

the
Concordia 
Lutheran

"The Scripture cannot be broken." John 10:35.

"My Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path." Ps. 119:105.

Vol. III

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No. 9



**OBEDY YOUR LORD
AND LET HIS TRUTH
BE TAUGHT YOUR CHILDREN
IN THEIR YOUTH!**

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Concordia Lutheran



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Vol. III September, 1959 No 9

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To set forth in simple and plain language the pure doctrine of God's Word as taught by the true Lutheran Church in full accordance with the *Book of Concord of 1580*, and the *Brief Statement of 1932*.

To show, on the basis of Scripture, what true Christians are to believe and how, out of love for their Savior Jesus Christ, they are to lead godly lives.

To furnish aids for Bible study and articles for Scriptural devotion and meditation.

To demonstrate, by our Scriptural stand, that our **Concordia Lutheran Conference** is not a sect or a false church body but that the congregations which form our Conference comprise the *true visible church* on earth, not denying, however, that there may be others unknown to us who truly share our Scriptural position in doctrine and practice and who also rightly belong to the *true visible church* of Christ.

To urge all who truly share our Scriptural position in doctrine and practice to acknowledge our position openly and publicly in order that we may recognize the blessed existence of such God-given unity and that we may then proceed to practice a God-pleasing church fellowship with them by supporting each other's work with our prayers and personal service as mutually acknowledged brethren in the faith.

To show that we do not have among us a mixture of divergent teachings but that we are, by God's grace, "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

To set forth pertinent historical information which has a bearing upon the Church and to expose modern philosophical thought and the so-called scientific theories which contradict the Word of God.

To expose particularly the false teaching and practice of the various so-called "Lutheran" church bodies by comparing their teaching and practice with what is plainly recorded in the Word of God, in the Lutheran Confessions, and in the old orthodox Lutheran writings.

To expose false teaching and practice wherever it makes its appearance and to keep abreast of the current happenings in the church world and among the nations as *signs of the times*.

To be truthful and factual in our reporting and freely to correct any misinformation of which we are not aware and which has been called to our attention. Also to clarify any information or statement of doctrine or practice which may be unclear to our readers or which may create a wrong impression.

Your Child and the Public School

September is the month when the public schools throughout our nation open their doors to pupils and students ranging in age from 5 or 6 to 17 or 18. The work of consecrated teachers in the public school system is indeed a monumental task. Seldom, however, do the school teachers receive the recognition they deserve in developing the minds of the young, in preparing the youth of our nation to find the profession or vocation for which they are best suited and molding their moral character as far as civil righteousness is concerned.

Many conscientious teachers, however, feel themselves morally or spiritually obligated to bring religion into their public school classroom. They feel that they must teach children to pray (at least at meal time) and that their music classes must include well-known hymns or songs in which God or the teachings of Scripture are mentioned. Many also feel it their duty to teach portions of Scripture to the children for memory work and choral recitation. However, as public servants, the school teachers should not make any religious exercise a part of their teaching program. They are not hired as religious leaders or as teachers of religion. Certainly they may privately testify of their faith as should all Christians, but this does not at all mean that they are to lead religious exercises, devotions, and the like in a public institution supported by the state and attended by children of all denominations who have ample

access to the church of their choice for their religious education.

The responsibility for religious training and instruction of children rests primarily upon the parents: "*And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*" (Eph. 6:4) The church also, through its called ministers, is obligated to baptise and to instruct the young with the parents' permission. Neither the public schools, however, nor any individual public school teacher has the right to infringe upon the work of the church by bringing religion into their program. This is an obvious mixing of that which is the right and duty of the church with that which is the right and duty of the state. Such a mixing of church and state is contrary to the principle set forth by Jesus when He told the Pharisees (Matthew 22:21): "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." Furthermore, public school teachers have no divine call as teachers of religion in carrying out the work of their profession.

