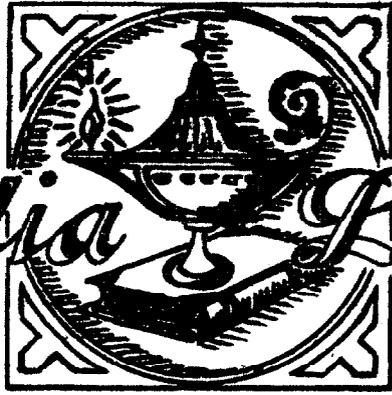


*the*  
**Concordia Lutheran**



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

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

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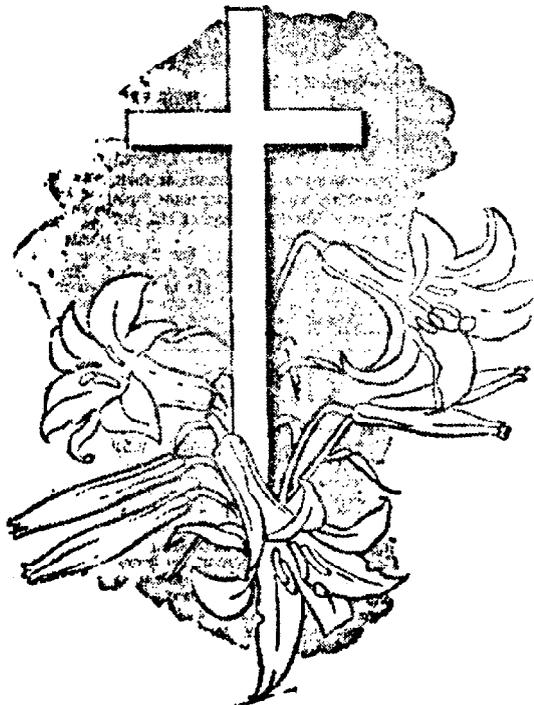
Vol. XIV.

First Quarter, 1969

No. 1.

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**HE ROSE  
AGAIN  
THE THIRD  
DAY  
ACCORDING  
TO THE SCRIPTURES!**



—I Corinthians 15:4.

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

Vol. XIV. 1st Quarter, 1969 No. 1.

**Official Organ of the  
Concordia Lutheran Conference**

This publication appears quarterly at a subscription price of \$2.00 per year.

**Editor:**

Rev. P. R. Bloedel  
3947 S. Graham, Seattle, Wash. 98118

**Assistant Editor:**

Rev. M. L. Natterer  
483 Tangent St., Lebanon, Ore. 97355

Send all articles to the editor no later than the 1st of the month which precedes the month of publication. All letters of comment or criticism concerning an article or articles in this periodical should be directed either to the editor or assistant editor.

**Business Manager:**

Mr. Martin R. Luedtke  
12472 Beacon, Seattle, Wash. 98178

The address label on your **Concordia Lutheran** shows the expiration date of your subscription.

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**Officers of the  
Concordia Lutheran Conference**

**President:**

Rev. O. W. Schaefer  
Box 424, Wilmot, So. Dak. 57279

**Vice President:**

Rev. H. David Mensing  
Central Ave. at 171st Place  
Tinley Park, Illinois, 60477

**Secretary:**

Rev. M. L. Natterer  
483 Tangent St., Lebanon, Ore. 97355

**Treasurer:**

Mr. V. K. Bloedel  
8152 W. Clovernook St.  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53223

**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 it confess, teach, and practice the Word of God in its full truth and purity and use the Sacraments according to Christ's institution. All who do this are the true visible church on earth.

To seek out all who truly share our Scriptural position in doctrine and practice, and to urge the mutual public acknowledgment of such God-given unity. Thus we shall be able thereafter to practice a God-pleasing church fellowship with them.

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 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.



## The President's Column

The majestic Feast of the Resurrection convinces us anew that our faith is built on the surest foundation. It calms our fears and fills us with new enthusiasm for the obligations which are ours as 20th century disciples of Christ. It gives us the comforting assurance that some day we, too, shall rise to live with Him eternally. May the spirit of this glorious festival linger in our hearts continually!

The first appearance of the risen Savior was to Mary Magdalene as she wept brokenheartedly near the open sepulcher. She was a devout follower of Jesus and had ministered to His needs. Now her world seemed empty, for she thought that enemy hands had removed her Master's body to some unknown place. Her sorrow was intense and very personal.

Turning around suddenly, she saw a man and thought it was the gardener. In her deep grief she did not recognize the Lord until He spoke her name and thereby revealed Himself, dispelled her sadness, and filled her heart with peace and joy. She expressed her happiness and faith by exclaiming, "*Rabboni, my Master!*" Now she realized that all His promises had been fulfilled.

We do well to make the cry of Mary our own. By faith we recognize our Savior and declare with believing heart, "*My Master!*" This will make us happy and blessed for time and for eternity. It will make us eager to tell others of the risen Christ even as Mary told the disciples what she had seen and heard.

That message is what our confused and war-torn world needs today. It is the message of peace between God and man, of divine love for all sinners, of eternal life for all who follow the resurrected Savior in true faith unto the end. All who hold fast to the truth of Easter will be the happiest people in the world. For them this wonderful season will prove a great blessing.

A blessed Easter Season to you all!

*Your servant in the Lord,*

O. W. Schaefer

# *How Do I Know that I am God's dear Child?*

This is a question which has disturbed and perplexed many a Christian—especially in the time of affliction when the author of all lies, the devil, shoots his fiery darts deep into our heart seeking to drive us into the pit of despair.

