sins**. Hence also this text does not contradict the text in Acts 16:30 where the Jail-keeper at Philippi placed the question before Paul and Silas: **"What must I do to be saved?"** and he received the answer: **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."** The Apostle Paul speaks here of the Way of Faith, **because he has to deal with a poor sinner (who is terrified about his sins)**.

Hence the **Apology [of the Augsburg Confession]** says: "Locī integri prolātī plerūque secūm afferunt interpretatiōnem" [Latin: Triglotta, 200] (that is, **when passages are considered in their own context, they often yield their own interpretation**." (Art. LV, 280, p. 149, Tappert; Triglotta, 201: "And passages, when produced in their entirety, very frequently bring the interpretation with them.)

Gerhard: "The interpretation of every passage **must agree with the purpose, the circumstances of the members, and their order**. As the lawyers say: it is unworthy of a citizen to judge concerning certain words of a law unless he has first considered the whole law. **So no one can judge concerning the true interpretation of a passage if he has not regarded the purpose, the circumstances, and the sequence of the text**." (Exeg. artic., Loc. de S. S., Concerning Scripture, par. 535)

⁴³ **Kretzmann** states on Deut.28:67, "The uncertainty of their fate would keep them in a continuous state of fear and terror."

Pfeiffer: "If in the text there arises doubt concerning the meaning of a word, an expression, or a sentence, **we must consider the preceding and following verses**; indeed, in certain cases even the preceding chapters of the book and note which meaning of the word or expression in question agrees with the circumstances and the intention of the writer. This demands (1) the logical method of interpretation, which holds that **every writer is himself the best interpreter of his words, and that no meaning may be accepted of the text which cancels what precedes and follows and so results in the self-contradiction of the author** (provided there is no doubt concerning his infallibility). This demands (2) the well-known rule of interpretation: **Scripture must interpret itself....**For example, does the expression 'sons of God' in Gen. 6:2 mean angels or men? Answer: **According to the context the expression means the latter, for here the context does not treat of angels, but of the multiplying of the human race.** Since also otherwise men are called sons of God, why should the expression here mean angels and not rather men, as the context suggests? Again, was the one presented by the witch of Endor (1 Sam. 28:11 if.) the true, or revived Samuel, or **was it a ghost represented in his form**? Answer: **The context suggests the latter, since what is said in vv. 6:19 if., does not correspond to the true Samuel.**" (Thesaur. herm., chap. X, pars. 2, 5, pp. 324, 326).

LITERAL SENSE INTENDED SENSE UNLESS COMPELLING REASONS TO TAKE THE TEXT FIGURATIVELY.

The safe-guarding of this principle that Scripture explains Scripture also serves the following thesis:

"The Evangelical Lutheran Church recognizes that the literal sense may be either the improper or the proper one; however, it does not deviate from the proper meaning of a word or sentence unless Scripture itself forces it to do so, namely, by either the textual circumstances, a parallel passage, or the analogy of faith." [F].

The literal sense of a text, or the sense intended by the Holy Spirit, can be expressed either in a proper (literal) or also in an improper (figurative) understanding of the words. For example, in John 4 the literal sense is expressed in the proper understanding of the words, when it states: "Christ, the Saviour of the world." (John 4:42). On the other hand, when it states in 1 Cor.10, "Christ is a Rock" (1 Cor.10:4), then the word "Rock" is used improperly (figuratively). In its proper (literal) sense the word "rock" means a "stone". Christ is not a stone. However Christ is a "Rock" in the improper or **figurative** meaning of the word, He is a Foundation, a Rock of Salvation, a spiritual Rock, as it also has been shown in the text [Ed. see 1 Cor.10:4].

Now who decides when the words are used in a text in the proper (literal) or in the improper (figurative) sense? Everything depends on the correct answer to this.

Here we Lutherans say: **The decision on this point rests** with no person, no learned (theologian, Ed.), no pope, not the entire church, no creature at all, **but solely and alone with the Scriptures themselves.** However the Scriptures themselves come to this decision in a threefold manner: **either through the connection (context), or the parallel passages, or through the Analogy of faith.**

CONTEXT DECIDES Is.51:1

An example of the **importance of the context** is as follows: In Isaiah 51:1 we read the words: **"Hearken to Me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged."** Are the words "rock" and "the hole of the pit" here to be understood properly (literally) or improperly (figuratively)? The answer is: **Improperly or figuratively.** This is shown by the **verse immediately following** which explains the preceding words, "Look unto Abraham, your father, and unto Sarah that bare you." (Isaiah 51:2). By the word "**rock**" **Abraham** is to be understood, by the words "**hole of the pit**" **Sarah** is to be understood.

[Ed. The sense here is: Just as the Lord, as a miracle of divine grace, provided a son for Abraham and Sarah in order to fulfil His promise regarding the formation of the Israelite people, just so the Lord **comforts His people who look to His grace** that in spite of the Babylonian captivity He will by His powerful hand keep, strengthen and preserve His Church. The words "rock" and "hole (hollowed-out well) of the pit" refer to the **impossibility of Abraham and Sarah having a child without the special power of God.**]

PARALLEL PASSAGES DECIDE FIGURATIVE USE

Furthermore, the Holy Spirit decides the question whether the words of a text are to be understood properly (literally) or improperly (figuratively) by the **parallel passages**.

In many passages of Scripture the words "**the eyes of God,**" "**a hand of God,**" etc. have been written. Are the words "**eye**" and "**hand**" used properly (literally) or improperly (figuratively)? No person has the right to understand these words improperly if the Holy Scriptures in the parallel passages themselves do not require him to do so. But, now, **it does do that**. Holy Scripture indeed says: "**God is a Spirit**" (John 4:24). **Thus the Scriptures describe God as opposite to a bodily form**. From this we see that all texts, where human members (Ed. parts of a human body, e.g. hand) are being ascribed to God, are to be regarded as being used in an improper sense (figurative sense). **God's "eye" is God's omniscience, His "hand" is His omnipotence**. If we do not understand these passages in such a manner, then we would reject the Scriptural interpretation and fall into the error of the anthropomorphites [Ed. error of the Mormons] who ascribe to God a body and members according to the nature of a human body.

ANALOGY OF FAITH DETERMINES FIGURATIVE USE.

The Analogy of Faith compels us to take the words in an improper (figurative) sense. In Matt.5 and Matt.18 the LORD Christ commands the cutting off of the hand and of the foot and the plucking out of the eye (if they sin). These words are not to be understood in a proper (literal) sense, but in an improper (figurative) sense. Why? **Because the Scriptures forbid us to do it**. The Scriptures forbid it when a person mutilates himself. Moreover, the Scriptures teach that the sins which are here spoken about that are to be destroyed, are resisted not by bodily mutilation, but **by daily contrition and repentance**.

The truth, that the Analogy of Faith compels us to understand words in an improper (figurative) sense, nevertheless, **can be misused**. Thus our church for this reason reminds us that a person must use the **entire Analogy of faith** and not accept one part of the same in opposition to another part. For example, thus the Reformed have said that the words of the Holy Supper are not to be understood in a proper (literal) sense, because Christ has a true human body and it is against the nature of a true human body to be present at many places at the same time. However, we say: **Scripture clearly teaches both: that Christ not only has a true human body, but also that the same body is essentially present everywhere wherever the LORD's Supper is being celebrated**. Consequently **both statements belong to the Analogy of Faith**, are to be accepted in child-like (simple) faith and are not to be placed in opposition to each other.

John Gerhard says: "If you say that the rule of faith forces us to depart from the literal sense (in the words of the Lord's Supper), namely, because, according to the rule of faith, it must be held that Christ's body is one that is true and natural, as also that Christ with His body ascended into heaven, then this comment will be of help that the rule of faith must be accepted altogether and **that parts of it must not be placed in opposition to one another**. Holy Scripture teaches both truths: namely, that **Christ's body is a true human body** and that **it is really and truly distributed in the Holy Supper**. Both truths must be believed, and one must not be placed in opposition to the other; **for Christ's body is not only a truly human body, but it is also the very body of the Son of God; and Christ not only ascended into heaven, but also sits at the right hand of God.**" (Loc. de interpr. S. S., par. 154). [All quotes from the fathers are translated by Dr. J. T. Mueller].