Praying together, or religious exercises of any type, are indicative of unity in the faith (Amos. 3:3). This of course, is not the case in a public school classroom where the presence of children from every and any religious denomination is required. When religious activities are carried on among such a mixed group the children are at once given the false

impression that all religious denominations are primarily and fundamentally the same and that the differences separating them are matters of minor importance. A child exposed to such an educational environment may soon have the idea molded into his mind that it doesn't really matter what a person believes and that all denominations are right—that they worship the same God only in a little different way.

How extremely dangerous this is in the light of such Scripture texts as John 8:31,32 where Jesus says: "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."; and where the Savior tells us in His sermon on the mount (Matthew 7:15): "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing; but inwardly they are ravening wolves."; and where St. Paul commands us: "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

It is certainly obvious that the mind of a young child is not aware of all the differences in doctrine and practice which separate the various religious denominations. Yet because of this very fact Christian parents are responsible for the proper religious training and conduct of their children. The smallest school child of normal intelligence can be instructed by his parents not to pray or sing hymns with others with whom he does not worship in church on Sunday. It is easy for a child to understand that

the public school is not the place to learn about God and His Word but that we learn those things in Sunday School and Church. These things can well be basic for the child as he enters the first grade of public school and if thus he learns to testify of his faith from little up and is faithfully nurtured in the Word of God, his religious convictions also will grow and will *mean something* to him as he increases in knowledge and wisdom in secular matters. His faith will become an essential part of his conversation and conduct by which he will be able to judge and test that which he is taught and asked to do both in school and in his wider circle of associations.

Parents should not think, as many do, that because their child is small they should not insist that he should not pray with others of a different faith or that he should not sing common hymns and carols with them. Such parents argue that the child begins to feel inferior and left out if they insist on such things and that they prefer to wait till later to instruct him more thoroughly. Here they make a serious mistake, for the child can readily recognize an inconsistency in their method ("Why did you let me do it *then* and not *now*?"). Here also parents should heed the words of Scripture: "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6.) Children need not at all feel inferior when they are taught to love Jesus and His Word and "in every way try to please Him."

—B

THE PHYSICAL SUPPORT OF THE SERVANTS OF THE WORD

(Adapted From an Old German Synodical Essay)

In this final installment we would like to discuss the *needs* of the servants of the Word. In His Word the Lord demands that His faithful servants "be able to teach others also." (2 Tim. 2:12) Such pastors do not simply fall from heaven already fully equipped with the necessary training. Therefore a long period of intense study must precede his entrance into the Office of the Ministry. All of this preparatory work costs money, and, in many cases real sacrifices. The knowledge which the servant of the Word has acquired in this preparatory work is not to serve some *selfish* purpose of his, but rather *the spiritual needs of his hearers!* Let not our congregations think that since their pastors have graduated from a Seminary, they do not have to study any longer. No, indeed, for no matter how long a servant of the Word has been in the Ministry he has by no means reached the point where it is no longer necessary for him to study! Even the learned Dr. Luther had to confess, "I am also a doctor and preacher . . . And I must still read and study daily, and yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and a pupil of the Catechism, and am glad so to remain." In order to further his studies, it is necessary for the pastor to have the proper tools. Besides the Bible, there are various commentaries, devotional books, religious periodicals, etc., which he should have in his library. Even

as a doctor must have his different instruments and a carpenter his various tools, so also must the pastor have the necessary books. Now if a servant of the Word is not paid a decent salary how is he going to buy such books?

Moreover, the Lord requires that a pastor be "the husband of one wife," (1 Tim. 3:2) "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." (v. 4) As the head of the house he is also responsible for the support of his family. The words of the Apostle also apply to him, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (1 Tim. 5:8) This does not mean that the pastor provide his family *only with the absolute essentials* (food and clothing), but also with various other necessities, for example, an education for the children, proper care of their teeth, employing the services of a doctor in the time of sickness, etc. All these things are surely necessary for the well-being of the family and it is the duty of the housefather to see to it that such necessities are provided. Now how can he do these things when his salary is not large enough to cover such expenses?

