

The Orthodox Lutheran

"we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth"

2 COR. 13:8



Vol. IV

April, 1955

Number 4

**“He Who Is Strong
To Save
Has Triumphed O’er
The Grave”**

The Orthodox Lutheran

Vol. IV

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ORTHODOX LUTHERAN CONFERENCE



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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To **Make known** the teachings, treasures, and history of the true Lutheran Church.

To **Offer evidences** that the Lutheran Church is **not** a sect, and **Not a New church**, but rather a continuation of the Church of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior;

To **Show** what **True Lutherans Must** believe, how they are to **Live** a Christian life, suffer in patience, and die in peace; and

To **Uncover** the current false doctrines, to **Oppose** them, and to **Warn** against them, especially to unmask **False Lutherans** and their **Aberrations** from Scriptures and the pure Lutheran Confessions, including the Book of Concord of 1580, the Brief Statement of 1932, and our Confession of Faith.

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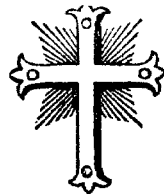
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Jesus Lives

The Word of God presents to us numerous testimonies concerning the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. After the crucifixion of Jesus, the chief priests and pharisees were ill at ease. They remembered that Jesus had said that He would rise again on the third day. They asked Pilate to make the sepulcher sure by placing a seal upon its stone door and by setting guards near the tomb to make sure that the disciples did not steal the body of Jesus by night. But in doing this they actually proved the certainty of Christ's resurrection, for early Easter morning some of the frightened guards rushed into the city and told the chief priests of the earthquake and of the angel who rolled the stone away from the door of the sepulcher, displaying the empty tomb. **Jesus lives!!**

But the Word of God testifies also that the Lord Jesus was seen at least 10 times after His resurrection. We are told that He was seen first by Mary Magdalene and then by the other women who came to the tomb early Easter morning. Later He appeared to Peter and still later on Easter day to the two disciples on the way to Emmaeus. On the evening of Easter Sunday Jesus appeared to all of the disciples except Thomas, and on the following Sunday evening He appeared to them again—this time Thomas being with them. On one occasion He appeared to over 500 brethren. He spoke to individual disciples and ate with them. He permitted them to touch Him, and for forty days He taught them concerning the Kingdom of God and, last of all, He gave them

the commission to go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, to teach them all things whatsoever He had commanded them, and that He Himself would be with them always even unto the end of the world. And then, even after His ascension into heaven, He appeared to the Apostle Paul on the road to Damascus. These testimonies concerning the resurrected Savior should remove all doubt from our hearts and cause us to confess with divine certainty: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."—B.



EASTER TRUST

*My Savior lives! No longer now
Can sin and death oppress me,
For in His robe of righteousness
My Lord doth daily dress me;
The mercy of the risen Lord
My daily comfort doth afford,
His love and favor bless me.*

*His life comes daily to my heart
And fills me with His power,
To Him I look for certain help
In ev'ry gloomy hour;
Yea, till my days on earth are done
And till my race at last is run
He is my Rock and Tower.*

*His gracious name assures to me
Deliv'rance from damnation;
He in His Gospel made it known
To ev'ry land and nation;
This truth upholds in ev'ry strife,
This message gives eternal life
And seals my full salvation.—P.E.K.*

Our Confessional Platform

TO TELL THE WORLD

What We Believe, Teach, and Confess with Regard to the Essential Truths of the Bible

(A Brief Summary of the Orthodox Lutheran Doctrinal Position especially over against the **Common Confession** and doctrinal statements found in A.L.C. publications.)

6. Concerning Certain Non-Fundamental and Controverted Doctrines

a. Church and State

We believe, teach, and confess that, whereas every Christian, as citizen of his country or state, is under obligation to support the government in every possible way, yet that, as a Church, a Christian body should not interfere with any functions of the State (Rom. 13:1-8; 1 Peter 2:13-16; Titus 3:1-2), intercessions being enjoined upon the believers that "they may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim. 2:2). Disobedience to the government is in order only when the latter attempts to interfere with duties prescribed by the Word of God (Acts 5:29). The State has jurisdiction over the bodies and the property of Christian citizens, while the Church is in charge of their souls. Hence the two jurisdictions should not be commingled, but kept separate (John 18:11, 36; 2 Cor. 10:4; Matt. 22:21; Luke 12:14).

