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.

Vol. XXXVIII **March--June, 1993** **Nos. 3 - 6**

"I Am the Lord:
That is My Name:
and My Glory
will I not give
to another..."

-- Isaiah 42:8

OFFICIAL ORGAN
of the
Concordia Lutheran Conference

This publication appears in a monthly or bi-monthly issue at a subscription price of $3.00 per year.

EDITOR:
Rev. E. R. Stallings, Jr.
110 Grasmere Court
San Antonio, TX 78218

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
Rev. M. L. Natterer
483 Tangent Street
Lebanon, OR 97355

LAY MEMBER:
Mr. Lloyd E. Martin
17400 Lockwood Ave.
Tinley Park, IL 60477

Address all subscriptions, renewals, and remittances to: **Scriptural Publications, 8907 Brightwater St., San Antonio, TX 78250-2012.** A special notice of expiration will be inserted in the issue which terminates your subscription.

Officers of the Concordia Lutheran Conference

PRESIDENT:
Rev. Paul R. Bloedel
9658 - 54th Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98118

VICE-PRESIDENT:
Rev. Mark W. Dierking
Box 33
Wilmot, SD 57279

SECRETARY:
Rev. David T. Mensing
17151 South Central Avenue
Oak Forest, IL 60452

TREASURER:
Mr. Victor K. Bloedel
10200 - 62nd Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98178

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

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

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

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

To demonstrate, by our Scriptural stand, that our **Concordia Lutheran Conference** is not a sect or a false church, 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 acknowledgement of such God-given unity. Thus we shall be able thereafter to practice a God-pleasing fellowship with them.

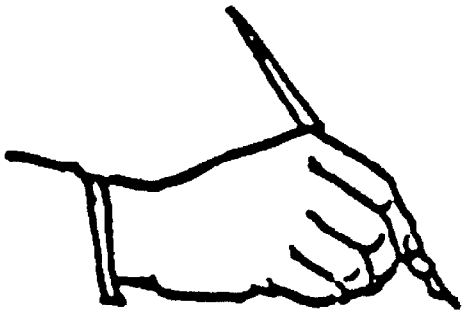
To show that we do not have among us a mixture of divergent teachings but that we are "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

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.



The President's Column

What does the Resurrection of Christ have to do with the Doctrine of Justification or the Forgiveness of Sins? The Bible says, ***"If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins,"*** (1 Cor. 15:17), and that Christ ***"was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification,"*** (Rom. 4:25). The "God loves you; Jesus loves you" crowd, among whom there may be true Christians, finds in Easter only a beautiful holiday celebrating how the meek and mild Jesus, whom they generally acknowledge to be true God, rose from the dead after being so cruelly mistreated and crucified. They may even say, "He died for my salvation," but seldom, if ever, is any mention made in churches today of "**OUR SINS**" because of which our Savior suffered the pains of Hell in our place, as our Substitute, on the ***"accursed tree of the cross"*** where Christ ***"redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us,"*** (Gal. 3:13). Yes, all of us are under that curse of the Law which was pronounced upon our first parents in the Garden of Eden and which has passed upon all mankind ***"for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,"*** (Rom. 3:23). The Lord God states ever so plainly in His Word, ***"Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them,"*** (Gal. 3:10). And, unless we begin to think that this does not include **all** people and that some, especially we ourselves, are worthy of God's love and of the love of Jesus, God says in His Word, ***"There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not,"*** (Eccl. 7:20), that ***"we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,"*** (Isaiah 64:6), that we have ***"all gone aside,"*** we are ***"all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one,"*** (Ps. 14:3), that ***"if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,"*** (1 Jn. 1:8), that ***"the wages of sin is death,"*** (Rom. 6:23), and that ***"the soul that sinneth, it shall die,"*** (Ezek. 18:4)--not merely the separation of body and soul in physical death but the everlasting

separation of body and soul **from God** in Hell where ***"their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh,"*** (Isaiah 66:24). If the Love of God and the Love of Christ is taught in the churches of external Christendom without the full force of the Holy Law of God (as set forth in the Scripture passages above) being brought to bear upon the hearts and consciences of the hearers, such people who hear **cannot**, through such a perversion of God's Word, become Christians no matter how often and how emotionally their teachers prate the theme which they have stripped of its power, namely, "God loves you; Jesus loves you!"