[Delivered by Dr. F. Pieper on 24 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
LORD'S SUPPER - AN UNWORTHY COMMUNICANT**

(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 **56-59.**)

62. The Unworthy Communicant. A communicant is unworthy:

(a) who does not believe (in Christ)⁴⁴.

Note: A distinction exists between the unbeliever and those Christians who are afflicted with trials. **Those afflicted with trials gladly want to believe and also truly believe**⁴⁵.

(b) one who lives publicly in the works of the flesh, e.g., he who:

(1) is a slave to worldly lusts, earthly minded. 1 Cor.10:21, "**Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the LORD's table, and of the table of devils.**"

(2) passes the time in gross lovelessness against the neighbour. Those who are irreconciled. Cain brought his sacrifice and was full of hate.

(3) lives in sins which rule over him; he serves this or that sin.

(c) he who does not repent of his sins, the impenitent.

(d) he who is a hypocrite.

(e) he who has no knowledge of his sins and of his Saviour. The Lord's Supper is to occur in remembrance of Him (Christ).

(f) he who comes merely out of habit.

(g) he who is self-righteous, who wants to show his "piety". Nothing at this table is even meant for you, yet you want to help yourself from it. Moreover, he does not go to the LORD's Supper like someone who is sick goes to a doctor, but as a healthy man goes to work.

(h) he who doubts and questions God's Word, that is, not the faithful believers whose souls are afflicted, but those who do not bring their reason into subjection to God's Word.

Note: The small faith of the faint-hearted and those who have doubts is not a mark of humility but of sin.

⁴⁴ **Trig. p. 997:** "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.**"

⁴⁵ **Trig. p.997:** "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;** as Christ says, Matt. 11: 28: '*Come unto Me all ye that labour 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.].

"**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."

63. The pastor is to refuse the LORD's Supper to Communicants who are clearly Unworthy beyond doubt⁴⁶.

Note (a): He should be prepared rather to lose his life than to admit such a one to Communion⁴⁷. Chrysostom⁴⁸.

Note (b): If it were just merely bread and wine that was in the LORD's Supper (a meal of remembrance), then it would not matter so much.

One is to refuse the unworthy communicant the LORD's Supper:

(1) For the sake of God's will, because He has commanded it.

(a) God has instituted the LORD's Supper only for Christians. Whoever gives it to others acts against God's institution⁴⁹.

Note: Even (ceremonially) unclean people were not permitted to partake of the Passover. Num.9:6⁵⁰.

(b) One is not to give that which is holy to the dogs. Mat.7:6⁵¹. You are not even to eat with the same. 1 Cor.5:11⁵².

⁴⁶ **Walther**: "Such preachers act against the command of God: '**Neither be partaker of other men's sins**' 1 Tim. 5:22. Whosoever can prevent a sin and does only not do it, but rather himself promotes it, is partaker of that sin. Now those preachers often could prevent this dreadful sin of an unworthy partaking of the LORD's Supper. But prompted by the **fear of man or the desire to please men** they do not only not prevent this sin, but promote it by their frivolous invitations. O how dreadful will be their responsibility! How will they be terrified when God will lay to their charge all the guiltiness in Christ's body and blood with which those impenitent, unbelieving and erring persons have burdened themselves whom they admitted without examination! Surely, if unworthy communicants are condemned, those who enticed them must suffer tenfold condemnation." (**Der Lutheraner**, Vol.4, p.162).

From the old, orthodox **ELSA Dr. Th. Nickel** writes: "Should the congregation, however, decide to compel him to relinquish his stand in regard to these people and demand that he permit them to attend Communion, **THEN HE SHOULD SOONER SUFFER HIMSELF TO BE DEPOSED, OR HE SHOULD RESIGN, RATHER THAN AGREE TO THEIR DEMAND.**" (Essay on Church Fellowship, Nickel, p.50; emphasis added).

⁴⁷ **Der Lutheraner** (Vol.4, p.161).

⁴⁸ **Chrysostom** (349 – 407 AD, Archbishop of Constantinople, was an early Church Father): "I would rather **myself** give up my body and life into death than concede that the **body of our LORD** be given to someone who is an unworthy communicant and I would rather let my **blood** be shed than allow **His** most holy blood be given to an unworthy communicant" (Hom.83. in Matthew). [**Der Lutheraner** (Vol.4, p.161).

⁴⁹ **Der Lutheraner** (Vol.4, p.161, 162).

⁵⁰ Num.9:6-10 (with Kretzmann's comments): "**6. And there were certain men**, probably Mishael and. Elizaphan, Lev. 10:4,5, **who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the Passover on that day**, Lev. 19:28; **and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day**; **7. and those men said unto him, 'We are defiled, Levitically unclean, by the dead body of a man; wherefore (why, Ed.) are we kept back, literally, "shortened," not given our full rights and privileges, that we may not offer an offering of the Lord in his appointed season among the children of Israel?'** They had reference to the precept which excluded the Levitically unclean from offering a sacrifice and from partaking in a sacrificial meal, Lev. 7:21. **8. And Moses aid unto them, 'Stand still, have patience, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you.'** He made use of careful prudence in dealing with these men and with the situation in which they found themselves, lest hasty advice should meet with the Lord's disapproval. **9. And the Lord spake unto Moses**, in answer to his inquiry, saying, **10.' Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity, for this was to be a standing rule, shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, the former possibility, of course, including every form of temporary Levitical uncleanness, yet he shall keep the Passover unto the Lord, not merely as a privilege, but as a duty.'**"

⁵¹ Mat.7:6, "**Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.**" **Kretzmann**: "For Christians especially the **sacred doctrines of Christ** are the **precious pearls on the ring of His mercy**. To cast these before dogs and swine, **before people to whom nothing is sacred, that blaspheme everything holy, is to expose the most sacred beauty to coarseness**. And the **result** is that those very people are **encouraged to profane the holy name of God, to think it a proper subject of blasphemous attacks**. And it cannot fail: **some of the mud will spatter on him that lacked**

Note: By "**that which is holy**" is first of all to be understood as the **Gospel**. We do not give the comfort of private absolution, however (*for you individually*, your sins are forgiven), to the impenitent.

(2) **For the sake of our neighbour**, to keep him from great (spiritual) harm and not to strengthen him in his sins.

(3) **For the sake of ourselves**, so that we:

(a) do not become partakers of other men's sins⁵³

(b) are not found to be unfaithful managers (stewards).

Note (a): But the congregation is to:

(i) stand faithfully at the side of the pastor in these matters. How sad it is if a pastor indeed refuses the LORD's Supper to an impenitent sinner, but the congregation strengthens the impenitent person in his sins.

(ii) thank God for such a pastor.

Note (b): Every insult, like this, that we are being so **exclusive** that God must divide off a separate place for them in heaven, one is to patiently bear.⁵⁴

judgment; he will be responsible for the desecration, and therefore also guilty before God. Note the figure of speech used by the Lord, the second verb referring to the first subject, and the first verb to the second subject."

In connection with the Lord's Supper **Dr. Carl Manthey-Zorn** states on this text:

"These are words of our blessed Lord. By '**that which is holy**' He also means **the LORD's Supper**, which is one of our '**pearls**.' By '**dogs**' and '**swine**' He means **such as are known to be ungodly and impenitent**; for **after the manner of dogs and swine they abuse this most holy thing which the mercy of God has devised for us poor sinners**. Is it not so? **The LORD's Supper should be denied to such persons**. They would eat and drink damnation to themselves in the **Holy Supper**. They are unworthy of the LORD's Supper. And '**he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the LORD's body**,' says the Holy Spirit. (1Cor.11:29.)

"And when a pastor **knowingly and intentionally, out of indifference, from fear of men, or for the love of gain, admits such ungodly and impenitent persons to the LORD's Supper**, then he flatly **disobeys the injunction of the LORD and brings down upon himself the curse of God**. And when church-members, for any reason whatsoever, demand that such persons be admitted to the Lord's Supper, they are in the **same position**. The Lord's Supper is instituted for **Christians, for God's children, who repent of their sins, believe in Christ, and are earnestly resolved, with the aid of God the Holy Ghost, henceforth to mend their sinful lives**. It is good and profitable for every one to take this to heart." (Crumbs, pages 366, 367).