How is the Christian to comfort himself when Satan plagues him with such troublesome thoughts? It is certain that the Christian can not manufacture his own real comfort; he can not rely upon the comfort offered to him by sinful man. We need but recall the example of Job's friends. In his great affliction those friends proved to be miserable comforters.

As the heat of the furnace of affliction increases there is always the danger that with the Apostle Peter we behold only the waves of adversity, and lo, like him, we begin to fall and sink. We see no comfort in ourselves but dust and ashes; we observe the feeble efforts of others to help us, but vain is the help of man. It is the devil who seizes such an opportune time and seeks to make us doubt even as he did with our first parents in the Garden of Eden. "How do you know that you are God's dear child?" he slyly whispers.

Being Christians we should answer without any hesitation: "*Because God says so!*" Already as little children we learned the well-known song, "*Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.*"

Yes, way back in eternity, God elected and chose me to be His very own dear child for Jesus' sake. Not that God blindly reached into the mass of humanity and on the basis of His absolute power snatched here an individual and there one to be His own. No, indeed, when God elected me to be His very own, He took into consideration the means through which I would be brought to faith and preserved in the same. The Apostle Paul writes in 2 Thessalonians, "*But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto He called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (2:13, 14).

When God elected me to be His very own dear child, He did so out of pure grace and mercy, without any merit or worthiness on my

part. *“God hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began”* (2 Tim. 1:9). Thus God was motivated by His grace and the sacrifice of Christ to elect me to be His own dear child. *“God hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His Will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved”* (Eph. 1:4-6).

God also provided the means through which I might be brought to faith in Jesus as my Savior. *“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God”* (Rom. 10:17); *“Baptism doth also now save us”* (I Pet. 3:21). It is through the Gospel message that the Holy Ghost works the true saving faith in my heart. Now God did not elect me “in view of my faith,” that is, God did not select me to be His own because He saw that I was going to come to faith; on the contrary, the faith which I have in my heart is a result or consequence of His having chosen me to be His very own way back in eternity. For we read in the Book of Acts, *“And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed”* (13:48). Because God elected me out of pure grace for Jesus’ sake, in the due course of time He brought me to faith through the cleansing waters of Holy Baptism and has kept and preserved me in the one true faith!

“How do I know that I am God’s dear child?” God tells me so in His Holy Word! For the assurance of my salvation I dare not look into God’s foreknowledge and draw all sorts of conclusions on the basis of my sinful reason. For that would only succeed in plunging me into the pit of despair! I dare not reason: “If God has elected some to eternal salvation, does that mean He has elected the rest to eternal damnation?” God has elected NO one to eternal damnation! *“As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live”* (Ezek. 33:11); *“God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”* (1 Tim. 2:4). And the Apostle reminds us in Corinthians that Christ died for ALL because all men are by nature spiritually dead in sin (2 Cor. 5:14, 15; Cp. Eph. 2:1-10). This Word stands fast!

Therefore, if I am to be certain of the fact that I am God’s own dear child, then I must look solely to His revealed Will, His Holy

Word, and treasure it in my heart. Do I sincerely repent of my sins and believe that the blood of Jesus washes me clean from all my sins and do I look to the Holy Spirit for strength to be fruitful in every good work? By God's grace, I can answer in all sincerity: Yes. Therefore, God tells me in His Word, "*Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Rom. 5:1); "*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*" (I Jn. 1:9); "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*" (Rom. 8:1); "*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life*" (John 3:16). And there we have it! "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*" (Acts 16:31).

Am I being arrogant and presumptuous in confessing that I am God's own dear child? Indeed not! For it is God's Word which tells me that I am and not my flesh. "*For I know that in me (that is in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing*" (Rom. 7:18); "*My sin is ever before me*" (Ps. 51:3). I am sure and certain that God chose me to be His own dear child way back in eternity before the foundation of the world, because God's Word does not lie! My certainty is not a self-arouse conviction, but it is based upon God's Word. "*For I KNOW Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that Day*" (2 Tim. 1:12). By doubting my salvation I am accusing God of lying! And "*God is not a man, that He should lie*" (Num. 23:19).

Ah ,what glorious comfort this truth gives me in the midst of so many trials and afflictions, anxieties and perplexities. He Who has loved me with an everlasting love assures me, "*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand*" (John 10:27, 28). And the Apostle speaks of this in the Epistle to the Romans, "*We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified ... Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? ... I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers,*

*nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (8:28ff.).*

Because I am God’s dear child, I can joyfully sing in the words of Paul Gerhardt:

*This I believe, yea, rather  
Of this I make my boast,  
That God is my dear Father,  
The Friend Who loves me most,  
And that, whate’er betide me,  
My Savior is at hand  
Through stormy seas to guide me  
And bring me safe to land.*

(Hymn 528, *The Lutheran Hymnal*)



## **ENDLESS JOY!**



JESUS, MY REDEEMER, LIVES; I, TOO, UNTO  
LIFE SHALL WAKEN,  
ENDLESS JOY MY SAVIOR GIVES; SHALL MY  
COURAGE, THEN, BE SHAKEN?  
SHALL I FEAR, OR COULD THE HEAD RISE  
AND LEAVE HIS MEMBERS DEAD?

NAY, TOO CLOSELY AM I BOUND UNTO HIM  
BY HOPE FOREVER;  
FAITH’S STRONG HAND THE ROCK HATH  
FOUND, GRASPED IT AND WILL LEAVE  
IT NEVER;  
EVEN DEATH NOW CANNOT PART FROM ITS  
LORD THE TRUSTING HEART.

