

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.” Psalm 119:105.

Vol. LIV

May—June 2009

Nos. 5–6



“The
Spirit
gave them
utterance”

— Acts 2:4



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Vol. LIV May - June 2009 Nos. 5-6

OFFICIAL ORGAN
of the
Concordia Lutheran Conference

This publication appears in a monthly or bi-monthly issue at a subscription price of \$5.00 per year.

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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 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 fellowship with them.

To show that we do not have among us a mixture of divergent teachings but that we are *"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 teachings and practices 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.

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Christ's Prophetic Office in the State of Exaltation



“He ascended up far above all heavens that He might fill all things. And He gave some... pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” —Ephesians 4:11-12

The Scriptures teach that Christ, the eternal, only-begotten Son of God willingly, yea, purposefully entered into His *State of Humiliation* in order to accomplish, vicariously, the redemption of sinful mankind by providing Himself as the all-sufficient *propitiation* which fully satisfied God’s justice, turned away His wrath from the transgressors, and caused Him to reconcile the world unto Himself, “*not imputing their trespasses unto them*” (II Corinthians 5:19). For Christ’s sake, for the sake of Christ’s work fully “*accomplished*” (John 17:4; 19:30) in His *State of Humiliation*, God graciously granted amnesty, as it were, to all men, put the sins of the world behind His back, and remembering them no more (Hebrews 8:12; cf. Isaiah 43:25). This forensic objective justification was purchased by the Savior’s vicarious atonement and is apprehended, that is, laid hold on and received, by faith — by humble, childlike confidence in what has already been rendered, accomplished, granted, declared and conveyed to poor sinners in the Gospel.

Christ’s *State of Exaltation*, beginning with His victorious descent into hell, His mighty resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, and His session the right hand of His heavenly Father, also belongs to the foundation of the Christian’s confidence of everlasting life as the result and fruit of the Savior’s redemptive work. St. Paul links the two states in this connection, saying that Christ “*was delivered for our offenses [in His State of Humiliation] and was raised again [in His State of Exalta-*

tion] for [i.e. because of] our justification” (4:25), as evidence of the Father’s acceptance of His beloved Son’s vicarious satisfaction for the reconciliation of the world. Indeed, “*if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins; ...but now IS Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept*” (I Corinthians 15:17, 20).

Also the writer to the Hebrews points out this wonderful linkage of the two states of Christ when he says that the Lord Jesus, as “*the Author and Finisher of our faith,*” specifically anticipated, while in His *State of Humiliation*, according to His divine omniscience communicated to His human nature, “*the joy that was set before Him*” in His coming exaltation; and, with that joyous, glorious, and triumphant end in view, He “*endured the cross, despising the shame.*” (Hebrews 12:2).

Moreover, the Apostle Paul, in his “classic” description of the states of Christ in Philippians 2:5-11, directly attributes the exaltation of Christ’s human nature to the Father’s unqualified satisfaction with His Son’s vicarious atonement, saying: “***Wherefore*** God also hath highly exalted Him...” Thus the entire Gospel of reconciliation is firmly anchored in the two states of Christ; and our faith rests upon *both* the humble and obedient Substitute for sinners *and* the glorified and exalted Lord, who now, also according to His human nature, always and fully uses the divine attributes communicated to His human nature and rules and fills all things with divine power and majesty (*Catechism Questions 148 and 154*).

The same blessed relationship exists between the states of Christ in His threefold office, that of Prophet, Priest, and King. For the purpose of this present article, we center upon His **prophetic office**, the office in which He *reveals Himself* to be the very Son of God and the only Savior of lost mankind. This office is most easily recognized in His own public ministry during His visible sojourn here on earth, where we behold Him in the holy Gospels preaching and teaching “*as one having authority, and not as the scribes*” (Matthew 7:29). It is the office prophesied of the Messiah already by Moses in the Old Testament, who told the Children of Israel: “*The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken*” (Deuteronomy 18:15), and the office affirmed of Christ by God the Father on the Mount of Transfiguration when He said in fulfillment of Moses’ prophecy: “*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him*” (Matthew 17:5).

Christ's prophetic office in His *State of Humiliation* included also the innumerable miracles whereby He confirmed His almighty power and authority, His own prophecies of things to come, His exposition of the Old Testament Scriptures particularly in those passages referring to Himself, and His debates with the scribes and Pharisees in which He expounded, defended, and demonstrated the authority, inerrancy, integrity and sufficiency of "*Moses and the prophets*" (Luke 16:29 and 31). His prophetic office was in no way "defective" in His *State of Humiliation* just because He did not always and fully use the divine attributes communicated to His human nature; on the contrary, Christ's divine authority was not diminished in His *State of Humiliation*, nor did His message lack anything in substance, or in efficacy, or in power, or in truth (John 6:63; 8:31-32).

Christ's prophetic office then continued in His *State of Exaltation* after His resurrection from the dead as He "*expounded unto [His disciples] in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself*" (Luke 24:27), as He "*opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures*" (v. 45), as He spent the forty days before His ascension "*speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*" (Acts 1:3), and as He committed to His Church on earth the **Office of the Keys**—the office of the Word and Sacraments, of forgiving and retaining sins (John 20:21-23)—the public administration of which He vested in the **Pastoral Office** of His local flocks or congregations (John 21:15-17; cf. Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2ff., etc.).

Did not the disciples' hearts "*burn within [them] while He talked with [them] by the way, and while He opened to [them] the Scriptures*" (Luke 24:32)? Since His ascension into heaven, however, Christ no longer "*talks*" with His disciples, as He did when He was locally present with them. Instead, He performs the functions of His prophetic office by giving to His Church on earth and to His local churches in particular (Titus 1:5; Revelation 2:7; etc.) "*pastors and teachers*" (Ephesians 4:11), *messengers* [Greek: - ((, 8@ Revelation 1:20], *preachers* (Romans 10:14b-15), to speak in His Name (Luke 10:16). And yet, how many Christians today often "burn" with a misguided desire to listen to the Savior's *own* voice, to sit personally at *His* feet (as did Mary of Bethany), and to hear *HIM* expound His precious Word of Life! Wouldn't *such* preaching be more *authoritative*? Wouldn't *that* Word be more *efficacious*? Wouldn't *direct* hearing be more *effective*, than the second-hand "*ministry of reconciliation*" (II Corinthians 5:19-20) that we have today??

Fortunately, for our own comfort and assurance, we can answer such speculations with a resounding “No!” on the basis of God’s clear and inerrant Word. For the ascended Savior’s prophetic office continues uninterrupted to this very day and will continue to the end of time as the exalted Christ sends men to preach in His Name. His prophetic office is *generally* exercised when an *individual Christian* bears personal witness to the precious truth of His Word (John 8:31-32; I Peter 3:15), speaks as the oracles of God (I Peter 4:11), confesses Jesus Christ before men (Matthew 10:32) as the only Name under heaven whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12), owns Him as his personal Savior (Romans 10:8-10), gathers with true brethren for edification from the Word (Hebrews 10:25), marks and avoids errorists (Romans 16:17), and brings up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).

But the ascended Christ’s prophetic office is very *specialy* exercised through the **Pastoral Office** of the local congregation, the **office** of preaching and teaching in the churches (Ephesians 4:11; Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5; I Peter 5:2; etc.). This is an office distinct from the spiritual priesthood of all believers, established by Christ Himself and vested originally in “*the apostles whom He had chosen*” (Acts 1:2). Incumbents of this office are not to usurp the rights of the spiritual priesthood, but they *administer* those rights *publicly* for the local congregations of believers. Indeed, while some of the special aspects and gifts peculiar to the ministry of the apostles have passed away, the office of preaching the Word of God, of administering the Sacraments, and of feeding and overseeing the local flocks of God is to continue to the end (I Peter 5:1-4). The Bible in its clear and certain passages (*sedes doctrinae*) sets forth the qualifications, duties, functions, responsibilities, authority, and honor due the incumbents of the Pastoral Office (I Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9; Hebrews 13:17; I Thessalonians 5:12-13; I Timothy 5:17; etc.).