Dr. Walther very strikingly explains this verse as follows: "Of these things (consolation of the Gospel, Ed.) we are **not to speak to dogs, that is, to enemies of the Gospel**; nor to **swine, that is, to such as want to remain in their sins and are seeking their heaven and their bliss in the filth of their sins**." (Law and Gospel, Walther, p.114).

⁵² 1 Cor.5:11, "**But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one no not to eat.**" **Kretzmann**: "If any one calling himself a brother, professing to be a member of the Christian congregation, enrolled as one of their own number, is a fornicator, or avaricious, or an idolater, or a reviler, an abuser of others, or a drunkard, with such a one you should not even eat. Paul gives only a few examples of flagrant, heinous offenses, which obviously **make a person unworthy of belonging to the communion of the Christian brethren**. Business transactions a Christian may have with such persons, but to **enter into friendly relations of social intimacy with them, to hold fraternal, friendly commerce with men of this stamp, such conduct will never agree with the Christian profession**."

Dr. F. Pieper (Christian Dogmatics, III, 384): "Because the LoRD's Supper is not intended for believers and unbelievers, but **only for Christians, everyone who has made his Christianity doubtful for the congregation must, before he communes again**, enable the congregation to become convinced that by God's grace he has risen from his fall. **Scripture therefore expressly prohibits us to treat as brothers in the faith those who live in gross, offensive sins, that is, to act toward them as though nothing had occurred**. 1 Cor. 5:11: '**But now I have written unto you not to keep company if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.**'"¹³⁶

Footnote 136 reads: "The συνεσθίειν prohibits any table fellowship. '**We are not to have him at our table, nor are we to be found at his table**' (Meyer), much less are we to join him at the Lord's Table."

⁵³ 1 Tim.5:22. See *Der Lutheraner* (Vol.4, p.162, 163).

⁵⁴ *Theological Quarterly* (1905, Vol. 9, p.47,48): "When a pastor watches over the Communion and **refuses it to the unworthy and to those who can evidently not receive it to the benefit of their souls**, he is at once decried as being

64. One is to seek to prevent unworthy communicants from partaking of the Lord's Supper:

- (a) by public preaching.
- (b) by thorough Confirmation instruction.
- (c) by confessional announcement for Communion.
- (d) by the Confessional Address.

Note (a): Such refusal of Communion does not occur as often as it should.

Note (b): We **seek** to prevent them from coming to Communion, yet we do not pass judgment on their heart.

Note (c): If an impenitent person slips through (and attends Communion in spite of all our watchfulness), then **he** sins, and we do not.

Objection: Why don't you seek to prevent those people from hearing God's Word who hear it to their judgment?

Answer: We cannot prevent people from hearing God's Word and we have no command to do so.

65. Therefore only those who are Christians are to be admitted to the Lord's Supper. More specifically only those may be admitted to the Lord's Supper:

- (a) who have been baptized.

Note: It was also the same with the Passover.

Ex.12:43, "**And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, 'This is the ordinance of the Passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof.'** The statute of the Lord confined participation strictly to the members of the children of Israel."

Ex.12:45, "'**A foreigner, a non-Israelite merely living in the country, and an hired servant, one merely engaged for a while, shall not eat thereof.**'"

Ex.12:48, "'**And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised** and thus be received into the Jewish Church, **and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land; for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.**' the privilege was limited to such as had accepted the Jewish doctrines, that believed in the God of the Jews." (Comments by Kretzmann).

Antithesis. We reject the following error:

The Reformed in Switzerland in addition also allowed those who were not baptized to partake (of their form of the Lord's Supper).

- (b) who stand with us (agree) in fellowship of faith.
- (c) who can examine themselves.
- (d) who do not contradict their faith by godless conduct.

66. Those who are to be refused the LORD's Supper.

a.) The Reason why a person is to be Refused the LORD's Supper lies not in the greatness or nature of the sin, but in the position which the sinner has taken towards the sin. Such a reason can be his false doctrine, his godless life and the lack of his ability to examine himself.

b.) Those who are to not be at the LORD's Supper are:

illiberal, bigoted, and selfish. Pastors and congregations that watch over their Communion table have been defamed as being so **exclusive** that God must divide off a separate place for them in heaven. With those who count the Sacrament **nothing more than a memorial feast** it is **deprived of all sacredness**, and not a few will partake of it in any church where they happen to be, for no other purpose than just to **show themselves sociable and charitable**, and to exclude any one who calls himself a Christian from it is something for which they have not the least understanding. But **cost what it will, a faithful pastor dare not cast the Lord's pearls to the swine, or give the Sacrament to those who cannot discern the LORD's body**. The pastor who will admit any and everybody to the LORD's table **betrays his Master's trust**, gives occasion for **many to eat and drink damnation** to themselves, and **destroys his own soul**." (Pastor F. Kuegele).

- (a) **the unbaptised**⁵⁵.
- (b) **the unconfirmed**, yet here there would conceivably be exceptions⁵⁶.
- (c) **the impenitent, the unbelievers and the godless**⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ See *Der Lutheraner* (Vol.5, p.58).

Theological Quarterly (1905. Vol. 9, p.119): "The persons who are not to be admitted to the Lord's Supper may be classified in the following manner:

1. Those who are not yet baptized. Baptism is '**the washing of regeneration,**' Tit. 3:5, in which souls are '**born of water and of the Spirit,**' John 3:5. Baptism being the door into the Church of Christ, **its very nature requires that it must precede the participation in the LORD's Testament. The LORD instituted His Testament for His disciples and not for strangers and foreigners.** Concerning the Passover it was commanded : '**No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof,**' Ex. 12:48. Even so in the New Testament no unbaptised person shall eat of this bread and drink of this cup."

Dr. J. H. C. Fritz states: "*Only Baptized Persons are to be Admitted to the Sacrament.* --- This is so self evident that it needs hardly to be mentioned, since through Baptism one is regenerated and *received into the Church*, while by means of the Sacrament of the Altar the *Christian faith, already established, is strengthened.* **Baptism should precede the LORD's Supper; for through Baptism disciples are made,** Mat. 28:19; and **to His disciples Christ gave the Sacrament,** Mat.26:26." (Pastoral Theology, p. 150).

⁵⁶ *Der Lutheraner* (Vol.5, pages 58, 49-50, 94).

⁵⁷ *Der Lutheraner* (Vol.5, pages 58, 78, 65).

Large Catechism (Triglotta p.767): "We must, therefore, **make a distinction here among men.** For those who are **wanton and dissolute must be told to stay away; for they are not prepared to receive forgiveness of sin, since they do not desire it and do not wish to be godly.** But the others, who are not such callous and wicked people, and desire to be godly, must not absent themselves, even though otherwise they be feeble and full of infirmities, as St. Hilary also has said: **If any one have not committed sin for which he can rightly be put out of the congregation and esteemed as no Christian, he ought not stay away from the Sacrament, lest he may deprive himself of life.** For no one will make such progress that he will not retain many daily infirmities in flesh and blood."

Theological Quarterly (1905. Vol. 9, p.121, 122): "**5. Manifest and impenitent sinners must always be refused.** Because **the LORD's Supper is a pledge and seal of forgiveness, it can be of benefit to those only who repent of sin and desire to be rid of it, and the impenitent who expect to go on in sin would only eat and drink damnation to them selves. The pastor who admits such manifest and impenitent sinners helps them on in the way of destruction** and sins against the Word of the LORD: '**Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine,**' Matt. 7:6.

"However, it is well to be remembered that the Catechism combines these two things: '**manifest and impenitent.**' A **manifest sinner is one who lives in such sins which manifestly make a man an unchristian, and whose sins are known.** When such a manifest sinner repents and asks forgiveness at the proper place and in the proper manner, **he is of course to be admitted,** and if some members of the congregation suggest that one who has been guilty of disgraceful acts or has served a term in jail be not allowed to approach the altar with others, the pastor must not consent. Such a discrimination might have place if the essence of Christianity consisted in a code of morality, but the essence of our religion is comprised in the saying, "**that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,**" 1 Tim. 1:5, and in the days of His flesh He received many who had been manifest transgressors.