# PUBLIC WORSHIP AMONG CHRISTIANS

## THE ACTS OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

### III.

The various liturgical acts may be arranged in two groups. The first of these groups comprises those acts by which God offers, appropriates, and seals to the congregation the gifts of his grace, while the congregation receives and enjoys these gifts in the manner intended by the Giver and in the measure of which the individual members of the assembly are rendered capable by the Spirit of God operating through the means of grace. The second group is made up of acts whereby the congregation in its turn offers up the sacrifices of hearts, lips, and hands of the children of God assembled in the common exercise of their holy religion, offerings acceptable to God for Christ's sake and received by Him as tokens of their gratitude and filial affection. It should, however, be noted here at once that the elements pertaining to the one or the other group are so blended and combined that several acts must be classed with the first or the second group according to the predominate elements.

#### A.

God has, in His wisdom and goodness, provided certain means by which He would confer upon His children the spiritual blessings wherewith He would bless them in His Kingdom of Grace: the *means of grace*, the audible Word, and the Sacraments. Thus it is that the liturgical acts of the first group consist essentially in the administration of the means of grace in public worship. They are placed first because their relation to the acts of the other class ranks them first. The Psalmist says: "*I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.*" (Psalm 119:32.) Faith must be engendered and nourished by the means of grace in order that it should bear the fruits of the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. (Romans 8:15.) Luther has well said: "If man should deal with God and receive of Him, this must come about, not by man making a beginning and laying the first stone; but God, without man's request and desire, must come first and give him a promise. Such word of God is the foundation, the rock upon which all works, words, and thoughts of man will thereafter be established.

This word man must gratefully receive, firmly believing the di-

vine promise and in no wise doubting that as He has promised, so it shall be and come to pass. This faith and confidence is the beginning, middle, and end of all works and righteousness . . . It is impossible that man of his own reason and ability should with his works ascend into heaven and, preveining God, move Him to grace; but God must prevene all his works and thoughts." The administration of the means of grace is the chief purpose for which Christ has instituted the ministry and should be looked upon by the pastor and the congregation as the very soul of public worship, which should receive the most careful attention by pastor and people. A church with a poor preacher and a good organist and choir is a caricature, and a prayer meeting without a sermon or Scripture lesson is liturgically considered an incomplete thing, lacking what ought to have been its better part.

The means of grace are in the public worship administered chiefly by the ministers of Christ and of the church. It is termed the "*ministry of the word*," (Acts 6:4) and among the "*elders*" those "*who labor in the word and doctrine*" are of first importance. (1 Tim. 5:17.) This points to the *Sermon* as the principal act of worship. The Apology says; "The foremost worship is to teach the Gospel," or, according to the German text: "The greatest, holiest, most necessary, and highest worship is to preach the Word of God;" and again: "In our churches the priests do properly perform their office, teaching and preaching the Gospel, preaching Christ."

Preaching Christ! There is no briefer way of stating what the sermon in public worship should be. The Law, of course, must also be voiced forth from the Christian pulpit; but chiefly to prepare the way for the Gospel and for Christ in the Gospel. A sermon without Christ as its subject or scope is not in its proper place in public worship. A philosophical discourse on some ethical or esthetical subject, or an entertaining talk on current events or topics of social life, may befit the lecture room or the stage, but should be banished from the Christian pulpit. Public worship is not an entertainment or an opportunity for social intercourse and enjoyment, but the public exercise of religion, which is the relation between God and man wherein God confers upon man His spiritual blessings and man devotes himself to and rejoices in the service of his God. The preacher in public worship, therefore, properly fills his place when he is the servant of God proclaiming that Word of salvation whereby God communicates to those who hear and receive it the blessings and benefits of Christ the Redeemer, draws His children into closer communion with Himself, and

fits them more and more for His service in true holiness here and hereafter.

Again, the sermon in Christian worship is in full keeping with the nature of public worship only when it is free from error of whatever kind. The minister is in the pulpit not in his own name, but in the name of God, and therefore, while to err is human, the preacher, when he speaks in the name of God, should be sure that what he says is true in all its parts. In his social intercourse, or where his advice is sought for what it may be worth, the minister is entitled to an opinion; but not in the pulpit. There he must not opine or conjecture, but say "*We speak that we do know.*" (John 3:11.) When, therefore, the preacher after the completion of his sermon prays that God would "mercifully cover whatever in this evening's discourse may not have been in full accordance with His truth," this is, at best, a token of ill-timed conscientiousness; the preacher ought to have been conscientious enough half an hour or an hour earlier not to go into that pulpit with a sermon of which he knew not whether it would stand the test of God's crucible.

Neither is the form of the sermon liturgically indifferent. The preaching of the Gospel is the means whereby God would work on and in the hearts of the hearers. To do this, he directs himself first to the understanding. But to approach the understanding, it is necessary to engage the attention of the hearer. Preachers should heed Luther's words: "The common people must not be taught with high, difficult, obscure words; for they cannot comprehend them. Among those who come to church there are small children, servants, old women and men. To them high teaching is of no use; they will not comprehend it, though they say, 'Oh, he has said precious things;' if you ask them, 'What has he said?' they will say, 'I do not know.' Oh, what pains did Christ our dear Lord take to teach simple doctrine! He employs parables, of husbandry, the harvest, the vine, the sheep, and all this in order that the people might understand, comprehend and keep it. You have populous congregations for whom you must render account to God. Therefore you should have a care to teach them plainly, distinctly, and faithfully."

The sermon should, furthermore, be clear and perspicuous, its contents and parts well arranged. The minister is in public service eminently a steward of God ministering from his master's stores to the wants of the children of the household. To do this, he should not, so to say, throw the spiritual supplies in a promiscuous heap before the congregation. A confused harangue rambling at random hither

and thither is not a sermon for a Christian assembly.