This is a divinely-instituted and *commanded* office (Titus 1:5) in which pastors who proclaim and teach the Word of God as taught by Jesus and the apostles and prophets speak with the same authority as *they* did, yea, in the Savior’s own voice, who assures His mouthpieces and ambassadors: “*He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me*” (Luke 10:16). Through this office of preaching, in which He gives His Church “*pastors and teachers*” (Ephesians 4:11b), the ascended and exalted Christ continues in His prophetic office to make known His will and grace to the children of men, for the “*perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*” (v. 12).

Thus Luther rightly states concerning the Pastoral Office: “When the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, ...this is as valid and certain in heaven also, as if Christ our dear Lord, dealt with us Himself.” Yea, when His ambassadors (II Corinthians 5:20; I Corinthians 4:1) preach, Christ Himself is preaching; when they teach, pupils sit at the feet of their ascended Savior; when they “*exhort and convince the gainsayers*” (Titus 1:9), Christ Himself is bringing the needed admonition; and when they “*feed the flock*” (I Peter 5:2), “*the church of God*” to which they have been called by the Holy Ghost (Acts 20:28), Christ Himself is building up His mystical body, the Church, and is arming it and strengthening it to “*withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand*” (Ephesians 6:13).

As we at our upcoming Convention give special attention to the training and support of theological students in our **Concordia Theological Seminary**, who, motivated by the precious Gospel of their Savior, purpose to “*study to show [themselves] approved unto God*” for the work of the Holy Ministry (II Timothy 2:15), we pray with the hymnwriter to our ascended and yet ever-present Prophet:

*Thou hast, O Lord, returned, to God's right hand ascending;
Yet Thou art in the world, Thy Kingdom here extending.
Through preaching of Thy Word in every land and clime,
Thy people's faith is kept until the end of time.*

*O blessed ministry of reconciliation,
that shows the way to God and brings to us salvation!
By Thine Evangel pure, Lord, Thou preserv'st Thy fold,
dost call, enlighten, keep, dost comfort and uphold!*

(TLH 485, 2-3)

—D. T. M.





“[They] began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” – Acts 2:4

The prophecy of Joel concerning the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, as Peter preached it in Acts 2:17 –

Hebrew

וְהָיָה אַחֲרֵי־כֵן אֲשַׁפּוּן אֶת־רוּחִי עַל־כָּל־בָּשָׂר

Greek

καὶ ἔσται ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις λέγει ὁ θεὸς ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα.

Latin

Et erit in novissimis diebus dicit Dominus effundam de Spiritu meo super omnem carnem.

German

Und es soll geschehen in den letzten Tagen, spricht Gott, ich will ausgießen von meinem Geist auf alles Fleisch.

French

Dans les derniers jours, dit Dieu, je répandrai de mon Esprit sur toute chair.

Spanish

Y en los postreros días, dice Dios, derramaré de mi Espíritu sobre toda carne.

Russian

И будет в последние дни, говорит Бог, излию от Духа Моего на всякую плоть.

English

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.

Our Confident Use of Bible Translations in the Light of the Great Commission

*“Go ye into all the world and
preach the Gospel to every creature.”*

Mark 16:15

God’s primary will, His foremost desire and intention with respect to lost and fallen mankind, is that all men be brought to repentance and be saved eternally by faith in His merciful forgiveness for Christ’s sake. This is the God, unlike all the so-called gods of this world, *“who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”* (I Timothy 2:4). This is the God who is *“not willing than any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”* (II Peter 3:9) and who swears by His own existence: *“‘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’”* (Ezekiel 33:11). And this is the God who has manifested His love to all the world in Christ Jesus by means of the Gospel, *“the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth”* (Romans 1:16). Therefore, since *“faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God”* (Romans 10:17), it is essential that His Word be preached and taught and spread — not only orally (Isaiah 55:10-11; Romans 10:17; Luke 11:28; etc.) but also in writing [or in print], so that it can be read, searched and understood (John 5:39; II Timothy 3:15-16; Matthew 24:15b; Mark 13:14; etc.) unto salvation (I Timothy 2:4).

The familiar passage of Holy Writ which serves as our title-text lays out for us three important considerations; and these comprise the “marching orders” or *commission* given to Christ’s church on earth by the Savior Himself whereby God’s primary will is to be accomplished:

I. The **task** is OURS to take up and to fulfill. It is OUR task to “get the Word out” — and not just our *task* but our great *privilege* as Jesus’ disciples. God does not promise to enlighten the benighted children of men *immediately*, that is, apart from His established means of grace. And those means, the Gospel and the Sacraments, are to be propagated and ministered to people by US, by His church on earth. We read, for example, St. Paul’s statement to the Corinthians: *“It*

pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (I Corinthians 1:21), OUR preaching, the bold proclamation of God’s Word by every believer as the evidence of his own discipleship (Matthew 10:32; I Peter 3:15) and the preaching of them who are “*sent*” (Romans 10:15) for the *public* proclamation of the Gospel (II Timothy 4:2) in the Pastoral Office which God Himself ordained (Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5; I Peter 5:2; etc.). “*Go YE...and preach*” (Mark 16:15), says the Lord Jesus, as He also declares in the “Great Commission” recorded in Matthew 28:19-20 — “*Go YE, therefore, and make disciples of [μ" 20]gbF" Jg] all nations.*”

II. The **message** is GOD’S Word, not ours. And that message, according to the verse immediately following our title-text, is “*the Gospel*” in the **wider** sense — both the Law of God to convict men of their sins and to show them their dire need for a Savior, and the Gospel in the **narrower** sense to bring them the good news of God’s merciful forgiveness for Christ’s sake and to work in them the confidence to accept and believe it; for Jesus specifically prescribes *the content* of the message in this wider Gospel preaching, saying: “*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved [the Gospel], but he that believeth not shall be damned [the Law]*” (v. 16). And Jesus again stipulates this content in Matthew 28:20, saying: “*Teaching them to observe **all things** whatsoever I have commanded you.*” Thus also St. Paul declared to the pastors of the church of Ephesus: “*I have not shunned to declare unto you **all the counsel of God***” (Acts 20:27).

III. And the **target audience** for our proclamation of God’s Word is abundantly clear from our title-text: “...*into **all the world** ...to every creature.*” Note in this connection that **OUR** commission, as **individual** Christians, is to proclaim God’s Word to an extremely **broad** audience, a *world-wide* audience, while the **Pastoral** Office of preaching, which was ordained for the specific purpose of nurturing and overseeing Christ’s *local* flocks (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2ff.) and giving account (Hebrews 13:17) for the sheep and lambs entrusted to the care of His undershepherds (v. 4), has a geographically **limited** audience (“*the flock of God which is **among you**,*” I Peter 5:2a).

But before we address this latter point about our **world-wide** target audience and the Savior’s clear implication that Bible **translations** will be needed to accomplish our mission, a special word is in order concerning our title-text **itself** and the critical attacks that have been made upon **it** — attacks that are reflected in many of the modern Bible **translations**.

We have, of course, written about this matter in the past (cf. for example, *CL*, May-June 2008, pp. 90-92). Under the guise of “Biblical scholarship” and “textual criticism,” some well-known professing Christian theologians claim that **Mark 16:9-20** does not belong to Holy Scripture; that it is a *spurious*, that is, false, counterfeit and illegitimate, addition to Mark’s Gospel; and this they have determined from “a survey of the evidence” gleaned from “following the canons [rules] of textual criticism” (Geisler and Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible* [1986], pp. 486-489). Among the “evidence” cited, they point out **a)** that these verses are lacking in many of the “oldest and most reliable” Greek manuscripts; **b)** that many of the ancient Fathers show no knowledge of these verses; **c)** that there is *another* ending in addition to vv. 9-20 that occurs in several manuscript copies; **d)** that, although the verses are found in the manuscripts underlying the *Textus Receptus* [the manuscripts from which the King James Version was translated in 1611], they regard the TR as “unreliable” because it is based in their estimation on “inferior” manuscripts according to the seven canons of textual criticism; and **e)** that an even longer ending is found in the “Washington” manuscript. What are we to make of all this “evidence”?? Geisler writes: “It is admittedly difficult to arrive at the conclusion that any of these endings is original. But, on the basis of known manuscript evidence, it seems likely that ...either Mark 16:8 is the real ending or that the original ending is not extant [is no longer in existence]” (Geisler, *op. cit.*, p. 488).

