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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Be Strong and of A Good Courage

--Joshua 1:9.

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STATEMENT of PURPOSE

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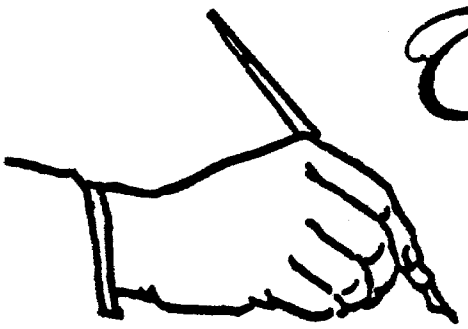

The President's Column

OUR CONVENTION MOTTO

"Be Strong And Of A Good Courage"

Joshua 1:9

Once again we are about to gather together in our annual convention. Our conventions should be precious to us, for in them we have a chance to fellowship together, a chance which is rare during the year. Indeed, often times it is several years in-between the times our laymen get to see and visit with one another.

But fellowship means more than just sharing with one another the news about our families, talking about the weather, catching up on the news we have missed since we last saw one another. To be sure, this is part of our fellowship as Christians, for just as our Savior is interested in all that we do and all that we are, so also we, as His brethren, should also be interested in the things that are important to our brothers and sisters in the faith.

What our fellowship must primarily revolve around, as those who "**live, and move, and have our being,**" Acts 17:28, in Christ, the **center** of our fellowship, always is the Word of God. There is so much in that Word that we can bring to one another's attention, how it has affected us over the past year or years, how we have seen the power of God work in our lives and the lives of others, how we have been witnesses to His goodness and grace in all things. This doesn't mean that we have to walk around saying "hallelujah" and "amen" to every thing that is said, but our fellowship together should always be salted with God's precious Word, whereby we may strengthen one another in the true faith. Indeed, while it applies primarily to the local congregation, the writer to the Hebrews expresses our purpose for gathering, even at conventions, well when he says: "**Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised; and**

let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: And so much the more, as ye see the day approaching," Heb. 10:23-25.

It is for that reason that at every convention the first thing we do is ask God's blessing through a service of convocation and then center the rest of the convention around a Scriptural theme and an essay grounded in God's Word presented to the convention assembled. Our theme this year, as announced in our last issue, is: **"Be strong and of good courage,"** Joshua 1:9. Considering the fact that we have entered those last days when Satan and the world are exerting every effort to destroy those who would remain faithful to their Savior, this theme is especially appropriate and should serve to encourage all of us in the even more trying days ahead.

But there is so much more to this theme. Not only will we consider this theme corporately, as a group, but our essayist, the Rev. David T. Mensing of Peace congregation, will focus his essay on the trials or temptations that the Lord lays on each of us as individuals. The essay will use as its foundation the words of the writer to the Hebrews which say: **"For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth,"** Heb. 12:6. We all know what a chastisement is. We know that such chastisements are not joyous and that, because of our sinful flesh, we too often grumble and complain under them. And yet, God reminds us that these chastisements are laid upon us because He loves us, that, as Peter says, **"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 honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ,"** I Peter 1:7.

Brethren, these trials are a precious gift of God to those whom He loves. Let us rejoice in them, and let the trials that the Lord has laid on us since we saw one another last be the focus of our fellowship together, not only in Convention sessions, but as we talk together on a one-to-one basis as well. Let's remind one another of God's goodness in this particular area of our Christian life, and strengthen one another through the word of promise that the love of God is manifested for us through these trials and the assurance of the wonderful God-

given glory that shall be revealed to us and in us, as St. Paul testifies: **"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us,"** Rom.8:18.

I look forward to seeing all of you at Convention. We pray that God would grant each of you a safe journey and I ask that you especially remember your Conference officers and our host congregation in your prayers as the day of our meeting fast approaches.

Your servant in Christ,
Rev. Mark W. Dierking, President

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Our Living Hope

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." --I Peter 1:3,4.

The **hope** of which the Apostle Peter speaks in this most comforting and reassuring passage is much **more** than a mere "grasping at straws" with an eye toward the unknown future, as that word is commonly used in our language **today.** For the **world's** hope is a **dead** hope, a vain "stab in the dark" with no more than a fifty-fifty statistical chance of realization. And, when such a vain hope is directed contrary to the express word and will of God, as most of the worldling's hopes are, even those things which **appear** to be positive realizations and outcomes are doomed to ultimate failure for the wicked when we understand "**their end**" Psalm 73:17. The **Christian's hope,** on the other hand, is not a vain, empty or even "chancy" hope, but is the **sure** and **certain anticipation and expectation** of what GOD HIMSELF **GUARANTEES** in His precious Word! Peter calls ours a "**living hope**", not just because of the fact that it thrives within the heart of every believer in Jesus, but because of its living SOURCE, because of its living POWER, and because of its living OBJECTIVE, as his words indicate.