The sermon should be solemn and dignified. "*Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord,*" says the Psalmist. (Psalm 93:5.) Burlesque and buffoonery are a disgrace to the pulpit and a desecration of public worship when they are so bold as to usurp the place of a Christian sermon or any part thereof.

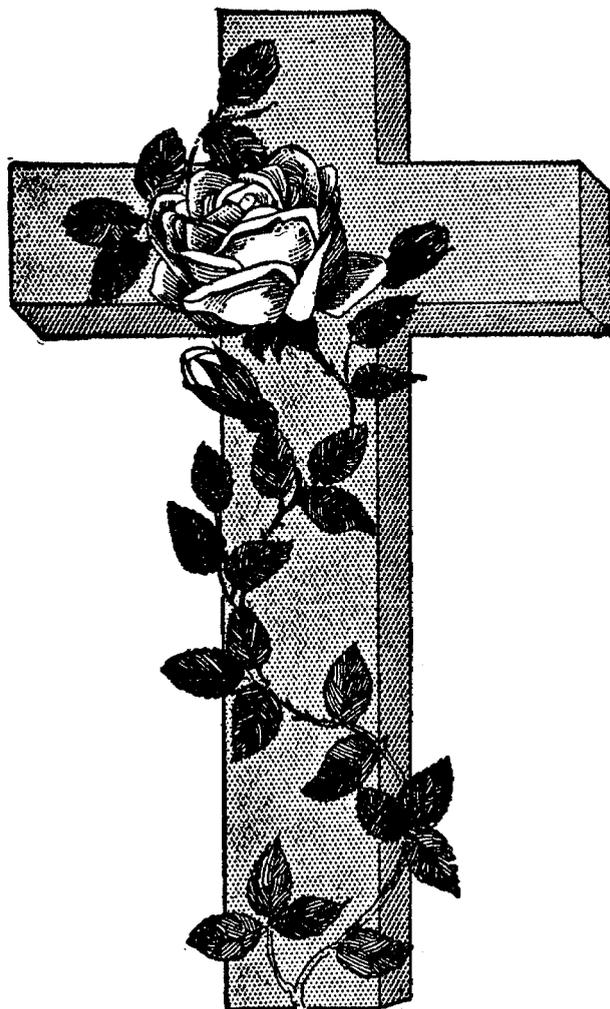
In connection with the sermon, the text of which the sermon should be an exposition and application claims our attention. The objection that the congregations are apt to lose interest in the regular Gospel and Epistle texts as they recur again and again for years is not borne out by experience. The contrary is true: our congregations after a year of sermons on free texts invariably welcome back the gospel of the day when the First Sunday in Advent opens a new church year and the preacher once more expounds the old sweet story of the King of Zion to whom the multitude sang, "*Hosanna in the highest;*" and in most cases, perhaps in all, the pastor's sentiments are with those of the people. Neither is the objection valid that the practice of preaching on the fixed texts will tend to keep the congregation unduly limited in its acquaintance with the Bible. The Christian's knowledge of the Scriptures should be both intensive and extensive. The preacher who aims at both in his Sunday sermons will probably come short of both, the sermons being too many days apart. The better way is to leave the extensive study of the Bible to daily readings at home and to go deep and deeper and ever more intensely deeper in expounding and applying the already familiar texts to the congregation.

A custom handed down through and from the mediaeval church is that of greeting the congregation before the beginning of the sermon with a pastoral salutation selected from the apostolic benedictions, 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 13:13; 2 John 3. In correspondence herewith the benediction from Phil. 4:7 is pronounced by our ministers immediately before leaving the pulpit. By these announcements of the grace and peace of God in Christ Jesus the entire sermon is most appropriately characterized as the administration of the means of grace, the Gospel of our salvation by grace for Christ our Savior's sake.

The *Scripture readings* are acts of the same class with the sermon. The lessons should be read without comment, to indicate that it is the Lord speaking to His people by the apostles and evangelists and that, whatever is afterwards said in the sermon must be from

the source and according to the norm of the *written Word*. Thus the reading of the Gospel and Epistle has its special significance, and the subsequent reading of the one or the other from the pulpit as the text of the sermon is by no means a mere repetition.

Still another form of the communication of divine grace to the worshiping congregation is that of a public absolution pronounced by the minister in the name of God in response to a public confession spoken by him in the name of the congregation. The place assigned to this act by some of the earlier Lutheran church-books is immediately after the sermon; others place it at the beginning of the service; and both ways are in use today. Where confession and absolution are assigned the first place, their significance is that thereby the congregation qualifies anew as a worshiping assembly of penitent and believing sinners hungering and thirsting after righteousness.



On The  
*Problem of Maintaining The Church and Its Ministry*

From his Sermon, Mark 8:1-9, The Feeding of the Four Thousand

(St. Louis Ed., XI, —translated by E. L. M.)

(continued)

This passage concerning the Office of the Keys, accordingly, in no way supports the Popes' tyranny. For it has been established not for the purpose that you make me, or I you, rich, or that I must be your master, and you must be subject to me; as the Pope is doing, who desires to make a worldly pomp and power out of it, showing himself thereby to be an arch-fool and a betrayer of God. But it rather teaches this: if I come to you in your troubles and terrors of conscience, in order to counsel and help you in your last hour or some other time and say: Let power, money, honor, and possessions now be relegated to the rear and dismissed from the mind, we presently have to speak of Christ's kingdom whereby alone and through nothing else you must be helped from sin and death.