With tongue in cheek, we wonder how comforting and assuring it is for Bible “critics” **not to know** what *really* belongs to the Holy Scriptures (Cf. Romans 15:4)! On the basis of the “art and science” of textual criticism, they find that “the variant readings which significantly affect the sense of a passage are less than ten percent of the New Testament” (*Ibid.*, p. 489). Wow!! A margin-of-error of **only** 10%?? We stress the word “significantly” as we wonder just how “significant” the sense of a passage has to be “affected” to be of concern to Bible critics! “Affected” in what manner? “And none of these [variants] affect any basic doctrine of the Christian faith” (*Ibid.*). Again, the underscoring is ours. How about the “not-so-basic” doctrines?? To what extent can they be “affected” without raising any concern?? “For all *practical purposes* the modern critical editions of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible *represent*, with their footnotes, exactly what the autographs contained — line for line, word for word, and even letter for letter” (*Ibid.*). Again, we have specially emphasized critical words. Are we really interested in what the Bible is “for all *practical purposes*”??

Are we comforted and assured that the texts only “*represent*” what God gave to men in the original autographs?? The “objective” of textual critics, writes Geisler, has been, on the basis of their scholarship and the “canons” or rules they have devised for themselves, “to **find** God’s Word as it was written in the autographs;” and this, in Geisler’s words, is “a worthy goal” (*Ibid.*). And if they have been **unsuccessful** in “finding” God’s Word? If they cannot reach their “worthy goal”? Then what? Surely a lot rests upon **them**, doesn’t it?

We have no doubt whatsoever about what we have in the pages of our Holy Bible! Why? Because the “having” of God’s Word does not depend upon US. The Lord Jesus prayed to His heavenly Father: “*I have given them Thy Word*” (John 17:14); and St. Paul writes to Titus: “*The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men*” (Titus 2:11). According to the Apostle Peter’s divinely-inspired assurance, we were “*born again*,” that is, regenerated and made the believing children of God, “*by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever*” (I Peter 1:23); “*...and this is the Word which [as] Gospel is preached unto you*” (v. 25). “*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope*” (Romans 15:4); “*for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*” (II Peter 1:21). The fact that we have the Word of God in its truth and purity is to **His** credit **alone**, to the praise of **His** gracious primary will that “*all men...be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth*” (I Timothy 2:4), and to the glory of His mercy in Christ Jesus that He in time called us, enlightened us, sanctified us, strengthened us, and kept us in the true and saving faith grace “*by the Gospel*” (Ephesians 3:6; 1:13; II Thessalonians 2:14; II Timothy 1:10; etc.). It is **GOD**, who has given to us His Word and has determined its *canonicity* or rule for our Christian faith and life.

Therefore it is a grave error to attribute our having God’s true Word to the work, discovery, scholarship and wisdom of **men**, as is the claim, for example, that **God** is responsible for the *canonicity* of the Scriptures; but how that is to be *known to be true* is the responsibility of **men** to discover, to determine, and to recognize on the basis of scholarly “textual criticism” and its assumptions, canons, and procedures. What “*comfort*” and “*hope*” and “*truth*” could we rely upon from the Scriptures if we were to ask ourselves at every turn that Satanic question: “*Yea, hath God said??*” (Genesis 3:1)? Imagine having to “pencil in” the following caveats

or warnings (and even disclaimers) into passages of God’s precious Word: “*He that hath My Word* [if he really thinks he has it], *let him speak My Word* [as he has determined it to exist] *faithfully*” (Jeremiah 23:28??). “*Search the Scriptures* [according to the oldest and best manuscripts], *for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they* [provided you can authenticate them by means of scholarship] *which testify of Me*” (John 5:39??) “*I have given them Thy Word* [in the original autographs — which no longer exist; so they’ll have to do the best they can to replicate them]” (John 17:14??). “*Sanctify them through Thy truth* [if they can figure out what that is]; *Thy Word* [which they hopefully can learn to recognize and eventually find] *is truth* [to at least a 90% certainty in the New Testament]” (John 17:17??). “*From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures* [if you’ve been using the latest critical text] *...All Scripture* [as you have learned to recognize it by means of careful scholarship] *is given by inspiration of God* [in the autographs *only* — which don’t exist anymore — but not in the copies which have variants that affect about 10% of the New Testament], *and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness* [provided you have the “best” manuscripts as the basis of your modern translation]...” (II Timothy 3:15-16??). ...and so on.

While we do not disdain appropriate and proper textual study, we do not rely upon **men** to sort out for us among all the extant manuscripts and to identify on the basis of their judgment and human scholarship what the **Word of God** is (Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, Nestle, Aland, Martini, Metzger, etc.), nor do we rely upon **men** to establish an absolutely-reliable collection of manuscripts (Erasmus, Stephanus, Beza, the Elzevirs, Scrivener, etc.) which we can confidently regard as “the *inspired text*.” Nevertheless, we **can**, on the basis of God’s own promises, be confident of **THIS**, that God in His infinite grace and mercy to us poor sinners has caused His inerrant, infallible, verbally-inspired, clear, and all-sufficient Word to be preserved to us according to His all-wise providence in the extant manuscripts. We, of course, prefer the *Textus Receptus* of the New Testament because of the fact that its constituent manuscripts betray no bias, compromise no doctrines, contain no true contradictions, and faithfully present the clear and certain passages which are the foundation of faith [*analogia fidei*] for our learning. In many of the other manuscripts, we find that NOT to be the case.

Likewise, with respect to **translations**, we clearly prefer the King James (Authorized) Version, in spite of archaic vocables and expressions,

difficult sentence structure at times, and an occasional poor translation from the original language. We find the King James Version superior to most of the modern translations in use today *because* it is faithful to the original languages; it was not produced by translators who have rationalistic biases contrary to the *analogy of faith*, and who have particular agendas which make their work less than truly objective. Unlike the King James Version, many of the modern translations were produced from the outset to accommodate the doctrinal diversity so common among the sects and to publish a Bible that almost all the major denominations could “live with.” While the truth may indeed reside in such translations, and people may indeed be converted and edified by passages that are properly rendered and do not violate the *analogy of faith*, the presence of compromised translations and wording that accommodates error makes such translations dangerous, especially to the trusting and unwary.

Nevertheless, as we pointed out earlier on the basis of our title-text, the Lord Jesus Himself implies very clearly that Holy Scripture *in translation* will in the majority of cases be what is carried “*into all the world*” and “*preach[ed]...to every creature*” simply because the Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New Testament are not universally understood, even though “*the Gospel*” is intended for all mankind. On the first Christian Pentecost, the Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to speak “*with other tongues*” (Acts 2:4), in the common languages of people “*out of every nation under heaven*” (vv. 5-6), “*the wonderful works of God*” (v. 11). Peter preached, presumably in Aramaic, though perhaps even in Greek (the “world language” of the day), and possibly in multiple languages — a straightforward Law and Gospel sermon with no holds barred. No one questioned his citations from the Scriptures as to their canonicity and authority, even though the Spirit’s gift of “*utterance*” in “foreign” languages made it possible and even necessary for at least some of the apostles to cite them in tongues other than Hebrew. And the efficacious Gospel, the means whereby the Holy Ghost works in the hearts of hearers, was heard by “*every man in [his] own tongue wherein [he was] born*” (Acts 2:8), that is **in translation**; “*and there were added unto [the disciples] about three thousand souls*” that day (v. 41).

Interestingly, Jesus Himself and His apostles quoted verbatim from the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament known as the *Septuagint* [LXX] —so named because of the seventy translators employed to carry out that monumental work during the two centuries before

Christ's birth. The eunuch of Ethiopia was reading Isaiah 53 from the *Septuagint* when Philip was directed by the Holy Ghost to join him in his chariot (Acts 8:30-33). And we see how powerfully the Spirit worked in him through that **translated** Scripture!

Luther gave to his people in Germany (ca. 1534) a gift of incalculable value when he **translated** [*verdeutscht*] both the Old and New Testaments into German and thus made available to them for the first time the Holy Scriptures in their purity, the Truth which, until then, had been virtually hidden away from their hearing, reading, searching and understanding under the cloak of Rome's Church Latin (Jerome's *Vulgata*).