"Because **manifest and impenitent sinners are to be excluded,** it is evident that the **pastor dare not act according to his moral conviction, or even according to his personal and private knowledge.** He may be convinced in his own mind, or may know positively, that an applicant for communion is **secretly living in sin and is not penitent, yet he cannot refuse the Sacrament.** He may warn and expostulate to persuade such a person to stay away from the Lord's table, but **he has no right to reveal what God allows to remain secret,** and he must act according to Prov.11:13: '**A tale-bearer revealeth secrets, but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.**'"

Dr. Walther in his *Pastorale* (p.192, 193) states: "It is good to note that a preacher does not have to be certain that those whom he wants to admit to the Holy Supper are Christians standing in the faith. For who could do that? Rather [he must be certain] only that it is not provable or obvious that they are non-Christians. To act according to his moral conviction in admitting people or turning them away is an inexcusable lordship over the conscience...."

"**Gerhard** writes:".... So according to Christ's example, a minister of the church should not exclude from the Holy Supper those whose sins are still hidden but should seriously warn the unworthy before the harmful reception and admonish them to true repentance." [Translation by Dr. Drickamer pages 147, 148].

Dr. Fritz states: "*Those Living in Sin and Remaining Impenitent Not to be Admitted to the Sacrament.* --- It is self-evident that those who are not willing to forsake all sin and are therefore **impenitent ought not to be admitted to the Sacrament,** for they really do not in **their heart** desire to be free from their sin and to serve God by a holy life. The

Note (a): Even when the impenitent are dying they are not to receive the LORD's Supper. Whoever then dies in unbelief is also to pass away without the LORD's Supper⁵⁸.

Note (b): Yet the impenitent sinner must be **manifest** ("One who lives in such sins which manifestly make a man an unchristian and whose sins are known." (TQ 1905. Vol. 9, p.122).

Note (c): Is the pastor capable of judging whether or a not a person is penitent? --- Yes, when they reveal their impenitence by **outward** distinguishing marks. Of course no-one can see into the heart⁵⁹.

Objection (from those who oppose this, Ed.): Christ permitted **Judas** (to go to the Lord's Supper).

Answer: But his act (actual betrayal, Ed.) had not yet occurred and his intention to do that before men was not yet public⁶⁰. See Walther **Pastorale**⁶¹, Page 193.

outward act of communing and the condition of the heart would in such a case not at all correspond" (Pastoral Theology, p.151).

Dannhauer (1603-1666), one of the most outstanding Lutheran leaders of his time and whom the Concordia Cyclopedia (197) calls "strictly orthodox", warns against the admission of such an obstinate, manifest sinner to the Sacrament as follows: "For whoever admits an obstinate sinner, for **whose iniquity there is sufficient evidence**, and gives him the pledge of the forgiveness of sins, **sins against him in a threefold way**: with a **false witness** in which he takes part, with an **increase of condemnation**, and with a **betrayal of the body and blood of Christ**." (Quoted in **Communion Fellowship**, Walther, p.44; emphasis added).

⁵⁸ Walther **Pastorale** (p.191).

⁵⁹ **Der Lutheraner** (Vol.4, pages 106,107.): " But – and this is the question – *is the preacher capable of judging about the repentance or lack thereof of the penitent ?* **He is only able to do so by the signs that are visible to him**, but nothing more than that is required of him. Repentance, in as much as it is an indication of the inner life, and consists of the divine sadness of the heart and a believing appropriation of the service of Christ, is **only recognized in an infallible way by the One who is alone the discernor of hearts and reigns, that is, the most secret depths of the human soul**. But this **also exhibits itself by external signs which express this inner experience**, the sadness in tears of repentance and visible dejectedness; the loathing of them by the forsaking the same, and faith, by a humble desire for forgiveness. **Only according to such external signs**, even if they might, by all means, be deceptions, can what is occurring in another person be judged. For this reason Paul wants no one to consider him as anything more than what one sees or hears from him, 2 Cor. 12:6. In keeping with that **the preacher also cannot ask for anything more than the penitent's own declaration about his heart's repentance and longing for salvation and so long as only the external signs of this declaration are not manifestly contradicted, he must be satisfied with that**. Through his preparatory discussion he will seek to dispel all self-deception on the part of the penitent, he will size up the condition of the soul of the penitent in order to seek to impart the Word that through the Holy Ghost, whose work the Word inseparably accompanies, rightly fashioned repentance will be evidenced in the mind of the penitent – but when the penitent gives the assurance of his penitence, then he, so far as there is not presented evidence to the contrary, demands nothing more and he can, without violating his conscience, impart the Absolution to the same, yes, according to the official instruction of his LORD his is also bound to do so. On the other hand, **the preacher would be unfaithfully fulfilling his office if he imparted the Absolution to an impenitent person that he knows or could know as such. For whoever declares the godless justified, or condemns the righteous, they are both an abomination to the LORD.** (Prov. 17.15)

"But **impenitence must be in the light of day, in manifest marks that the penitent himself cannot justify**, as this is often the case. If such marks are not evidenced, even if there is evidence that causes suspicion of the presence of an impenitent soul, then the pastor (*Seelsorger*) must warn, threaten, beg, plead. Then if the penitent presents the confession of a rightly fashioned penance, he is not permitted to withhold the Absolution from the same. Rather, he is bound by his office to impart it to him, and he can do this in the assurance of God's mercy without doubt, fear or anxiety. For he is only the instrument of God. God will already know how to spot hypocrites who draw near to him with their lies while their hearts are far from him; for them the life giving Word will work death, the comfort, terror, the blessing, a curse." (pages 106,107).

⁶⁰ See **MORSELS FROM THE SAVIOUR** (2014. Vol.2, No.5, Page 14 Footnote 54.) We of the ELCR prefer to believe that as Dr. Ylvisaker indicates after examining the textual evidence in the four Gospels that "**according to the accounts of the three evangelists (Matthew, Mark, and John), Judas could not be present during the Sacrament, but must have left the circle of the disciples before the words of institution were spoken.**" If that was the case then those who object to manifest and impenitent sinners being refused the Lord's Supper have no argument here to stand on."

⁶¹ If we put the question, "Whether or not Judas did receive the Lord's Supper?" to one side, what **Walther and Gerhard** say about the **Biblical principle involved** and its **application** is important to take note of if there is situation

Note (d): For us such a case as Judas could occur if someone was reported as applying for membership in the lodge, but the admittance was not yet completed and if the matter were known only to the pastor⁶².

Note (e): If the sin is known alone by the pastor, then he should admonish the sinner to stay away from the LORD's Supper (until the matter is Biblically resolved, Ed.), but if he still appears at the LORD's Supper, then he cannot publicly refuse him the LORD's Supper and reveal his sin⁶³.

(d) **the self-righteous**, who remain in that state. This table also is not meant for you, since you yourselves want to lend a helping hand to your own salvation⁶⁴.

"Useless were for thee My Passion,

If thy works thy weal could fashion .

This feast is not spread for thee

If thine own Savior thou wilt be." (Walther Hymnal 205v8; Synodical Conference Hymnbook 311v7).

(e) **the heterodox**, who remain in their error⁶⁵. See **Abendmahlsgemeinschaft** (See section on **Communion Fellowship**).

(f) **the irreconciled**. The LORD's Supper is a meal of love⁶⁶.

with an impenitent sinner like Judas: "It is good to note that a preacher does not have to be certain that those whom he wants to admit to the Holy Supper are Christians standing in the faith. **For who could do that? Rather [he must be certain] only that it is not provable or obvious that they are non-Christians. To act according to his moral conviction in admitting people or turning them away is an inexcusable lordship over the conscience.** Even the Lord, who according to His omniscience knew that Judas was receiving the Holy Supper to his judgment, nevertheless **admitted him because he was not yet manifest to people [as a non-Christian].**"

"**Gerhard** writes: "Christ certainly admitted Judas at the same time as the others to the use of the Holy Supper, as is concluded from Luke 22:20-23, for although Judas already then intended in his heart to betray Christ, indeed, had already then been paid for unrighteousness, yet this very **serious sin was known to Christ alone**, but was by no means known to one of the apostles at this time, for they asked one another 'which of them it was that should do this thing' (Luke 22:23). So after a foregoing **serious warning to desist from sin**, Christ admitted Judas to the Holy Supper at the same time as the others. **So according to Christ's example, a minister of the church should not exclude from the Holy Supper those whose sins are still hidden but should seriously warn the unworthy before the harmful reception and admonish them to true repentance.**" [Translation by Dr. Drickamer pages 147, 148].