That certainly does not indicate an external, worldly kingdom or power but a service. For I thereby seek nothing of you, but I serve and bring you a great, precious treasure, not gold and silver; but since your heart desires to become secure and comforted and to have a gracious God in heaven, I come to you and bring you a joyful message, not of my own choosing or opinion but by the command and commission of Christ, who says: "*Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,*" Matt. 11:28, etc.; again: "*Whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,*" Matt. 18:18; or as He here says: "*Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.*"

Isn't that serving, and freely bringing an inexpressible, heavenly, eternal treasure, for which neither you nor the world with all its possessions and wealth is able to pay? For what are all earthly treasures and all kingly crowns, gold, silver, precious stones, and what the world prizes, in comparison with this treasure which is called forgiveness of sins; whereby you are delivered from devil, death, and power of hell, and are assured that God in heaven now wants to be gracious to you, and so gracious that for the sake of Christ you shall be His child and heir and Christ's brother and coheir. Therefore it is not possible to buy such a precious treasure or to pay for it with

money; as our Judas Iscariot, the Pope, has done. That treasure must be given and received altogether for nothing, or it profits you nothing; for God's gift is not obtained by money, Acts 8:20.

This, however, is not to be understood to mean that ministers who faithfully teach God's pure Word shall be given no income . . . No, that indeed is not the meaning, they should receive a salary. For if they do not have sufficient food, drink, clothing, and other necessities, they will not for very long be able to perform the work of their office but will find it necessary to consider how they may be able to support themselves in some other way. In that case the Gospel will soon disappear, which is what the devil thereby seeks.

Christ Himself teaches that they should be given wages, when He says, Luke 10:7: "*The laborer is worthy of his hire*"; and St. Paul, Gal. 6:6: "*Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things*"; and adds yet a harsh word: "*Be not deceived; God is not mocked*"; and 1 Tim. 5:17: "*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine.*" If others are provided for who fill earthly positions wherein they serve the congregation in order that they can take care of their duties, much rather is it a duty which should be performed to the ministers of the Word; for St. Paul says that they in preference to others are worthy of double honor.

And if the doctrine of the Gospel shall in the future remain pure in the pulpit, that our children and future generations may have and hear it, then it is not only our duty to provide for them but also with all diligence to apply ourselves, that the schools be supplied with capable persons, who also should be faithfully provided for, in order that men may be trained who are not only plain ordinary preachers, able to instruct the Christian congregation in the Word, but also are specially trained, so that they are able to resist and oppose faction's and false spirits. Not only should the Christian rulers and lords willingly support and help this undertaking but also the Christian private citizens who live in town and country.

On the basis of what has been said, each can well understand what a great, precious treasure that is to hear the Gospel or absolution with right understanding from pastor and minister. If he comes to you in your illness and comforts you, then you should most certainly believe that Christ, the Lord, Himself visits and comforts you. For no one dares ever come to you without His divine command, for

he would neither know how to help nor counsel you. But since you hear that He Himself commands it, you can confidently and joyfully say: There comes Christ Himself to me in my pastor (father confessor); for he does not speak his own but God's Word, for which he has been sent and whose command he has.

There you have a sure comfort against the terrors and fears of your conscience. You need not be in perpetual suspense and doubt, as the Pope's doctrine directs us, which absolves no one from sins except he has repented sufficiently and has confessed all. There not the slightest word about faith and the Power and the Keys, instituted by Christ, is taken into consideration. For such doctrine and knowledge were so totally unknown, that I myself, as a Doctor of Theology, who certainly should have known better, did not think or teach otherwise; for my sins were not forgiven me until I had done enough penance and had repented sufficiently. But if sins are not forgiven until they have been weighed and balanced against our own penance, repentance, and good works, we then have absolutely no forgiveness to hope for. For I can never be sure in myself that I have done enough penance and have repented sufficiently. For this reason also no one can absolve and pardon me on that basis whether he be the Pope or any one else.

Accordingly, by means of the Pope's lies consciences have been deplorably misled to forsake the Word of faith and the command of God and to put their trust in their uncertain contrition and repentance. This brought in a great sum of money, from which many churches, monasteries, orders, chapels, and altars were built and richly endowed; and the Pope's bulls and letters are still at hand which show and confirm this. Thereby he has wretchedly deceived the whole world, that no one is able sufficiently to comprehend the harm and grief which come from it, to say nothing of being able to exhaust the subject. For this reason we faithfully and constantly exhort that he who can should help that schools, pastorates, and preachers be maintained, in order that such or worse error (which the devil thereby most certainly intends) does not again overtake us.

Behold, that is the correct way to teach and believe concerning the kingdom of Christ and the Office of the Keys. And if we will be guided according to that, we will remain Christians and will be able to conduct ourselves properly in all matters which pertain to God and men. We will also heartily thank God that He has delivered us from the control and tyranny of the Pope, who has made nothing but pomp and earthly dominion out of the Power of the Keys, which cer-

tainly has alone been instituted and ordered by Christ to help the entire world to obtain such treasure which can not be purchased with any amount of money and possession.

Let us now therefore be thankful to our Dear Lord Christ, who by means of His resurrection has established such a kingdom of grace whose purpose is that we should in all trouble and distress continually find sure help and comfort. And we need not go a great distance to get such precious treasure nor strive after it with great difficulty and cost, but He has given His Apostles and all of their successors,\* and in case of necessity every single Christian, to the end of time, the command and full authority, that they should comfort and strengthen the weak and despairing and in His name forgive their sins.

(to be concluded)

— E. L. M.