"**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**"! Yea, to Him all glory and praise is due for reconciling the world unto Himself in Christ Jesus, His only begotten Son! It is He "**who hath saved us**", Paul writes to Timothy, "**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**"! Indeed, "**God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son**" to be the **scapegoat** for sinners, the **sacrifice of substitution,** to be humiliated, mocked, spitefully entreated, crucified and slain, "**...that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life**". What a sacrifice! What a gift! "**Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift**"! -- "**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!**"

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again", gave birth to us **spiritually.** He put new life into our souls that **"were dead in trespasses and sins"** Eph. 2:1. He planted faith in Christ into our hearts, made us new creatures **"alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord"**,(Rom. 6:11), and adopted us to be His own dear children and heirs of eternal life! And this He did **"according to His abundant mercy"**--undeserved kindness to the wretched and unworthy. When we consider who we WERE by virtue of our **natural birth,** helplessly mired in sin, spiritually blind, dead and enemies of God, depraved and capable only of evil, it was only God's **mercy** that could have rescued us, **"abundant mercy", plenty** of it in Christ our Savior, that caused Him to give birth to us **spiritually,** to make us His own sons and daughters, and to give us a new **birthright** as His heirs. A **birthright** is something to look forward to as the result of being someone's heir, an **inheritance;** and our **spiritual birthright,** as those "begotten again" by God the Father is **"HOPE"**, Peter tells us, the sure and certain anticipation and expectation of what our heavenly Father **guarantees** us in His Word. Peter calls this a **"living hope"** not because of how brightly it burns within us but because of ITS LIVING **SOURCE,** God Himself, who IS life, who GAVE **US** life when we were dead, and who GUARANTEES US life as we look forward to our inheritance. This is no vain, empty or uncertain hope to which we have been born, but this is the REAL THING, the life we can "bank on", confidently anticipate, as surely as God is God, abundant in mercy, and blessed forevermore!

Moreover, ours is a **"living hope"** because of the LIFE-GIVING **POWER** by means of which that hope exists, the power that "fuels" our hope and keeps it alive. What is that power? Peter tells us that God **"hath begotten us again unto a lively** (that is, a **living) hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."** The power of Christ's resurrection is the **evidence** of our justification, the **prototype** of our own resurrection from the grave, the **verification** of the truth we preach, the **vindication** of our faith, and the **surety** that our hope in Christ is not limited to **"this life only"** I Cor. 15:12ff. It is **"the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"** that proves Him to be the Son of God, the **"worthy Lamb"** who alone was able to keep God's Law in our place and to suffer its

punishment in our stead with the **absolute perfection and value necessary** to atone for our sins. -- It is "**the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**" that proves His doctrine to be the **truth**; and the truth of Jesus' Word **powers** our living hope! He said He would rise again on the third day, and so He did! And He says that our birthright of everlasting life is valid and certain, and **so it is**!--It is "**the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**" that assures us of our **justification,** of our forgiveness, by God for Christ's sake. "**Christ was delivered**", He suffered and died, "**for our offences**", to pay the price of our redemption, "**and was raised again for our justification**", God the Father testifying thereby that He was completely satisfied with Jesus' sacrifice as "payment-in-full" for our sins, and that He could therefore declare the whole world forgiven, "justified" for Jesus' sake.-- It is "the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" that is the **prototype of our own resurrection** on the Last Day; for Jesus Himself assures us: "**Because I live, ye shall live also,**" John 14:19; and Paul echoes this assurance to the Corinthians, saying: "**Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept,**" I Cor.15:20. Therefore we Christians are NOT the "**most miserable of all men**", as are the modernists and the purveyors of a purely social gospel who have hope in Christ "**in this life only**"; for ours is **not** a **short-lived** hope, **not** a hope that "**fizzles out**" as "**we walk through the valley of the shadow of death,**" but a "**living hope**", powered by Jesus' own resurrection, so that we can **anticipate the fulfillment of all His promises** to us, "**even as HE is risen from the dead,** lives and reigns to all eternity! **This is most certainly true!**"

And what does our Savior promise us? What is the object or **objective** of our living hope to which we look forward as heirs of God through Christ? Peter says that our "**living hope**" **expects to receive,** according to God's abundant mercy and sealed by Christ's resurrection, "**an inheritance**"--an unearned gift of a dear heavenly Father to His dear child--"**an inheritance incorruptible**" (not subject to depreciation, devaluation, theft or deterioration by moth or rust, as are the things valued by this present world), "**...and undefiled**" (untainted by sin and imperfection, as are the things we inherit here on earth), ..."**and that fadeth not away**" (never losing its value or lasting appeal through all eternity)! What a gift!

What a prize! What an unspeakably great and glorious "inheritance"!!

That inheritance is "**reserved in heaven FOR YOU!**" Could any guarantee be more **personal** than that?? It's **YOURS! NOW ALREADY,** as your **birthright**! It has **YOUR NAME** on it, inscribed in the Book of Life, on the page marked "Adopted Heirs for Christ's Sake"! Reach out, therefore, with the hand of faith and claim what is yours by confidence in your risen Redeemer! Hang onto it with all your heart, "**that no man take thy crown**!" Let **nothing,** let **no one** rob you of the "**living hope**" that is yours as a dear child of God and heir of everlasting life in heaven, where there is fulness of joy and pleasures at God's right hand forevermore!

This is a sight that gladdens!
What **peace** it doth impart!
Now nothing ever saddens
the **joy** within my heart!
No gloom shall ever shake,
no foe shall ever take
the **HOPE** which God's own Son
in love for me hath won!

L.H. 192:3

--D.T.M.