⁶² See **Synodical Conference Proceedings** 1904, p.41.

⁶³ **Walther Pastorale** (p.195): See **Pastoral Theology** by Dr Fritz p.153.

Theological Quarterly (1905. Vol. 9, p.122): "Because **manifest and impenitent sinners** are to be excluded, it is evident that **the pastor dare not act according to his moral conviction**, or even according to his personal and private knowledge. **He may be convinced in his own mind, or may know positively, that an applicant for communion is secretly living in sin and is not penitent, yet he cannot refuse the Sacrament.** He may warn and expostulate to persuade such a person to stay away from the LORD's table, but he has no right to reveal what God allows to remain secret, and he must act according to Prov. 11:3: '**A tale-bearer revealeth secrets, but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.**'"

⁶⁴ **Der Lutheraner** (Vol.5, p.58).

⁶⁵ **Der Lutheraner** (Vol.5, p.58).

Theological Quarterly (1905. Vol. 9, p.123): "**10. Those who do not believe the Lutheran doctrine, according to the rule: 'Lutheran altars for Lutherans only.'** Those who do not believe the real presence of Christ's body and blood cannot discern it, and though they may be truly converted Christians, yet their error must debar them from a Lutheran altar. **Those who eat of one bread and drink of one cup are to be one in faith**, as in love. When dying persons who belong to another denomination request the communion by a Lutheran pastor, it is sufficient that they confess their faith in the words of institution, i. e., in the Lutheran doctrine of the LORD's Supper. Time and circumstances may not permit them formally and publicly to withdraw from their former connection, and the Sacrament should not be denied them on that account."

⁶⁶ **Der Lutheraner** (Vol.4, p.199; Vol.5, p.58).

Walther Pastorale (p.194).

Theological Quarterly (1905. Vol. 9, p.123): "7. Persons who are **entangled in a quarrel** must be exhorted to comply with Matt. 5:23, 24. Very frequently such persons claim that they are the party which has been sinned against and therefore this word of the Lord would not apply to them, but even when this is a fact **they are, nevertheless, under obligation to seek reconciliation before communing. The innocent party becomes guilty if no attempt at reconciliation is made. The party that has done all in its power to bring about a reconciliation and has failed must be admitted to the Sacrament lest a penitent Christian be permanently deprived of the communion by the**

Note (a): Also the offended party becomes guilty if he makes no attempt at reconciliation⁶⁷.

Note (b): If one party willing to be reconciled, but the other party perhaps is on the other side of the sea, then the confession is sufficient⁶⁸.

(g) **the Excommunicated**⁶⁹. See section under **Bann** (Excommunication).

Note: Exceptional case: If they repent on their sick bed and evidence of such is given before witnesses, and are also prepared in their case to amend their life and are publicly reconciled with their congregation are to be given the Lord's Supper.

(h) sorcerers, fortune-tellers and all those who live in an ungodly occupation. See **Beruf** (Occupation, Calling), **Arbeit** (work)⁷⁰

(To be continued.)

malice of an enemy. A suit at court, if not carried on from spite and enmity, is per se not an impediment, but as a rule it is more advisable for Christians to refrain from communing while a suit is pending. In cases where restitution is necessary this should, if possible, be made before communing." (Kuegele).

⁶⁷ **Theological Quarterly** (1905. Vol. 9, p.123): "Very frequently such persons claim that they are the party which has been sinned against and therefore this word of the Lord would not apply to them, but even when this is a fact **they are, nevertheless, under obligation to seek reconciliation before communing. The innocent party becomes guilty if no attempt at reconciliation is made.**"

⁶⁸ Walther **Pastorale** (p.194).

⁶⁹ Walther **Pastorale** (p.196).

Theological Quarterly (1905. Vol. 9, p.123): "8. Excommunicated persons must first be received again into the communion of the Church, and their repentance must be made known to the congregation before they are publicly admitted to the LORD's Supper. When an excommunicated person makes confession on his deathbed and requests the Sacrament, his request may be granted before his repentance is made known to the congregation generally, but this is to be counted an exception to the rule." (Kuegele).

⁷⁰ Walther **Pastorale** (p.197): "Those who are living in an **ungodly** status (profession Ed.) are to be suspended from Holy Supper until they abandon this status (profession, Ed.) and devote themselves to a God-pleasing profession." Walther then lists a number of professions that are considered ungodly and includes quotes concerning them. Then he continues: "But a status (profession, Ed.) is not to be considered ungodly only because what it produces is mostly misused." Translation is by Dr Drickamer. The editorial notes are mine.

Fritz **Pastoral Theology** (p.152, 153): "Anyone engaged in an **unlawful or ungodly occupation**, such as actors (especially portraying sinful actions, Ed), sorcerers, spiritualists, fortune tellers, keepers of brothels, bootleggers, dispensers of forbidden drugs, abortionists, usurers, (those selling lottery and raffle tickets, sellers of corrupt and indecent literature, promoters of indecent films, Ed.), etc., must be suspended from the Sacrament until they forsake such an occupation (See Acts 19:19, Ed.). An occupation is unlawful, and therefore also ungodly, **if forbidden by the laws of the State**; it is ungodly, though not forbidden by the law of the State, **if it is a direct violation of a definite divine prohibition**, Deut.18:10-12, or if it is a violation of a general direction given in the Word of God that all that we think, say, or do should never be to our own or to our neighbor's harm, but rather to our neighbor's edification and welfare, Rom. 15:2; 14:19; 2 Cor. 12:19; Eph. 4:28-29. **We should be careful not to condemn such an occupation as that of makers of firearms, manufacturers of drugs, etc., as in itself ungodly, simply because it produces such things as by some are put to a directly sinful use.** Abusus non tollit usum. (The abuse does not prevent the correct use, Ed.)."

Theological Quarterly (1905. Vol. 9, p.122): "6. Persons who follow **dishonorable and sinful occupations** must first abandon their former way. Such, for instance, are keepers of lotteries, gambling dens, disreputable houses *et id omne genus* (and all of this kind, Ed.). Into this category belong fortune-tellers, spiritualists, and those practicing the black arts, concerning which we read Acts 19:19: '**Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men.**' People who use incantations and superstitious arts for the stilling of pain, discovering of secrets, etc., often do not know that these are sons walking in unknown sins and needing instruction."



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 5.
(Continued)

Because Carlstadt also wanted to make it a sin to call the holy Supper a Sacrament, **Luther** writes in the same writing: “Dear fellow, **do not let it be a small thing to you to forbid what God does not forbid; to break Christian freedom, which cost Christ His blood; to encumber consciences with sin where none is.** Whoever does and dares do this, dares also to do any evil. Indeed he denies thereby all that God is, teaches and does, as well as his Christ. So it is no wonder that in the Sacrament he wants nothing else than bread and wine, and is the cause of still other disaster. What good can the devil do?”