We hear, on radio and television, of the great strides which Christianity is making thoughout the world. Dr. Schuller, of Crystal Cathedral fame, declares that, through him, millions have become Christians and have received Jesus into their hearts. A Baptist church boasts (in a Canadian publication) of twenty-five new members each week who have decided to become Christians and confess that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God. But what good does it do to say that you have received Jesus into your heart without recognizing your utter sinfulness and wretchedness; or to say that Jesus is the Son of God without understanding that what Jesus did, He did as your Substitute--bearing in His own sinless body the terrible punishment which you deserve because of your sins and that the heart of the Gospel is that in Christ ***"we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace,"*** (Rom. 1:7).

Gospel Reductionists (those who take away the power of the Gospel by neglecting the Holy Law of God through which alone you are taught to recognize yourself as you really are in God's sight, namely, lost and condemned, ruined in body and soul) even make your **faith** a work of your own **because of which** God loves you and Jesus loves you! What ever happened to that Word of God which says that we are born again ***"not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever,"*** (1 Peter 1:23), that Christ is the ***"Author and Finisher of our faith,"*** (Heb. 12:2), that "***by grace*** (God's kindness which not one person in the world deserves) ***are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast,"*** (Eph. 2:8,9), that we can't even say, with believing hearts, ***"that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,"*** (1 Cor. 12:3b), and that those who believe in Jesus as their Savior ***"were***

born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," (John 1:12,13). As soon as faith becomes a work of the Law about which a person can boast, such faith is no longer Christian faith but pharisaical, pagan work-righteousness. It is no longer the faith of a humble child of God but the faith of a proud Pharisee who thinks that God owes him His love **because** he believes in Jesus as his Savior, **because** he has made his decision for Christ, **because** he has "taken Jesus into his heart." What a sly scheme of the devil by which he makes people think that they are Christians by telling them, "God loves you; Jesus loves you," when, in reality, they deny ***"the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction,"*** (2 Peter 3:1), for ***"by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight,"*** (Rom. 3:20), (see also Rom. 3:27, 9:32; Gal. 3:1-3,10; 2:16). Such is also the faith of many in Lutheranism today (which had its beginning back in the days of the old Norwegian Synod, ALC) who think that it is **their faith** which God had foreseen in eternity, that caused God to predestinate them to eternal salvation (intuitu fidei).

There has come across my desk some literature from **Creative Communications for the Parish**, 10300 Watson Road, St. Louis, Missouri, which publishes material especially for Missouri Synod pastors, which demonstrates what is being preached and taught today in a church body which used to be considered, in the days of Walther and Pieper, a bulwark for conservative Christianity. Now this body is thoroughly entrenched in heterodoxy, especially with its Gospel reductionism and toleration of the charismatic movement. What Christianity is left could well be absorbed by the leavening influence of unionistic behavior. (**May those in the Wisconsin Synod (WELS) learn a serious lesson and beware**--for we have observed the seeds of sectarianism and Gospel reductionism also in that once orthodox body.) In this packet, which also contained some material from Concordia Publishing House, there were two pamphlets, especially, which caught my eye. One was entitled, **Healing Words, Spiritual Resources for Your Hospital Stay,** and the other contained what was called Pentecost reflections with the title, **Come, Holy Spirit, Fill Us Anew**. Neither of these pamphlets, which are supposed to be for Christian devotion, have even so much as one word to say about the way to heaven through Christ, our Savior, in whom alone we have the forgiveness of sins and that righteousness which avails before God. Dr. C. F. W. Walther would turn over in his grave if he knew that the pastors and theologians of the

great synod which he founded were now spewing forth such hogwash or allowing it to be disseminated. Our **Concordia Lutheran Conference**, by God's grace alone, retains the preaching and teaching of God's Word in all its truth and purity and is prepared, also by God's grace, to train men as prospective pastors in what was once known as conservative Lutheranism. May our risen and ascended Lord and Savior, the only Head and Foundation of the Church, abundantly bless all our efforts to this end.

Your servant in Christ,

Rev. Paul R. Bloedel

The 42nd Annual Convention

of the

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

will be held, Lord willing, at

Peace Ev. Lutheran Church
Central Ave. at 171st Place
Oak Forest, IL 60452
The Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastor

June 25, 26, 27, 1993

Convention Theme

"Hollowed Be Thy Name" Matt. 6:9

Convention Essay

The Proper Interpretation and Use of the Holy Scriptures
The Rev. E. R. Stallings, Jr., Essayist
Pastor of Holy Scripture Ev. Lutheran Church, San Antonio, TX

THOSE *INCREDIBLE* CULTS!