The Blessedness Of Being A Sheep Of The Good Shepherd

"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

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Perhaps no imagery in Scripture is as dear to the hearts of humble, sincere believers in the Lord Jesus -- to the young and old alike -- as the Savior's own description of Himself as the **Good Shepherd.** For that word-picture, as we find it exquisitely "painted" in John, chapter 10, says a lot, first of all about our Lord Jesus, and about His work as our Redeemer. It is a picture of **self-sacrifice, vicarious** self sacrifice, as the Good Shepherd **"giveth His life for the sheep,"** John 10:11. It is a picture of **loving concern** for the frail and helpless, as He **"carries the lambs in His bosom and gently leads those that are with young,"** Isaiah 40. It is a picture of **tender nurturing,** of **gentle care and leading,** as He makes His sheep **"to lie down in green pastures"** and leads them **"beside the still waters"** of His precious Gospel, restoring their soul and leading them on the **"paths of righteousness for His Name's sake."** And it is a comforting picture of **security,** as the Good Shepherd protects His flock in the sheepfold of His "goodness and mercy" and grants His sheep and lambs to **"dwell in the House of the Lord forever,"** Psalm 23.

But the picture of Jesus, the **Good Shepherd,** says plenty about the **sheep** as well! It is a **humbling** picture that shows us for what we really **are** and why we desperately **need Him** to be **OUR** Good Shepherd. Sheep are docile, **defenseless** creatures, easy prey for prowling beasts like **"ravening wolves"** (Matthew 7:15) and **"roaring lions"** (I Peter 5:8)--not as bright, alert and self-sufficient as they seem to think they are as they wander about aimlessly, sometimes far from the safety of the sheepfold! Sheep are **frail, helpless,** and **easily injured**--although one wouldn't know it, judging from the chances they take near crevices, ravines and rockslides! Sheep don't know what's **good** for them. If they had their way, they would simply munch on whatever is handiest, requiring the least effort on their part; for they have to be prodded and driven to nourishing pasturage. When sheep become **lost,** they can't find their own way home; they need a shepherd or a

good sheep dog to round them up. And yet they are notorious "wanderers" requiring alert and constant supervision! THAT is the picture of **you and me**! Humbling?? Yes, indeed! Depressing? Not if we are **JESUS' sheep;** for as we plainly see from our Savior's words, we have every reason to be **happy, satisfied,** and **secure** in that humble role, being a **blessed sheep of the Good Shepherd**--blessed in the **hearing of His voice** and blessed in the **security of His fold.**

"**My** sheep hear **My voice,**" says Jesus. In verses 4 and 5 of this same chapter He tells us concerning sheep that they follow their **own** shepherd "**for they know His voice. A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.**" A voice may conceivably be **imitated,** but it can't truly be **duplicated** -- a fact which makes a high-tech **voice-print** nowadays as sure a means of identification as a fingerprint. **Jesus' voice** is one-of-a-kind; and every true sheep of Jesus **recognizes it** when he hears it, **perks up his ears to listen** to what it is saying, **loves** its familiar, secure sound, and **happily responds** to it. "**My sheep hear my voice,**" he tells us--the voice that sounds forth in His **precious Word,** the voice with which every true Pastor or **under**shepherd of the Lord Jesus preaches and teaches, guides and oversees the flock committed to his charge by the Holy Spirit; for Jesus assures them, "**He that heareth you heareth Me,**" Luke 10:16. "**Everyone that is of the truth,**" He said to Pilate, "**heareth My voice.**" Such are Jesus' sheep.

"**And I know them and they follow Me.**" We are truly **blessed** in the hearing of our Good Shepherd's voice, because it is the voice of His Word by which **faith in Him** is engendered and strengthened in us unto salvation, for "**faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God,**" Paul writes in Romans, chapter 10. It is the voice of His Word which confirms to us the blessed fact that He **knows us** as His sheep -- not merely in His omniscience as the Son of God, but in that **special knowledge** of **love** and **effect** by which He chose us to be His own, to come to faith in Him by the hearing of His precious Gospel, to "**live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness.**" And it is the **voice** of **His Word** through which our "**walk**" in Him is created, enabled, sanctified and sus-

tained; through which we are made "**new creatures**" by the operation of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, through which God Himself "**worketh in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure,**" so that Jesus can say of us, His dear sheep, "**They "follow Me,**" "**looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith,**" Hebrews 12:2. Thus it behooves us all to **examine ourselves,** whether we be in the faith, whether we truly **are** the sheep of Jesus, blessed in the hearing of His voice; and that we can do by posing ourselves several pointed questions: Do I **recognize** the Good Shepherd's voice when I hear it? Does it have a "ring" all its own for ME, so that I clamor to hear it, perk up my ears to listen to it, come running at the sound of it as His Word is proclaimed and taught?? Do I **trust** His voice, relying on it for comfort when I am sad, for assurance when I am in doubt, for direction when lost, and for rescue when under attack?? If your answer to these questions is, "Yes", then you are indeed a **sheep** of your **Good Shepherd**--still a **sheep** to be sure (helpless, frail, defenseless, and naive in and of yourself; prone to wander, often oblivious to danger, and all-too-ignorant about what is good for you)--but a **blessed** sheep in the hearing of His precious voice which calls out to you in His Word, makes and keeps you His sheep, as you continue in that Word of Truth, a "**disciple indeed,**" John 8:31-32.

