

# 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. Responsibility for all translation work and notes is taken by Pastor B. L. Winter of the ELCR.]

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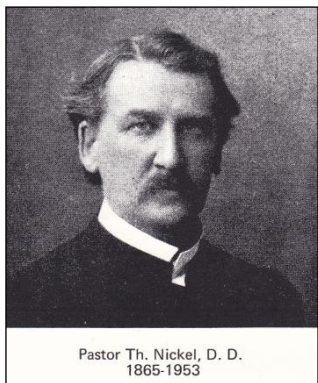
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## SERMON

[From “Der Lutherische Kirchenbote” (The Lutheran Church Messenger) the official church paper of our former ELSA here in Australia, August 3, 1916, Vol. 43, Number 16, Pages 122-123.]



Pastor Th. Nickel, D. D.  
1865-1953

**“You Are The Light of the World”<sup>1</sup>** Mat.5:13,14  
(by the late Dr. Th. Nickel<sup>2</sup>)  
[Conclusion.]

This important duty which we Christians have over against the world the Lord shows us in another picture. He states: “**Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle<sup>3</sup> and put it under a bushel<sup>4</sup>, but on a candlestick<sup>5</sup>, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven**” (Mat.5:14-16).

## CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE A LIGHT IN THE WORLD.

“**Ye are the light of the world,**” the Lord states. Just as true Christians are the **salt** of the world, just so they are the **light** of the world. Now this is also their duty that they are to illuminate the world as a light. By nature Christians are also in darkness. Sin has darkened their understanding. But Christ who is the true, real Light of the world has enlightened them through the bright light of the Gospel and made them by it Children of Light. Christians are a light in the Lord. Certainly, they also still have much darkness in their sinful nature. Because they are and remain sinful human beings, they themselves therefore must also especially

<sup>1</sup> Last time Dr. Nickel dealt with Christians being the “salt of the world.”

<sup>2</sup> **Dr Nickel** (1865- 1953) graduated from Concordia Seminary, St Louis in 1888. From 1901 to 1923 he served in our former ELSA, being its president from 1903-1922. From 1924-1930 he was President of the Free Church of Saxony. He returned to Australia in 1935. He was an outstanding orthodox theologian of the Old Missouri type.

<sup>3</sup> The Greek word refers to a lamp that was customarily used in those times.

<sup>4</sup> Earthenware grain measure holding a little more than a peck which is a container holding about 9 litres.

<sup>5</sup> The Greek word refers to a lamp stand. The lamp should be placed on a stand, a small projecting stone in the wall in the houses of the poor, or a lamp-stand in the form of a tripod, which could easily be moved about in the house.

make use of the bright light of the Gospel for themselves in order that their understanding may be enlightened more and more. But insofar as they are Christians, they are a light, *the* light of the world.

### BY NATURE ENTIRE WORLD IS IN SPIRITUAL DARKNESS

As a light they are now to illuminate the world, that is, they are to bring to them the true knowledge of God<sup>6</sup>. The world which knows nothing of God and does not want to know dwells in the night and darkness. **“Darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people”** (Is.60:2). All mankind, even the cleverest and most learned are blind in spiritual things. They understand nothing of the Spirit of God. All Divine things are foolishness to them.<sup>7</sup> The darkness is a picture of death. The children of this world, all unbelievers lie in death; they are dead, spiritually dead<sup>8</sup>, through trespasses and sins. They are incapable of doing the least good in the sight of God; they are children of wrath and damnation<sup>9</sup>. If the light is not brought to the world so that it can be illuminated, then it must perish in the darkness of sin.

That is now the duty and sacred obligation of all Christians that they spiritually illuminate the world. They are the light of the world. Through them the blind world is to come to a saving knowledge of God<sup>10</sup>. As a light they can do nothing else but shine. If they stop shining, then they are no longer a light, but are themselves darkness. It is in the nature of light that it shines. Could a city that is also situated on a hill remain hidden? No, since it stands out in the country and it is visible to all those to whom it shows the way. The Church of Christ is a city of God which must catch the eye of everyone which cannot remain hidden. Already Isaiah states: **“O Zion<sup>11</sup>, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain<sup>12</sup>; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings<sup>13</sup>, lift up thy voice with strength<sup>14</sup>; lift it up, be not afraid<sup>15</sup>; say unto the cities of Judah<sup>16</sup>, ‘Behold your God!’<sup>17</sup>”** (Is.40:9). Christians, because they are enlightened by Christ, because they have become a light, they are to let their light shine by testifying of Christ. When it is dark a person does not then light a lamp and place it under an earthenware container for grain! It would benefit no-one there. But you place it on a lamp stand so that all those who are in the house can see. Hence our Christianity benefits no-one else if we keep it to ourselves. Christ has made us to be a light so that we do not hide the light, but that we let it shine so that everyone may see our good works and glorify God in heaven.

### DUTY OF CHRISTIANS TO CONFESS THEIR FAITH IN WORD AND ACTIONS

That is the duty of Christians, their **life’s** duty to confess their faith, to testify of Christ, through word and conduct to let their light shine. That is the glorious work that a Christian can do that he testifies about Christ

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<sup>6</sup> The true knowledge of God is found only in God’s Word. It is God’s Word, rightly divided into Law and Gospel, that the Christian is to bring to the world.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor.2:14, **“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”**

<sup>8</sup> The Biblical meaning of **death** is **“separation.”** **Temporal death** is separation of body and soul: the body returns to the dust of the earth; the soul to hell or heaven, Compare Luke 16:23. **Spiritual death** is separation from God through unbelief here in this world – all unconverted people in this world are in a state of spiritual death. **Eternal death** is everlasting separation from God in the torments of hell, Mat.25:41. Spiritual death is described in Eph.2:1, **“You... were dead in trespasses and sins.”**

<sup>9</sup> Eph.2:3, **“We... were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”**

<sup>10</sup> Faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ as this is revealed in the Gospel.

<sup>11</sup> The Christian Church is here portrayed as an evangelist proclaiming the message of the Gospel of salvation.

<sup>12</sup> The Church is to proclaim the pure Word of the Gospel so that it is heard far and wide.

<sup>13</sup> This is **parallelism**, a Hebrew principle, where “Jerusalem,” another picture of the Christian Church, is repeated as proclaiming the Gospel, for further explanation of “Zion” and **emphasis**. This is meant to bring out **the urgency of God’s call to proclaim His Word until the last day.**

<sup>14</sup> This message is to be proclaimed joyfully and forcefully.

<sup>15</sup> True Christians are **not to be faint-hearted** on account of their feeling of unworthiness or due to the vicious attacks of Satan, but they are to spread the Gospel with **courage and determination** given to them by the grace of God.

<sup>16</sup> **Kretzmann** comments on these words: “All those who have **experienced tribulation** similar to that of the mother.”

<sup>17</sup> The true God is our God **only through faith in Christ Jesus our Saviour**. He is the almighty Protector and Rescuer of His Children.

and thereby brings to others the knowledge of salvation. We know Christ as the only Saviour of the world; we know that we have become reconciled with God through Christ and that we can come to the Father only through Christ. We know that He has made all poor sinners of God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption<sup>18</sup>, and that, whoever believes in Him will be saved. It is this truth which has illuminated us and is yet to illuminate the world. It is this truth which alone can illuminate the world. For these reasons we are to proclaim this truth. We are to confess the Lord; we are not to be ashamed of Him, but we are to testify about Him wherever we have opportunity to do so, in our families, in our association with our friends, in our business relationships with others, at the opportune time and when it seems inopportune. Our entire life is to be a loud sermon about our salvation in Christ Jesus. The world is to be able to see from all our words and actions that the Spirit of Christ illuminates us, that we stand in the most intimate fellowship with God, that we are God's children. This is our duty involving the greatest responsibility and whoever seeks to carry it out faithfully will not find much friendship with the world. For the world in its wisdom does not know God, the message of the cross is foolishness to it<sup>19</sup>. It also loves the darkness more than the light for their works are evil<sup>20</sup>. Therefore they also hate the Children of Light. However Christians are not to let themselves be led astray by the world.

### FAITH IN CHRIST IMPELS CHRISTIAN TO BE A DEDICATED LIGHT

It is the kind of light that shines and while illuminating others, it consumes<sup>21</sup> itself. Hence Christians are to consume themselves in the service of the Lord when they bring salvation in Christ to others and testify about Jesus. In this way God's Name is glorified; in this way the poor world is helped. If we do not carry out our duty, then the world will perish in the darkness of sin. However, if we lose the Light which God has by His grace given to us, our light of faith will be extinguished; for whoever denies the Lord, the Lord will also deny him before His Heavenly Father<sup>22</sup>.

**“Ye are the Salt of the World,” “Ye are the Light of the World”** (Mat.5:13,14), thus the Lord calls out to all Christians. That is their duty so that the world is preserved from destruction. May God preserve us so that we do not become salt that has lost its power to preserve and to prevent decay and that our light does not

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<sup>18</sup> This is a reference to 1 Cor.1:30, **“But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.”**

Kretzmann correctly explains this text: “By the grace of God, **Christ has become Wisdom to us**: in and through Him the mystery of the divine plan of salvation has been unfolded to us; in and through Him we know God as our dear Father and through this knowledge have eternal life, John 17:3. But this would not be possible were it not for the fact that **Christ became unto us Righteousness** as well as **Sanctification**, 2 Cor. 5:21; Jer. 23:5; Matt. 3:15; Gal. 2:16, 17. The righteousness of Christ has been imputed to us as well as His perfect fulfilment of the Law, and thus **our whole life is consecrated to God, and every act is a work of divine service.... For Christ is our Redemption**; by paying the ransom of His blood and life He has delivered us forever from the power of all our enemies; He had in Himself the power to achieve this deliverance, 1 Thess. 1:10; Col. 1:13, 14. And thus we have in Him the guarantee of the glory of eternal life which will be revealed to us on the last day. And all this is God's free gift of grace.”