We reject and condemn all "church lobbying," that is, all attempts to influence the government, except when the latter infringes upon rights and duties of the Church, also the policy of those who seek to have the power of the State employed "in the interest of the Church" or its confessions, thereby turning the Church into a secular dominion; likewise the activity of those who would govern the State by the Word of God or by the distinctive tenets of any church body, thus endeavoring to turn the State into a Church.

b. Sunday

We believe, teach, and confess that the Sabbath observance and all regulations of the Ceremonial and Civil Law of the Old Testament have been abrogated, and that neither Saturday, nor Sunday, nor any other day is appointed by God (Col. 2:16; Rom. 14:5; Gal. 4:10-11). The observance of Sunday or of any other day as a day of worship was instituted according to apostolic example (1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10; Acts 20:7), and Christians will, for the sake of love and peace, observe Sunday and other festival days.

We reject and condemn the teaching of those who would transfer the outward observance and worship of the Old Testament to New Testament conditions, who would insist upon keeping the Sunday, especially according to the so-called "blue laws," as having been passed according to God's will and command.

c. The Millenium

We believe, teach, and confess that the Kingdom established by Christ here on earth will remain under the cross until the end of time (Acts 14:22; John 16:33; 18:36; Luke 9:23; 14:27; 17:20-37; 2 Tim. 4:18; Heb. 12:28; Luke 13:8), that the final coming of the Lord will be sudden, surprising the great majority of the people on earth in the midst of false teaching and sinful

living (Matt. 24:5, 7, 24, 38; 2 Peter 3:3-7, 10), that this advent will usher in the Judgment Day, in which Christ will judge the quick and the dead (Matt. 24:29, 30; 25:31; 2 Tim. 4:1; 2 Thess. 2:8; Heb. 9:26-28); that the time of the Last Day is, and will remain, unknown until it breaks upon the World (Matt. 24:42; 25:13; Mark 13:32, 37; Acts 1:7); that there will be but one resurrection from the dead (John 5:28-29; 6:39-40).

We reject and condemn every form of chiliasm, that is, the teaching that there will be a thousand years of glory preceding Judgment Day, Christ appearing either at the beginning or at the end of that time (Premillennialism; Postmillennialism); likewise that there will be a conversion of the Jewish nation as such, a statement which is both historically and Scripturally false and is based upon an obvious misunderstanding of Rom. 11:26 (Rom. 11:7; 2 Cor. 3:14; 1 Thess. 2:16); likewise the claims of those false teachers who insist, from time to time, that they can determine the very day of Christ's return to judgement (Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:32).

d. The Antichrist

We believe, teach, and confess that the teaching of the Lutheran Confessions declaring the pope to be the Antichrist is clear Scripture doctrine, the law of identification being generally used throughout Holy Writ and no other phenomenon in history satisfying the requirements of the apostolic prophecies (2 Thess. 2:3-12; 1 John 2:18), hence that the pope, as the head of the Roman sect, is, as the Smalcaid Articles put it, "the true Antichrist," a fact which is borne out by his "sitting in the temple of God," 2 Thess. 2:4, and even blasphemously assuming the name and the prerogatives of God, by the blasphemous condemnation of the doctrine of justification by faith alone, as set forth in the decrees of the Council of Trent; also that there is a progressive deterioration of the papacy even since the days of Luther (the declaration of the pope's infallibility when speaking *ex cathedra*, that is, in his official capacity; the dogma of the immaculate conception of Mary; the dogma of the assumption of Mary (which is, in effect, a deification of the Virgin), not to speak of the many idolatrous customs which have been introduced into the Roman Church.

We reject and condemn all teaching which would make the doctrine of the Antichrist a mere "historical judgment," or that looks for another phenomenon in the future which could be labeled as "the Antichrist," whereas the prophecies point back to apostolic days for the beginning of the phenomenon which requires the identification of the papacy with the Antichrist, or that denies the fact that this doctrine is clearly defined in Scripture.

e. A Rightful Betrothal

We believe, teach, and confess that a Scriptural betrothal, that is, one entered into according to the requirements of Holy Writ (the express or implied consent of the parents, the free consent of the parties concerned, the understanding of the duties of holy wedlock, etc.) places upon the betrothed persons the obligations of the married estate, especially as to fidelity; it is a marriage entered into, although not yet consummated, because of certain civil laws (an analogous case being that of a pastor who is called to a congregation, thereby becoming its pastor, even if weeks and months may pass before he is actually in charge of his parish). This is clear doctrine of

Holy Writ, both in the Old Testament (Deut. 22:23-24; Gen. 29:30) and in the New (Matt. 1:18-25; Rev. 21:2; 22-17) and therefore the exposition of the Small Catechism is right in stating: "Marriage is entered into by a rightful betrothal, or engagement."