But we are not only blessed in the hearing of His voice, but also in the **fruit** of that hearing, namely, in the **security of His fold.** For Jesus says of His true sheep, "**I give unto them eternal life.**" This gift of **eternal security** in the sheepfold of the **Good Shepherd** is a totally unearned, undeserved blessing that is ours when by faith in Him we dwell in the safety only He can provide us. It is a **gift** that ONLY HE can bestow, because only **He** was able to OBTAIN it for us, to PAY FOR it in full "with His holy precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death," and to GIVE US for our very own "without any merit or worthiness in us"; for if it had been up to us poor sheep, we by nature would have forsaken the sheepfold long ago and gone every one his own way out into the wilderness of sin, despair and death! But by His grace we dwell **by faith** in the security of His fold and there **by faith** HAVE this gift of "**eternal life**" for our very own.

Moreover, it is only within the security of His fold that

our **perseverance** in the true and saving faith is assured; for He says of us, His sheep, **"They shall never perish"--"they shall in no wise perish forever".** As long as we continue to hear His voice, continue as His sheep by faith in Him, and continue to follow Him in childlike confidence, **our security is assured,** and we can be certain of escaping eternal damnation. No matter how weak the sheep are **of themselves,** no matter how cruelly their flesh assails them, no matter how viciously the wolves and lions howl and roar at them and snap at their heels, they are **safe** in the arms of their **Good Shepherd** and in the security of His fold. Only if they **bolt** from the fold in unbelief, forsaking its security, **close their ears** to the Shepherd's voice, lest they should believe and be saved, and **refuse** to follow Him, resisting the work of His Holy Spirit in their hearts, **then** such blessed security would be a thing of the **past,** forfeited solely by their own fault! **"From this preserve us, Heavenly Father!"**

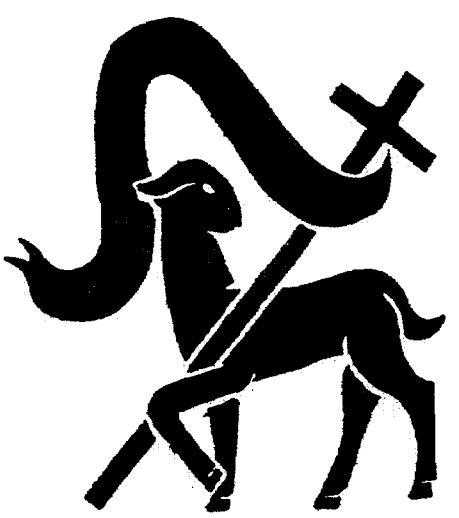
Nay, barring our own defection from the security of Jesus' sheepfold, **nothing** and **no one** can take from us the gift of eternal life that He has given us, for He adds: **"Neither shall any man** (i.e. **anyone**) **pluck them,"** pluck those believing sheep, **"out of My hand." Blessed** indeed are you, beloved hearer of your Good Shepherd's voice and follower of His precious Word, **in the security of His sheepfold,** where the Wolf cannot harm you, and his wicked allies cannot deceive you, nor seduce you into misbelief, despair and other great shame and vice! For, though you be assailed by them as you still walk through this veil of tears, yea, even though you walk through the valley of the shadow of death," your **Good Shepherd** is with you; His rod and His staff they comfort you; and you can confidently declare with Paul **"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!!"** Yea, no one shall be able to pluck us out of our **Good Shepherd's** hand! O, the blessedness of being a sheep of Jesus, our **Good Shepherd**--blessed in the hearing of His Voice (the Source of our faith, our assurance, our hope, our comfort and our strength to follow Him)--and blessed in the security of His sheepfold (where by faith in Him **we enjoy** the gift of eternal life, rescue from everlasting death, perseverance in

the faith by continuance in His Word, and the assurance that no one will be able to take our crown!)

Who so happy as I am,
Even now the Shepherd's lamb!
And when my short life is ended,
By His angel hosts attended,
He shall fold me to His breast,
There within His arms to rest!

--TLH 648:3

--D.T.M.



Motherhood . . .
and the roll of the woman

It is 6:00 A.M. and today's mother gets up to get ready for work, not housework, but office work. As there is little time to prepare breakfast, because both mother and father must get to work on time, everyone grabs for himself a glass of juice and a breakfast bar. On the way out the door. today's mother reminds her husband to be sure to stop at the store on the way home from work to pick up some Morton potpies and then set the oven for 350 degrees. On the way to work, today's mother drops off little 3 year old Johnny at the Farmer In The Dell Daycare Center. She reminds the daycare director that Johnny is not yet potty-trained and that he needs to learn to tie his shoes and to brush his teeth.

It is now 5:00 P.M. and today's mother leaves the office. She stops at the bank to deposit some money into her own personal account. With just 10 minutes to go before the daycare closes, today's mother rushes through rush hour traffic to pick up little Johnny. Upon getting home she asks her husband if he would mind setting the table and checking the potpies in the oven as she must shower and get ready for tonight's Women's Coalition Caucus meeting. Her husband reminds her that he has a meeting, too, and asks if she got a sitter for little Johnny. Today's mother fires back, "That's your responsibility!" Meanwhile, Johnny takes his potpie into the family room to watch "Family Feud" in hopes that the laughter will drown out the argument between his mother and father. During the argument, today's mother warns her husband that if he doesn't back off, she will divorce him and get at least 50% of his assets.

Yes, today's mother is free at last! Free from diapers! Free from potty-training! Free from dependence upon her husband's income! Free from the four walls of home! Free from cooking! Free to pursue a career to become a "whole person," a "fulfilled individual."