“Therefore listen to me, my brother, **we should surrender body and life for Christian freedom, as for every doctrine of faith,** and do everything that is forbidden contrary to it, and omit everything that is commanded contrary to it, as St. Paul teaches in Gal. 5:1. Since this same Christian freedom is in danger in regard to this word and name, Sacrament, **you are henceforth obligated to call the Lord’s Supper a Sacrament, in defiance of these prophets of the devil.** And if you are among them or come upon them, you must call it a Sacrament, not on account of your own conscience, but in order **to confess** and maintain Christian freedom. **Do not allow the devil to make a commandment, prohibition, sin, or matter of conscience, where God wants none.** If you allow them to make this a sin, Christ is no more, they take Him away. For with that kind of a conscience we deny the true Christ, who takes away all sin. So you see that **there is not a minor danger in these minor things if one wants to make them matters of conscience.**

“Just the same, if you are **forbidden to eat meat** on a fish-day, you must eat it. If you are **commanded to eat** it on a meat day, then you must not eat it. If you are forbidden to marry, you must marry or at least show that you want to do it, and so on. **Wherever someone wants to make command, prohibition, sin, good works, conscience, and danger where God wants to have freedom and neither commands nor forbids anything, you must hold to this freedom and always do the opposite until you have preserved freedom**” (Walch, XX, 278; Erlangen, XXIV, 214f. Am. Ed.40, p.151-152.). On this point, compare Article X of the Formula of Concord.

As far as the **confessional ceremonies** are concerned, they may not be enumerated for all cases, according to what has just been said. **Something that is a confessional ceremony at one time and one**

⁷¹ 1811-1887.

place may not be one at another time and another place. If the confession of doctrine and the preservation of Christian freedom are not endangered, the use or non-use of any adiaphoron is **free** for every church, as long as there is **no offense against love and the good order and edification of the church are not disturbed.** Ceremonies which the Evangelical Lutheran Church and its preachers cannot give up at the present time without weakening the confession of pure doctrine include: the omission of the breaking of the bread in the holy Supper as well as the use of the Apostles' Creed and the renunciation of the devil at holy Baptism. If a congregation did not want to conform to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in these matters, a Lutheran candidate would not accept its call with a clear conscience.

[Calvinists opposed the renunciation of the devil at infant Baptism because they denied that the child could ever have been under the devil's sway if he was one of the elect. The Reformed opposed the creed at Baptism because they denied that the Holy Spirit worked through Baptism to bring people to faith. The Reformed insisted on breaking the bread in the holy Supper because they saw it as a total symbolical action, not as a means of grace in which the true body and blood of Christ are distributed as the pledges of forgiveness and salvation. Giving in to the Reformed on these matters would have been agreeing with their reasons and so confessing their doctrine. KKM.]

NOTE 6.

No further discussion is needed that **one cannot in good conscience accept the call of a congregation that does not state that it wants to introduce pure church and school books.** A preacher who would look on calmly and permit his congregation to sing out of song books and its children to be instructed out of school books which **contained the poison of false doctrine** would certainly **not be a pastor [Seelsorger] but a murderer of souls [Seelenmoerder].** If the congregation does not yet have completely pure books of this nature, it would be enough under certain circumstances to **demonstrate what was false in them and to warn against it. But it should declare itself ready to replace them with pure books as soon as possible.**

(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.)

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 Bethany⁷², South Australia. (Taken from KB Jan. 1888 page 7,8)
[Continued from Jan.- Feb. 2015 Issue of **Morsels**].

Thursday, 30 June, 1887 – Morning Session

After **Pastor Dorsch**⁷³ had explained how Christ's atoning work is being denied through the doctrine and practice of the Roman Catholic Church in an anti-Christian manner, even the statement which has been made many times that the Dogmatician Baier⁷⁴ did not regard the Papacy as the Antichrist has itself been **refuted** by a quotation from his Compendium⁷⁵. Furthermore, **Pastor Oster**⁷⁶ pointed out that the word

⁷² This was at the church of **Pastor George Heidenreich** (1828-1910) who studied at Hermansberg 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 Hermansberg in Germany.

⁷³ **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.

⁷⁴ **Baier's** (1647-95) **Compendium on Positive Theology**, a series of Volumes on Christian doctrine, was corrected and added to by Dr. Walther who used it as the basis for his Dogmatical Studies with his students.

⁷⁵ A concise but thorough explanation of Christian doctrine in a set of Dogmatical works.

⁷⁶ **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,

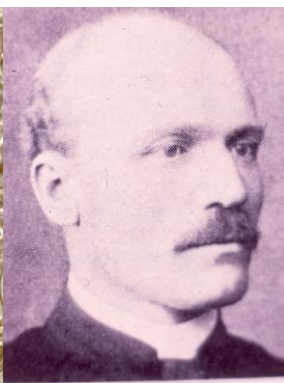
"Antichrist" in the Epistles (letters, Ed.) of John and in 2 Thessalonians is not used in one and the same way⁷⁷.



Pastor Oster



Pastor Ey



Pastor Dorsch



Pastor Heidenreich Snr.

Pastor Kaibel⁷⁸ explained that he readily admitted that five sixths of all who testified in their writings about the vices of the Antichrist agreed that this term referred to the Papacy in Rome, yet not all of them. And for proof that among Lutherans they did not stand alone in this position he had read in a long article about the Antichrist from the "Gotthold"⁷⁹, Year 1880, a church paper which appeared from inside the Breslau Synod.

After a long debate back and forth Pastor Dorsch declared that the question now arose whether both parties (the Australian and the Immanuel Synods) wanted to discuss matters further at all. For his part he

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.

⁷⁷ By the Holy Spirit John had written 1,2 and 3 John close to the end of his life. He died around 100-108 AD. Here in 1 John 2 he first refers to many "antichrists," many false teaches who would arise and lead many astray before the coming of Christ on the Last Day. Then he distinguishes these false teachers from "the Antichrist." The use of the definite article, "the" and the word "that" in the Greek: (a) identify this "Antichrist" as a false teacher who is unique in the worse sense of the term; he will lead many astray like as no false teachers before him. (b) It also points back and refers to 2 Thessalonians which was written about 50-52 where the Holy Spirit through Paul warned about the rise in the visible church of a unique false teacher in the worst sense of the term, the Papacy of Rome. (c) The context of John's letters also identify him as such by his false teaching.

1 John 2:18,22 ff.: "Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.... Who is the liar except he who denies that Jesus is the Christ; this is the Antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. Every one who denies the Son does not have the Father either." Again in 1 John 4:3, "And every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not of God, and this that (spirit) of the Antichrist, of whom you have heard that he is coming.. and now already he is in the world." 2 John 7:" For many deceivers went out into the world, those who do not confess Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh: this is the deceiver and the Antichrist."

Dr. Kretzmann correctly explains: "It is the period of the world's existence in which, as St. Paul had taught and the Christians had heard from all their teachers, the great Antichrist was to make his appearance, 2 Thess. 2:3-7. And even as the mystery of iniquity was already at work, preparing the way for the rise of the one great Antichrist, the Pope of Rome, so the Christians of those days saw, and were brought into contact with, many small antichrists, many false teachers whose doctrines were at variance with the eternal truths of the Gospel. All these factors were, even to the Christians of the early Church, signs of the end. Note: The great Antichrist has been revealed as such by the work of Martin Luther, whence we have evidence that we are living in the last days of the world."

See **The Pope—The Antichrist** by: P.E. Kretzmann.

⁷⁸ 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.

⁷⁹ It means "Gracious God." The Breslau Synod consisted of those who in Germany had opposed the Union Church of Frederick William III, King of Prussia. It was formerly recognised by the government in 1841. It was Confessional but later deteriorated. Pastor Hensel who was trained and ordained by Pastor Fritsche had been a member of this church before coming to Australia.

believed that it was possible if they declared themselves in agreement with the following theses drawn up by him which he placed before them.

1. We uphold **every doctrine** contained in the Lutheran Symbols⁸⁰ whether these doctrines occur directly there in the expressed words (**ex professo**⁸¹) or whether they are merely incidentally (casually, Ed) referred to, and regard such doctrines as binding on all Lutherans. But if it could be proven that the Symbols in some point are against God's Word, then it is self-evident that God's Word stands over the Confessions, although from our heart we believe that this hypothetical case will not take place⁸².

2. All possible new "doctrinal progress" and "doctrinal developments"⁸³ are permitted when people accept these errors either against the Analogy of Faith or contradict the presently already established doctrine in the Symbols.

⁸⁰ Book of Concord of 1580.

⁸¹ This is Latin for "a subject matter explicitly discussed" A Latin Ecclesiastical Glossary Dr. David Scaer.)