We reject and condemn the teaching that an engagement is a mere vestibule of the wedded estate, according to the position taken by the children of this world, that it does not have the binding power of the vows exchanged in the wedding ceremony, that it may be dissolved by repudiation of one of the parties or by mutual agreement, that the teaching of Luther and other leaders of true Lutheranism was merely based on Germanic custom.

7. Symbols of the True Lutheran Church

We believe, teach, and confess that the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church, as contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, present the doctrine of Holy Writ in all the articles which they treat and are therefore to be accepted, not merely quatenus (insofar as), but quia (because) they are in agreement with Holy Scripture.

8. In Conclusion

We believe, teach, and confess that every Christian, and particularly every teacher of the Church, is pledged to an unqualified and unequivocal loyalty to Christ and the FULL TRUTH of His Word (John 8:31-32; Matt. 28:20; Prov. 30:5-6; Gal. 5:9; 1:8-9); that this loyalty includes not only the personal confession of this truth, but a contending for its every teaching, whether this concerns the personal foundation, Jesus Christ (Is. 28:16; 1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20; Heb. 11:10; 1 Peter 2:6), or the dogmatic foundation, that is, the doctrinal content of Holy Writ (Matt. 28:20; Prov. 30:5, 6; Gal. 1:8-9), or the organic foundation which is the Word itself, Holy Writ being inerrant and inviolable in all its statements, this attitude being demanded by the Lord (Jude, 3; Matt. 10:32; Luke 12:8; John 10:37; 10:5; Matt. 16:6, 12; Matt. 12:30); that no other consideration may be permitted to interfere with this duty of defending the truth of Holy Writ, neither relationship (Matt. 10:35-37) nor fear of men (Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:5), nor inertia and laziness (Is. 56:10-11) nor any other carnal considerations; that Scripture indeed urges patience in the case of such as are weak and ignorant in Christian knowledge (Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; Jas. 5:19-20), but that it does not contradict itself when it directs true confessors to avoid errorists and to withdraw from them (Rom. 16:17; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Titus 3:10; 2 Thess. 3:6), especially if there is danger of being identified with them and thus becoming partakers of other men's sins (1 Tim. 5:22; Rev. 18:4; 2 John, 10-11).

While we do not intend to force consciences, we nevertheless hold that the Word of God requires the full loyalty of every true Christian and all other considerations must yield to this demand.

—Compiled by Dr. P. E. Kretzmann

WELCOME TO ALL NEW SUBSCRIBERS

Keep Informed About Conditions Existing Among Lutherans and on the Church Front. Subscriptions make excellent gifts.

What About Women Covering Their Heads In Church

The following item appeared in one of the nationally known bi-weekly religious magazines:

"Is it sinful for women and girls to attend divine worship services with uncovered heads? Answer: The Apostle Paul discusses this question 1 Cor. 11:3-16. To one who reads these verses carefully, it becomes apparent at once that the Apostle does not approach this question as a matter of right or wrong, but of custom. When he forbids women to teach in the churches, he states that it is the Lord's commandment. 1 Cor. 4:34-37. But the matter of women coming to church with heads covered he calls a custom. 1 Cor. 11:16.

"It should be noted that it was an oriental and specifically Jewish custom for women to appear in public veiled, possibly to express their subordination to the man. The Greek women enjoyed complete freedom in this respect, and it is possible that some of the women converts in Corinth were reluctant to accept this Jewish custom. Paul, however, feels keenly on this subject and endeavors earnestly to persuade the Corinthian women to conform. Yet, he leaves it on the basis of comeliness and custom, asking: 'Is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?' His answer: 'We have no such custom.' verse 16.

"Times have changed, and we have no way of knowing how Christian people feel in this matter today. By and large, however, this ancient Jewish custom is in general vogue among us now. And since you have been brought up that way, it quite naturally appears casual and lacking in dignity, as you express it, if women and girls come to church with uncovered heads. What stand

shall our churches take in this matter? Doubtless it is within the rights of the churches to urge women, as St. Paul did, to come to the services with covered heads. Christian women should be willing to conform.