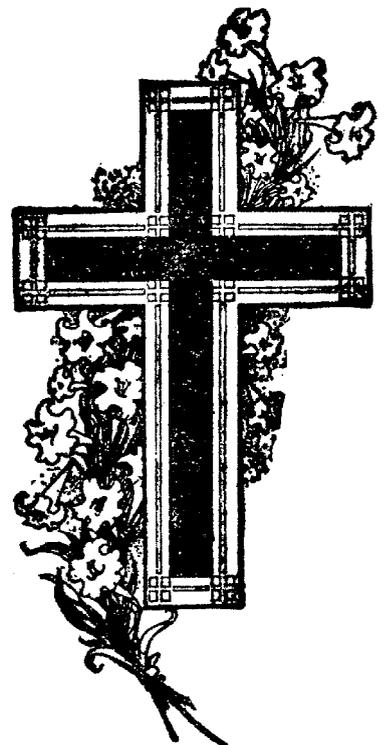
\**Note:* successors, here used in the sense that “the present-day regular ministry is the divinely-willed continuation of the extraordinary apostolate and essentially one with it, as Scripture expressly also confirms in a variety of ways.” (1 Pet. 5:2,4; Acts 20:28; Col. 4:7; Phil. 2:25; 1 Cor. 1:1; 4:1; 1 Pet. 5:1.) — Hoenecke, *Ev. Luth. Dogmatik*, Vol. 1, P. 182. (Above translation of Hoenecke taken from *The Faithful Word*, Vol. 3, 1966.) —E. L. M.



## THANKS!

THANKS TO THEE, O CHRIST VICTORIOUS!  
THANKS TO THEE, O LORD OF LIFE!  
DEATH HATH NOW NO POWER O'ER US,  
THOU HAST CONQUERED IN THE STRIFE.  
THANKS BECAUSE THOU DIDST ARISE  
AND HAST OPENED PARADISE!  
NONE CAN FULLY SING THE GLORY  
OF THE RESURRECTION STORY.

—*The Lutheran Hymnal*, 207.



# A Sermon on Marriage

... by C. F. W. Walther

TEXT: JOHN 2:1-11.

(Translated by Donald E. Heck — Presented by E. L. Mehlberg)

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In our Savior, dear Christian friends!

God instituted marriage for the temporal and eternal well-being of man. While the first man was still in paradise, God wanted to establish the first family bond. God then said, "*It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.*" Gen. 2:18. And after God had completed this work, he himself led the first bride to the first bridegroom. He himself pronounced the benediction on this first pair. David says to every pious married couple, "*Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.*" Ps. 128:2.

If we question those who have married, what would we find? Unfortunately not a few regretfully think back to that hour when at the altar of the Lord they so joyfully gave the promise of faithfulness until death. At first they hurried to make the vow which they thought was so lovely and so blessed. But scarcely was it made when lo! aversion, regret, and despondency filled their hearts. The honeymoon was hardly ended when it seemed as though their sweet dream was shattered by a bitter, painful awakening. They think: The wonderful dawn of the first days of my marriage I interpreted as the beginning of a beautiful happy life. Alas! It was only the forerunner of gloom and sorrow. If countless married people do not say it, they at least think: Oh, if I had never taken this step! Oh, if I could only return! If I could only be free again! Now my life's happiness is sold forever.

Tell me, how come? First of all, Satan often meddles without a person suspecting it. Many could still be so happy but they consider their marriage an unhappy one. Marriage is God's ordinance; Satan, this enemy of human happiness, hinders the happy progress also of this blessed institution. He often attacks a Christian, concealing the good things and the blessings of God which they enjoy or could still enjoy. Even a Christian has to arm himself daily with God's Word and prayer, that he does not become unthankful and misunderstand the Fatherly guidance of his God in his marriage.

That so many have not yet found peace of soul in Christ is undoubtedly another cause for so many unhappy marriages. They seek in marriage happiness and rest for their empty hearts. Whoever seeks this in marriage seeks in vain. Even this state can never satisfy the yearning heart of man. A person must be saved in Christ and his grace. If a person has acquired this treasure, then his married life will also become a quiet, peaceful, and happy one. Yes, the less a Christian seeks his happiness in his marriage but in Christ alone the happier his marriage will be.

Finally, many do not know from God's Word, how they should begin, conduct, and view their marriage. Many begin and conduct it without God; hence, they can expect to be unhappy and unblessed. On the other hand, others who do enter this state with God think that a happy marriage is one which has no troubles. They want their spouse to be free from weakness and frailties, and their married life without cross and trouble. They do not bear in mind that in this life, nothing, nothing is perfect except God's Word and grace. They do not bear in mind that no one has ever found a perfect spouse. They do not bear in mind that if they were not married, they would still have to bear other frailties in those with whom they come into contact, possibly even the same frailties which they must bear in their own spouse. They do not bear in mind that as the other partner must bear *their* frailties, they are obliged to bear *his*. They really do not bear in mind that here God guides us from imperfection to eternal perfection, from frail union on earth to perfect communion in heaven, from suffering to joy, from trouble to heaven, from tears to eternal laughter.

However, my friends, marriage is far too important to skip studying it in the light of the divine Word. Since our today's Gospel on the marriage at Cana invites us to view marriage as God sees it, let us accept this invitation.

The text. John 2:1-11.

The Gospel of the marriage at Cana gives us occasion to direct our attention to the state of matrimony. Marriage appears to be a secular matter and not for the Church to consider; but we must also consider that for a Christian all earthly relationships have a higher meaning, that there is a relationship between the kingdom of God and his soul's salvation. Scripture must shed its light on marriage. A Christian is very much in need of instruction on marriage from God's Word. Of course, Christians should be *in* the world, but not *of*

the world; they should do earthly things, not with an earthly but a heavenly mind. Perhaps many suppose that instruction in marriage is profitable only for a *part* of the Christian congregation; but he who is not yet married can be kept only through the Word of God; and he who never marries will find that everything in the Word of God benefits all, if only he pays attention to it. Hence, permit me to show you.