⁸² **Dr. F Pieper** correctly explains (Dogmatics, Vol. 1, pages 354-358): "In adopting its Symbols, or Confessions, the **Lutheran Church did not adopt doctrines which are foreign to Scripture, but confessed its faith in the doctrines revealed in Scripture.** The attempts to spread unscriptural doctrines in the Church under the guise of Scriptural teaching forced the Church to set forth in its own words what the Scriptures actually do teach. The Symbols, or Confessions, of the orthodox Church **are simply its affirmation of the Scriptural doctrine over against the denial of it by heretics.**"

Again: "Walther writes in his *Pastoraltheologie*, p. 52: 'The minister who is called by a congregation **must obligate himself to teach according to God's Word and the Church's Confession**; he owes this to the congregation as a guaranty that he will not dispense his own wisdom, but will preach publicly and privately the pure Christian doctrine and not attempt to be master of their faith.'"

Again: "The confessional pledge covers only the **doctrine**. It is the confession of the Church, and the Christian Church is concerned about the doctrine."

Again: "**Scripture alone decides which doctrine is true, which is false; but from the attitude which one takes toward the Symbols of the Lutheran Church we learn whether he knows and accepts the Scripture doctrine or does not accept it.**"

Again: "Chemnitz *Loci*, Wittenb., 1623, III, 235: 'The Symbols are not something alongside or contrary to Scripture, but are the very marrow of Scripture. And so we also say that we accept Scripture in the sense which is delivered to us in the true and proved Symbols of the ancient Church.'"

⁸³ **Pieper** (Dogmatics Vol.1., pages 129-134): "**There can be no development of the Christian doctrine, because the Christian doctrine given to the Church by the Apostles is a finished product, complete and perfect, fixed for all times. It is not in need of improvement and allows no alteration.** Christ's mandate (Matt. 28:18-20) extends over the **entire New Testament era to Judgment Day.** According to this mandate the Church is to teach the nations all things whatsoever Christ has commanded. And Christ declares further that the Church has His doctrine in the doctrine of His Apostles when He declares (John 17:20) that all members of His Church to the Last Day will believe on Him through the Word of the Apostles. The Apostles, too, insisted on the finality and immutability of their doctrine. Paul exhorted the churches to retain the doctrine which they had received from him. '**Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle**' (2 Thess. 2:15). And this injunction was addressed not only to the Apostolic Church, but to the Church of all times. That is evident from the passages in which Paul expressly refers to the future. '**After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them**' (Acts 20:29-30). '**In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils**' (1 Tim. 4:1; also 2 Tim. 3:1 ff.). Paul left no room for an interim theology. '**Keep this commandment ... until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ**' (1 Tim. 6:14 f.; 2 Tim. 4:1 ff. See also 1 Pet. 5:1-4). Paul's doctrine is the immutable divine truth; so much so **that Paul pronounces a curse upon everyone who dares to change his Gospel** (Gal. 1:6-9; 5:12). Because the Apostolic doctrine is immutable, Paul commands the Christians to avoid all who teach otherwise (Rom. 16:17) and to regard them as bloated babblers and ignoramuses (1 Tim. 6:3-4).—The theologians of our day and age should note **that Paul maintains the perfection of the Apostolic doctrine** especially over against those who claim to possess higher philosophical knowledge and deeper spiritual insights and presume to supply alleged deficiencies in the doctrine of Christ. He declares that those who believe the doctrine of Christ, as proclaimed by the Apostles, '**are complete in Him.**' '**Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit.... And ye are complete in Him**' (Col. 2:7-10; also 16-20)."

3. We are to guard against any conditional subscription to the doctrinal contents of the Symbols.

4. In addition we are to guard against the popular error of doctrinal development of modern theology by which certain parts of the universal Christian faith, especially of the Lutheran Confessions, are eliminated and lost as they are relegated to the area of debate.

After reading the above four points on the part of the pastors of the Immanuel Synod it was expressed that it had become apparent how both Synods are divided in several fundamental points and that it therefore would be best for the debate on this to be closed.

Pastor Ey⁸⁴ (of the Australian Synod) declared that he had received the impression that both Synods were still separated by a great division. For this reason he admonished against agreeing with the above theses **only outwardly** otherwise the existing gap would only be plastered over.

Pastor Kuss⁸⁵ found it irresponsible to destroy the unity of the church on account of the existing different points of doctrine, and he also expressed his amazement that yet no-one from the Hermannsburg brethren had expressed his opinion. To this statement **Pastor Heidenreich** responded that the Hermannsburg pastors had not taken any different position over against their Brethren in Office (pastors of the ELSA, Ed.), that they particularly fully agreed with the principles which were expressed in the paper of Pastor Dorsch.

Pastor **Doehler**⁸⁶ and **Heinze**⁸⁷ explained that for their part they did not agree with their Brethren in Office (pastors of the Immanuel Synod, Ed.) in regard to **Chiliasm**; the former added his explanation that he did not regard Chiliasm as the basis for severing church fellowship; the latter explained that although he was an antichiliasm, he would not in any way oppose it in the Immanuel Synod.

Finally the conference passed the resolution to raise the theses of **Pastor Dorsch** for further discussion in the afternoon session.

(To be continued)

[**Editor's Note:** In regard to the first point Pastor Dorsch makes we are reminded of what **Dr. Janzow**, an old Missouri trained pastor, and at that time **General President** of our old ELSA here in Australia stated in regard to the Lutheran Confessions in 1936: "The Symbols are binding in respect to all their **doctrines**, whether treated **ex professo** (expressly), or merely introduced in support of other doctrines, inasmuch as they teach no doctrine for which they do not furnish sufficient Scriptural proof. Inasmuch as the subscription with "**quia**" (**because**) demands **acceptance of every doctrine in the Symbols**, no teacher is permitted to place any doctrine on the free list, cast doubt on any fact of doctrine, deny those doctrines they affirm, and affirm those they reject and condemn." (ATR 1936,p.92).]

Again: "That there can be no development of the Christian doctrine is, finally, evidenced by the patent fact that **whenever men set out to develop the doctrine, they invariably pervert and destroy the Christian doctrine.**"

⁸⁴ **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.

⁸⁵ **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.

⁸⁶ **Pastor Carl Doehler** (1854-1927) studied at Neuendettelsau (the home of the evil "Open Questions" principle) from 1878 until 1881. He was intellectually gifted having also done university studies.

⁸⁷ **Pastor Carl Heinze** (1827-1891) started studies under Pastor Fritzsche (1843-1851) and left to go to the gold fields in 1851. Later he returned and was ordained in 1862 on the Lutheran Confessions by a **Congregational minister** and later joined the Immanuel Synod. He was at Krondorf at the time.

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.

(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.

(II) The Miserable Condition of the Godless is Described. Verses 4 and 5.

(1) With a Brief Verdict: “*The ungodly are not so; ... like the chaff which the wind driveth away.*” Verse 4.

Verse 4.

Verse 4: "The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away."

The Miserable Condition of the Godless is Described.

The ungodly are not so: However not so are the **ungodly**⁸⁹, v.1. They are people who have an evil and disturbed mind, they are not like a succulent, green fruitful tree which is not only elegant to look at, but also useful.

but are like the chaff: but are like the light and contemptible **chaff**, Ps.35:5⁹⁰, Job 21:18⁹¹, Is 17:13⁹², Is.29:5⁹³, etc.

⁸⁸ This **J. G. Starke** (1630- 1695), a faithful Lutheran Commentator, is not to be confused with contemporaneous Johann Friedrich Stark (1680-1675) who was a pietist, and whose prayer book Dr. Franz Pieper reworked. Christoph Starke, J. G. Starke's father, completed the OT commentary from Genesis through Job. He also did all of the NT commentary. However, the OT from Psalms through Malachi was done by Johann George Starke (Notes from Pastor Jonathan Neipp of the LCR).

⁸⁹ **רָשָׁע** (*rasha*): In the Hebrew the same word for "ungodly" is used here as in Verse 1.

On Verse 1 Starke described as "unrestrained, immoral sinners, whose heart is far from God and from His blessed fellowship."