**Dr. Walther** states on this text: “Here we have the **true sequence**. The **first requisite** to obtain **wisdom, knowledge and the way of salvation**. This is the primary step. Next comes **righteousness, which we obtain by faith**. Not until this has been attained, comes **sanctification**. *I must first know that God has forgiven my sins, that He has cast them into the depth of the sea, before it affords me real joy to lead a sanctified life*. Before that it was a grievous burden to me. At first I was angry with God; I hated Him for demanding so many things of me. I should have liked to cast Him from His throne. I mused in my heart, It would be better if there were no God. **But when I had been pardoned and justified, I delighted, not only in the Gospel, but also in the Law.**” (emphasis added).

<sup>19</sup> 1 Cor.1:18, **“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”**

<sup>20</sup> **John 3:19, “And this is the condemnation, that Light (Christ, the Saviour, Ed.) is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”**

<sup>21</sup> When a Christian acts as a **light** in this world the power of the **Holy Spirit so controls him that by faith in Christ** he is moved to **devote himself entirely** in thoughts, words and actions to testify of Christ and to bear witness against sin that he **consumes himself in the Lord's cause**, but not in this sense that he loses the power of God's grace and strength, but that he is at the same time constantly nourished by God's Word.

<sup>22</sup> Mat. 10:33, **“But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.”**

become dark. May He help us so that we recognise and carry out our duty to His glory and for the salvation of ourselves and for the world.

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

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## LECTURES ON THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH THE TRUE VISIBLE CHURCH OF GOD ON EARTH by Dr. F. Pieper.<sup>23</sup>

### FOURTH LECTURE: The Written Word of God is the Sole and Only Sufficient Source and Norm, Standard and Rule of all Christian Doctrine and Practice, Faith and Life.

(continued from *Morsels From The Saviour* August-September 2013)

Since the Fall of man into sin no one knows by himself how he can be saved. That a *total ignorance* rules amongst the people in regard to this matter, is shown in this way, that when they try to draw from their own wisdom, they completely take an altogether wrong way to salvation, namely, the way of works. But in His grace God has taken mercy on the human race; He has given mankind, groping about in the dark, a revelation, and this Revelation is placed before the human race in the written Word of the Apostles and Prophets in Holy Scripture.



#### BIBLE PROOF

But God, who has now given mankind this Revelation, has **bound** mankind strictly to it. God now also impresses upon people that *in spiritual things* they teach and believe no more and no less than that which is written in the Scriptures. “**Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it,**” He says in Deut 4:2; and again: “**Keep and do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, that ye turn not aside there-from to the right hand or to the left,**” Joshua 23:6. God also now impresses upon people that they should obtain spiritual knowledge from **no other source** than His written Word. Therefore Scripture says to mankind: “**To the Law and to the Testimony<sup>24</sup>: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them<sup>25</sup>,**” Isaiah 8:20. “**They have Moses and the prophets<sup>26</sup>; let them hear them,**” Luke 16:29. God also now impresses upon people that His Revelation, as it is placed before us in Holy Scripture is a **perfect, sufficient** source of knowledge and standard of all Christian doctrine in spiritual matters. He says of His Word that it is able to make us wise unto salvation, that it also makes perfect<sup>27</sup> a man of God<sup>28</sup>, fitted out for every good work<sup>29</sup> (2 Tim 3:15-17).

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<sup>23</sup> **Dr. F. Pieper** (1852- 1931) delivered these lectures to the entire student body of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in the so-called “Lutherstunden” or **Luther Hours**. He followed a tradition started by Dr. Walther. On September 4, 1885 **Dr. Walther** stated: “We call these Friday evening lectures, which form, as it were, the conclusion of the week’s instruction, ‘Luther Hours,’ chiefly because in these lectures I let our beloved father Luther, the God-appointed Reformer and the common teacher of our church, speak to you.” (Walther, “Law and Gospel,” p. 344). In these lectures Dr. Pieper deals with significant points found in Walther’s outstanding book, “The Evangelical Lutheran Church the True Visible Church of God on Earth,” and further explains them to his audience. This particular series began on Nov. 31, 1889 and was completed on June 12, 1891.

<sup>24</sup> These words mean: “Turn back to the Word of God as it is divided into Law and Gospel.”

<sup>25</sup> According to the Hebrew, Kretzmann gives the correct meaning for the words, “**There is no light in them,**” as: “**The dawn of salvation will not arise for them.** He who sets aside, ignores, rejects, the Word of God *destroys himself, has no hope for time and for eternity.*” (emphasis added).

<sup>26</sup> These words refer to the written Word of God as it is divided into Law and Gospel.

<sup>27</sup> The Greek means “spiritually complete” so that every Christian, and especially every Christian teacher, lives up to the requirements of his office and station according to God’s will.

<sup>28</sup> It takes **spiritual courage** brought about by the Holy Spirit in the Gospel to carry out the Christian’s duty. Hence here not only every Christian, but also every faithful teacher of the Church bears the honouring title of a “man of God,” every believer has become the special property, the child of God, through faith in the merits of Jesus Christ.

## THE ORTHODOX LUTHERAN CHURCH RECOGNISES THE BIBLE AS THE SOLE STANDARD OF DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE, FAITH AND LIFE.

Therefore, then that church body is only a church body as *it should be* or an *orthodox church body* which recognises the Holy Scriptures, or the written Word of the Prophets and Apostles as the sole and sufficient source and norm<sup>30</sup> of all Christian doctrine. The Apostle says of the Church that it is “**built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets**” (Eph.2:20), which means: the Church in its belief is based solely and alone on the **WORD, the inspired Word** of the Apostles and Prophets. In so far as a church body does not do this, in so far as it draws from another source of knowledge or makes human words or thoughts the basis of its doctrine and its faith, just so far has this church body *fallen away* from the foundation which God has given to the Church, just so far is it not a true church, but a sect.

## HUMAN REASON IS IN NO WAY THE SOURCE OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE AND LIFE.

Therefore the *Reformed* church is not an orthodox church. Although they also say this in general that Holy Scripture is the source and norm of all their teachings, but in fact, in certain doctrines, they **use human reason in place of the Scripture** -- for example, in the doctrines of the Person of Christ and of the Lord's Supper.

In the doctrine of the **Person of Christ** the Reformed teachers deny the communication of attributes with the philosophical axiom: “**The finite is not capable of the infinite**”<sup>31</sup>. When now Holy Scripture clearly says: “**The Word**<sup>32</sup> **became flesh**” (John 1:14), and, “**In Him**<sup>33</sup> **dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily**” (Col. 2:9), the Reformed teachers continue to say: “**The finite is not capable of the infinite.**” Against the real presence of Christ's true body and blood in the Holy Supper, the Reformed teachers bring up the philosophical axiom: “**Each true body is visibly and physically present at one place.**”<sup>34</sup> Therefore, if there is no local and visible presence of the body of Christ, then the body of Christ is not present at all.

Now though Scripture says as much as it does that in the Holy Supper the bread is Christ's true body<sup>35</sup>, they continue to say: “**Each true body is visibly and physically present at one place.**”<sup>36</sup> So the Reformed

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<sup>29</sup> The King James Version has, “**thoroughly furnished unto all good works.**” These words in the **Greek** mean: “**Fully fitted out or equipped** toward every good work.” True believers in Christ find their greatest delight in performing the will of God, in doing such works as will please Him, to show Christ their thanks for all that He has done to redeem them.

<sup>30</sup> Standard.

<sup>31</sup> The Latin reads: “**FINITUM NON EST CAPAX INFINITI.**” Here the Reformed use reason **instead of just adhering firmly to Scripture**. This principle of the Reformed may apply in **earthly matters**, for example, you cannot fit an elephant into a small matchbox, but does not apply in spiritual matters with reference to what Scripture says.

In accordance with this **false idea** they **deny the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ's true body and blood in the Lord's Supper**. They **erroneously** claim, “Since Christ's body is finite, how can it be present in the Lord's Supper when it is celebrated all over the world.” In the **first** place, they forget that **Christ is the almighty God** and He does what He says He will, whether we can understand it or not. **Secondly**, they do not accept that in the Person of Christ, His qualities according to His Divine Nature are communicated to His Human Nature, so that when Jesus said, “**Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world**” (Mat.28:20), Jesus is not only present everywhere according to His Divine Nature, but also according to His Human Nature.

So when Christ says that the moment we eat the bread and drink the wine in the Lord's Supper we receive His true body given into death for us and His true blood shed for us for the forgiveness of sins, then **this is true, not only because His Word is true**, but because **He is the almighty God** and because His Divine and Human Natures are intimately united in the one Person of Christ so that His Divine Nature communicates its qualities to His Human Nature bringing about what He says in the Lord's Supper. How the doctrine of the Real Presence occurs we do not know; but that Scriptures clearly teaches it, is affirmed not only by the words of Christ's institution, but also by 1 Cor.10:16 and 1 Cor.11:23-29.

<sup>32</sup> The Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity.

<sup>33</sup> Christ. See Col. 2:8.