The fact that we can confidently use Bible translations should, of course, be of great comfort also to **US** who have God's Word **translated** into English, as well as to our dear brethren in Nigeria (who have it in Kalabari) and to our dear brethren in Yekaterinburg (who have it in Russian). The key, of course, to our confident use of translations is, first of all, our gracious God's promise that His Word will endure forever (Isaiah 40:8; I Peter 1:25); secondly, His assurance that it was written aforetime "*for our learning*" (Romans 15:4) and will not return to Him without fruit (Isaiah 55:11); and thirdly, the Savior's commission that sends us out to "*preach the Gospel to every creature,*" in languages that they can understand, so that they can "*come unto the knowledge of the truth*" (I Timothy 2:4) and be saved eternally.

We must, however, exercise due diligence in *examining* translations for slipshod and even deceptive renderings; for hidden, rationalistic agendas whereby translators would "*deceive the hearts of the simple*" (Romans 16:18) into accepting a perverted Scripture (II Peter 3:16); and for the accommodation of error by those who would create a translation acceptable to ALL and thus eliminate language that identifies, challenges, and reproves false doctrine. Examples of all of these are *common* in the modern translations! Feel free to ask your pastor to point them out to you. By God's grace we have exercised such diligence and intend to continue our vigilance; and we strongly caution our people NOT to use translations that are attractive merely on the basis of their contemporary language, spelling and sentence structure. They **must** articulate "**SOUND** *speech that cannot be condemned*" (Titus 2:8), lest the precious truth of God's Word be *perverted* and His Name *profaned* among us to the peril of our souls! "From this preserve us, heavenly Father!" (Luther).

— D. T. M.

Are You Spirit-Connected If You Do Not Feel His Presence?

“The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

John 14:26

“Are you Spirit-connected **if you do not feel** His presence?” The answer is an unhesitating “Yes! Absolutely! Most certainly! Without any doubt!” How can we respond in this way? We can respond in this way because of the testimony of John 14:26 (as well as many other testimonies from the Holy Scriptures). The “*Holy Ghost ...shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you*” (John 14:26). This “*Spirit of truth*” (John 16:13) will teach and will keep on teaching us and bringing to our remembrance the words of Jesus: Everything that Jesus said and taught **during His earthly, visible time here on this earth**, everything that Jesus, the Son of God, “*the true God*” (I John 5:20b), said and taught **through the prophets in the Scriptures of the Old Testament** (II Timothy 3:16 – “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*”), and everything that Jesus said and taught **through the apostles and evangelists in the New Testament** after His ascension (I Thessalonians 2:13 – “*When ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the Word of God.*”).

We are indeed Spirit-connected when we are connected to the Holy Scriptures, the written Word of God, which “*came not...by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*” (II Peter 1:21). **We are Spirit-connected when we continue in Christ’s Word** (John 8:31-32) in what we believe, cling to, stand for, practice, do, and follow as His disciples; for He says: “*The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life*” (John 6:63). **We are Spirit-connected when we hold to the Word of God alone**, the Word “*which liveth and abideth forever*” (I Peter 1:23), the Word “*which the Holy Ghost teacheth*” (I Corinthians 2:13), **even if we do**

not subjectively feel our connection with the Holy Spirit. This one true God, the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19), has given us the Scriptures, the Word of “*truth*” (John 17:17), as the only source and standard of doctrine and of practice (Ephesians 2:20) and has made His Word the means whereby His **Holy Spirit** converts sinful men to saving faith (I Peter 1:23; Romans 1:16; 10:17; etc.), sanctifies them in their lives (I Thessalonians 2:13; John 17:17; etc.), and preserves them in the true faith unto salvation (I Peter 1:5; etc.)

*“He that is of God heareth **God’s words**; ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God”* (John 8:47). Jesus spoke these words of truth to Jews who had once “*believed on Him*” (v. 31), but then had quickly turned away from Him and His words in unbelief (vv. 45-46), even going so far as to pick “*up stones to cast at Him*” (v. 59). The Savior **did not say** to these Jews: “*He that is of God feels God’s Spirit operating within him; ye therefore are not of God because ye feel Him not.*”

However, contrary to and opposed to the objective revelation and changeless testimony of the written Word of God, **some** answer the title question of this article in a different way. They say “**No**” to the question, “*Are you Spirit-connected if you do not feel His presence?*” These “some” are the so-called “Charismatics” as they are gathered in actual Charismatic-friendly congregations and church bodies such as the Assemblies of God, the Church of God in Christ, the International Pentecostal Holiness Church, and The International Church of the Four-square Gospel. However, some Charismatics are gathered together in separate, distinct groups within other Protestant church bodies and within the Roman Catholic church. Yes, such is the case even within some **Lutheran** synods. Already in 1991, the Rev. Delbert Rosin, Director of “Renewal in Missouri [Synod]” (RIM), reported in the quarterly RIM Newsletter: “Currently we have 470 (16 of which are in Canada) pastors who are either involved in renewal or have stated they are supportive, although many of them have not ‘gone public’ with their views for a variety of reasons. There have been differing opinions relative to the actual number of pastors on our list, but we know our numbers are quite accurate because we have personal contact with these brethren” (*Christian News*, September 30, 1991; reproduced in the *Christian News Encyclopedia*, Vol. V, page 3357).

Why do Charismatics (often identified also as Pentecostals, even though there are some differences between them) answer “No” to the question: “*Are you Spirit-connected if you do not feel His presence?*”

1. The Charismatics regard feelings, experiences, and emotions as **more important** than the authoritative, infallible, and verbally-inspired Word of God (Luke 16:29-31; John 17:17; II Timothy 3:16; I Corinthians 2:13). It is pure heresy, false teaching, and ungodly practice to regard *anything* or *anyone* (including feelings and those persons who are Charismatics) as **more important** than the Word of God, whether the people involved are doing so willfully in opposition to their knowledge of the truth from God's Word (Hebrews 10:26), or whether the people involved are doing so out of ignorance, believing that the Charismatics are genuine, sincere, and Godly (Romans 16:18b; see also II Samuel 15:11). And what is to be the response of the child of God to the persistent heresy, the persistent false teaching, and the persistent ungodly practice of elevating feelings, experiences, and emotions **over and above** the Word of God? The response is to be what the Holy Scriptures teach the child of God: "*Beware of*" them (Matthew 7:15-16a), "*avoid them*" (Romans 16:17), "*Reject*" them (Titus 3:10); "*from such withdraw thyself*" (I Timothy 6:5c), "*abhor that which is evil*" (Romans 12:9), "*hate every false way*" (Psalm 119:104), "*come out from among them, and be ye separate*" (II Corinthians 6:17); "*neither be partaker of other men's sins*" (I Timothy 5:22b).

2. The Charismatics do not believe (as evidenced by their words and actions) that the Holy Scriptures are to be the **only source** for what they teach, hold to, and practice, as well as the **only** source of doctrine concerning what they will not teach, will not hold to, and will not practice, and that these Scriptures are to be the **only standard** for what they believe and how they live as Christians ("*By the Law is the knowledge of sin*" (Romans 3:20); "*Beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself*" (Luke 24:27); "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine*" (II Timothy 3:16); "*Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope*" (Romans 15:4); "*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*" (II Timothy 3:15); "*Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path*" (Psalm 119:105); "*Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word*" (Psalm 119:9); "*If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and to the doctrine which is according to Godliness, he is proud; knowing nothing; ...supposing that gain is Godliness; from such withdraw thyself*" (I Timothy 6:3-5).

Even though some Charismatics (or possibly all of them) would object to the above statements, yet as our dear Savior clearly teaches us: “By *their fruits* ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:16a). This is “*righteous judgment*” (John 7:24); this is Godly, necessary judging, such as the Berean Christians engaged in when “*they searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so*” (Acts 17:11). We are not concerned about the objections of any or all of the Charismatics, but we are concerned, first and foremost, with what the Word of God teaches us. As the precious sheep of Jesus, declared by God to be righteous in His sight because of the Savior’s perfect, active, satisfactory-to-God obedience of God’s Law in our stead and in the world’s stead (Matthew 5:17; Galatians 4:4-5; Matthew 17:5; II Corinthians 5:19 and 21; Romans 5:18-19; Jeremiah 23:6), and bought back or redeemed with the holy, precious blood of the good Shepherd (John 10:11) who paid in full the penalty of our guilt (I Corinthians 6:20; I Peter 1:18-19), we will, according to our “*new man*” (Ephesians 4:24), want to hear and continue to follow the voice of our Savior (and the voice of the heavenly Father and the Holy Spirit) in the Scriptures (John 10:27; John 8:31-32 and 47; II Timothy 3:14-16; Luke 5:5; Psalm 25:4-5; Ephesians 6:11-13, 17b), and not the unreliable and deceitful “voice” of our fickle feelings and unstable emotions.