The servant of the Word is also to be known for his *hospitality*. In writing to Timothy, the Apostle Paul says, "A bishop (pastor) must be . . .

given to hospitality.” (1 Tim. 3:2) A pastor has many opportunities to practice Christian hospitality and he certainly ought to do it without murmuring. But it is also self-evident that it costs money to take care of guests in the home. How can the faithful servant of the Word fulfill his duty in this respect if his salary is so low, that he cannot even properly take care of his own family?

The pastor is to be “an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity,” (1 Tim. 4:12) “in all things showing himself a pattern of good works.” (Titus 2:7) This does not simply mean: he should deal with the Christians in a friendly and loving manner, and be an example of piety in his behavior and speech, but it also means: he should *actually practice deeds of charity*. Where the need exists and it serves the Kingdom of God, there the pastor should contribute generously and be an example to the flock. In order to do this, he must possess the necessary means.

We shall bring this subject of *the physical support of the servants of the Word* to a close with a quotation from Luther’s Large Catechism. In the explanation of the Fourth Commandment he writes, “We have two kinds of fathers presented in this commandment, fathers in blood and fathers in office, or those to whom belongs the care of the family, and those to whom belongs the care of the country. Besides these there are

yet spiritual fathers; not like those in the Papacy, who have indeed had themselves called thus, but have performed no function of the paternal office. For those only are called spiritual fathers who govern and guide us by the Word of God; as St. Paul boasts his fatherhood 1 Cor. 4:15, where he says: *In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel*. Now, since they are fathers they are entitled to their honor, even above all others. But here it is bestowed least; for the way which the world knows for honoring them is to drive them out of the country and to grudge them a piece of bread, and, in short, they must be (as says St. Paul, 1 Cor. 4:13) as the filth of the world and everybody’s refuse and footrag.

“Yet there is need that this also be urged upon the populace, that those who would be Christians are under obligation in the sight of God to esteem them worthy of double honor who minister to their souls, that they deal well with them and provide for them. For that, God is willing to add to you sufficient blessing and will not let you come to want. But in this matter every one refuses and resists, and all are afraid that they will perish from bodily want, and cannot now support one respectable preacher, where formerly they filled ten fat paunches. In this we also deserve that God deprive us of His Word and blessing, and again allow preachers of lies to arise to lead us to the devil, and, in addition, to drain our sweat and blood.

“But those who keep in sight God’s

will and commandment have the promise that everything which they bestow upon temporal and spiritual fathers, and whatever they do to honor them, shall be richly recompensed to them, so that they shall have, not bread, clothing, and money for a year or two, but long life, support, and peace, and shall be eternally rich and blessed. Therefore only do what is your duty, and let God take care how He is to support you and provide for you sufficiently. Since He has promised it, and has never yet lied, He will not be found lying to you.

"This ought indeed to encourage us, and give us hearts that would melt in pleasure and love toward those to whom we owe honor, so that we would raise our hands and joyfully thank God who has given us such promises, for which we ought to run to the ends of the world. For although the whole world should combine, it could not add an hour to our life or give us a single grain from the earth. But God wishes to give you all exceeding abundantly according to your heart's desire. He who despises and casts this to the winds is not worthy ever to hear a word of God." (Trig. p. 627ff.)

(The End) M.L.N.

"No pestilence so infects the body as godless doctrine infects the mind. Well the apostle says of false teachers (2 Tim. 2:17): 'Their word will eat as does a canker'." —Luther

A Devotion

"When I am weak, then am I strong!"

2 Cor. 12, 10b.

There are various passages of Scripture which because of their structure and content are unusually striking. This is especially true of such sentences in the Bible which are called *paradoxes*. For example, in Matthew 10:39 the Lord says: "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it!" Here our Savior stresses that when a man follows Him in faith, even though he lose his earthly life, his soul is safe and rests in the arms of Jesus. In Mark 9:35 we read: "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all and servant of all!" In this passage Jesus emphasizes the Christian virtue of humility, whereby in His eyes the lowly service of the believer pleases Him most.