"But in the last analysis the matter will have to be left to the discretion of the individual."

We are agreed, in general, with this exposition of this much controverted section of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. However, we do not believe that the writer should have passed by so silently verses 14 and 15: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering".

In these two verses the Apostle, appealing to the natural feeling of his readers, declares that nature itself teaches that if a man wears his hair long, it is a disgrace to him, but if a woman wears her hair long, it is unto her glory. It is a significant thing that practically all nations in the world agree in having the men wear the hair short while that of the women is worn long. Long hair on a man is considered a sign of effeminacy, while long hair on a woman is looked upon as her crowning beauty. Although the sinful vanity of woman, abetted by the foolish admiration of men, has placed even the hair into the service of sin, (1 Peter 3:3; 1 Tim. 2:9.) it remains true nevertheless: it is given her to serve as a covering, in the nature of a hood. Nature itself has insisted upon woman's veiling her head, and therefore it is proper and fitting for her to express this intention in keeping her head covered.

P.E.K.

The Matter Of Christian Giving

“God loveth a cheerful giver.” (2 Cor. 9:7.) “Give and it shall be given unto you.” (Luke 6:38.) These words of Scripture are simple, well-known, and often repeated, but their sacred precept is **not practiced** as it should be among Christians.

“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, **as God hath prospered him**, that there be no gathering when I come.” (1 Cor. 16:2.) In these words is expressed the God-given, Christian principle of giving. Here the Almighty God, Maker and Provider of us all, tells us in particular that we are to give and to share of our material blessings or resources, which all of us possess in bountiful measure, according to His grace.

In our congregations and in our Conference the work of the Lord is set before us by our loving Father. His love and His will are eternal truths. His will cannot change, neither will He let us change it to suit our fancy. His work is **our** work as His children, and is to be performed not only prayerfully but also in loving loyalty and consecration. Sincere devotion to our holy calling in Christ Jesus requires of us as stewards not only a **good knowledge and understanding** of God’s revealed will on this matter, but also a **most persistent attention** to the tasks at hand, and finally, a **faithful use** of all gifts and talents entrusted to each of us.

The basis for such Christian Giving is the infinite and all-sufficient grace of God in Christ Jesus, for whose sake God has declared us and all men righteous. God’s love sent Jesus to become our Substitute and our Salvation. God’s love finished the work of redemption. God’s love in Christ has made us children of God and heirs of eternal life. God’s love caused Him to choose us from eternity to be members of His Kingdom of Grace and Glory, to work saving faith in our hearts. The Apostle therefore states: “Ye are bought with a price.” (1 Cor. 6:20.) “Ye are not your own.” (1 Cor. 6:19.) “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should **show forth** the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” (1 Peter 2:9.) Our faith in Jesus as our Savior is to **show itself** in our lives, for faith without the expected fruits, that is, faith without works, is dead. (cp. James 2:20.)

We should also be reminded of the following reasons for being good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 1) First of all, there is God’s express **command** to give, to share, to serve, to worship Him, and this in truth and purity. 2) Secondly, there are God’s precious and numerous promises, so beautiful to hear and so encouraging to the Christian. 3) Thirdly, we must consider the great wealth of material **blessings** together with the priceless spiritual **heritage** that is ours as believers - these all being ours by faith in Christ, by the grace and mercy of our heavenly Father. 4) Hence a fourth reason for practicing good stewardship habits becomes very evident, namely our personal **gratitude** to the Lord. Daily God blesses us and therefore daily and consistently we should worship and praise His holy Name. 5) Finally, there is also our sincere **love** to the Father in heaven, and for the holy work which we are privileged to perform in His Name and for His sake. And can

we forget to love our neighbor as ourselves? To share the Gospel with our fellowman demands prompt and efficient devotion to the cause of Missions. Above all things, "the love of Christ constraineth us." (2 Cor. 5:14.)

How shall I worship and serve? Of course, it is understood that we concern ourselves not with what the **neighbor** is doing, but with **our** personal life in Christ. The method is clearly stated in the Scriptures, in the Old Testament as well as in the New. (cp. Deut. 16:17 with 1 Cor. 16:2.) The practice of tithing is indeed nowhere demanded of us, yet we might well ask ourselves: If God, who is ever a God of love and justice, always fair with His children, deemed it just to claim one-tenth as a fair share of return from His dear people in the Old Testament, could not we voluntarily use that proportion as a starting point? "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." (Rom. 15:4.)