While every detail of the above account is not true of all or even most mothers, more and more it is becoming the norm.

For a moment, let us see how God's Word portrays

motherhood and the "virtuous woman." We find that she does good to her husband all the days of her life. The text says, **"She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life,"** Proverbs 31:12). Her heart's desire is to promote and support her husband. She has as her chief concern to stand by her man. Moreover, she is busy and industrious in the home. Verse 13 of Proverbs 31 says, **"She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands."** She is not afraid to use needle and thread, to iron clothes, and to darn socks. She arises early to prepare the meals. In Proverbs 31:15, we read, **"She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens."** While there is no set time to make preparations of meals, the point made by the Lord God in His Word is that mother in the house **finds delight** in preparing good meals for her family. Wherever possible she makes her own and her children's clothing. Speaking of the role of the mother in the household, God says in His Word, **"She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple,"** Proverbs 31:21-22. In addition, **"She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness,"** Proverbs 31:26. Such wisdom from her lips is due to the fact that she has the Word of God in her heart. How blessed is a man who has a wife whose heart is filled with God's Word. She is more concerned about her soul than her beauty, for in this same chapter in Proverbs, verse 30, we read, **"Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."** Other texts tell us that the Godly woman obeys her husband, wants to bear children where God grants such a blessing, and is a keeper at home, that is, she is a homemaker. (**See:** Ephesians 5:33b; Titus 2:4,5; I Timothy 2:15; I Peter 3:1-2.)

In the eyes of the world, such a mother is an unimaginative, passive, unintellectual slave. Never will she achieve her full potential, and never will she have real freedom or rights.

As we think back to Mother's Day 1990, let us ask and answer a very basic question: Who is better off? Today's mother, or the mother and woman as portrayed in the Bible? We shall see that the mother portrayed in Scripture is better

off both spiritually and temporally.

Let us look first at motherhood from the spiritual perspective. Indeed, motherhood must be considered in light of God's Word and the Gospel. Fundamental to this spiritual perspective is whether a mother is a Christian who, because she is a Christian, accepts and respects the Word of God. If she is still an unbeliever or a mere nominal Christian, she will have an entirely different outlook and perspective. If she is an unbeliever, she will **think** as an unbeliever. She will have the convictions of an unbeliever, and the goals of an unbeliever. She is ruled by her Old Adam or sinful nature. Being so ruled, she is selfish, proud, self-willed, and rather than being spiritually-minded, her heart is set on the things of this world. The Bible pictures such people in these words, **"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them,** II Cor. 4:4. Being in unbelief, the mother rejects as foolish what God's Word says about obeying one's husband, bearing children, and being a homemaker.

On the other hand, when a woman is a Christian, her heart and mind are changed through faith in Christ Jesus. The Bible says, **"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,"** II Cor. 4:6. A Christian mother should then be a spiritually-minded person, one who sees, thinks, and reasons with the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit through the Word. She should see the wisdom and blessing of God's plan of motherhood, and should not argue with God about her position and role in life. She should know that her role is just as Godly and important as her husband's. Thus, unless the role of motherhood is seen from the perspective of faith and God's Word, the arguments about motherhood become endless circles.

The role of motherhood is not always appreciated even in external Christendom and in so-called Christian homes. How are we to explain the fact that even some Christian mothers grow weary of motherhood and begin to question the validity of this role? Like all Christians, she must cope with her

sinful nature, her Old Adam. The Old Adam always argues against the wisdom of God. What is more, the world in which we live fosters not God's wisdom but the world's wisdom and philosophy, Colossians 2:8. T.V. ads, women's magazines, and television shows are tremendous propaganda machines against motherhood and the role of women in this world. They bombard women with the lies and the deceitful reasoning of Satan. If a mother listens long enough to Gloria Steinem, Dr. Joyce Brothers, and other women's liberationists, she will become convinced that she is a loser--if not antiquainted or out of step with the times.

What must a Christian mother do in the face of all this propaganda? She should ask herself, "Am I a Christian? Do I believe that Christ not only died for me, but also knows what is best for me?" She must ask herself, "Do I love my Saviour and His Word? Do I believe He is wise and good? Do I see that my greatest and most important freedom is the freedom I have in Christ from sin, death, and the devil?" Indeed, she should stay in God's Word and stay out of ungodly magazines and other materials which attack motherhood and the role of a Christian woman in this life.

Indeed, we all, men, women, and children alike, must confess that we often resent our station in life and balk at the role in which God has placed us. Men complain and seek to change their role, too. Some men refuse to take the lead in the home and refuse to make the tough decisions which are needed to be made in every household and thereby practically force the wife and mother to assume the headship. Often children seek to have adult freedoms and privileges before they have become more mature in their thinking, have had a wider range of experience and become better able to handle responsibilities. As sinners we **all** have an abundance of sins to confess. Let us be thankful that we have a Savior to whom we can turn for the full and free forgiveness of all our sins, and who fills our hearts, through the power of His Word, with the earnest purpose to amend our sinful lives.

Indeed, the power of the Gospel makes the role God has given us good, satisfying, and fulfilling. There is peace of mind in knowing that one is sincerely eager to live in accord with God's will. There is fulfillment in knowing that God's

blessing rests upon one's labors. Therefore the Lord, speaking of Christian woman, declares, "**Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but she that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised,**" Proverbs 31:30. Her value is immeasureable! The Bible says, "**Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies,**" Proverbs 31:10.