Another Bible paradox is the inspired statement of the apostle Paul which he wrote to the Corinthians in defense of his apostleship and unselfish service in their midst. He did not use words of self-praise, but emphasized that to keep him humble the Lord had given him a thorn in the flesh. Despite many unpleasant experiences which marked his career as a servant of the Lord Paul declared that he would rather glory in his infirmities, and then he wrote the words of the text given at the heading of this meditation: "When I am weak, then am I strong!"

Here is an unusual expression indeed, but one that is filled with signifi-

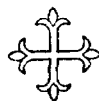
cant meaning. In this same letter to the Corinthians he wrote: "We are weak in Christ, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you!" 2 Cor. 13, 4b. To be true followers of and workers for the Lord it is necessary that we be *weak* in Him. This does not mean, of course, that our faith and service to Christ are to be of a weak nature. Rather it means that we share in that humbleness which marked the Lord's life in that He suffered and endured all things, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. As Jesus' disciples we are to share in that weakness, remaining humble, enduring enmity without thought of vengeance, exercising self-control and committing our cause to Him that judgeth righteously. To be weak in Christ means to die unto sin and to bury all evil desires living alone for Him who redeemed us and made us His own. It implies a despairing of one's own ability and a wholehearted dependence on the help and guidance of the Lord in all we do.

Paul realized that in such a state of weakness he under God would really be strong. He says therefore: "Then am I strong . . . we shall live with Him by the power of God!" While many seek to be mighty and effective in their own strength and are failures in God's sight Paul learned that as he was weak so he was also strong in the Lord for Jesus said to him "My strength is made perfect in weakness!" 2 Cor. 12:9. Hence Paul could declare with conviction: "I can do all things through Christ

which strengtheneth me!" Phil. 4:13.

The fact that we are strong in Christ will show itself in fervent prayer for as we make better use of this great privilege, we shall accomplish mighty things for the Lord. Our strength in the Savior will be evident in our faith, as we follow in the footsteps of those heroes of whom we read: "Out of weakness they were made strong!" Hebr. 11:33-34. Strength in Christ will show itself in bold witnessbearing, as we proclaim the only message of salvation and stand up for Jesus. Our good works will also give proof of our being strong in the Lord. As men observe our Christian faith and life, they will be directed to glorify God in heaven. And he who is strong in Christ can face all trials, tribulations, and crosses and will glory in his infirmities even as Paul.

May the words of the apostle be the attitude of our hearts and the source of strength and comfort as we go about our mutual tasks in the kingdom of the Lord! —O.W.S.



BACK ISSUES

We have had many requests for back issues of our periodical. These issues will be priced as follows:

Issues of current year ----- .20

An additional five cents for each previous year.

OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The Board of Directors of the Concordia Lutheran Conference will meet, God willing, at the home of Mr. Victor Bloedel, 8152 W. Clovernook, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 6 and 7, 1959.

The first session is to begin at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, October 6. All Board members should be present; or, if this is impossible, they are requested to submit their reports, in writing, to the undersigned, before that date.

Those attending please inform either Mr. Bloedel or the Rev. E. L. Mehlberg, pastor of Christ Church, Milwaukee regarding their attendance and time of arrival.

H. David Mensing, President

Walking In The Old Paths

2 Tim. 3:15: *"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."*

There is indeed no book on earth which records so many events of sin-abominations and transgressions by human beings as do the Holy Scriptures. This Holy Book, especially the Old Testament, so far as its record of human events is concerned, contains practically nothing but a great, terrible catalogue of sins. Already the first act which the Bible records concerning man's activities, is a fall into sin. Indeed, it was such a great fall that the entire human race of all ages was drawn into sin and corruption with it. After the fall into sin the Bible relates that the first son of the first parents became a murderer of his brother, and it shows how from that time onward, from generation to generation, the wickedness of man

continued steadily to increase. Yes, so high did the wickedness mount that finally, in the 17th century after the creation of the world, God found it necessary to send a general flood to destroy, with the exception of eight souls, all the millions of people who at that time lived on earth and who were hopelessly beyond moral improvement. But also after the account of that terrible visitation of God's punishment, the Bible still does not present an improved world. Not only does it present, among others, the heathenish Sodom and Gomorrah as cities whose sins and abominations cried out so loudly to the heavens for vengeance that God had to turn against and destroy them by raining down upon them fire and brimstone