## THE DIGNITY OF MARRIAGE IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S WORD

God's Word makes two things clear to us:

1. *How Highly God Honors Marriage; and,*
2. *How Men Must Honor It.*

Lord God, heavenly Father, by the institution and preservation of the holy estate of matrimony you seek the well-being of men. You have revealed your gracious will for this relationship in your holy Word. Give us grace to ponder and learn to know this important subject in the proper light. Show all unmarried young men and women how this important union may be made in your name; show all who are fathers and mothers how they may use this state to your glory and their salvation. Yes, by your holy Word grant now that there may be ever more pious families and family altars; that all wounds in our households be healed, all self-made misery end, and all unsuccessful marriages successful. Lord, do this, for you made light out of darkness, good out of evil, blessing out of a curse; may goodness and faithfulness meet each other, and uprightness and peace kiss each other. Hear us for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Bridegroom. Amen.

### I.

Reason can in some measure recognize the honor of marriage. Even reason tells us that without marriage all mankind would sink to the level of animals; on the other hand, through this indissoluble union the whole human race has received countless blessings. If there were no marriage, the entire race of man would be given to the lusts of the flesh in all uncleanness; marriage, however, plants decency, modesty, and chastity as nothing else can. Furthermore, no creature on earth is dependent in so many ways and for so long a time after his birth upon the help of others as is a human being; if there were no marriage millions of children would roam the world as orphans and most would soon die; but marriage unites father and mother in love and both hold out their hands to their beloved children.

Marriage is the foundation of all other necessary and beneficial estates; without marriage there would be no union of men into nations; without it no state would last. Nowhere would there be any permanency. But marriage ties one to families, brings about honest relationships, makes home dear, and holds entire races and families together; finally they expand into nations. What would the world with its thousand-fold miseries, with its selfishness, and with its faithless friendships and associations be like without marriage with its sincere mutual love of spouses, with its faithful loving father and mother, with its tender love of children? Without it the misery of this world would be inexpressibly greater; marriage brings a very natural ardent love into the bitter world and brings to people, who at first are often strangers to one another, a wonderful inward friendship which shares each other's miseries and joys. It is clear, even reason must recognize and admit, that marriage works an inexpressible wholesomeness upon society. Consequently, we also read that even pagan writers praise marriage as the most beneficial of all institutions.

Yet, the real dignity of marriage we see correctly in the light of God's Word. Now let us hear what our today's Gospel has to say.

Jesus Christ was the Son of the living God, come to seek and to save that which was lost. His first thirty years He lived in unnoticed quiet. Finally, He left His retirement, entered upon His office of Messiah, and began to gather about Him a group of disciples. At this time there was a wedding at Cana of Galilee, probably among the relatives of Mary, the mother of the Lord. Since Christ had just appeared in Galilee, He and His disciples were invited. And what did Christ do? One might have thought, that He who had come to found the kingdom of God, a kingdom of heaven on earth, would have declined the invitation. No, He accepted it and honored this wedding not only by His gracious presence, but to reveal His glory He also did His first miracle there. And what was the miracle? Did He heal a sick person? Did He awaken someone from the dead? No, since they lacked wine, He revealed His glory by miraculously turning water into the most delicious wine. My friends, this most wonderfully reveals the dignity of marriage.

We see four points hidden from reason. First, marriage must be a holy institution which God himself must have instituted; second, it is a state which God himself sustains by his omnipotence; third, it is an institution whose necessities God himself provides; fourth, it is one in which God wants to reveal himself to men.

(to be continued)

# *A Call for Nominations*

The congregations of our Concordia Lutheran Conference are herewith solicited for nominations for a *President and full-time Professor* and also for an *Associate Professor* for our prospective Concordia Lutheran Conference Seminary. These nominations are to be in the hands of the chairman of the Committee on Theological Education, the Rev. P. R. Bloedel, no later than May 15, 1969. Pastor Bloedel's address is 3947 South Graham Street, Seattle, Washington 98118.

This request for nominations is, of course, contingent upon all the decisions to be made regarding the seminary at our forth-coming convention to be held on June 20th to 22nd at Lebanon, Oregon.

The regulations regarding such nominations are set forth in our official *Constitution*, page 10, paragraph B, line 8, as follows: [the Committee on Theological Education] *both by member congregations and by the Board of Directors, and to this end, the chairman, through either the President or Secretary of the Conference, shall previously give official notice of the need for such nominations by medium of our official periodical. The nominations received shall then first be published in this periodical before a call is extended, so that any member congregation may file commendations or objections with the Committee.*"

This call for nominations is being made at this time because of the urgent need to go forward in our seminary program and the earnest desire to begin Seminary classes in the Fall. Much time will therefore be needed for the preparation of the courses of study and for orientation.

It is suggested that in the event this notice is received by a congregation which has no regular meeting scheduled prior to May 15th, that a special meeting be called for the consideration of this important matter.

May the Lord bless our membership's prayerful response to this call for nominations in the Savior's name.

THIS NOTICE IS GIVEN BY P. R. BLOEDEL, CHAIRMAN OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION THROUGH  
THE PRESIDENT OF OUR CONFERENCE, O. W. SCHAEFER.

# *St. John's Lutheran Church*

OF LEBANON, OREGON

## to host 1969 convention

An invitation has been received from St. John's Lutheran Church of Lebanon, Oregon, M. L. Natterer, pastor, to hold the annual convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference in their midst.