God's plan for His people in these blessed New Testament times is **PROPORTIONATE GIVING**. This method of offering gifts and sacrifices to the Lord applies equally to the needs of the local congregation and to the work of the Conference to which we belong. God does ask **EVERY** member of His Church, none excluded, not even children or young people, or newly-weds, or pensioners, to bring a **righteous offering** of that which **HE HAS GIVEN UNTO US**, namely, of our **RESOURCES** and **INCOME**. We cannot deny that God has **RICHLY** blessed **US**. He has given us all that we have. From that which already **HAS BEEN GIVEN UNTO US**, **WE** are to make a righteous offering, i.e., an act of worship proceeding from the heart where Jesus dwells through His Word, and performed with willing hands in gratitude toward the Savior.

As for the division of our goods there has ever been much discussion, but keeping the word of God before us, "Give as the Lord hath prospered you" we shall fare well. Each of us knows, and God knows even better, the measure of our prosperity. Let us be honest in our evaluation of the blessings He bestows. Then there will be a righteous division of our resources and an honest balance of our account with the Lord and everliving Head of the Church. To consider only our net income, our profits and surplus after expenses are taken out, is a dishonest evaluation. To those who use such arithmetic the Lord says: "There is that scattereth and yet **INCREASETH**; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to **POVERTY**." (Prov. 11:24.)

God has given us **everything**. All that we **ARE** and all that we **HAVE** is given us by His grace! If we will set aside **God's share** as we ought for "church and charity", then we shall not be tempted so easily to use it for personal advantage or enjoyment. We should certainly not steal from the Lord (Acts 5:1ff.), or would we deceive ourselves? The Lord warns: "Be not deceived" neither by yourself nor by another, "God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap". (Gal. 6:7.)

Many professing Christians cry loudly whenever mention is made of a "special collection". That in itself is not a good sign. True Christians welcome extra tests of their faith and love for Jesus. What is the underlying cause for these "special collections" or offerings? They sometimes become necessary because we are either ignorant of the right way to give, prompted by faith, or, we deliberately push aside God's will in favor of selfish habits

and desires. Right stewardship habits belong to God's economy and order. Where regular, weekly, righteous division of personal income and resources is practiced, there will seldom be need of special offerings. All too often there is no SYSTEM or method at all in handling finances, neither in the home nor in the congregation, and so often the cause is outright selfishness. We ourselves may be guilty without realizing, and only too ready with an excuse, instead of admitting it. God searches the heart and tries the reins of men (Jer. 17.) He knows the thinking behind our speech and actions.

Are our lips holy and our hands clean in this respect? When we are asked to DO something for the Lord, do we say: "I am too busy"? When we are asked to help the poor, the distressed, the helpless, or the sick fellow-man, or to visit him, do we say: "I haven't time just now"? When we are urged to be more regular in church attendance and at the Lord's Table do we reply: "I don't believe there is an express word of Scripture which tells me how often I should commune and how much of this and that endeavor am I to support"? Again and again personal needs and selfish desires are given priority. Sometimes we become so bold as to express our excuses to others, thus misleading them, thinking perhaps that God does not hear them. Or, because men do not argue with us (perhaps out of pity) we think that the Lord excuses us too. Yes, very often we use the portion that the Lord expects us to give back to Him for ourselves. It is indeed true, God has commanded us to take care of our own (1 Tim. 5:8) but He has not told us to do this **with His share** of what He has given us.

Proportionate giving is God's way of stewardship. Let us try it, use it! We shall prosper by it! **It is a fair plan:** fair to the Lord, fair to us, fair to His Kingdom, fair to everyone in His Kingdom. By exercising this fine Christian virtue we can, by God's grace, accomplish great things for the Lord. Our faith will be cultivated and grow into an heroic faith performing noble deeds to the glory of our Savior.

May we, when we set up our congregation's or our household budget, be sincere and honest and faithful in the setting up of **His plan** for successful and joyful living. May we practice GOOD stewardship habits, TODAY and TOMORROW, ever setting aside God's share for His work, the most holy and glorious work in all the world. Our God is still in the heavens and He has assured us in His Word that He will guide, bless and sustain us in all that we do in His Name for His glory, for His Church. May His GRACE abide with us, abound in us, govern us, encourage us in our stewardship efforts and in all other Christian virtues for His own holy Name's sake!—O.G.S.