from heaven, but it even presents the families of the holy patriarchs themselves and the entire chosen people of God as the scene of sin, idolatry, and every vice. Yes, even among people whom Holy Writ extolls as saints, there can hardly be found any of whom it does not at the same time report a fall into sin or some other stain in his life. Furthermore, the Scriptures frequently describe the most grievous offense in such great detail and so bluntly that one cannot read the account without shuddering.

For that reason many have taken offense at the Bible. Many have held that a book which practically on every page presents hardly anything but the sins of people, describing them so freely and openly, can hardly be a holy book, can not possibly be the Word or the Revelation of God. If a book has been given by God for the purpose of improving man, one would expect that it would only describe the lives of pious, virtuous, and holy people who in every way would serve as worthy examples. Though there be many intelligent people who think that way, those thoughts are nevertheless entirely wrong. Let us but consider the matter a little, and we will soon be convinced that it was great wisdom on the part of God that He in His Word presented such a dark and terrifying picture of mankind.

The entire Holy Scriptures have been written for that very purpose that men might be brought to faith in Christ, the Savior of the world. Christ is the substance and light of

the Old and New Testament. He Himself says concerning the Old Testament: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." For that reason Paul also writes to Timothy, referring to the Old Testament in the same way: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." For the same reason Peter also preaches: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." That the New Testament also has this purpose, really needs no proof; let us just bring one reference. We read at the close of the Gospel of St. John: "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

Why? If now the Holy Scriptures would alone proclaim how many pious people there have been, would we then indeed be led to faith in Christ? Wouldn't that lead us to think that people are good, that they haven't fallen so low, that they are not so bad off, that they can well be saved through their own efforts if they just want to, and that they need no Savior to accomplish it? No doubt.

Far be it from us, therefore, that we should take offense when man, and even the most holy man, is always presented in the Bible as a sinner. We must rather recognize in this the

great wisdom of God. By holding before our eyes those sins which from the beginning of the world have held sway among men, God wants us to understand that man's righteousness and merit is but an empty figment of the imagination and a dream, that the human race is a fallen race, and that every person therefore is a sinner, that even the most pious with his righteousness cannot stand before God, that grace, free grace, is man's only refuge, and that there is therefore no help and salvation apart from Christ.

Those things which the Bible together with such terrifying sins records, should serve us as a mirror

in which we should see and learn to understand our own life and our own heart, so that we humble ourselves before God and flee to the cross of the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world.

*Promote Thy knowledge in me,
Thy help my soul afford,
With understanding crown me,
Lord, grant this by Thy Word:
That I the faith retaining,
In Thy full truth remaining,
Defy hell by Thy sword. Amen.*

Taegliche Hausandacht
C. F. W. Walther (Crull)
Translated by ELM.



A group of pastors, delegates, and visitors at the Ninth Annual Convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Empire, Oregon, June 18-21, 1959.

Truth is Truth

A very stimulating article entitled *Positive Teaching and Positive Learning: Hallmarks of Truly Christian Schools* is found in the August issue of *The Lutheran Spokesman*. (This periodical is published bi-monthly by a group which left the Wisconsin Synod for doctrinal reasons).

This particular article sets forth the proposition that truth is truth no matter who claims it. Rev. V. Gerlach, the author of the article, writes, "How sad it is to find Christian teachers, pastors, and professors who condemn everything a Schlesinger or a Lippmann says because he is a Jew, everything a John XXIII or a Fulton Sheen says because he is a Catholic, everything a Billy Graham or a Bob Jones says because he is not a member of 'our synod'." At the same time, however, the author is quick to point out, "We do not mean to say that all these men say is truth, nor are we contending that some of their statements are true because *they* have uttered them. In fact our Lord urges us to beware of such false prophets and to avoid them. But we do contend that even an utterance of the Pope may be truth if it does not contradict the Word, and *it is truth* when it agrees with the Word."