"And then if any man shall say to you, 'Lo, here is Christ!' or 'Lo, He is there!' believe him not; for false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed: Behold, I have foretold you all things."

Mark 13:21-23

According to the Lord Jesus, the **Savior** and **Head** of the Christian Church, the **credibility** of a teacher or preacher claiming to represent **Him** is not measured by outward trappings, signs and miracles, or even the use of His precious Name (Matthew 7:22-23; Mark 13:6), but rather by **adherence to His precious Word of truth** (John 8:31-32). All other religious teachers, in spite of their seductive "sheep's clothing" --their smooth oratory, their charisma, their zeal, and even their ability to cite Scripture passages with apparent ease-- are and should be easily recognized as "**false** prophets" and "ravening wolves." (Matthew 7:15) They *"serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly"* (Romans 16:18); for, instead of feeding the flock of God and nurturing the souls of the Savior's sheep and lambs, they "eat" them! (Ezekiel 34:3) One would think that such unscrupulous and dangerous "hirelings" (John 10) would be promptly **marked** (identified) and **avoided** (shunned) by sheep who know the voice of their Good Shepherd! (Romans 16:17; John 10:1-5) Sadly, however, thousands (perhaps even millions over the years) have been and still are being **seduced** and **deceived** by the "good words and fair speeches" (Romans 16:18), by the "signs and wonders" (Mark 13 above), and by the pretended authority of false teachers of religion (Matthew 23).

A respected dictionary (Webster's New World) gives two definitions for the word "**incredible**", the second of which appears to be the most

commonly understood, namely, "too **unusual** or **improbable** to be possible." However, in our title for this article, we have used the word in its first or primary meaning, namely, "**not credible; unbelievable**" due to the lack of genuine authority, reliability and trustworthiness. **That** is the crucial flaw, the critical deficiency, in **CULTS** and **CULT LEADERS**, particularly those who masquerade under the name of **Christ** and represent themselves as **His** flock and **His** shepherds. Jesus Himself unmasks them in our text and elsewhere as **incredible** --not worthy of our trust, not in the least believable!

Depending upon the reference work and its particular verbiage, most respected encyclopedias and dictionaries define a **CULT** as a religious group devoted to a living leader, a new teaching, or an unusual practice. Most cult leaders require absolute obedience from their members, claiming for themselves that right as the exclusive possessors of sacred truth. Many insist on a communal life-style and the surrender of all worldly goods to the "group" (or, more accurately, to the leader himself). Although the founding leaders of the following cults have long since died, their history, teachings and practices still qualify them for "cult" status, notably: The Mormons (Joseph Smith/Brigham Young); Witnesses of Jehovah (Charles Taze Russell); Seventh Day Adventists (Ellen White); Christian Scientists (Mary Baker Eddy); Quakers (Fox, Penn and Barclay); and Swedenborgians or "Church of the New Jerusalem" (Emanuel Swedenborg).

Cults of **more recent origin** include (and this list is not exhaustive by any means) the Unification Church (Sun Myung Moon); the Jonestown commune in Guyana (Jim Jones), which ended with the mass-suicide of its members in 1978; the Church Universal and Triumphant in Montana (Elizabeth Clare Prophet); and, of course, the now infamous Branch Davidians of Waco, Texas (Vernon Howell a.k.a. David Koresh), the main enclave of which was consumed in flames on April 19th of this year. Current estimates suggest that **over 1,000 cults** exist and function among us today, many of which (and this is the thrust of our present article) either represent themselves as "Christian" and "Biblical" or have enough traditionally Christian trappings in their symbols and practice as to deceive those who, out of ignorance or stubbornness, will not look more deeply into their doctrinal position. Thus they prey upon *"the simple"* (Romans 16:18); and most of their victims are not merely the socially disenfranchised and disaffected who become their "groupies",

but they are often simple, immature and unlearned **Christians**, whom the Apostle Paul characterizes as *"children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the **sleight of men** and **cunning craftiness**, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."* (Ephesians 4:14) And what simple Christian faith such poor people may once have had is soon completely destroyed and supplanted by an unquestioning, idolatrous devotion to a self-proclaimed "Messiah", guru, or Apocalyptic "savior" who leads them into soul-destroying error and ultimately into everlasting damnation!