3. A huge part of the Charismatic Movement is personal feelings, personal experiences, and personal emotions, whether such feelings, experiences, and emotions are in accord with the Word of God or not. Charismatics (whether knowingly or out of ignorance) promote **man**-focused “worship” rather than Triune God-focused Worship (Matthew 4:10; Psalm 100:4-5; Psalm 26:8; Ecclesiastes 5:1-2; I Corinthians 10:31-32; II Corinthians 5:14-15). People often want an emotional “high,” a “good and a comfortable” feeling, a “liberated” experience where they can say and do what they please. (Is not this a similar reason why people try drugs, experiment with and abuse intoxicants of all kinds, and practice illicit sex?) At the same time, the Charismatics “steer away” from “doctrine,” as if that were something bad and not good (despite the clear instruction of Scripture in Matthew 28:20; Luke 24:47; I Timothy 4:16; 5:17; 6:3; II Timothy 3:16; Titus 1:9; 2:1; Acts 2:42; Romans 16:17). The Charismatics “steer away” from “*rightly dividing the Word of truth*” (II Timothy 2:15) into clearly distinguished Law and Gospel, sin and grace sermons, as if such sermons would drive people away from and not “draw” them into the Kingdom of God (despite the clear instruction of Jeremiah 23:28; II Timothy 4:2-5; I Peter 4:11).

Therefore, it is not surprising to see some of the “fruits” of the Charismatic Movement in many congregations and church bodies today: Turning the worship of God’s House into a staged performance featuring claimed miraculous healing events and entertaining their audience in this venue with up-beat “Christian rock” bands in so-called “contemporary worship;” open and blatant unionism because doctrine, what God’s Word teaches about false doctrine and false teachers, is ignored and not followed (Matthew 7:15; Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 24; Romans 16:17-18; Galatians 5:9); tolerating and even supporting women pastors, not putting into practice what Scripture teaches about women usurping what God has specifically reserved for the men in His churches (I Timothy 2:12-14; 3:1-2); fostering a rowdy, emotionally-charged atmosphere in which the teaching and preaching of God’s Word is all but pushed out the door, as well as the ability even to hear the Word of God (if and when it is used properly and faithfully), in contrast to what Scripture teaches about appropriate decorum in the House of God and the content of truly God-pleasing worship and devotion (Ecclesiastes 5:1-2; Matthew 6:33; Luke 10:39-42; I Corinthians 6:20; I Corinthians 14:40; etc).

People **are NOT Spirit-connected** when what they believe, cling to, stand for, practice, do, and follow in their lives (whether partially or completely, whether deliberately or in ignorance, whether in one thing or in many things) are built on and anchored to their **feelings** and their **emotions**, when they are **NOT** built on and are **NOT** anchored to, but are contrary to and are opposed to, the **Word of God**, to the **Holy Scriptures**, to what “*is written*” (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10), to “*what saith the Lord*” (Jeremiah 23:1-2, 4, 7, 11-12, 15-16, 23-24, 29-33). A person is **NOT connected to the Holy Spirit** when he **separates** the Spirit of God from the written Scriptures, from the written Word of God, from God’s Word of “*truth*” (John 17:17), as if the Holy Spirit worked and operated **outside of** the Holy Scriptures.

So feelings and emotions (no matter how sincere) are **never** to be the standard, the basis, and the foundation of what we believe, hold to, practice, and follow in our earthly lives. The Word of God and the Word of God **alone** is to be that never-changing, daily standard, basis, and foundation for what we believe, hold to, practice, and follow in our lives in this world. Furthermore, **our feelings** and **our emotions** are not to be the deciding factor as to how we live our lives as Christians in this world, but **the Word of God alone** is to be our counselor, our teacher, and our light. The Spirit-connected child of God will confess, according to his “*new man*” (Ephesians 4:24), the confession of the Psalmist re-

corded for our learning in Psalm 119: “*Thy Word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee. ...Thy testimonies...are my delight and my counselors*” (vv. 11 and 24).

And what **alone** is to move, constrain, and motivate believers in Jesus willingly and cheerfully to submit to and to follow the Word of God, even when it goes against and opposes their own feelings and their own emotions? It is “*the love of Christ [which] constraineth us, because we thus judge that if One died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again*” (II Corinthians 5:14-15).

Does this then mean that the children of God are to be emotionless and have **no** feelings at all? Absolutely not! The Holy Spirit’s work of bringing to Peter’s remembrance the words of Jesus, “*Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice*” (Mark 14:72), produced this emotional evidence of God-pleasing contrition in Peter: He “*wept bitterly*” (Matthew 26:75). The same Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Paul in Philippians 4, reminds all believers in Jesus: “**Rejoice in the Lord** *always, and again I say, Rejoice*” (v. 4). They have good reason to rejoice, for “[They] *are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar (special) people, that [they] should show forth the praises of Him who hath called [them] out of darkness into His marvelous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy*” (I Peter 2:9-10). That joy, Jesus says, “*no man taketh from you*” (John 16:22), even “*though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations [trials], that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom, having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls*” (I Peter 1:6-9).

—R. J. L.



THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT TO BE CULTIVATED BY EVERY TRUE CHRISTIAN



“But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no Law.”

—Galatians 5:22–23

The expression, “*fruit of the spirit*,” mentioned in the above passage, refers to those good works in the life of a Christian which result and flow from his saving faith in Christ Jesus. This is why we also refer to them as “fruit(s) of faith.” Every true Christian will have the “*fruit*” of good works in his life; for “*faith without works is dead*” (James 2:20, 26). However, the *amount* of fruit will differ from one Christian to another. Accordingly, Jesus describes the believers at the end of His explanation

to the *parable of the sower* as follows: “*These are they which are sown on good ground, such as hear the Word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirty fold, some sixty, and some an hundred*” (Mark 4:20). The amount of spiritual fruit will also vary in the life of an individual—a Christian at certain times being more fruitful in good works than at other times. It is important that we work *not* simply to *maintain* our current level of sanctification, but rather to *grow* in the fruit of the spirit out of love for the Lord Jesus. “*We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification*” (I Thessalonians 4:1–3).

Whatever God has commanded in His Moral Law is certainly included among “*fruit of the spirit.*” This present article, however, will focus mainly on those that are listed in Galatians 5:22–23, which also happen to be so broad in scope that they encompass all of the others. All other fruits of the spirit can really be summed up in the very first fruit on this list, namely, “*love.*” In the original Greek of the New Testament it is “*agape*” [ah • GAH • pay], which is the greatest kind of love imaginable. This is the word—together with its verb form, “*agapao*” [ah • gah • PAH • oh]—that the Bible uses to describe God’s amazing love for sinful mankind, which was demonstrated and “*manifested*” in the sending of His Son to be our substitute under the Law, to suffer the punishment and God-forsakenness of the damned, and to die in our stead, and thus to save us from the wrath of God that we have earned by our sins (I John 4:9–10). It is the word that describes what God, in His very essence, *is* (I John 4:8,16). Now the Scriptures do not only set forth “*love*” as a *divine* attribute, but also as that which the Lord our God demands of *us*. In His holy Law, God requires us to show true *agape* or *love* both to Him and to our neighbor; and it is this *love*, perfectly rendered by Christ in our stead, that actually fulfills all of God’s Commandments (Matthew 22:37–40; Romans 13:10). This is the love that is so beautifully described in I Corinthians 13:4–7 (though *agape* is there translated “*charity*”). When our heart is moved by the love of Christ (II Corinthians 5:14) to this kind of selfless love for our neighbor, we desire, according to our *new man*, to seek not our own gain but to suffer loss—even the loss of our life—in order to help someone else (John 15:13), as Christ Himself did (Revelation 1:5–6) and taught us to do by precept (John 15:17; I John 4:11) and by His own perfect example (I John 3:16).