We readily acknowledge that truth is truth no matter who proclaims it. The Lord Jesus says of the Scriptures, "Thy Word is Truth" (John 17:17). Now whoever speaks that Word of God, be he a true believing child of God or even a rank unbeliever, it

still is and remains God's Word, the Truth! Dr. Luther also stressed this Scriptural truth. "We must, after all, confess that in certain other articles the enthusiasts hold views which accord with Scripture and God's Word and that although they are *impious heretics and blasphemers of Christ*, he who hears and believes them *on these points* shall be saved. That God proclaims His Word even through the wicked and the godless is not an insignificant blessing." (St. Louis Ed. Vol. 17, p. 2212)

"And how do we apply this principle to life in our schools?" writes Pastor Gerlach. "Well, to begin with we might take a look at our teaching and determine whether we are guilty of telling our young people that everything Reformed or everything (need we say it?) Missourian, or everything (we *need* say it!) of Wisconsin, is sordid and unclean."

Our quarrel has never been with the Scriptural teachings which any given church-body may proclaim—in fact, we rejoice whenever we hear or read any teaching of God's Word presented in its *truth and purity*. On the other hand, however, we very strongly reject and repudiate any teaching *from any church-body* which contradicts one iota of the Divine Truth. And not only does God demand that we reject all false teachings, but also that we separate from such persons, where against instruction and admonition, persistence is maintained in falsifying His Holy Word. (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10) By God's grace, this is precisely what we have

done with the Synodical Conference, because it as a corporate body no longer adheres to *all* of God's Word.

Pastor Gerlach's argument, however, is well taken. We must ever be on our guard lest we automatically reject something simply because it comes from the Missouri or Wisconsin Synods, especially since so many of us, pastors as well as laymen, have suffered such grievous injustice in the past particularly at the hands of the Synodical officials. May God help us always to rejoice in the truth and to stand steadfastly against all error!

—M.L.N.



WHERE IS YOUR TREASURE?

*A trip to earth the dear angels took,
In this house to take a searching look.
They cry: Why build ye so anxiously
securely,*

*When but as guests here upon earth
ye are purely?*

*And for the mansions eternal which
are up above,*

*Your planning and efforts show, Oh,
such negligent love?*

*"For where your treasure is, there
will your heart be also."*

—Luke 12:34

Besser, Bibelstunden
Tr., ELM

A "LUTHERAN" MONASTERY !

In the March, 1959, issue of the *Concordia Lutheran*, p. 41, the reader will recall an article which discussed the *Una Sancta* movement fostered by pastors and professors from various Lutheran bodies including a substantial number from the *Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*. A member of this *Una Sancta* group is responsible for establishing a "Lutheran" monastery in Oxford, Michigan. The man's name is Rev. Arthur C. Kreinheder.

Mr. Kreinheder was ordained a priest in the State Church of Sweden by Bishop Nygren of Lund and has been attending Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. He is intending to enter the ministry of the *Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod* and is reported to have the sponsorship of one of the district presidents.

The monastic order, which was established by Kreinheder last year, is known as the CONGREGATION of the SERVANTS of CHRIST. The life of the monks belonging to the monastery is centered about the Sacrament of the Altar, Confession, and liturgical piety. After a period of probation, which begins at the time of entering the order, the monk serves a three-year novitiate during

which he takes annual vows of poverty, celibate chastity, and obedience.

It should indeed be astonishing for our readers to learn that prominent pastors and professors of the *Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod* encourage and defend such rank Romanistic innovations. —B

WISCONSIN SYNOD --

Recent issues of the *St. Louis Lutheran* and the *Badger Lutheran* bring pertinent information on the doctrinal resolutions passed at the annual convention of the Wisconsin Synod, held at Saginaw, Michigan, August 5-12, 1959.