Because a woman trusts the Lord **first** for salvation and **secondly** for wisdom in motherhood, she is better off than today's mother even temporally. She has the love and trust of her husband. The Bible says, "**The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil,** Proverbs 31:11. A man who has a wife who is a Godly woman realizes what a treasure he has. Moreover, she has the praise of her children along with that of her husband, for we read in Proverbs 31:28, "**Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.**" Deep down, even though they may not always show it, children love and respect the mother who loves the Lord. Moreover, the fruit of her labors will bring her future happiness. She has the happiness of seeing her children blossom into mature Christians as they grow into adulthood.

Now widows, single women, deserted women and others need not feel left out of this instruction. God has good reasons for their present status. Either way, no matter what a woman's present status is, if she is a true believer in Jesus as her Savior, she will certainly agree with what God's Word says about motherhood and the role of the woman in general. In the final analysis, **being** a Christian and **enjoying** God's blessings upon your life is the most important matter of all. If you have Christ and His precious Word, you have all that you need. You have all blessings--both here in time and hereafter in eternity.

Let us then extoll and encourage motherhood and the role of the Christian woman according to God's plan and design, and let us who are husbands and children love, honor, and cherish the mother of the house.

--ERS

Bible Study Outlines

W I N E

I. The Scriptural names for wine which come into consideration here are:

A. Tirosch. This Hebrew word occurs 38 times in the Old Testament and designates the unfermented juice of the grape, "sweet wine" (Micah 6:15); "wine" (Prov. 3:10).

B. Yayin. This word occurs about 140 times in the Old Testament and designates the intoxicating fruit of the vine, Gen. 9:12-24; Gen. 19:32-35; I Sam. 1:14; 25:18,37; II Sam. 13:28; Esther 1:7; Isaiah 5:11; 28:1,7.

Note: Tirosch generally emphasizes a blessing of the Lord and is placed on a par with corn and oil, while **yayin** is commonly used as a drink and is placed on a par with meat, bread and milk, Gen. 27:28; Deut. 14:22,23; 18:4; Joel 2:24; Ps. 4:7. **Yayin,** Gen. 14:18; 27:25; I Sam. 25:18; Isaiah 55:1; Ps. 104:14,15.

C. Schekar. An intoxicating drink which seems to be different than wine, Numbers 28:7. (In the New Testament it appears, in a Greek transliteration, only in Luke 1:15, "strong drink.")

D. Ghamar. A thick, sticky, intoxicating syrup-like drink used by Belshazzar in his feast, Dan. 5:1-4, and spoken of in Ezra 6:9 and 7:22. A similar word is used also in Isaiah 27:2. This word is also translated "wine" in the KJV.

E. Oinos. This Greek word designates fermented wine in the New Testament, Eph. 5:18; Luke 7:33,34; Rom. 14:21; I Tim. 5:23; I Tim. 3:3; Luke 10:34; Mark 15:23; Rev. 17:2.

F. Gleukos, Acts 2:13. The fruit of the vine is called Gleukos through all the stages of the fermentation process.

G. Oinos noos, refers to "new wine," Luke 5:37-39. Fermented wine.

II. Wine was the common drink, not grape juice. I Sam. 25:18; II Sam. 16:2; Eccl. 2:3.

A. Wine was used in connection with the offerings. Ex. 29:40; Num. 28:7,14; 15:5,7,10; Lev. 23:13; I Sam. 1:24.

B. Wine was forbidden the priests during the time of their service in the House of God. Lev. 10:8,9.

C. In the New Testament, wine was such a common drink that John the Baptist was an exceptional person because he drank no wine. Luke 7:33; Luke 5:39; Luke 10:34.

D. Christ
1. drank wine, Luke 7:34.
2. made fermented wine at the wedding in Cana, John 2:1-11.
3. blessed wine in the Lord's Supper, Matt. 26:27.

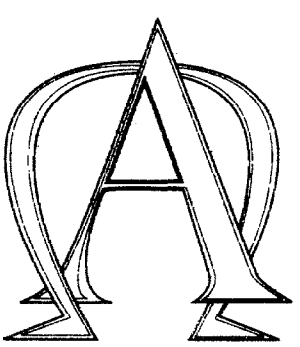
III. Wine in the Lord's Supper.

A. Jesus took the cup which was used in the Passover, Luke 22:7-20. During the celebration of the Feast of the Passover, only wine was available since it took place in the Spring of the year and there was no method of preserving grape juice from the previous Fall.

B. The early Christian congregations used fermented wine, I Cor. 11:21.

IV. The **moderate** use of wine is permitted according to Scripture, but the **excessive** use is forbidden. Prov. 20:1; 23:20,21,29-33; Hab. 2:5,15; Prov. 31:6,7; 10:19; Ps. 104:15; I Cor. 6:10; I Tim. 4:4; Col. 2:16; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:18.