But how is it possible that this glorious virtue of love can be present in the hearts of sinful, selfish human beings? It is only possible by the working of the Holy Ghost through the power of His Word —converting the heart of man by bringing him to faith in Christ Jesus and working in him sanctification of life (Philippians 2:13) to the glory of God’s grace (Matthew 5:16). This is not to say that unbelievers cannot have and display a certain kind and degree of love and affection for each other. But the nature of true *agape* —that love which is a reflection of God’s love for sinful man and, when perfectly rendered, is the fulfilling of God’s Law— is completely unknown and never experienced by those who reject the grace of God in Christ Jesus in unbelief. However, when a stubborn enemy of the Lord is changed into a loving disciple by the gracious and powerful working of the Spirit through the Means of Grace, his heart becomes filled with God’s love for him. “*The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us*” (Romans 5:5). The saving knowledge and appropriation of God’s love for us produces, as spiritual fruit, true *love* for the Lord (I John 4:19; John 15:5); and it also produces true *love* for our neighbor (I John 4:20–21).

When a person knows from the Gospel, accepts as true, and confides in the blessed fact that he is loved by God, his heart is filled with *joy*; and “*joy*” is the next item on the list of “*fruit of the spirit*.” Now because this joy is listed as a fruit of the spirit, it most certainly cannot refer to the kind of fleshly “joy” that unbelievers sometimes experience in the pursuit of sinful pleasures. Rather, this is the *joy* that follows upon and then accompanies saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:8). The knowledge that in and through Christ Jesus’ work of redemption we are reconciled to God (II Corinthians 5:19), have in Him a loving heavenly Father who cares for us in all of our needs (I Peter 5:7), hears and answers our prayers (John 16:23), works all things together for our good (Romans 8:28), will be with us as we pass through the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23:4), and will tenderly bring us into paradise (I Timothy 4:18; John 14:3), certainly fills the heart with great and inexpressible *joy* if these Gospel assurances are truly believed and not doubted. The promises of God’s grace in Christ are what move Christians in their new man to “*rejoice in the Lord alway*” (Philippians 4:4), even in the midst of much earthly sorrow (II Corinthians 6:10).

The next listed “*fruit of the spirit*” is “*peace*.” There are actually two different kinds of *peace* that are both the fruit of saving faith in the Lord Jesus. The most important of these two is the spiritual *peace with God* that is ours when we cling in confidence to His forgiveness of all

our sins for Jesus' sake. "*Being justified* [declared righteous, forgiven] *by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Romans 5:1). The other kind is an earthly *peace with our fellow human beings*, which we strive to advance in accordance with the Second Table of the Law (Matthew 5:9). "*The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace*" (James 3:18). Sadly, this second kind of peace is never perfectly achieved here on earth due to the influence of the devil, our own sinful flesh, and the Old Adam of all those with whom we interact. And though our neighbors may oppose our best efforts at having a peaceful relationship—making it impossible for us to live peaceably with them—this is still to be what we *on our part* should strive to promote and maintain. "*If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men*" (Romans 12:18). Thankfully, the *peace* that we as believers enjoy with God through Christ is *perfect* and *constant*—being not at all based upon our own imperfect works but upon the all-sufficient work of reconciliation accomplished by the Son of God as our substitute under God's Law. This peace brings with it the assurance of the Lord's enduring mercy and eases all of the burdens of this earthly life (John 14:27; Matthew 11:28–30).

Next in the list of spiritual fruit is "*longsuffering*," which simply means *patience*. (The word "longsuffering" is based on the Old English usage of the word "suffer"—to allow or permit. Thus it means to endure for an extended period of time.) Our longsuffering with one another is to be modeled after God's enduring patience with the children of men and is to be rendered in appreciation for His gracious longsuffering toward us. The opposite of having this Godly fruit is displayed when, moved by our sinful flesh, we become quickly upset and "*soon angry*" (Titus 1:7; cf. James 1:19–20) when things do not happen immediately in the exact way that we think they should, when we deal harshly and unmercifully with our neighbor contrary to the Word of God in Ephesians 4:31–32, or when we unjustly judge the hearts of others when we do not see a certain amount of good fruit in them as quickly as we would like. Jesus warns us concerning unwarranted judgment: "*Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned*" (Luke 6:37). Being *longsuffering* with our neighbor in lowliness and meekness is the loving *forbearance* to which St. Paul exhorts us in Ephesians 4:2.

The following two fruits of the spirit appear to be more different in their English translations than they really are in the original Greek of the New Testament. The words translated here as "*gentleness*" [*chrestotes*] and "*goodness*" [*agathosyne*] mean basically the same thing in Greek

—both referring to *goodness* and *kindness* exercised particularly toward our fellow men and “*especially unto them who are of the household of faith*” (Galatians 6:10). The Savior in the Gospels gives numerous exhortations to and examples of deeds of goodness and kindness as the evidence of both neighborly and brotherly love, as “*fruit*” that He expects to be produced upon our branches as His disciples (John 13:35; 15:8), fruits that He Himself will point to as evidence of saving faith (Matthew 25:40); and both James and John in their epistles stress the same as being hallmarks of Christian sanctification (James 2:15-17; I John 3:17-18) — “*fruit of the spirit.*”

“*Faith*” is the next listed “*fruit of the spirit.*” Since we here have “*faith*” listed as a “*fruit,*” this word does not refer to *saving faith* — childlike confidence in the mercy of God to poor sinners for Christ’s sake — but rather to *faithfulness*, the result and evidence of saving faith. This is how the same Greek word is used in Titus 2:10 (there translated as “*fidelity*”). The Greek word for “*faith*” is “*pistis,*” and it has the same root (“*peitho*”) as the Greek word “*pistos,*” which means “*faithful*” (II Timothy 2:13). Faithfulness certainly is an important fruit of saving faith, but it does not come “naturally,” nor is it a product of our own reason or strength. It is worked in us by God Himself through the Means of Grace (Philippians 2:13). Being *faithful* to God means remaining true to Him, continuing in His Word as genuine, loyal disciples, demonstrating fidelity in the face of temptations to apostasy, exercising diligence in our stewardship of both spiritual and temporal blessings, being steadfast and unmovable in our confession and in the practice of the same — “*unto death*” (Revelation 2:10). Faithfulness is what we pledge at the time of our Confirmation — “with the help and by the grace of God.” Our faithfulness to God is to be moved by and modeled after Christ’s faithfulness to the will of His heavenly Father by which He redeemed us (Hebrews 3:1–6). Moreover, faithfulness to the Lord and to His Word manifests itself in faithfulness also to our neighbor and especially to our brethren in this world (III John 5–6), faithfulness in word and deed, reliability, dependability, steadfastness, and loyalty — in good times and in adversity (Proverbs 11:13; 20:6; 27:6; 28:20; Isaiah 8:2; Daniel 6:4; Matthew 24:45–46; etc.).

The next listed “*fruit of the spirit*” is “*meekness.*” And while this word in common usage means gentleness, patience, kindness and mildness of spirit, these traits all belong to “*humility,*” a synonym of “*meekness*” in our dictionaries today and certainly the basis of those traits in *Scriptural* usage. Accordingly, Jesus says of Himself: “*I am meek and lowly in*

heart” (Matthew 11:29). Christians are told to conduct themselves “with all lowliness and meekness” (Ephesians 4:2); and the Apostle James exhorts us to “receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls” (1:21). Humility before the Lord and before His Word according to the First Table of the Law is paramount (I Peter 5:6); but this humility or “lowliness of mind” (Philippians 2:3) should extend also to our attitudes and dealings with our fellow men, as Jesus exemplifies it in His parable when He observed how the self-centered Pharisees chose out the best seats in the house at a wedding (Luke 14:8ff.); and St. Paul says: “Let each esteem other better than themselves” (Philippians 2:3). Meekness before God and before our fellow men should be clearly evident to those around us particularly when we are bringing them the Scriptures and testifying of our faith, so that God in all things is glorified (Galatians 6:1; II Timothy 2:25; I Peter 3:15). The perfect example of Christ is the pattern of meekness that we should strive to follow, “who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously” (I Peter 2:23). Thus He bids us in Matthew 11:29 to learn from Him true meekness.