The Hebrew word for “**ungodly**” comes from a verb which means “to loose,” describing them as having fallen away from God and no longer wanting anything more to do with Him. This word carries two ideas. First, it means to be loose with reference to morals. It means immoral and without Godly restraint or controls. It also means ungodly, godless, or negative toward God, loose from God, without Him as an anchor or controlling factor. It refers to those who are guided and controlled by their own desires, emotions, impulses of the mind and flesh rather than by the Word of God.

⁹⁰ Ps.35:5, "**Let them be as chaff before the wind**, scattered to the four corners of the earth; **and let the Angel of the LORD chase them**, Jehovah Himself, in the person of this Angel, thrusting them down and destroying them" (Comments by Kretzmann).

The Hebrew scholar, **Dr. Allen P. Ross**, correctly comments on Ps.35:5 as follows: "As seen in Psalm 1 the image of **chaff** indicates that they are **worthless to God because of their wickedness** and will be removed in judgment. He is praying here for that **judgment that separates the chaff from the wheat**, the wicked from the righteous. In the

which the wind driveth away: the wind of divine wrath scatters. The chaff is scattered by the wind especially on that day when it is separated from the grain when it is winnowed on the threshing floor (Septuagint⁹⁴: "*which the wind scatters from the face of the earth.*"). Yes, He will even consume it with fiery zeal as stubble is burnt Mat.3:12,10⁹⁵; 7:19⁹⁶; Luke 3:17⁹⁷, 9⁹⁸.

simile the wind (רוּחַ) will drive the chaff away, but it will be **the LORD who drives them away:**"the Angel ("a" capitalised by Ed.) of the LORD thrusting." The form of this verb is the participle (רוֹחֵה), 'thrusting away.'" [Commentary on Psalms, Vol.1, p.767].

⁹¹ Job 21:18, " **They** (the ungodly, the wicked, Ed.) **are as stubble before the wind and as chaff that the storm carried away.**"

⁹² Is.17:13, "**The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters**, in an apparently irresistible tidal wave; **but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off**, rather, it, the threatening tide of hostility, **and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind**, the picture being taken from the open threshing-floors of the Orient, which were usually situated in elevated places, **and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind**, like whirling dust or particles of straw from the threshing-floor, as the wind picks them up and flings them away." (Comments by Kretzmann).

⁹³ Is.29:5, "**Moreover, the multitude of thy strangers**, of the enemies of Zion, **shall be like small dust**, utterly crushed, **and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away**, carried off by the wind without a trace to show that they were there; **yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly**, the destruction coming upon them in a moment." (Comments by Kretzmann).

⁹⁴ Greek translation of the Old Testament which was begun about 285 BC and completed before 130 BC (Concordia Cyclopedia 1927 Edition, page 79).

⁹⁵ Mat.3:12: "**Whose fan is in His hand, and He will throughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.**' The picture is that of a **threshing-floor** in the Orient, a flat, open space paved with stones. The husbandman has **driven his oxen across the floor to tread out the grain from the hulls**, or his workmen have beaten it out **with flails**. Now comes the **purging of the floor to separate the stalks and the hulls from the grain, and the winnowing of the loose matter with a fan to blow away the lighter chaff and leave the heavier kernels**. God's great threshing-floor is the earth. The test by which He decides the fate of every person in the world, by which He separates the wheat from the chaff, **is the relation toward Jesus and His salvation**. Those that are found **secure in His redemption through faith are gathered safely into the garner of heaven**. But those that are found too light, either on account of their **reliance upon their own self-righteousness** or because they esteem a mere external church-membership a sufficient guarantee of the joys of heaven, will find themselves subjected to the **violent, inextinguishable fire, not only of the judgment, Mal. 4:1, but of hell. Matt. 25:41.**" (Comments by Kretzmann).

Mat.3:10: "**And now also the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.**' The ax has been placed, it is even now ready to begin its work of just retribution, of **stern justice** upon every spurious descendant of Abraham. **Every tree which proves itself hopelessly barren cannot escape the near inevitable doom....** Not only is fruit demanded, which may, under circumstances, be unpalatable and even poisonous, but his condition is that the **tree produce good fruit**. Unless this demand is met, there is no other alternative: **The useless tree is condemned to be firewood**; the unbelieving Jew will be **excluded** from the kingdom of the Messiah." (Comments by Kretzmann).

⁹⁶ Mat.7:19, "**Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.**' So far as the test of trees is concerned, men's judgment in their case is so definite and absolute that **they do not hesitate to cut down and burn a bad tree**, knowing very well that it is beyond all possibility for that tree to bring forth good fruit the next year. But this judgment will strike also those that are guilty of false teaching and living, **whose fruits must finally reveal the condition of their hearts. Theirs will be the punishment of the fire of hell**. In the mean time the Christians must not forget their duty to test and examine the doctrine and the works of the false teachers, lest they become guilty of laxness in spiritual matters." (Comments by Kretzmann).

⁹⁷ Luke 3:17, "**Whose fan is in His hand, and He will throughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable.**' But woe unto those that refused to accept this Saviour with His Holy Ghost. As the husbandman separates the chaff from the wheat by a careful and repeated use of the fan, gathers the wheat into his granary, but burns the useless chaff, so Christ, as the Judge of the world, will deal with those that have been weighed and found wanting, that have the outward appearance and behaviour of real believers, but lack true, sanctifying faith. Unquenchable fire in the abyss of hell will be their lot." (Comments by Kretzmann).

⁹⁸ Luke 3:9: "**And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees; every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.**' Of the entire Jewish nation the words were true that the ax

COMMENTS BY STARKE ON VERSE 4

The benefit of Godliness is here presented **very emphatically** to the conviction of the mind and even more clearly and obviously **by referring to the wretched state of the godless**. According to the original (Hebrew) text this verse reads: "**Not so the godless!**" The sentence is cut short⁹⁹. This indicates the highest degree of emotion of the author who stirs up a strong and powerful feeling in the mind over against that which has produced this miserable condition of the godless. The Septuagint and other translations have emphatically expressed the literal words and have stated and repeated this most important expression: "**NOT SO THE UNGODLY -- NOT SO.**"

[To be continued]



[Ed. Both the Old and New Testaments refer to the threshing floor as a **symbol of judgment**. [Jer. 51:33](#). As seen in the above texts John the Baptist uses the imagery of the threshing floor to describe the coming Messiah who would separate the true believers from the false."

Dr. Stoeckhardt: "Grain was threshed and beaten out on some high ground with a flail, and then cast into the air. The fresh breezes then would blow and so separate the chaff from the wheat which would then be gathered into the garner. In applying this picture, **the Psalmist already foreshadows the end of the ungodly** . **The day will come when the Lord will purge His threshing floor and reject the ungodly forever.**" (Select Psalms page 16.)].

was laid to the roots; if the national tree would not bring forth fruit when this last great chance was offered them and bring forth good fruit, then their judgment would be carried out upon them, as a warning also for all future generations, no matter where they might be living in the world. The last great visitation of grace for the children had dawned with the coming of the Baptist. Once more and for the last time the hand of sparing mercy stayed the hand of avenging justice which had even now lifted the ax; the people as a whole rejected the Savior, and the ax of God's wrath cut down the unfruitful fig-tree in the vineyard." (Comments by Kretzmann).

⁹⁹ This is a **figure of speech** (aposiopesis) where the speaker **suddenly breaks off what is being said with a short, but sudden silence**, as here in the Hebrew: "**Not so the ungodly ----.**" The Hebrew scholar **Dr. Allen P. Ross** describes this figure of speech as follows: "The sentence is not complete because of the intense emotion involved."

It expresses **deep emotion** to indicate the author's concern about the loss of the salvation of the godless, **powerful emphasis** to show **how important and serious this matter is** which is going to be referred to and **strong contrast as a warning to the Godly** in child-like faith **NOT to walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor to stand in the way of sinners, nor to sit in the seat of the scornful, but constantly to meditate of God's Word** and to show their faith in **true obedience to Christ**.

Dr. Ross again comments: "A **strong contrast** now shifts the focus of the Psalm: '**Not so are the ungodly!**' The rest of the verse uses a **simile** to explain that the ungodly life is worthless [Ed. He later points out that it ends in eternal death.] -- and this makes the warning to avoid the advice of the ungodly even more compelling." (Vol.1, page 191).