Despite pressure to terminate fellowship relations with the Missouri Synod immediately the 125 delegates voted to ask their Doctrinal Unity Committee to continue and accelerate discussions with the Missouri Synod "until agreement on doctrine and practice is accomplished or an impasse is met." Delegates were told that discussions during recent years have been fruitful. Meanwhile the Synod will continue "a vigorously protesting fellowship."

An entire District of the Wisconsin Synod has threatened to withdraw unless a final break in relations was voted. Already before this several of the Synod's pastors and congregations severed their affiliation for the same reason.

In summarizing the situation between the Missouri and Wisconsin

Synods the chairman of the Committee on Church Union stated: "There are still differences and offenses. They have troubled the Church in some form from its very beginning. But in the light of the recent past we do hope that the Lord will continue to bless our mutual efforts towards complete reconciliation."

Concerning the action taken by the Wisconsin Synod one of its pastors wrote the undersigned, "I view this action only with deepest regrets and a disturbed conscience." However, an editorial in the *St. Louis Lutheran* declares: "The Lutheran Synodical Conference seems to have weathered the worst of the storm . . . We can only pray fervently that we haven't now simply managed to slip into the relative calm that exists in the eye of a hurricane and that we are due for another serious blow before it's all over." —O.W.S.

NORWEGIAN SYNOD --

In the August issue of our *Concordia Lutheran* a report was given concerning the doctrinal resolutions passed at the annual convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (Norwegian Synod). In substance, that church body resolved to continue its suspension of fellowship relations with the Missouri Synod and to participate in further discussions with the Joint Doctrinal Unity Committee.

In the August 27th issue of the *Lutheran Sentinel*, President Milton

E. Tweit of that Synod reports that since their convention two pastors and one congregation have withdrawn their membership "because they feel that our Synod's action is a case of disobedience to God's Word."

President Tweit then proceeded to review the historical developments within the Synodical Conference during the period of 1955-1959 and clarified the action taken by the Norwegian Synod at its conventions during those years. Then he answers the question: "Is our recent action a case of disobedience to God's Word, as is charged by some; or is it in harmony with the Scriptures?"

His reply is as follows: "Without question the situation is both complicated and unusual. On the one hand, the offenses have not by any means been fully removed, and new offenses continue to occur. And yet on the other hand, some of the actions of the Missouri Synod or its members to which we have objected have at least in part been corrected or removed by proper discipline (e.g. the Common Confession, declination of the recent invitation of the National Lutheran Council, and others . . .). At the same time the Committees have created what may well be the machinery for resolving still others of our difficulties, since the Missouri Synod members have shown an attitude of willingness to bow to the Scriptures . . . We believe that the action of our Synod under the present circumstances must be based not only upon Romans 16, 17, which was

applicable in 1955, but rather upon such passages as 2 Thess. 3:14-15: 'And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother;' and Gal. 6:1-2: 'Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ'."

We fail to see that the action of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod is in harmony with Scriptures. While it speaks of a certain improvement within the Missouri Synod, it also mentions old offenses which still exist and new ones which have just arisen. This hardly proves a willingness among Missouri Synod members to bow to the Scriptures. Furthermore, the correct application of 2 Thess. 3:14-15, and Gal. 6:1-2 must *precede* that of Romans 16, 17, whereas the E.L.S. reverses them. Once Romans 16,17 is applied, all fellowship ceases and the action is *final*.

Consequently we hold that the action of the E.L.S. is a case of disobedience to the Word of God and that the step taken by the two pastors and the one congregation in withdrawing their membership from that Synod was Scriptural. May God through His holy Word open the eyes of others so that they also will do that which is pleasing to the Lord!
—O.W.S.

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Milwaukee 16, Wisconsin

Peace Ev. Lutheran Church

H. David Mensing, Pastor
Central Avenue at 171st Place
Tinley Park (Chicago), Illinois

St. Stephen's Ev. Lutheran Church

O. W. Schaefer, Pastor
Box 424
Wilmot, South Dakota

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church

E. C. Hallstein, Pastor
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M. L. Natterer, Pastor
6th and Tangent
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12472 Beacon Avenue
Seattle 88, Washington
M. L. Natterer, Vacancy Pastor

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