"Our songs and psalms sorely vex and grieve the devil, whereas our passions and impatience, our complainings and cryings, our 'alas!' or 'woe in me!' please him well, so that he laughs in his fist. He takes delight in tormenting us, especially when we confess, praise, preach, and laud Christ." — Luther.



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—Ed.

News From Our Brethren

PONSFORD, MINN., CONGREGATION LOSES PROPERTY

On February 2, 1955, Judge Ruge-
mere at St. Cloud, Minn., handed
down a decision in which he gave
the property to the Missouri Synod
faction of Mt. Calvary Luth. Church,
Ponsford, Minn. In June, 1952, the
congregation voted unanimously to
join the Orthodox Lutheran Confer-
ence. Up until this time the con-
gregation was independent, and had
not joined the Missouri Synod or
any other church body. The pastor
of the congregation, at that time
(the Rev. Francis Q. Schupmann),
held numerous study meetings with
the members of the congregation,
and after a thorough indoctrination
from the Holy Scriptures and a stu-
dy of the many errors in doctrine
and practice in the Missouri Synod,
their consciences, directed by the
Word of God, led them into the Or-
thodox Lutheran Conference. (For
a more complete picture of the case
see the July-August, 1954, OL. pp.
117-119.)

In June, 1953, the Missouri Synod
under the name of Rev. Dierks, had
counselled several members of Mt.
Calvary to bring a law-suit against
the faithful members of the congre-
gation. This happened almost a year
after the Missouri Synod filed a law-
suit against the faithful members
of St. John's Church in Height of
Land, Minn. The final result of
both of these cases rests with the
Almighty God in heaven who will on
the last day render a just and holy
decision on the basis of His Word
alone.

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church has
reorganized under the name of St.

Paul's Orthodox Lutheran Church.
Plans have already been made to
begin construction of a place of wor-
ship this summer, God willing. With
the spirit of "Thy will be done" the
congregation will go forth under
God, preaching the Full Truth of
His Word and defending that faith
which was once delivered unto the
Saints.

A.W.S.

PASTOR INSTALLED IN EMPIRE, OREGON

Sunday, March 13, was a day of
great rejoicing for the members of
St. Paul's Orthodox Lutheran Church
at Empire, Oregon. For approxi-
mately one year the congregation
patiently waited for the Lord to pro-
vide them with a faithful pastor.
Finally, in His infinite mercy and
grace, the Lord of the Church grant-
ed the members of St. Paul's con-
gregation a new shepherd, Pastor
P. R. Bloedel from Wilmot, South
Dakota. Pastor Bloedel was in-
stalled by the undersigned who had
based his sermon on 1 Cor. 4:1,2.
The speaker stressed the fact that
the congregation should receive its
pastor as a minister of Christ and
as a steward of the mysteries of
God.

The installation service was at-
tended not only by the members of
St. Paul's congregation, but also by
a number of fellow-believers from
St. John's Orthodox Lutheran Church
in Lebanon, Oregon. A dinner was
served by the ladies of the congre-
gation to all those in attendance. We
pray that the Lord would keep both
pastor and people in the pure teach-
ings of His Word and crown their
labors with success.—M.L.N.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN

Fourth Lecture—F. Pieper, D.D.

(Translated by A.M.S.)

Spiritual life, which is in Christians and by virtue of which they are Christians, can be **destroyed**. It is a false teaching of the Calvinists that spiritual life can never again be completely destroyed where it once existed. No, just as a person can take his own or another's physical life, so he can destroy his own or another's spiritual life. To be sure, a person cannot produce spiritual life in himself, for that is rather the work of God's grace and His almighty power. But man does have the terrible ability to **destroy** that spiritual life which God created and preserved in him.

And such destruction of spiritual life is something very frightening and horrible. We are shocked even when we have to view the destroying of physical life. Who, for example, can without fright and horror watch an execution? On such occasions not only the weaker sex but men faint. And if one man murders another, those who are witnesses of the act are likely to join in a general cry of fright and horror. So also, if we should see a case of suicide, the same feeling of shock would come over us. But it is much more horrible when spiritual life is destroyed, for, where spiritual life has been extinguished, there eternal death and damnation are found.