<sup>34</sup> The Latin reads: “**OMNE CORPUS VERUM EST IN LOCO PHYSICE ET VISIBILITER.**”

<sup>35</sup> This is just another way of expressing the **Sacramental Union**, of saying that in the Sacrament in a way known only to God the communicant receives Christ's true body which died for him on the cross in, with and under, the

teachers come to the position that in order to preserve their principle of human reason **they change the clear word of Scripture into the exact opposite**. Yes, not the humble, faithful submission to the Word of God, but **rationalism** is the characteristic of the Reformed church in so far as it differs from the Lutheran church. Several Reformed teachers have quite coarsely stated that, so, for example, Zwingli at the Colloquy<sup>37</sup> at Marburg in 1529. When it had been proven to Zwingli that **on the basis of the words of institution the true body and blood of Christ are present and are partaken of in the Holy Supper**, he then said: "God does not place before people such incomprehensible things to believe," a statement about which Melancthon at that time indeed had been frightened in his heart. Other Reformed teachers have candidly said that human reason is at least the second or **secondary** principle in theology. The Reformed church cannot be called a sister church of the Lutheran church. That a Reformed church exists alongside the Lutheran church is not the result of a "necessary historical development," as it is expressed these days, but it is the result of this fact that the Reformed church distinguishes itself from the Lutheran church in this **that alongside of the Word of God in its teachings it makes human reason its principle of theology**. The rationalistic principle which has been introduced by the Reformed into their theology is completely developed by the Socinians<sup>38</sup>, Unitarians and the new Protestants who simply say: Holy Scripture is a source and norm of theology in so far as and to the extent that it agrees with human reason.

This introduction of human reason as the source and norm of theology is condemned by God's Word *further, quite specifically*, when it says that **human reason itself then is by no means capable of understanding God's Word**, when divine Revelation was put before it. So we read in 1 Cor.1:21,"**For after that in the wisdom of God the world by (German has `its') wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe**"; 1 Cor.2:14, "**But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**" The Apostle Paul warns explicitly against human reason being used as the source and norm of theology when he says in 1 Cor.2:4,5: "**And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.**" Holy Scripture says that human reason, when it is a matter of examining revealed truth, does not ask for advice, but rather *brings into captivity every thought* to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor.10:5<sup>39</sup>. Yes, Scripture also says that when this does not occur we allow ourselves to be robbed of the revealed Truth by philosophy or human wisdom. Col.2:8 reads: "**Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.**"

## NOR ARE TRADITIONS A SOURCE OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

Furthermore, the *Papal* church is not an orthodox church. In the first place, this church alongside of the inspired Holy Scriptures also makes the Apocrypha<sup>40</sup>, therefore *human* books, as a source and norm of Christian doctrine. Then it quite expressly places alongside of Holy Scripture **tradition**<sup>41</sup> as a source of

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bread. **Luther** used to say that when Christ said, "Take eat; this is My body," as He handed the bread out to His disciples, that it was similar to us saying, "Take, this is money," as we hand out to a person a purse filled with money.

<sup>36</sup> Whether we can see Christ's true body and blood in, with and under bread and wine, **does not matter**; what does matter is that **Christ clearly tells us that we receive His true body and blood** when we eat the bread and drink the wine in the Sacrament. Faith clings to the Word of Christ and His almighty power.

<sup>37</sup> Debate with Luther on the Lord's Supper.

<sup>38</sup> They denied the Trinity.

<sup>39</sup> 2 Cor.10:5 reads, "**Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.**"

<sup>40</sup> The word "Apocrypha" means "hidden," because the Jewish believers of the Old Testament never regarded them as inspired, **nor did Christ**, nor did the early New Testament Church. After the last book of the Old Testament was completed a number of non-inspired writings arose, which the priests who had a sacred reverence for the inspired Old Testament refused to include as a part of the Scriptures. A number of false doctrines arose in them. For example, the Catholic Church takes its doctrine of purgatory from the book of Maccabees. **Dr. Luther**, together with all orthodox Lutherans, never regarded the Apocryphal books as inspired. **Luther** said, "Apocrypha--that is, books which are not regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures, and yet are profitable and good to read."

<sup>41</sup> Catholic tradition refers to all the decisions of the popes and of the Catholic Church as well as doctrinal treatises accepted by them, whether Scriptural or not.

Christian doctrine. It is true that the Papal church says that also tradition is God's Word. They falsely claim it was a part of the Word of Christ and the Apostles which was transmitted verbally by tradition, a part of God's Word which God the Holy Spirit has spoken through the Councils and particularly through the popes. But we know what kind of "Word of God" that is! Papal tradition is nothing else than **human teaching**. Holy Scripture itself says that all Christian doctrine is comprised in it, that therefore it does not require any addition by a so-called tradition. What the Apostles have written is identical with what they have taught verbally, 1 John 1:3,4<sup>42</sup>. Therefore in regard to the Papal church the Word of God applies in Matt.15:9: "**But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**" Yes, the Papal sect as such stands exclusively, absolutely, on **human authority**. According to papal teaching the pope has the power, because of his infallibility *alone*, to interpret what appears to them *the* dark passages of Holy Scripture. As well he *alone* can also determine decisively what is true tradition and what is not. So *the pope himself* continues on as the sole source and norm of papal theology exclusively as a result of *the fabricated doctrine of the infallibility of the pope*.

## NOR ARE 'NEW REVELATIONS' A SOURCE OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

Finally, all those who appeal to new revelations outside of and alongside of Holy Scripture and want to make these a source and norm of Christian doctrine are also not orthodox organizations. To them belong, for example, the Quakers as well as the Spiritualists who at present are talking much about themselves. Now of course these fanatics<sup>43</sup> also say that their new revelations are *God's* revelations, that God speaks in their hearts, that God lets them see visions, that God sends spirits to them in order to communicate messages to them. **But this is gross deceit!** In the first place, **Holy Scripture says quite explicitly, that all revelations about doctrine would cease with the appearance of Christ**, Haggai 2:6,7; Heb.12:26-28; John 17:20. In the second place, **Holy Scripture also warns us especially against new revelations which allegedly occur by the appearance of those who have died**. Luke 16:29 refers to that: "**They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them**" and Isaiah 8:19,20: "**To the Law and to the Testimony.**" Therefore all those who make the so-called new revelations a source and norm of theology, abandon the foundation of faith which has been given to the church.

## THE POSITION OF THE ORTHODOX LUTHERAN CHURCH

On the other hand, now, the *Lutheran* Church is an orthodox church body. This church body **rejects** all false principles and norms by which truth is obtained such as human reason and human wisdom, man-made laws and the so-called authority of the church, new revelations of the fanatics, etc., and holds fast in words and actions to this that *the written Word of the inspired Apostles and Prophets, Holy Scripture, is the sole and sufficient source and norm of all Christian doctrine*. Let us now this evening look at some proof for this that the orthodox Lutheran church holds fast to Holy Scripture as the sole source and norm of all Christian doctrine.

In the **Formula of Concord** it is stated:

"We believe, teach, and confess that the *sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with [all] teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone*, as it is written Ps.119:105: '**Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.**' And St. Paul: '**Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed,**' Gal.1:8."

"*Other writings*, however, of ancient or modern teachers, *whatever name they bear*, must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures, but all of them together be subjected to them, and should not be received otherwise or further than as *witnesses*, [which are to show] in what manner after the

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<sup>42</sup> 1 John 1:3,4: "**That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and, truly, our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you that your joy may be full.**"

<sup>43</sup> The German word is "Schwaermer," spiritual "enthusiasts," those who falsely believe that the Holy Spirit comes to them directly, outside of the written Word.

time of the apostles, and at what places, this [pure] doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved.” (Triglotta, page 776; italicised emphasis from Pieper).

Here our church makes a distinction between Holy Scripture and *all other* human writings. We distinguish *all* human writings absolutely from this *one* Writing which has been inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Scriptures. **Holy Scripture alone is the judge and is to be judged by no-one**; however all other books are to be subject to the Scriptures as the Judge.

For what purpose do we ourselves also appeal to *human* writings, then, in controversies over doctrine? We appeal to them, as our Confession says here, as *witnesses* to the true doctrine. We appeal to human writings **not** for the purpose of proving doctrine as divine teachings, but in order to prove that our *Confessors* have also **had these divine teachings at all times**. Also the **Schmalcald Articles** say: “The Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel.” (Triglotta, page 467).

We require a *divine* foundation for our faith. However no angel and archangel can give us a divine foundation for our faith. Only in the inspired Word of *God* do we have a divine foundation for our faith. From this principle, that faith must adhere only to God’s Word, was the Reformation born.

**Luther**, when he was dismissed from [the Diet of] Worms solemnly, attested:

“He thanks above all his imperial majesty, the electors, and estates of the empire most humbly and obediently, and as much as he could, because they had listened to him so graciously.... For he desired *nothing else than that a reformation from the Holy Scriptures*, for which he had prayed so diligently, be undertaken and carried out; otherwise he would yield and suffer everything else for the sake of his imperial majesty and the empire, both life and death, honour and dishonour, and *that he reserved for himself nothing else than only to confess and to attest freely and only the Word of God*.” (XV,2318f.; S.L. XV, 1935; Taken from Walther T.V.C., p.53)

Indeed, Luther accepted only that as his doctrine which is identical with Scripture. It can be proven about him that whatever did not agree with the Scriptures he did not even want to recognise as his teaching, but from the outset knew to reject it as un-Lutheran.

He said in 1528: “So even Luther does not desire to *be Lutheran except he teaches Holy Scripture in its purity*.” (XXI,234; S.L. XVI, 422,426; translated in Walther T.V.C., p.53; italicised emphasis is Pieper’s).

(To be Continued.)

(Delivered on 29 NOVEMBER 1889. Headings added. Translated BLW. Proofed KKM. )

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## PRACTICAL

(The following is translated from the **Real Lexikon**, a series of 8 volumes summarising the sermons, essays, etc., of the old former Missouri Synod and the Synodical Conference drawn up by Pastor Eckhardt, pages 25-29.)

### The Lord’s Supper

**22. In, with, under.** With these words the nature and manner of the real presence of Christ in the Lord’s Supper are not described, but only the false ideas of impanation, transubstantiation, etc., are refuted<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> See **Mueller’s Dogmatics** (pages 521,522): “But the use of this expression does not involve a departure from the literal sense of the words of institution; it is but **an amplification of the literal sense** of the words....The phrase, ‘in, with, and under’ fittingly serves the purpose of **repudiating the papistic error of transubstantiation and of affirming, in opposition to the error of the Reformed, the Scriptural doctrine of the Sacramental union**.” See **Pieper Dogmatics** (Vol.3, pages 345, 346).