--MLN



Around the World

with editorial comment

by M. L. Natterer

An ordinance that would give unmarried or homosexual city workers equal standing with married employees will start a nationwide trend in both the public and private sectors. Mayor Art Agnos endorsed the measure at its introduction and eight of the 11-member Board of Supervisors signed as sponsors. Larry Brinkin of San Francisco's Human Rights Commission said that "this landmark: Putting into city law in the first major city in the country that lesbian and gay couples and unmarried straight couples have a right to dignity in their relationships." Approved, the ordinance would be the most far-reaching of its kind in the country, said Matt Coles of the American Civil Liberties Union's San Francisco chapter, who spent more than a year helping draft the final version. This ordinance would also formalize the non-discriminatory policies already in effect, such as visiting rights for domestic partners at city hospitals and city jails, Coles said.

The home, the family, is the foundation of the State! Such a home does not consist of two homosexuals or two lesbians. It consists of husband (man) and wife (woman) and any children resulting from such union. This arrangement is normal and natural. For the State to sanction a sexual relationship between two males or two females is perversion and pollutes society. Unrestrained, it will eventually lead to the destruction of the state. Why? Because marriage is God's institution (Genesis 2:18-24). To protect the home the Lord has issued specific warnings against the sins of perversion (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:27; I Corinthians 6:8,10). Those who oppose God's arrangement will only succeed in bringing God's wrath down upon themselves. Look what happened to the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19). "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge," (Hebrews 13:4). "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," (Hebrews 10:31). How can there be any "dignity" to such perverse relationships which the Creator of heaven and earth condemns as an abomination?

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With the national media feeding the frenzy, people flew in from all over America to gamble on Pennsylvania's $115 million record-setting jackpot, the biggest since Illinois set its $69 million record 12 days earlier. But players for the Pennsylvania jackpot did repeatedly tell interviewers they'd use the loot, if they won, for a house. Until the 70's, the American dream, (and practice) was to work hard, save weekly, then make the down payment on your own home. Now people's hopes get boiled down to million-to-one odds. Perhaps our national standard of living is plummeting faster than we realize. States used to treat gambling as faintly tainted activity, at best. No longer. States are hooked, like their gambling citizens. A decade ago, less than $2 billion worth of lottery tickets were sold nationwide. Last year Americans bought more than $15 billion worth of lottery tickets. Lotteries have become a massive, repressive, debilitating tax--especially on lower income people. "We're building a nation of gamblers," says Arnold Wexler, executive director of New Jersey's Council on Compulsive Gambling. Lottery-driven gambling might indeed become the national addiction of the 90's, as serious as alcoholism, drug abuse and cigarette smoking.

The above was taken from an article written by Neal R. Peirce, a syndicated columnist, and appeared in the editorial section of the Sunday Oregonian, May 14th. The caption for the above article was most significant: "HOOKED. State lotteries debilitate the poor, encourage gambling as harmless entertainment." What else was to be expected? The states, already 28 of them, have created this monster and now it is getting out of control! Just think, there has even been talk about allocating a certain portion of the state's lottery to be used in treatment programs for the addicts that their own public gambling helped create! It is the purpose of our government and its laws to promote the general welfare of its citizens. Gambling, however, is an evil business which robs the gullible by catering to their greed in offering the fulfilment of their day-dreams. Labor, thrift, self-discipline and honesty, are being relegated to the back-ground when the states encourage their citizens to indulge in this vice of gambling which can only result in disastrous consequences as many are beginning to find out.

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Jim Bakker has been tried in U.S. District Court on 24 counts of fraud and conspiracy and sentenced to prison and fined more than $5 million. Prosecutors say he used nearly $4 million in ministry funds to finance a lavish lifestyle. In

all, 23 witnesses have testified describing the Bakkers' lifestyle which included: $140,000 in kitchen and dining room renovations at Tega Cay; a $25,592 garage and atrium addition; a 15-by 18-foot closet added to the master bedroom and a bedroom for Jamie, Bakker's son, at a cost of $92,278; a $570 shower curtain for daughter Tammy Sue's bathroom and $439 worth for throw pillows for her bedroom; an insurance policy that covered more than $158,000 worth of furs and jewelry, including a $45,000 ring. PTL paid the insurance premium, which totaled about $2,500 in 1985; $83,000 in security equipment at the Bakkers' Gatlinburg, Tenn., home; a $10,910 presidential Rolex watch Mrs. Bakker purchased in December 1984; 2 Rolls Royces and 4 Mercedes, etc.

The above news account reminds me of the old saying: "The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly fine." For a number of years Bakker succeeded in getting away with his opulent lifestyle at the expense of his contributors. Now he has to stand and receive his punishment. But what is that earthly punishment compared to the eternal punishment which will be meted out to him, if he does not repent, when he stands before the Judgment Seat of God (II Corinthians 5:10). He stole from the people to enrich himself and led a vast number of souls astray with his false teachings! Many of the unbelieving children of the world use this and similar examples to denounce all preachers as being hypocritical and money-hungry. We know from the Word of God that it is the duty of the congregation to support its pastor (Luke 10:7; I Corinthians 9:13,14; Galatians 6:6). Luther writes in his sermon on John 20:19-31 that "if pastors do not have sufficient food, drink, clothing, and other necessities, they will not be able to perform the work of their office for very long, 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" (St. Louis Ed., XI). A money-hungry and self-seeking preacher, however, is a disgrace and a "belly-server," Romans 16:18.