Listen now and hear how Scripture warns against the destruction of spiritual life. The Apostle Paul writes in I Cor. 3:17 concerning the destruction of spiritual life: "If any man defile the temple of God," that is, destroys spiritual life, "him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." And the Lord Jesus Christ says to him who destroys spiritual life in someone else by giving offense (Mark 9:42): "It is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea."

And how the Lord Jesus, in the same connection, warns against spiritual suicide! He urges all children of God to practice the most unsparing self-discipline; He bids them to crucify the flesh with all its lusts and affections, so that the sinful lusts may not gain the upper hand and thus destroy spiritual life. Listen to the words in their connection. Christ said (Mark. 9:43-48): "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

That is how horrifying, according to the Scriptures, the destruction of spiritual life is. When a person is converted, that is, when spiritual life begins in him, then, as the Scriptures expressly testify, there is joy before the angels of God. When a person falls from spiritual life, when spiritual life is extinguished in him, then without doubt the angels of God cover their faces in sorrow. O, how we ought, therefore, to beware of the destruction of spiritual life!

But in what way does the destruction of spiritual life come about? It does **not** originate **with God**. As God wants to bring all men to spiritual life, so He wants to preserve spiritual life in all those in whom it has begun. The destruction of spiritual life originates **with man himself**. How? Through a life of sin, that is, in this way that sin, which still exists in every Christian, gains the upper hand.

The sins which deal the death-blow to spiritual life are of many kinds. A person kills spiritual life in himself when he commits this sin, that in his heart he goes astray from the teaching of justification. If a person no longer wants to be saved by the grace of God in Christ but rather through his own merits, then he immediately falls from spiritual life, for in that case he no longer believes in Christ the Crucified. Therefore the Scriptures say: "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." (Gal. 3:10.) And Christ calls the scribes and Pharisees, who trusted in their own righteousness, "whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones" (Matt. 23:27).

Futhermore, a person loses spiritual life through despising the means of grace. If a person does not want to keep contact with God's Word, his spiritual life will be extinguished in him as surely as a lamp goes out when its oil supply is exhausted. Finally, a Christian destroys his spiritual life through **every** sin that he allows to gain **control** of him. The Scriptures mention in particular fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, gluttony, drunkenness, worry about having the necessities of life, anger, hatred, refusing to be reconciled, doing things with a bad conscience, etc.

So you see how the destruction of spiritual life occurs. I hope that you will take to heart what has been said here both for your own good and for the good of those over whose souls you will some day have to watch.

Listen now, in connection with this whole subject, to some words of Luther as found in the Smalcald Articles. There in Part III, Article III (sections 42-44), Luther takes up this subject and says: "On the other hand, if certain sectarists would arise, some of whom are perhaps already extant, and in the time of the insurrection of the peasants came to my own view, holding that all those who had once received the Spirit or the forgiveness of sins, or had become believers, even though they should afterwards sin, would still remain in the faith, and such sin would not harm them, and crying thus: 'Do whatever you please; if you believe, it all amounts to nothing; faith blots out all sins,' etc. — they say besides that if any one sins after he has received faith and the Spirit, he never truly had the Spirit and faith: I have had before me many such insane men, and I fear that in some such a devil is still remaining.

"It is, accordingly, necessary to know and to teach that when holy men, still having and feeling original sin, also daily repenting of and striving with it, happen to fall into manifest sins, as David into adultery, murder, and blasphemy, that then faith and the Holy Ghost has departed from them. For the Holy Ghost does not permit sin to have dominion, to gain the upper hand so as to be accomplished, but represses and restrains it so that it must not do what it wishes. But if it does what it wishes, the Holy Ghost and faith are certainly not present. For St. John says, I John 3:9: 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, . . . and he cannot sin.' And yet it is also

the truth when the same St. John says, I John 1:8: 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.' (Triglot, page 491.)

Thus Luther expresses himself at length on this subject which we are now treating. Here Luther teaches most emphatically that spiritual life can be destroyed. He knew people who denied that fact. The Anabaptist enthusiasts declared that, if a person were once converted, he would forever remain in the state of conversion. If a person had once been awakened to spiritual life, then he could do what he wished—he could fall into the worst of sin and still he would remain spiritually alive. This teaching is expressed also in the decrees of the Synod of Dort, where it is taught: If Christians fall into grievous sins, then the exercise of faith indeed stops but not faith itself; grace itself is still present; what disappears in cases of grievous sins is only the **feeling** of grace.