Concerning the correct use of these words **Luther** says: “With these words they (the faithful Lutherans, Ed.) are confessing their faith, that Christ’s body truly is in the Sacrament.” (Pieper, *ibid*). See **Triglotta** pages 983, 985.



**Objection:** By using these words we have departed from the literal words of Scripture.

**To this we answer:**

1. These words, “in, with, under,” reproduce the same meaning as found in Scripture on this doctrine. For example, the words: “*The Word became flesh*” (John 1:14), are repeated and explained by, “**God was in Christ**” (2 Cor.5:19).<sup>45</sup>

2. They are only a defence of the words of institution. “Drink, this is water,” means: **in and with the glass** the water is handed out. So here in the Lord’s Supper.

### **The Lord’s Supper – Transubstantiation.**

**23. Transubstantiation.** The Catholics teach that the bread changes into the body of Christ by the consecration of the priest so that only the physical properties of the bread, colour, taste, remain.

With the Catholics that the bread is still called bread is only a way of speaking.

Note (a). This doctrine dates back to 499 AD, was further taught by Peter Lombard and accepted by the Lateran Council of 1215.

Note (b). They explain, “This **is** My Body,” as, “This **becomes** My body.”

Note (c). They<sup>46</sup> translate 2 Tim.2:6,<sup>47</sup> “It is proper that the farmer<sup>48</sup> changes the fruit.” As well they translate 1 Tim.4:3<sup>49</sup>, “The food which God has allotted to be changed in the Eucharist.”

Note (d). Concerning the moment, the nature and essence of the change they are not in agreement.

Note (e). Even Catholics themselves acknowledge that there are things against Scripture with their doctrine.

Note (f). Sometimes this doctrine is even attributed to us.

Note (g). When the **fathers** spoke of a change, they understood by this only a setting apart of the elements in fellowship with the body and blood of Christ.<sup>50</sup>

Note (h). From this doctrine of transubstantiation follows the worship of the host, the carrying about of the same on Corpus Christi festival since 1264.

**To this we answer:**

#### **a. Arguments Based on Reason.**

1. How can bread and wine be changed into a Person who has already existed for a long time?

2. Christ’s body could have been eaten by worms. How could worms originate from pretend bread? The history of mice.

3. The quality of a thing cannot exist without the presence of the thing itself. How can wine keep its intoxicating power after its essence is no longer in existence.

4. From the words: “You are Christ, the Son of the living God,” one could also then conclude that Christ is no longer true man.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> See **Triglotta** pages 983, 985.

<sup>46</sup> Catholic theologians. Cf. Lehre und Wehre 1874, p.181.

<sup>47</sup> 2 Tim.2:6, “**The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits.**” (KJV).

<sup>48</sup> German: “the one who works at planting the crop.”

<sup>49</sup> 1 Tim.4:3, “**forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth**” (KJV).

<sup>50</sup> **Der Lutheraner** (Vol.3, pages 126,127): “The church fathers much rather mean by ‘change’ the setting of the elements into such a condition that they retain their substance, but now are... in, with and under which the body and blood of Christ are received.” (Pastor Joel Baseley Translation).

<sup>51</sup> What is meant by this is: If the Catholics believe that in the Mass they are only receiving the **semblance** of the bread and not real bread but only Christ’s true body, then, as Dr. F. Pieper says, “all of Scripture could be interpreted as meaning a mere external appearance or semblance” (Dogmatics, Vol.3, p.297), then in these words which refer to the whole Christ, both true God and true Man by virtue of the personal union of the two natures, what the disciples saw in regard to Christ as true Man was only a semblance of a man and not a true man without sin.

## b. Proofs from Scripture.

1. 1 Cor.10:16: In the Lord's Supper there is an intimate fellowship between the bread and Christ's true body.<sup>52</sup> (*What is meant: According to this text, the bread remains bread. But as well as the bread the communicant also receives Christ's true body, BLW.*)
2. The bread also in the Lord's Supper is still called bread. 1 Cor.11:28, "So let him eat of that bread." 1 Cor.10: 16, "The bread which we break."<sup>53</sup>
3. If Christ's body in the Lord's Supper first originates from flour and grape juice (*as the Catholics teach, BLW*), then it is not the body which came from Mary and which was given into death for us.
4. Christ does not even say: "The bread (houtos) is My body, but (touto) this which I give you, is My Body<sup>54</sup>."

## 24. The Sacramental Union takes place

- a. Only during the use, only where an eating and drinking take place.<sup>55</sup>

Note. If the wine possibly falls on the ground, then only wine falls on the ground.

- b. only in the **entire** action of administration of the Sacrament.<sup>56</sup>

Note (a). If the administration of the Sacrament is interrupted after the consecration, one must begin again from the beginning.<sup>57</sup>

Note (b). The exact moment of the union cannot be determined. Catholics: the consecration is the moment the bread changes into Christ's body; on which word (*that the priest states, BLW*) they are not agreed.

Note (c). Christ said: "This is My body," while He **gave** them the bread.<sup>58</sup>

## 25. The Sacramental Union does not take place:

- a. where mockers are gathered together outside the church.
- b. where an essential part of the Sacrament is absent or changed, e.g., grape juice is used instead of wine.
- c. where the words of institution are falsified according to their meaning, as with the Reformed who thereby abolish the essence of the Sacrament.

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<sup>52</sup> 1 Cor.10:16, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the *communion* of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the *communion* of the body of Christ?" (KJV).

<sup>53</sup> Triglotta pages 493, 983,985, 1009,1011.

<sup>54</sup> **Houtos** is the **masculine** form for "this" in Greek. The word "bread" in Greek is masculine. But Jesus does not use the masculine form for "this." He uses the **neuter** form "**touto**." The **demonstrative pronoun 'this' (touto)** embraces *both the bread and Christ's true body*.

**Dr. Luther** brings out the meaning of this when he states: "THIS bread which I have now consecrated by blessing and thanksgiving, **THIS** that I now give you" to eat "is sacramentally one with **CHRIST'S BODY**."

] **Dr P.E. Kretzman** gives the correct meaning: "From His hand they should take and then eat what He gave them. But it was not mere bread which He gave them; for in referring to the pieces which He distributed, He uses the neuter demonstrative, while bread in the Greek is masculine. Here is a clear reference to the **sacramental presence of the body of Christ in, with, and under the bread**. This is brought out still more strongly in the parallel passages, especially 1 Cor. 11:24."

<sup>55</sup> Walther Pastorale (p.174, 175); [Drickamer English pages 133, 134. Fritz Pastoral Theology, pages 144, 145].

<sup>56</sup> consecration, distribution, reception.

<sup>57</sup> Walther Pastorale (p.188; Drickamer English, p.144; Fritz Pastoral Theology p.147).

<sup>58</sup> **Pieper**: "It should be added that the Formula of Concord very definitely rejects the opinion that the consecration by itself, or the mere recitation of the words of institution, makes the Sacrament or brings about the *unio sacramentalis* (Sacramental union, BLW)...But the Formula of Concord says, ' However, this blessing, or the recitation of the words of institution of Christ alone, does not make a Sacrament if the entire action of the Supper, as it was instituted by Christ, is not observed (as when the consecrated bread is not distributed, received, and partaken of, but is enclosed, sacrificed, or carried about), but the command of Christ, 'This do' (which embraces the entire action or administration in this Sacrament, that in an assembly of Christians bread and wine are taken, consecrated, distributed, received, eaten and drunk, and the Lord's death is shown forth at the same time) must be observed unseparated and inviolate, as also St. Paul places before our eyes the entire action of the breaking of the bread or of distribution and reception, 1 Cor.10:16.' (Trigl.1001, *ibid.*, 83f)." (Pieper, Vol3, page 372, English).

d. where there are no communicants, as in the private mass of the Roman Catholic Church. (*This is like, BLW*)Baptizing without a child!

**26. The Sacramental Union ceases** when the administration of the Sacrament is completed.<sup>59</sup> Outside its use in the Sacrament, the wine is merely wine.<sup>60</sup>

Note. One cannot determine the exact moment when the administration of the Sacrament is completed.

Antithesis. Catholics: the Union continues to exist even after the Sacramental administration.<sup>61</sup>

Note. That is why the host is stored (reserved) which was ordered by Pope Innocent the Third. Yet it remains merely bread.

**27. The Sacramental Union does not depend on**

a. the will of men. Men cannot make anything a Sacrament.<sup>62</sup>

b. the priest who (claims to) receive such power through the ordination of the priest. Catholics.

c. the Office and the Call of the pastor. New Lutherans.

d. the **ordination**. Buffalo Synod. --- In an emergency even a lay man can administer the Lord's Supper.

e. the words of consecration, as if they work magically like a spell.<sup>63</sup>

Note. This formula should then have performed a miracle for the Catholics.

**f. the faith of the pastor.**

Note (a). Then we would never be certain if we have the Lord's Supper.

Note (b). The priest is only the one who distributes the instrument.

Note (c). One can receive the Sacrament even from a Godless pastor.<sup>64</sup>

Note (d). That of course does not serve as an excuse for a godless servant of the church or such hearers who remain with such **obvious** godless pastor.

g. the **faith**, religious feeling and preparation, of the worthiness of the **communicants**, Rom.3:3<sup>65</sup>. Should their unbelief invalidate God's faithfulness? Our hunger does not make the food. Also unbelievers receive Christ's body in the Sacrament<sup>66</sup>.

Note (a). What a comfort this is in tribulation if our faith falters<sup>67</sup>!