“Temperance” is the last listed “fruit of the spirit.” This word is used in only three verses of the New Testament (Acts 24:25; Galatians 5:23; and II Peter 1:6). Its etymology suggests the application of strength in order to accomplish something; and, in its Biblical usage, it means to exert *self-control* —to restrain oneself from following the evil impulses of the flesh. This is again something that Christians must work hard to accomplish, not by their own reason or strength but with the help and by the grace of God. Because each and every one of us has the Old Adam (the Old Man, the sinful flesh) within us, warring against the New Man of faith (Romans 7:23; Galatians 5:17) to destroy our soul (I Peter 2:11), all of us must continuously battle carnal impulses and exercise Godly control of ourselves lest we follow the devil in the ways of wickedness instead of walking in the holiness to which the Lord God has called us as Christians (Ephesians 2:10; 4:1–2; Colossians 1:10; etc.). The Apostle Paul describes his ongoing fight to restrain his flesh when he writes to the Christians in Corinth: “I keep under my body and bring it into subjection” (I Corinthians 9:27). Is he 100% successful in this endeavor (as those claim to be who number themselves among the “holiness” bodies)? No, indeed; for he confesses humbly to the Romans: “The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. ...O wretched man that I am!! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death??” (7:19, 24). And then he adds in confidence of God’s enabling

grace: “*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!*” (v. 25). Thanks to the working of God’s Holy Spirit (Philippians 2:13) through the power of the Gospel (I Thessalonians 2:13) and constrained by the love of His Savior (II Corinthians 5:14), Paul battled his flesh and fought to bring his body and mind (all of his thoughts, words, and actions) under the rule of God’s Law, captive to the obedience of Christ (II Corinthians 10:5). And this is what the Gospel of God’s grace in Christ Jesus will both move and enable *us* to do as new creatures, as the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (II Corinthians 5:14–17; Galatians 3:26-27).

At the end of this list of spiritual fruit, St. Paul adds: “*Against such [fruit] there is no Law.*” The Law of God does not oppose any of this good spiritual fruit; on the contrary, it *requires* that such fruit be produced. In every true believer, this fruit is being produced by the New Man, “*which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*” (Ephesians 4:24) — though not to the same degree in all (Mark 4:8). But how do we become *more* fruitful in these Christian virtues as the Scriptures exhort us (I Thessalonians 4:1)? The Lord Jesus Christ —describing Himself as the true Vine and His followers as the branches in that Vine— teaches us that our heavenly Father makes the branches more fruitful by *purging* them (John 15:2). Thus the Lord chastens us and removes spiritual hindrances from our lives in order to increase our spiritual fruit (Hebrews 12:11). Chastenings “*yield*” or produce “*the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby*” by driving them to the Gospel for comfort in the forgiveness of sins, for the assurance of our reconciliation with God and our adoption as His children, for the knowledge that our Father deals with us “*as with sons*” (v. 7) in His chastenings, and for the strength to be able to bear them according to His faithful promise (I Corinthians 10:13). Through the Law of God, working as a rule, the Lord teaches us Christians what the fruits of the spirit **are** that we are to cultivate (II Timothy 3:16–17); and through the powerful Gospel of God’s grace in Christ Jesus, this fruit is **produced, sustained, and increased** in our lives to the glory of His grace (II Corinthians 5:14–15; Ephesians 4:31–32; I John 4:11, 19) —Christ being the true source of that fruit (John 15:4–5). So then, abiding in our Lord Jesus Christ by faith and trusting only in His merits for our forgiveness and salvation, and confiding in His Holy Spirit for the sanctification of our lives here in this world by the power of the Gospel, let us strive in love to glorify God by cultivating the “*fruit of the spirit*” in all that we do, say, and think (I Corinthians 10:31; Philippians 1:11). Our Savior tells us: “*Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples*” (John 15:8). God grant such fruitfulness to us all for Jesus’ sake!

—P. E. B.



THE HOLY TRINITY REVEALED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

“And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”

—Genesis 1:26

In the Athanasian Creed we confess: “Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic [i.e., universal, Christian] faith, which faith, except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance...He, therefore, that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity...This is the catholic faith; which except a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.” (*TLH*, p. 53). The sublime and transcendent mystery of the Holy Trinity, three distinct persons (Father, Son and Holy Ghost) in one divine being or essence, is a matter of God-wrought faith. Since faith comes by hearing God’s Word (Romans 10:17), those who reject the Bible as God’s own Word also deny the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

Among so-called Lutherans, the E. L. C. A. is a case in point for just such a denial. For example, in a doctrinal textbook used at the seminaries of the E. L. C. A. church body, we read: “The startling discovery was that the ecclesiastical dogmas are not to be found in the Bible, but are products of a later time. In the age of Christendom, the dogmas of the Trinity and of Christ, as formulated in the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, were necessary to believe for salvation. Now the biblical critics could apply the Scripture principle of Protestantism to show that these dogmas cannot be required for faith since they lack solid biblical support.” “Truly the Trinity is simply the Father and the man Jesus and their Spirit as the Spirit of the believing community” (Braaten/Jensen, *Christian Dogmatics*, Volume I, Fortress Press, 1984, p. 155, as cited in *Christian News*, 5/18/87).

Of course, the average Lutheran layman in the average E. L. C. A. congregation often has no idea that such outrageous denials of the doctrine

of the Holy Trinity are common place in E. L. C. A. seminaries. Many laymen think that what they have always believed is still held as true with “solid Biblical support” by all or at least most of their seminary professors and students. Not so, sad to say. But the E. L. C. A. is not alone in this sad flight from the truth, as the historical-critical school of Bible interpretation devastatingly removes God’s Word and replaces it with subjective human opinion.

Thanks be to God, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is plainly, clearly and without a doubt taught throughout the Holy Bible, including the Old Testament. Our topic restricts us to the proof texts found from Genesis to Malachi.

Our theme text is a good place to start: “*And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth*” (Genesis 1:26). Here the one true God speaks using a plural pronoun (“*Us*”) with a singular verb (“*said*”). And in the next verse we read that God made man “*in His (singular) image.*” Other examples may also be cited (cf. Genesis 3:22; 11:7). God is *singular* in essence and *plural* in persons. As a matter of fact, the very first passage of the Bible, Genesis 1:1, already indicates “a singular in plurality,” for in Genesis 1:1 the word for “*God*” [Hebrew: *Elohim*] is a plural form, but the verb is singular.

Critics like to point out that this does not specifically indicate *three* persons. So where are passages that tell us of the *three* persons in one essence? Take the well known Aaronic Benediction of Numbers 6:24-26 – “*The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.*” Here the name of the only true God (“*the Lord*”) is repeated three times, for there is *one* God in *three* persons.

Moreover we have the reference in the prophecy of Isaiah: “*And one cried unto another and said, ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory’*” (6:3). Once again there is a *three* in reference to the *one* (“*Holy, holy, holy*” – “*the Lord*”).

Even the most important verse (to the Jews today) in the Old Testament, chanted by the Jews with the stress on “*one,*” gives us proof of the Trinity. How so? Moses states: “*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our*

God [is] one Lord” (Deuteronomy 6:4). The Hebrew word for “one” used here is most often used as a *unified* one (cf. Genesis 2:24: “they... one”). Now there is an entirely different word in Hebrew for what could be called “a *solitary* one,” but that is *never* used in reference to God! So the very verse that stresses “one” true God (in His *essence*) also brings out the *unity* of His *persons*!

Other passages rightly cited as proofs for more than one person in the one essence are those which indicate more than one person of the Godhead. In Genesis 19:24 we read: “*Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.*” Here the only true God (“*the Lord*”) is spoken of as having more than one person (“*the Lord...from the Lord*”).

In Micah 5:2 we read: “*But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*” Since this is the *Lord* speaking and thus referring to Someone to come forth “*unto [Him]*” who actually has been going forth from “*everlasting,*” that other Someone must also be *true God*, the *Lord*. From the New Testament we know this is a Messianic prophecy fulfilled in Jesus born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:5-6), in whom “*all the fullness of the Godhead*” dwells “*bodily*” (Colossians 2:9) and who is “*God blessed forever*” (Romans 9:5)!

In Psalm 45:6-7 we also find more than one person referred to: “*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.*” The New Testament confirms this as a reference to the Father and the Son (Hebrews 1:8ff.).

In Hosea 1:7 we find yet another reference to the Father sending the Son to **save**: “*But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.*” The *Lord* (the Father) will save Judah “*by the Lord their God*” (Jesus = “*the Lord is salvation*”); “*for He shall save His people from their sins*” (Matthew 1:21). Jesus is *the Son of God* (Luke 1:32, 35), the *Lord incarnate* (Hebrews 2:14); compare also the names *Immanuel* (Isaiah 7:14) and *Emmanuel* (Matthew 1:23) – “*God with us*”).