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A new fidelity oath for Roman Catholic leaders, pastors and teachers, is too vague, leaders of the Canadian Catholic bishops said late Fall. The new oath, which became effective last Spring, fails to distinguish between teachings that belong to the core of the Catholic faith and those which do not, said Bishop Robert Lebel, the new president of the Canadian

Conference of Catholic Bishops, on the final day of the bishop's annual conference. Bishop Lebel and conference vice-president Bishop Thomas Fulton are visiting Rome in January and will ask for clarification of the oath. In the past, people in parish ministries and teaching positions affirmed their allegiance to the church in the words of the ancient Nicene creed. They also agreed to accept the "solemn deliberations" of the church on matters of faith and morals. The revised oaths, however, commits them to "adhere with religious submission of will and intellect" to all teachings of the pope and bishops.

It is a well-known fact that "Holy Orders" is one of the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church. All those constituting this "Hierarchy of Order" (Cardinal, Archbishop, Bishop, Priest, Deacon, etc.) pledge their allegiance to the Roman Pope and the teachings of the Roman Church. Pope Boniface VIII had declared in his "Unam Sanctum," "We, moreover, proclaim, declare, and pronounce that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human being to be subject to the Roman Pontiff." And in 1870, Papal Infallibility was declared an official teaching of the church of Rome. The official teachings of the Roman Church were already set forth in the Council of Trent (1545-1563). The very fundamental teachings of God's Word were actually condemned by this Council: The Bible as the **only** Source and Norm of all teachings in the Church, Salvation by grace through faith **alone**, Christians can be certain of their salvation, there is **only** One Mediator between God and men, etc., etc., Thus, the fidelity oath of the Roman Catholic leaders is contrary to the Word of God since it is in support of evil and the promulgation of false doctrine. On the other hand, an oath to uphold and to continue in the pure teachings of God's Word is well-pleasing unto the Lord Jesus who assures us, "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed," John 8:31.

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Legislators gave overwhelming preliminary approval to a bill that would scrap decades of Communist orthodoxy by allowing people to own factories and farmers to pass leased land on to their children. By a vote of 309-29, with 34 abstentions, the Supreme Soviet approved the bill and sent it to a commission headed by President Gorbachev, which will edit the legislation and publish it for nationwide discussion before final action. Strict ideologists say Marxist principle stipulates that all means of production belong to society as a whole, and that private ownership leads to exploitation. Un-

der the legislation approved, citizens may own their "means of production" and "pursue individual and other kinds of economic activity," the official news agency Tass reported. Farm families would have the right to pass land leased from the state to future generations, and the legislation would permit joint-stock and other forms of private ownership, Tass reported.

In 1879, a stenographic report of four lectures was published which had been previously delivered by Dr. C.F.W. Walther, a fine orthodox Lutheran theologian, against the evils of Communism. He points out that Communistic principles are not only contrary to reason, nature and experience, but also in conflict with definite doctrines of Christianity. He goes on to ephasize that Communism paints a picture of a fool's paradise and thinks, if only all property becomes common property, then all will have equal claim upon it and this will become a glorious world. But the Communists fail to take into consideration that all men are not equal concerning abilities, talents, intelligence, physical traits, motivation, etc. Moreover, the Bible plainly teaches that men are, by nature, selfish and are never satisfied with what they have but always want more and more as Scripture declares, "The eyes of man are never satisfied," Prov. 27:20. Besides, true happiness does not consist in earthly riches but only when we, by God's grace, accept from the heart the precious Gospel of Christ and Him crucified. Consequently, it is a fact well established by experience, that the Communists never attain their professed end as the above news item so significantly testifies. This is the case not only in Russia but throughout eastern Europe where the Communists have dominated for years!

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In the summer of 1988, one of the century's worst heat waves gripped the East Coast and had Midwest farmers wondering if the Dust Bowl had returned. On June 23, at a Senate hearing on global climate change, James Hansen, a respected atmospheric scientist and director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, gave alarming testimony. "The earth is warmer in 1988 than at any time in the history of instrumental measurements," he said. "The greenhouse effect is changing our climate now." Hansen's remarks touched off a firestorm of publicity. A major news magazine speculated that the Great Plains would be depopulated. On NBC's "Today" program, biologist Paul Erlich warned that melting polar ice

could raise sea levels and inundate coastal cities, swamping much of Florida and Washington, D.C., and the Los Angeles basin. In Paris last July, the leaders of seven industrial democracies, including President Bush and British Prime Minister Thatcher, called for common efforts to limit emissions of carbon dioxide and other "greenhouse gases."

The above appeared in the 1990 February edition of the "Reader's Digest" under the title, "What is the Truth about Global Warming?" After the article attempts to answer the question, it concludes, "We still know far too little to be stampeded into rash, expensive proposals, . . . Further research and climatic monitoring are certainly warranted." As Christians we cannot help but notice the glaring absence of any reference to God in the article. It was not our so-called brilliant scientists who created and preserve this world. It was the almighty and all-wise God who brought forth all things out of nothing. It is that same God who also preserves and sustains all things as the Psalmist declares, "O Lord, Thou preservest man and beast," Psalm 36:6. and this is the comfort for us Christians so that we, as Paul Gerhardt, can "commit whatever grieves thee into the gracious hands of Him who never leaves thee, Who heav'n and earth commands. Who points the clouds their courses, Whom winds and waves obey. . ." (TLH, 520). God has promised us, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease," Genesis 8:22. So it will remain until our Lord bursts forth in the clouds of heaven on that Final Day "then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord," I Thess. 4:17.

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