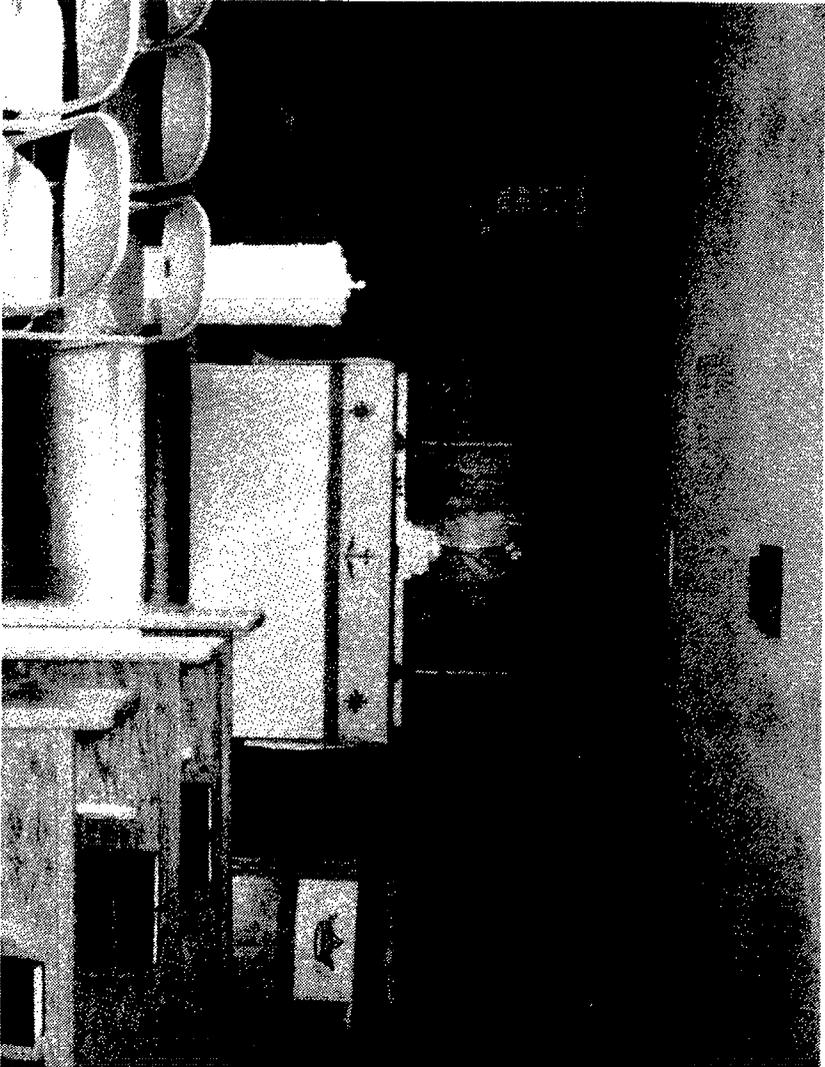
The convention, then, God willing, will be held in Lebanon on June 20th — 22nd. It will be preceded by the Pastoral Conference on June 18th and the meeting of the Board of Directors on June 19th.

May the Lord graciously bless this coming convention with full representation from our congregations, and may He also bestow His gracious blessings upon the important deliberations and decisions which this convention will resolve in the fear of God for His work's sake.

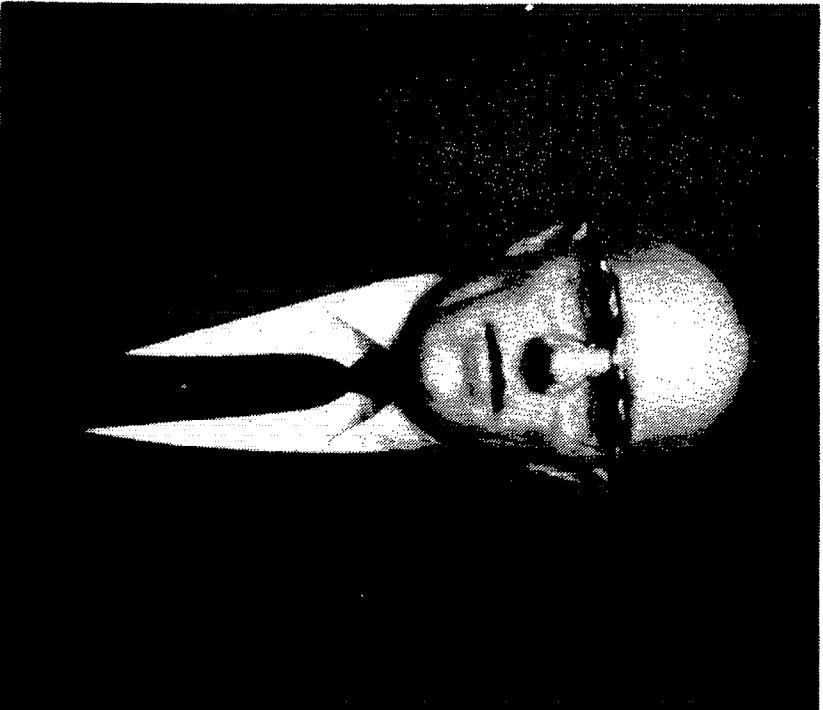
—O. W. Schaefer, President



A FRONT VIEW OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH



THE INTERIOR OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
LEBANON, OREGON



PASTOR M. L. NATTERER  
*(Pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, Lebanon, Oregon)*

**THE CONCORDIA LUTHERAN**  
12472 Beacon Avenue South  
Seattle, Washington 98178

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