Note (b). Faith does not depend on the **essence** of the Lord's Supper but on the **benefit**. See **Section 52**.

Note (c). Among the Reformed faith makes the Sacrament.

Note (d). Then Lutherans would receive Christ's body also in Reformed churches if they only believe.

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<sup>59</sup> **Guenther** (1831- 1893. He studied under Dr. Walther and he from 1873 was also a professor at St Louis until his death.) in **Symbolics** (translated by Wallace McLaughlin) states: "The Sacramental union of the body and the blood of Christ ceases when the Sacramental action has come to an end.... (Triglot. pp. 977,1001, 1009)." Then he states: "1 Cor.10:16. (The bread which we break, that is, distribute to be eaten, is the communion of the body of Christ; the bread which remains and is not distributed and eaten cannot be the communion of the body of Christ.)" [p.111]

**Symbolics**: refers to that area of theological knowledge which deals with the origin, rise, nature, and contents of the public doctrinal position of different church bodies in comparison with Holy Scripture.

<sup>60</sup> **Guenther** **Symbolics** (translated by Wallace McLaughlin): "Bread and wine do not lose their substance after the consecration.... (Triglot, p. 813; 983, 985,1009)." [p.110].

<sup>61</sup> **Guenther** **Symbolics** (translated by Wallace McLaughlin) p.111. Triglot. P.1009, paragraph 108.

<sup>62</sup> Triglot. p.999, paragraphs 73 and 74; also p.811 paragraph 8 (note3).

<sup>63</sup> Triglot. p. 811; Walther Pastoreale, p.171; (Drickamer English page 132).

<sup>64</sup> Triglot, p.237, paragraph 28; p. 511; pages 755,757.

<sup>65</sup> Rom.3:3, "**For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?**"

**Kretzmann** explains: "For what is the situation? If some were unfaithful, surely their unfaithfulness will not render the faithfulness of God inefficient!" (NT, Vol. 2, p. 14).

<sup>66</sup> Triglotta pages 755,757

<sup>67</sup> Triglotta pages 1003, 753,755.

h. alone on **Christ's promise**<sup>68</sup>.

Note. The words, "Let the earth bring forth (produce)," spoken once, operate every year. So it occurs in the Lord's Supper.<sup>69</sup>

### **The Earthly Elements.**

**28. The Earthly Elements** in the Lord's Supper are the bread and wine.

Note (a). Why exactly bread and wine? Because they nourish and strengthen people.

Note (b). Concerning the kind and form of the Earthly Elements in the Lord's Supper God has not given any command, therefore it does not matter:

(i) if the bread is leavened or unleavened.

(ii) if the wine is white or red, as long as it is only fermented wine which is the fruit of the grape vine.

Note (c). In any case Christ used unleavened bread and fermented wine as the Jews were obligated to use at the Passover.

Note (d). Concerning the kind of bread the Catholic Church has argued about for many years.<sup>70</sup>

Note (e). One should particularly not make use of **counterfeit** wine, but the use of wine with some water mixed with it, as the Catholics command, is an adiaphoron.<sup>71</sup>

Note (f). Unfermented wine is not wine. See **Wine**.

Note (g). If in a congregation a particular kind of wine has been used, then the pastor should not often and without good reason make changes.

**29. Since the Lord's Supper must be administered according to Christ's institution, one is not permitted to change the earthly elements.**<sup>72</sup>

Note (a). Where one uses something else, for example, for wine, then he does not have the Lord's Supper of the **Lord**. Christ has not given any promise that His blood is present in such cases.

Note (b). Those who absolutely are not able to drink wine should then rather stay away from the Lord's Supper.

Note (c). The **pastor** and the **congregation** must see to it that only genuine wine is used, otherwise they place Christians in a tormented state of anguish of conscience.

Note (d). Of course if a Christian once through the guilt of men was **cheated out** of receiving the Lord's Supper, then for all that God is not deceived. The **spiritual** partaking always remains for a Christian.

### **Antithesis.**

a. Montanists. Use cheese for bread.

b. Manichaeans who abolished the use of the wine.

c. Temperance Movement which forbade the use of wine.

d. Methodists. Use Unfermented wine.

e. Mormons. Water.

f. Calvin.

*(to be continued)*

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<sup>68</sup> Walther quotes Gerhard: (**Pastorale**, pages 171, 172; Drickamer English, p. 132; See Fritz **Pastoral Theology**, p.143.): "Rather we believe and confess uprightly that the presence of the body and blood of Christ depends exclusively on the will and promise of Christ and on the constantly continuing effectiveness of the first institution."

<sup>69</sup> See Walther **Pastorale** (p. 172) and Fritz **Pastoral Theology** (p.143,144).

<sup>70</sup> **Guenther Symbolics** (translated by Wallace McLaughlin) p.107:

"Mat.26:26; 1 Cor.11:26. (Since Christ speaks only of bread and neither commands one kind of bread nor forbids another, He has left this matter to Christian liberty.)..." The Roman Catholic Church falsely teaches that only "unleavened wheat bread shall be used.

To the Contrary, see: Gal.2:4,5; 5:1,2."

<sup>71</sup> Walther (**Pastorale**, pages 168; Drickamer English, p. 130.):

"It is also an adiaphoron whether the wine ... is totally pure or mixed with water (such as the Lord probably used according to the custom in that country); as long as it is from the fruit of the vine according to Mat.26:29...."

"It is an **error** when the Greek and Roman churches want the holy Supper celebrated only with wine mixed with water; or when the Reformed Beza, following Calvin, wanted to permit the holy Supper to be celebrated with any substituted elements similar to the bread and wine...."

<sup>72</sup> Walther (**Pastorale**, pages 169; Drickamer English, p. 130).

## Walther<sup>73</sup> Pastorale – A Valid and Legitimate Divine Call.



**Theses 5:** In reference to the call to a definite ministerial charge (pastoral office), two things must be considered: 1.) whether such a call be valid [ratus] (vocatio rata), and 2.) whether it be rightful [legitimate (legitimus, rectus)] (vocatio legitima s. recta). The call is valid, when it is extended by those who before God are entitled and empowered (have the right and authority from God) to issue such a call; and it is rightful (legitimate), when it has been obtained in the proper (correct) way.

### NOTE 1<sup>74</sup>.

(Continued)

So even if there are here no high, distinguished persons, royal officials, consistorial councils, etc., but only workers and farmers participating in the call, that does not rob it of its power and validity.

**Luther** gives this comfort to the Bohemians, against the temptation of thinking that their small and corrupted group cannot issue a valid divine call: “But if such a doubt tries to trouble and confuse you that you would think that you are not a church or people of God, then here is my answer to that: **one cannot recognise the church by its outward conduct; one recognises it only by the Word of God.** Listen to Paul in 1 Cor.14:24,25<sup>75</sup>, where he also says: ‘The unbeliever who came in among the congregation and saw that they all prophesied (God’s Word is expounded and preached) he would fall on his face and confess that God truly lives in you’. However you may be certain that in many of you there is God’s Word and the knowledge of Christ. But be it wherever it may: Since the Word of God goes together with the knowledge of Christ, since it does not return void<sup>76</sup>, no matter how weak it may appear by the outward conduct of those who heed it. For the Church, even if it is already weak because of the sins (of its members), is never unchristian, but always Christian because of the Word; it [its members] indeed sins, but it confesses and knows the Word and does not deny it. Therefore one should not reject [cast out] those who thus praise and confess the Word, even though they do not shine and glisten with any outstanding holiness as long as they do not live in manifest sins or lead a perverse life. Therefore **you should not doubt whether the Church is among you,** even if there were only ten or six who thus had the Word. For everything which those same people did in this matter<sup>77</sup>, also with the agreement of the others who do not keep the Word, one should still certainly believe that Christ has done it, if only they would administer the matter in humility and with prayer, as we have said.” (Walch X,1870.ff.). (“How One Should Choose and Ordain Pastors” 1523 S.L. X, 1599-1600;).

**B. E. Loescher** testifies to the same when he writes: “The call comes from the whole church or congregation; the whole congregation must not be charged with those sins which some, or the most important, or even the majority of members in it are committing, when it acts according to God’s command and order. That which concerns the inner holiness and worthiness of such action (of calling), is based **subjective** only on the true, living, limbs of the Church; and if there were only two left in the congregation, then Christ is especially present at their vote<sup>78</sup> (at their voting in the matter of the call), Matt.18:20; **since He for their sake still has His Church at such a place**, so also in view of the same, not the least bit of inner holiness and obligation of those who are calling is lost. God carries out His work in the call even if the instruments may do their duty therein (concerning this) well or badly. As little as we may deny or call into question His divine rule and powerful influence in the realm of nature when we see all the things He has

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<sup>73</sup> 1811-1887.

<sup>74</sup> **Dr. Walther** is explaining that the validity of a call depends on those who extend it having the right and the authority from God to do so. According to Scripture Walther states that it is every Christian local congregation which has this right and this authority.

<sup>75</sup> 1 Cor.14:24,25: “**But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.**”

<sup>76</sup> run idle, never without fruit.

<sup>77</sup> calling and ordaining pastors.

<sup>78</sup> **Suffragio.**

created, particularly human beings, in this that what they carry out under such concurrence<sup>79</sup> of God<sup>80</sup>, they love and intend the evil and the sin more than good: so little does God also take back (withdraw) completely His work, concurrence, rule and promise where in His Kingdom of grace something happens concerning His command and order, although the instruments had no other intention than a carnal one in what they have done, as much as it was up to them.” (Unschuld. Nachrr. 1715. p.872. ff.).