Consider several references in the Prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah and Zechariah, each having the same type of proof that “*the Lord*” (the Father) and “*the Lord*” (the Son) are involved in working together to do “*the Lord’s*” will (the divine will is **one!**):

“Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 41:14).

“Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God” (Isaiah 44:6).

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called: The Lord our Righteousness” (Jeremiah 23:5-6).

“For thus saith the Lord of hosts: After the glory hath He sent Me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye. For, behold, I will shake Mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants; and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent Me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day and shall be My people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent Me unto thee” (Zechariah 2:8-11).

“And I will strengthen them in the Lord; and they shall walk up and down in His name, saith the Lord” (Zechariah 10:12).

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn” (Zechariah 12:10).

Other references could be cited as proof texts, but let these suffice. Anyone unconvinced at this point is rejecting the evidence of Scripture itself, and no amount of additional “proof” would suffice him (Luke 16:31).

Thus far we have shown the **unity of essence** and the **plurality of persons** (especially of the Father and the Son). But what about the third person of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Ghost? Although alluded to in Numbers 6:24-26 (“*the Lord*”) and Isaiah 6:3 (“*the Lord*”–“*Holy*”), we also can cite direct proofs of the Spirit’s essential deity; for the Holy Ghost is also true God, one in essence with the Father and the Son (cf. New Testament proofs: Divine names – I Corinthians 3:16; Acts 5:3-4; divine attributes – I Corinthians 2:10; Hebrews 9:14; divine works – Titus 3:5; II Timothy 3:16/II Peter 1:21; and divine honor and glory – I Peter 4:14).

What are some **Old Testament** proofs? In Genesis 1:2 we find this proof: “*And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*” The Holy Ghost is given this clear divine name, “*Spirit of God.*” At creation He was working with the Father and the Son, as the Holy Trinity created everything. The Father is the Creator (I Peter 4:19); the Son also (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16); and the Holy Ghost also specifically took part in creation: “*By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the Breath [Hebrew: *ROO-ach*, which also means “*Spirit*”] of His mouth*” (Psalms 33:6). The divine attribute of omnipresence is also clearly ascribed to God the Holy Ghost in Psalm 139: “*Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make My bed in hell [or, according to the Hebrew, *the grave*, or *death*] behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me*” (vv. 7-10). So also the Spirit has divine names, divine works and divine attributes! The Spirit is “*the Lord*”! The Holy Ghost is one in essence with the Father and the Son! The Holy Ghost is the third person of the Holy Trinity!

We even have the Spirit mentioned with the Father (“*I*”) and the Son (the Father’s “*chosen*” One) in Isaiah’s prophecy: “*Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; Mine Elect, in whom My soul delighteth. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles*” (42:1).

Isaiah 11:2 and 61:1 offer similar references to all three persons in the one true God: “*And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord*” (Isaiah 11:2) [Cf. New Testament proof of God’s Spirit in the Christ, Jesus: John 3:34, Acts 10:38, *et al.*]. “*The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because*

the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” (Isaiah 61:1) [Cf. New Testament proof of fulfillment: Luke 4:17-21].

Finally, the *New Testament* bears witness that the **Old Testament** teaches the doctrine of the Trinity. In John 5:18 we read: *“Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.”* The Jews objected to the fact that *Jesus* claimed to be God’s Son, not that God had a Son, equal with Himself in essence. This indicates that the Jews accepted the plurality of persons in the Godhead. Moreover, we have our Lord proving His deity from the **Old Testament** in Matthew 22:42-46, *“Saying, ‘What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He?’ They say unto Him, ‘The Son of David.’ He saith unto them, ‘How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son?’ And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions.”*

Moreover in Matthew 22:41-46, when our Lord Jesus quotes Psalm 110, He mentions that David spoke through the Spirit of God (v. 41). The Jews do not dispute the divine work of the Spirit, for the Spirit is God, giving us the oracles of God (Cf. David’s confession in II Samuel 23:2-3: *“The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, ‘The Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.’”*). John the Baptist clearly accepted the fact that *“the Spirit”* was God: *“And I knew Him not; but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, ‘Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost’”* (John 1:33). John does not reply to the Father: *“Who is the Holy Ghost? Who is the Spirit?”* He knows Him to be God and Lord!

In conclusion, we are well aware that anti-Trinitarians of every stripe have many convoluted and erroneous “answers” to the proofs cited in this short article. However, a refutation of their myriad twistings of Scripture (II Peter 3:16b) and oppositions of knowledge falsely so-called (I Timothy 6:20) is beyond the scope of our present topic. We say with all simple, childlike believers that anyone taking the passages *as they read* would rightly accept them as saying what they mean and

meaning what they say. Such childlike faith is wrought only by God Himself through the very Word which unbelievers reject. We therefore thank our gracious God for consistently, from the beginning, revealing Himself in His one undivided essence as three distinct persons, first in the **Old Testament** (Genesis 1:1 and beyond) and now also in the **New Testament**. The Old Testament reveals the sublime and majestic Holy Trinity with sufficient clarity (Psalm 119:105) for all to know, accept and believe by God's grace and the power of His Word (Romans 1:16; 10:17; etc.), even as the doctrine of salvation by grace for Christ's sake through faith is clearly revealed and "*hath appeared to all men*" (Titus 2:11), as it is written of our Savior Jesus Christ: "*To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His Name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins*" (Acts 10:43).

The Doctrine of the Trinity will not save a person, in and of itself, as if mere head knowledge of the true God is all that it takes to go to heaven. What must be believed is the work of the Holy Trinity *for our salvation*, especially that the second person, the Son, became incarnate to gain righteousness before God for every soul of man by living a life of holiness and thus keeping the Law *for us* (Romans 5:19, 10:4, II Corinthians 5:21), and to pay the penalty of our guilt by suffering the damning death we deserve as punishment under God's justice (Galatians 3:13; John 1:29; I John 1:7, 2:2). This Savior is Jesus, the Christ (John 20:31), your Substitute (Isaiah 53; II Corinthians 5:21), whose righteousness and blood redeemed you to His Father, earned and procured for you justification and the sending away of all your sins. The Holy Ghost, in and through the Gospel, offers to you the blessings of salvation, convinces you of this truth, and creates and preserves saving faith within you so that you place all your trust in the fact that "*God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved*" (John 3:16-17).

May we ever give all praise and glory to the Holy Trinity for our full, free salvation, the unspeakable gift of His grace — purchased and won by the Son, declared for all by the Father, and offered to all mankind in the Gospel by the Holy Spirit, who also works in men's hearts the faith to receive it. "To Thee, O blessed Trinity, be praise now and eternally" (TLH 245, 6). Amen!

— E. J. W.

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Sunday School & Bible Class 8:45 a.m.

Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

The Rev. PAUL E. BLOEDEL, Pastor

22012 Torrence Avenue

Sauk Village, IL 60411 (708) 757-6859

E-mail: revbloedel@gmail.com

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

300 North Ridgeland Avenue

Oak Park, IL 60302 *Telephone: (708) 386-6773*

Sunday School & Bible Class 9:00 a.m.

Worship Service 10:15 a.m.

The Rev. ROBERT J. LIETZ, Pastor

233 North Cuyler Avenue

Oak Park, IL 60302 (708) 386-4145

E-mail: robertjlietz@yahoo.com

NOTE: For the web site addresses of the individual congregations, please consult the [Directory of Congregations](#) on the web site of the Conference: www.ConcordiaLutheranConf.com



58th Annual Convention
of the
Concordia Lutheran Conference

Friday, Saturday and Sunday
June 26th, 27th and 28th, 2009

at
Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church
Oak Park, Illinois

Motto:

“Redeeming the Time”

Ephesians 5:16

The Essay on the topic
**“Redeeming the Time with Respect to
the Training of Future Pastors”**
will be delivered by
Pastor Edward J. Worley

The Friday sermon will be preached by
President Edward J. Worley

The Sunday sermon on Matthew 9:36-38
will be preached by
Pastor David G. Redlin

**The Pastoral Conference on
June 23rd & 24th**
**Board of Directors meeting on
June 25th**