What judgment does Luther pronounce upon such teaching? He says they are insane if they make such statements, and it is the devil who prompts them to entertain that error and to teach it. It is actually a most horrible error. It is throughout of such a character that it leads Christians to carnal security and thus, through carnal security, leads them to fall. By way of this error the devil can talk us into thinking thus: "O, we can do what we want; we can live according to the lusts of the flesh; our faith will still not stop completely and grace will never leave us completely. What we lose is only the feeling of grace; we still remain united with Christ." In that way, just through such a delusion, we would lose Christ.

NOTE: This is about half of the 4th lecture. The second half will be printed in the next month's issue of the **O.L.**—AMS.

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ON THE UNIONISM FRONT

"Pastor In Quartet. The Rev. Sydney Gaither, former pastor of the Coos Bay Methodist Church, is a member of a quartet in Cottage Grove called the "Holy Four", which recently sang for a meeting of the Cottage Grove PTA. Other singers are Father Mai, a Roman Catholic; Robert Kuntz, Missouri Synod Lutheran, and the Rev. Lee Huntington Young, an Episcopal vicar of St. Andrews Church, Cottage Grove and St. David's at Drain." (Quoted from the **Coos Bay Times**, Jan. 1955.)

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The Dance

The essential feature of the dance

The essential feature of the dance as it is now universally known and practised, not only in ball-rooms of a more or less public nature, but also in private homes and clubs of various kinds, is the **EMBRACE**, which forms the very basis of the dance. This is an undeniable fact! Whenever a man places his arm about a woman in a more or less close embrace, whether this is done in an automobile, on boat trips, in parks, in the parlor, in public or in private, he is indulging in a familiarity which is not permissible outside of wedlock and close relationship. The embracing of the bosom of a stranger is an act impure in itself (Prov. 5:20) and cannot be done by Christians without serious injury to their consciences and probable lasting harm to their souls.

The dance produces unfaithfulness

The Marriage Vow is a vow to **FAITHFULNESS** between husband and wife **UNTO DEATH**. When husband or wife or both indulge in dancing with other members of the opposite sex, it is the very beginning of Unfaithfulness. How can it be otherwise when husbands turn their wives over to the embraces of other men, and wives relinquish their husbands to the embraces of other women? What, then, becomes of the Marriage Vow? The dance produces infidelity, jealousy, and suspicion among married people. The Scriptures say concerning marriage: "What therefore God hath joined together **let not man put asunder.**" Matt. 19:6. Will Christian spouses, therefore, take part in the dance?

The dance gives offense

Those who indulge in the dance are continually **giving offense** (occasion or cause to sin), not only to those who watch their shameful behavior, but also to their partners in the dance who are ever in danger of becoming heated in their lusts and to sin in thoughts and desires, if not in glances, words, and deeds. Christians will always heed the warning words of the Apostle Paul: "Flee fornication." (1 Cor. 6:18.); "Flee also youthful lusts." (2 Tim. 2:22.); and of the Apostle Peter: "Abstain from fleshy lusts, which **war against the soul.**" (1 Pet. 2:11).

UNIONISM is a mockery of true Christian unity. Instead of healing the injury, it develops it into an incurable corroding cancer. — An exact definition of Christian Unity we have in 1 Cor. 1:10: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye **all speak the same thing**, and that there be **no divisions** among you, but that ye be **perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.**"



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MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

Military Chaplaincy is contrary to the Word of God because: 1. It violates the doctrine of the call. 2. Church discipline cannot be exercised by military chaplains. 3. It is plainly a mixing of church and state. 4. A true Lutheran pastor cannot comply with the official chaplaincy regulations without defying plain teachings of Scripture. 5. A military chaplain cannot possibly avoid unionism. — Furthermore, the chaplaincy is not necessary because a true Lutheran in the armed forces can receive the Word of God, which alone is able to strengthen and sustain him in the true faith, without the services of a chaplain.

“Without the Word of God there would be no church. Through the Word the Church is engendered, born, and founded; through the Word she is maintained and expanded; through the Word she must be renewed when she has been perverted; through the Word she alone wages her battles and conquers.” — Walth-
 er.

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