**Spener** writes further: “There can be an **error in the calling**<sup>81</sup> in a different way, that the call can be either **not legitimate**<sup>82</sup> or **not valid**<sup>83</sup>. Such a call is **not valid**<sup>84</sup> where the man does not in fact become a pastor and therefore it is totally without effect. Since, where someone is called or thrust forward (obtruded) by those who do not have this power, the congregation does not therefore also accept him (\*). Such a call is **not legitimate**<sup>85</sup> where someone has in fact actually been given to a congregation, but it **occurred in such a manner as should not have happened**; as where those **who are calling**<sup>86</sup> fail because of emotional and other carnal causes; where **those to be called**<sup>87</sup> are **not competent on their part to practise** the (duties of the) call, or otherwise do not hold to the rule of God in such work. If we were to regard all **non legitimate calls**<sup>88</sup>, or those wherein something unseemly (sinful) has occurred, **as not valid**<sup>89</sup>, then we would suffer almost **infinite pains of conscience**<sup>90</sup> from it. For who could at all times determine just what the procedure of calling has been in every case and whether, on the part of **those calling**<sup>91</sup> or on the part of **him who received the call**<sup>92</sup>, not much that is merely human has been permitted to enter in, or whether or not, on the part of both, the divine Law has in more than one respect been transgressed! The objection might be raised that at the least such a **call**<sup>93</sup> is not **divine**<sup>94</sup> which does not occur according to divine order; a divine call, of course, belongs to the Office of the Ministry. But hereupon it should be noted: that the authority for a divine call belongs also to the **congregation, for it is the servant of God**, and yet it is not always the case with such a call that everything went according to divine order, instead it is often rather a divine disaster, and is conducted in such a way that nothing divine is to be found there, than the power<sup>95</sup> itself. Thus since we speak of the **external call**<sup>96</sup> (for such only comes into consideration, since the **internal call**<sup>97</sup> comes into consideration only as far as the conscience of the person who is called is concerned), so it is sufficient **for the validity of the ministry**<sup>98</sup> that **a call be extended by those to whom God has given such power**. Therefore the call is a **divine call**<sup>99</sup> (**in so far as that which concerns the Office itself over against those entrusted with it**) since it is an effective power conferred by God<sup>100</sup>, although not without abuse which may be exercised (which has **not been exercised without abuse**<sup>101</sup>).” (bedenken, Hall.A. Tom.IV,p.521.ff).

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<sup>79</sup> Concursum.

<sup>80</sup> The means by which God preserves and directs the things He has made: **God is the cause of all good acts**; He is **never the cause of sin**; God permits sin, but He does not will that which He permits; God concurs in evil acts only in so far as they are acts, not in so far as they are evil; man alone is responsible for his evil acts; e.g., God gives the man the strength to hold a gun, but that he uses it to murder someone is not God's but solely man's responsibility.

<sup>81</sup> vitium in vocatione.

<sup>82</sup> non recta.

<sup>83</sup> non rata.

<sup>84</sup> non rata.

<sup>85</sup> non recta.

<sup>86</sup> vocantes.

<sup>87</sup> vocandi.

<sup>88</sup> vocationes non rectas.

<sup>89</sup> pro non ratis.

<sup>90</sup> infiniti conscientiae laquei.

<sup>91</sup> vocantis.

<sup>92</sup> vocandi.

<sup>93</sup> vocation.

<sup>94</sup> divina.

<sup>95</sup> to call.

<sup>96</sup> vocatione externa.

<sup>97</sup> interna.

<sup>98</sup> ad ratum ministerii.

<sup>99</sup> vocatio divina.

<sup>100</sup> Effectus potestatis a Deo concessae.

<sup>101</sup> non sine abusu exercitae.

[Walther's Footnote (\*): Of course if the congregation accepts such an intruder some time later, then the call thereby also belatedly becomes **valid**<sup>102</sup>.]

**August Hermann Francke** speaks quite similarly. He writes: "Someone who receives a call is not required to investigate whether he indeed has been called by the bishop or patron or the whole congregation out of a pure intention; he must rather look at himself and **examine if his intention is pure and well pleasing to God**. If he was not to accept a call until he knew that **those who were calling him**<sup>103</sup> wanted him as a teacher out of true faith, then he might never be able to accept a call. The reason this is mentioned is, so that one does not think, when it is said that with a call one has to have a look at **those who are calling**<sup>104</sup>, as if one has to attend to the **intention**<sup>105</sup> of **those who are calling him**<sup>106</sup>; since one rather only wants to point out that (for a call to be valid) **those who are doing the calling**<sup>107</sup> **must be such who really have the right (power) to call**<sup>108</sup>. (Collegium pastorale ueber Hartmanni pastorale ev. I, 404).

[In this Pastoral Theology section bolded emphasis added].

(Thanks the late Pastor K. K. Miller for his help. To be continued.)

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### MINUTES

of the free Pastoral Conference involving both synodical bodies of the Australian Synod and the Immanuel Synod which was held on 24 and 25 September, 1889 at Adelaide. (Continuation and conclusion. **Kirchbote**, page 55)

#### Third Session – Morning 25 September, 1889.

(Continued from August-September **Morsels**)

**Pastor Rechner Sen.**<sup>109</sup>: There are also texts about which we can never be completely clear in our understanding of them as you admit. With these texts we still want to leave it to the Lord to open our understanding and see how He will reveal the meaning of them to us in the future. Therefore when we also interpret some texts differently than you, then you are also at least to respect our interpretation and not say: "This and nothing else is how it must be understood."<sup>110</sup> Therefore do not dismiss our interpretation, but let us walk hand in hand as brethren.

**Pastor Peters**<sup>111</sup>: "Who will decide which text is clear?" so you ask, Rev. Pastor Rechner. **Clear** texts are plainly such which only the malicious can distort. For example, we have here the text, "**The Father is**

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<sup>102</sup> rata.

<sup>103</sup> Vocantes.

<sup>104</sup> Vocantes.

<sup>105</sup> Animum.

<sup>106</sup> Vocantium.

<sup>107</sup> Vocantes.

<sup>108</sup> Jus vocandi.

<sup>109</sup> **Pastor Rechner Sen.** (1830-1900) had no special theological training, but he was a day school teacher and due to a split in his congregation he was called to be their pastor in 1861. He was president of the Immanuel Synod from 1874 until 1900. He had been a strong supporter of Pastor Kavel.

<sup>110</sup> When an interpretation of Scripture **clearly contradicts** a plain doctrine of Scripture or a clear proof passage of the Bible, or the context or a correctly explained parallel passage or the Biblical rules of Scripture exposition, then **that interpretation is wrong and an error which is of grave danger to the church**. This is where the errors of the Immanuel Synod, especially on the doctrine of the Millennialism arose. In spite of their interpretations clearly being shown to be in error, they still wanted acceptance of them by our old ELSA or at least their toleration. They wanted their error to be given equal rights with the Truth, in other words, they wanted our ELSA pastors "to agree to disagree agreeably" on these points. This constituted the evil "Open Questions" principle on which the later UELCA was based and which is contrary to 1 Cor.1:10 and John 8:31,32.

<sup>111</sup> **Pastor Peters** (1850-1925) studied at Hermannsburg, Germany and was ordained in 1877. He was at Murtoa from 1878 until 1904 and was also the founder and principal of the college there. He was the editor of the **Kirchenbote** from 1893 until 1894 and president of the Victorian and New South Wales District from 1893 until 1904. He too became a very faithful "Missourian" in doctrine and practice as his excellent commentary on Revelation, "The Judge

**greater than I**" (John 14:28). This text is obscure; but it becomes clear through the clear text<sup>112</sup>, "**I and My Father are one**"<sup>113</sup> (John 10:30).

**Pastor Kaibel**<sup>114</sup>: The texts, "**The Father is greater than I,**" and, "**I and My Father are one,**" are both clear.

**Pastor Peters**: If I take the first text by itself on its own, then I must say: "Christ is not God's Son."<sup>115</sup>

**Pastor Stempel**<sup>116</sup>: It depends on whether the text, "**The Father is greater than I**" (John 14:28) is to be explained according to the other text, John 10:30, or vice versa. Obviously the former is the case; therefore, the latter text, John 10:30, is clear.

**Pastor Kaibel**: What matters is that both texts exist correctly.

**Pastor Peters**: You explain the text, "**The Father is greater than I,**" in a certain way; who gives you the right to do that?

**Pastor Kaibel**: The "Whole of Scripture"<sup>117</sup> must be the standard by which to judge.

**Pastor Dorsch**<sup>118</sup>: The "Whole of Scripture" is too general an expression.<sup>119</sup>

**Pastor Kaibel**: Our conviction is that you have brought a system into Scripture. The Holy Spirit has not given us a Scriptural system, but the Scriptures. John 5:39.

**Pastor Dorsch**: What are then the **Confessions** anything else than saying "Yes," and "Amen" to the Word of God? We use the Symbolical Books<sup>120</sup> **because** they are that. You are only walking with crutches<sup>121</sup>.

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Is At The Door" shows. He was a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia (ELSA) [which later changed its name to Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (ELCA)].

<sup>112</sup> Clear texts of Scripture are those in which a **Bible doctrine or its meaning** is specifically, clearly, directly, unambiguously and deliberately set forth in detail in the very literal words of the text itself. These texts are so plain that we know without any doubt what the individual words say in their literal, grammatical and historical sense in the given context.

<sup>113</sup> Here in **John 10:30** Jesus states that even though in the Godhead He is a distinct Person from the Father, yet they possess the same essence of the Godhead. This is a proof passage for One divine Essence in the Trinity. According to His Divine Nature Jesus is equal in power, might and majesty with the Father.

In **John 14:28** Jesus is speaking according to His Human Nature in His State of Humiliation where Christ did not always and fully use, according to His Human Nature, all the divine attributes He possessed according to His divine Nature which were communicated to His Human Nature. Only according to His Human Nature in His State of Humiliation do the Scriptures speak of the Father being mightier than Jesus. This occurred in order to redeem the world. After His suffering and death for the sins of the world, in His State of Exaltation, from the time of His being made alive in the grave to all eternity, also according to His Human Nature He always and fully uses all the divine attributes communicated to His human nature. See the excellent explanation of John 14:28 by Pastor Peters in his outstanding commentary on the book of Revelation, **The Judge Is At The Door**, page 21.

<sup>114</sup> **Pastor Kaibel** (1850-1918) studied at Neuendettelsau (the home of the evil "Open Questions" principle) from 1873 till 1876 and was ordained in 1877 at Light Pass Straight Gate, South Australia. He was Vice-President of the Immanuel Synod from 1900-1918.

<sup>115</sup> Therefore since this contradicts a clear passage of Scripture, it is an obscure text which must be explained by other clear texts.

<sup>116</sup> **Pastor Stempel** (1832-1908) was one of the faithful pastors of our old Lutheran Church here in Australian who was trained by Pastor Fritzsche (himself trained by the orthodox Lutheran Dr. Scheibel in Germany). He graduated in 1855. When our church came under the influence of the old Missouri Synod in the 1880's he eagerly saw in it a faithful orthodox Lutheran church body and became a "Missourian" in doctrine and practice. He was president of our church at the time of these discussions (1897-1903).

<sup>117</sup> The Bible knows of no such thing which Pastor Kaibel falsely teaches as the notorious "**whole of Scripture (Schriftganze)**." By this they falsely claim that the doctrines of Scripture are not fixed. But **by using human reason** you can go throughout Scripture and find new teachings which the Holy Spirit so far has not yet revealed which contradict the doctrines that are clearly revealed in Scripture. Here they interpret **obscure passages** in Revelations which are symbolical as literal or try to interpret these obscure passages with other obscure passages. Also they try to harmonise doctrines which God's Word does not harmonise. So they come up with new teachings which are condemned elsewhere in the Bible.

<sup>118</sup> **Pastor Dorsch**: (1858-1916) studied under Dr. Walther and Dr. Pieper at St. Louis, USA and was ordained in 1881 at Adelaide, South Australia. He was the first of the Missouri trained pastors to serve in our old once orthodox ELSA. He was a brilliant man, an outstanding theologian and he served our church well.

<sup>119</sup> What Pastor Dorsch means that it can be interpreted in many different ways.

<sup>120</sup> The "Symbolical Books" refer to the Lutheran Confessions as found in the Book of Concord which we subscribe to **because they correctly expound Scripture**.



**Pastor Kaibel:** You are placing the fathers above Holy Scripture and do not depart a footstep from them. But we hold to this that we take our stand on **everything** which is Holy Scripture and are bound to it and consequently we **go beyond the Confessional Writings** in particular points<sup>122</sup>.

**Pastor Dorsch:** When the Symbolical Books do not deal in detail with such doctrines, for example, as the doctrine of verbal inspiration, we also state what the Scriptures state even though it is not in the Confessions.

**Pastor Auricht**<sup>123</sup>: In the Introduction to the Formula of Concord it is indeed stated that all teachings are to be judged according to Holy Scripture.

**Pastor Dorsch:** You are saying that we regard certain doctrines as teachings of the Confessions which are still not taught in Scripture. However, that is not so.

**Pastor Kaibel:** You are not going one footstep beyond what the fathers have said. But because we see that the fathers have not exhausted the Book of Revelation, therefore we must **go beyond** the fathers.<sup>124</sup>

**Pastor Dorsch:** Are you asserting that the fathers had paid no attention to the Book of Revelation?

**Pastor Peters:** Prove that the prophetic Books are to be interpreted **in any other way** than in accordance with the entire remainder of Scripture

**Pastor Kaibel:** Yesterday I explained that the visions which, for example, Daniel gives, are impossible to be explained from the doctrinal writings of Moses and the Psalms, but only through fulfilment. The Prophet of the New Covenant<sup>125</sup> also can only be interpreted through those things which are revealed which the future brings.

**Pastor Peters:** Everyone concedes that.<sup>126</sup> But here the point in question is what is stated in your thesis: The Revelation of John ‘**must**’ ... be so interpreted according to its character<sup>127</sup>. For this ‘**must**’ you must state a definite **Word of God**.

**Pastor Kaibel:** The “**must**” in our thesis is an expression of our conviction. We regard it as absurd<sup>128</sup> to say that the later prophetic writings are to be interpreted according to the earlier ones.

**Pastor Peters:** For your conviction you must have a Word of God.

**Pastor Kaibel:** I did not say that. It can follow from the “**Whole of Scripture**<sup>129</sup>.”

**Pastor Stempel:** We have made no progress. We are here together in order to discuss the principles of the exposition of Holy Scripture and there in your thesis it is : The Revelation of John is not to be used so as to be understood that it receives light from the earlier texts<sup>130</sup>. What is the your principle for the interpretation of the Book of Revelation?

[**Editor’s Note:** In Pastor Peters commentary on Revelation he not only deals with the correct understanding and application of what is stated there, but he **refutes all of these false ideas** which the Immanuel Synod and others upheld. Also he emphasizes again and again what is the **only correct Biblical way of expounding** this book. It would be a good thing if we again studied this book thoroughly.]

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<sup>121</sup> What Dorsch means is that by relying on the false principle of the “**Whole of Scripture**” they are using a crutch which will not give them the proper support or the faithful exposition of Scripture. He wants them to rely totally on the bare word of Scripture, the plain proof passages.

<sup>122</sup> Where the Lutheran Confessions according to Scripture condemn false doctrines like the Millennium, the Immanuel Synod ignored this and relied on interpreting unclear symbolical texts in a literal way or according to their reason, which not only contradicted plain passages of the Bible, but introduced new, false teachings.

<sup>123</sup> **Pastor Auricht** (1832-1907) studied first under Pastor Fritzsche here in Australia (1843-1846), then when the split came followed Kavel, especially in the Millennium, finished his training under Kavel (1846-1858). He was ordained in 1858 and later was president of the Immanuel Synod from 1900 until 1907, editing their church paper until 1907. When this debate occurred he was 57 years old. He too was an adherent of the evil “**Open Questions**” principle.

<sup>124</sup> What Pastor Kaibel is saying is that they are prepared to teach as doctrine their interpretations of Revelation which either contradicted the clear plain passages of God’s Word or introduce new teachings which are not found elsewhere in Scripture. In **The Judge Is At The Door** Pastor Peters warns earnestly against this.

<sup>125</sup> Revelation. Again please read **The Judge Is At The Door** where Pastor Peters outlines clearly the Biblical principles on which his excellent exposition is based. This book was published in 1899.

<sup>126</sup> Pastor Peters is saying that the fulfilment of a prophecy clearly affirms the prophecy’s true meaning.

<sup>127</sup> Again Pastor Peters exposes their double talk. The Book of Revelation must be interpreted according to the correct rules of Biblical exposition and especially with Scripture itself. The “**character of the Book**” is open to so many different interpretations.

<sup>128</sup> Contrary to reason.

<sup>129</sup> A person’s own interpretation of the passage as it suits him.

<sup>130</sup> But this is a vital rule of Scripture used by our Lord Himself that **Scripture explains Scripture**.

(To be continued)

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## THE PSALMS (Johann George Starke)

### 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.

##### Verses 1-3

**1. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.**

**Blessed<sup>131</sup> is the man<sup>132</sup>:** Psalm 119:1<sup>133</sup>; 128:1<sup>134</sup>. The blessedness of the man or the men! Which is great, manifold, indeed indescribable; both bodily as well as spiritual blessedness, Psalm 34:11<sup>135</sup>; 37:25<sup>136</sup>; Mat.5:3-12; Luke 6:35<sup>137</sup>. Not only this blessedness, but also of the future life in heaven, 1Tim.4:8, which is promised in God’s Word and also in the acts of grace and mercy of God, Titus 3:5; Eph.2:8,9; Rom.9:12.

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<sup>131</sup> (a) By position and context, the Hebrew is **exclamatory**. It means, “Oh, the blessedness!” It stresses this as a fact to those who in faith follow the Lord’s will in this passage.

(b) “**Blessed**” is **plural** in the Hebrew and literally means, “Oh the blessednesses, or the blessings!” It is an **intensive plural** and is **designed to emphasize the multiplicity of blessings and happiness** to those who in childlike faith fulfil the requirements marked out in this Psalm. We might paraphrase, “Oh, how very, very blessed and spiritually prosperous is the one who ...” [See **Luther** Am. Ed. 14, 287; Keil and Delitzsch, 5 p.49]

(c) The Hebrew word for “blessing” is אֲשֶׁרִי (‘ashree). It comes from a word which means “to go straight, go forward, advance, **set right**.” The root verb means: (a) to “proceed, **advance in the way of understanding**” ([Prov. 9:6b](#)), (b) “**do not proceed in the way of evil men**” ([Prov. 4:14](#)), and (c) in [Isaiah 1:17](#) it is used of correcting false rulers so they will go straight through learning and advancing in the Word.

**True blessedness comes alone from believing in Christ Jesus as our only Saviour from sin.** As soon as we by grace are **set right with God** by the Holy Spirit through Christ’s atoning sacrifice, we are already truly happy in our soul, with peace, contentment, joy and the certainty of Christ’s loving care in this world and that He will take us to be with Him in heaven at death or on the last day. This is **true spiritual prosperity**. But through the **believing study of God’s Word and right application of it to our lives** as we learn to trust Christ more, obey Him more faithfully, and **resist sin more earnestly**, we **grow and advance in blessedness and spiritual prosperity**. The experience of the blessedness of true Christians increases in direct proportion to their believing knowledge and application of the Word in their lives.

<sup>132</sup> The true believer is described as **greatly blessed** when he in true faith **avoids doing or following as a habit in his life** the evil plans, teachings or advice of the ungodly (those who are not guided by God’s Word), but seeks as a **habit of life** to follow the advice and wisdom of the Godly.

<sup>133</sup> Ps. 119:1, “*Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the LORD* (in true faith guided by **His Word** in their entire life).”

<sup>134</sup> Ps. 128:1, “*Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD* (in faith **showing childlike reverence and honour to the Lord** which moves the Christian to avoid sin); *that walketh in his ways.*”

<sup>135</sup> Ps. 34:11, “*Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD* (**showing childlike reverence flowing from faith**).”

<sup>136</sup> Ps. 37:25, “*I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*”

<sup>137</sup> Luke 6:35, “*But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.*”

Everyone<sup>138</sup> of both genders really participates in this blessedness<sup>139</sup>, Job 12:10<sup>140</sup>; Gal.3:28<sup>141</sup>; Rom. 2:10,11<sup>142</sup>.

**Who<sup>143</sup> does not walk<sup>144</sup>**, who does not regulate his life, Gen.49:6; 1 Kings 19:4; Deut.26:2, after he, in the order of repentance and faith in Christ has obtained the forgiveness of Sins, Ps.32:1,2 together with the other blessings of salvation.

**In the counsel<sup>145</sup> of the ungodly<sup>146</sup>**, unrestrained, immoral sinners, whose heart is far from God and from His blessed fellowship. The one who is blessed does not seek advice from the ungodly, nor does he join in with his achievements and, yes, he himself pays no attention to his allurements and example, Psalm 15:4<sup>147</sup>.

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<sup>138</sup> Who are true believers in Christ.

<sup>139</sup> **Luther**: “‘Man’ is used in the Scriptures in a threefold way. It signifies age, sex, or humanity. It is used for age in I Cor. 13:11: ‘When I became a man, I gave up childish ways’; for sex in Matt. 1:16: ‘Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary,’ and in John 4:16: ‘Go, call your husband’; and for **humanity** in I Sam. 26:15: ‘And David said to Abner, “Are you not a man?”’ And in this **third sense man is called blessed here, so that the female sex is not excluded from the blessing.**” [Am. Ed. 14, 288].

<sup>140</sup> Job 12:10, “*In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.*”

<sup>141</sup> Gal.3:28, “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus*”.

<sup>142</sup> Rom. 2:10,11, “*But glory, honor, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. For there is no respect of persons with God.*”

**Kretzmann**: “By rewarding the good works of the believers with the **gracious gift of eternal life**, the Lord merely crowns **His own work in them** with His full acknowledgment in the presence of the whole world. Only **by faith in the Savior are good works possible, and faith itself is a gift of God**; and therefore the Last Judgment will be a glorious proof of the fact that salvation comes to men ‘all of grace.’”

“This statement (verse 11) he now establishes by declaring **that there is no respect of persons with God**; the external condition, position, or station of a person, his wealth and social connections, have absolutely no influence upon Him.”

<sup>143</sup> “**Who**” is a **function word** which introduces us to the person who by faith is so blessed, one who has the qualities of life which lead to blessedness. It does not teach salvation by works. The blessedness comes to those **only who by faith in Christ** avoid sin and faithfully follow God’s Word. This word “**who**” introduces for the believer the principle that **certain things corrupt, tear down and destroy. Other things build, develop, make fruitful, and give the capacity and means for happiness** through trust and fellowship with God. This is the message of this Psalm.

<sup>144</sup> The Hebrew verb for “**walk**” is in the Hebrew perfect tense, which as **Dr. Laetsch** states: “denotes an act which has become a habit.” Hence the Godly person in faith makes it a habit of life not to regulate his life according to the counsel of the ungodly, but devotes himself entirely to God’s Word. follow a course of action

**Luther**: “It is well known that in the manner of the Scriptures ‘to walk’ and ‘to approach’ are figures of speech, meaning ‘to live’ or ‘**to associate**’, as in Psalm 15:2; and in Psalm 101:6. Similarly in Rom.8:1,4.” It means to follow a course of action,” or “to live, follow a way of life.” The tense is decisive, he is one who has chosen not to follow this path.

<sup>145</sup> **To walk in the counsel of the ungodly**: *refers to the evil way of thinking, the plans, even false doctrines (Luther) or advice of the wicked; it stresses the pondering of these evil things in the mind and then formulating a plan of action.* The Hebrew scholars **Keil and Delitzsch** state: “Blessed is he who does not walk in the state of mind which the ungodly cherish.” (V, 49). It refers to a mental attitude, a state of mind, or viewpoint that determines the decisions that we make. He who is blessed is one who has determined to walk by the whole counsel of the Word, not by his emotions, experience, tradition, by popular opinion or by what is politically correct.

<sup>146</sup> 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.

<sup>147</sup> Ps.15:4, “**In whose eyes a vile person is contemned** (despised) [**German**: *he pays no attention to the ungodly, but honours the God-fearing.*]; **but he honoureth them that fear the LORD** (in every way he is anxious to please his fellow believers). **He that sweareth to his own hurt** (he stands by the oaths or vows made by him even if it means a loss to him), **and changeth not** (he allows true piety govern his whole life and all his actions).”

**nor standeth<sup>148</sup> in the way<sup>149</sup> of sinners<sup>150</sup>**, who neither joins with them in their organizations which wilfully by their outward actions depart from God's Law, nor, if he has inadvertently fallen into error or a mistake, stubbornly continues to remain in it, Prov.8:3<sup>151</sup>, nor even in the least manner sit with him, for there sit the scoffers, those who regard what God says and does as vain foolishness.

**nor sitteth<sup>152</sup> in the seat<sup>153</sup> of the scornful<sup>154</sup>**. The blessed person has no intimate association with such people who talk differently than they act, or who publicly praise their own wickedness, have acted fully and willingly for the desecration of the most holy Name of God and have infected others as a contagious epidemic.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> **“Stand”** in the Hebrew means “to stop, to be firm.” **Luther**: “...means stubbornness, a stiff neck, in which the proud excuse themselves with words of malice;...

‘To stand’ means, in Scriptural metaphor, ‘to be steadfast,’ as in Rom.14:4.”

**Luther**: “The Hebrew word for column (a round tall piece of rock, shaped like a cylinder and used as a support for the roof of a building in ancient times, BLW.), like the Latin word for statue, comes from the concept of standing.”

From merely walking in their counsel, one becomes **more confirmed** in the way of the wicked, more involved and influenced. It denotes movement toward the formation of habits or patterns.

<sup>149</sup> It refers to one's conduct, behaviour patterns, habits and responses. It refers to *the established course of sin shown in their outward conduct*. Here we see patterns forming and becoming entrenched. From thinking like the world we begin to act like the world.

<sup>150</sup> **“Sinners”** is a Hebrew term from archery and meant “to fall short, miss the mark.” The mark is the will and plan of God in His Law. Sin is the transgression of the Law. We all miss the mark, and none of us are perfect nor will we ever be perfect in this life. This is why Christ had to die for our sin so we might have His righteousness. **But “sinners” here refers to those who have deliberately chosen a way of life**, a path deliberately contrary to the Law of God as revealed in the Word of God. The blessed person by grace chooses to direct his life by God's Law.

<sup>151</sup> Eccl. 8:3, **“Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.**

<sup>152</sup> Literally this can be translated, *“in the seat of scorers, he has not sat.”* **“Sit”** is the Hebrew means “to sit, dwell, remain, abide.” **It emphasizes a thoroughly settled state or condition—settled down, comfortable, content with the world with its patterns entrenched in our lives.**

**Luther**: “to instruct, to be a master or teacher.” cf Mat.23:2.

<sup>153</sup> **“Seat”** in the Hebrew means: (a) a seat, a place of sitting, or (b) an assembly where many are gathered together to sit and make deals or have close associations. The point is, when you sit in someone's seat, according to the idiom, you act like or become what they are. You even teach what they teach.

<sup>154</sup> The Hebrew word “to mock, deride, ridicule, scoff.” Grammatically, it is a **participle of habitual action**. It refers to one who is actively engaged in ridiculing and treating with contempt the Word of God.

**Luther**: “Now they are the scornful whom he accuses throughout the Psalter as the deceitful and the deceitful tongue, as those who, **under the appearance of sound doctrine, administer the poison of their false teaching**. And no bodily pestilence **is as contagious for the body as the teaching of godlessness is for the soul**.... Indeed, what more pernicious deceit is there than to give a deadly poison to souls hungry for pure truth?” (Am. Ed. 14, 290).

<sup>155</sup> There are **three things the man who is blessed must avoid**. Notice how the Psalmist develops this because it is so instructive and is a warning in itself. As it is presented, it demonstrates **the process of retrogression**, which always occurs when people, especially Christians, do not grow in God's Word. We never stand still!

**Verse one** portrays this truth in **three degrees of degeneration**, each a little more permanent, settled, and embedded into one's life.

(1) There are three degrees of *habit or conduct*: **walk / stand / sit**.

(2) There are three degrees of *openness, fellowship, or involvement* in evil: **counsel / path / seat**.

(3) There are three degrees of *evil* that result: **wicked / sinners / scoffers**.

In each of these there is **regression from God's Word and progression into sin and Satan's way**. It warns us how easily people are influenced by the way of the world in its attitudes and actions, for actions follow attitudes.

**Keil and Delitzsch** state: “The three appellations form a climax:... Therefore: *Blessed is he who does not walk in the state of mind which the ungodly cherish, much less that he should associate with the vicious life of sinners, or even delight in the company of those who scoff at religion.*”

**Kretzmann** states: “Note the **climax** in the verse: first comes the **meditating of evil, then a wilful performance of that which is sinful, then the suppressing of a good conscience and the mockery of everything sacred**; and, on the other hand, **first the seeking of the society of the godless, then a somewhat uncertain standing at the outside of their circle, then a deliberate participation in their mockery.**”