In these last days of sore distress, Jesus tells us, *"false Christs and false prophets shall rise,"* not only claiming **themselves personally** to be the Messiah (Mark 13:6), as was the case with Koresh, but **pointing to** false saviors and false Christs --**NOT** OUT OF ANY PURE MOTIVE OF LOVE AND CONCERN FOR LANGUISHING SOULS YEARNING FOR HEAVEN, BUT "to **SEDUCE**, if it were possible, **the VERY ELECT,**" (v.22) and "to draw away disciples **AFTER THEM**." (Acts 20:30b) This is not the personal judgment of your writer upon such cults, but the judgment of Jesus Himself, who knows the hearts! Sadly, all too many close their ears to His earnest warning against spiritual seducers who peddle theological "snake oil" in His Name, who preach *"any **other** Gospel unto you than that ye have received,"* (Galatians 1:9) and who *"show signs and wonders"* as an integral tactic in their deceptive scheme. *"Believe (them) not,"* Jesus exhorts us, *"but take ye heed!"* Don't be swayed by them; don't listen to them; don't send for their material; don't let down your vigil against them! They are not "**harmless Bible students**", as the media sometimes characterizes them in an effort to gain them public sympathy! They are, on the contrary, **extremely dangerous** --not because of caches of weapons and their willingness to kill and be killed for their leaders, but because of the soul-destroying poison they spew forth! *"Behold, **I** have foretold you all things,"* says our perfect Prophet, the Lord Jesus. We don't need, neither dare we hearken to or support or even defend those whom He, through His Apostle Paul in Galatians chapter one, calls "accursed"! We have been amply warned!

Instead, let us diligently hearken unto the exhortation of Peter in his second epistle chapter three: *"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But **grow in grace and in***

the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To ***Him*** *be glory both now and forever! Amen."*

The haughty spirits, Lord, restrain
who o'er Thy Church with might would reign
and always set forth something new,
devised to change Thy doctrine true!

A trusty weapon is **Thy Word**,
Thy Church's buckler, shield and sword.
Oh, let us in **its** power confide,
that we may seek no other guide!

Oh, grant that in Thy holy Word
we here may live and die, dear Lord;
and, when our journey endeth here,
receive us into glory there!

Amen.

(L. H. 292;6,8 & 9)

--D. T. M.

"Render therefore unto Caesar..."

"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

Matthew 22:21

July 4th is a very important and significant day in the history of our beloved country. For it was on July 4, 1776 that the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress. This next month on the 4th of July the United States will observe its 217th birthday with elaborate celebrations such as patriotic speeches, parades

and fireworks displays. For us Christians the birthday of our country should be more than a mere outward observance, it should serve as a time of **reflection**. We should stop and consider, for a moment, the many wonderful blessings which the Lord God has granted us through our government, in particular, the many freedoms which we enjoy and only too often take for granted. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom to assemble peaceably, freedom to the right of trial by jury, etc., are all freedoms which are guaranteed to us in the Constitution of our country. One of the most priceless freedoms to us Christians in this country is the right to worship as we please. This separation of Church and State is not found in many of the other countries throughout the world. Disastrous consequences of the State ruling the Church or vice versa are well-known. They were, in fact, so fresh and vivid within the hearts and minds of our early founding fathers that the separation of Church and State was set forth very emphatically in the 1st Amendment to the Constitution of our country. We are well aware of the fact that although there are those who strive with might and main to do away with this separation (the Roman hierarchy, as well as a sizable number of those within the Protestant camp), this 1st Amendment continues to stand, and we pray that it always will!

On the basis of Holy Writ our Lutheran fathers have correctly held that **the government is ordained of God** whether it be a government by the people (democracy), a government by a single person (monarchy), or a government in which the power resides within a certain body of the people (republic). The Scripture passages which set this forth are crystal clear. ***"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation"*** (Rom. 13:1,2). And in verse four of this section the Apostle refers to the government as *"the minister of God."* It is the Lord who provides the existing form of government which is His representative. The fact that there may be ungodly incumbents occupying this office does not nullify this truth of God and excuse disobedience. When the Apostle Paul wrote this epistle to the Christian congregation in Rome, the "higher power" was Nero. A more pagan, a more wicked and unjust government, could hardly be imagined. And remember what the Savior told Pontius Pilate? ***"Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above"*** (John 19:11). We are reminded

by Daniel that ***"the Lord removeth kings, and setteth up kings"*** (Dan. 2:21). Therefore our Lutheran fathers declared in Article 16 of the Augsburg Confession of 1530, "Of Civil Affairs they (the Lutherans) teach that lawful civil ordinances are good words of God, and that it is right for Christians to bear civil office, to sit as judges, to judge matters by the Imperial and other existing laws, to award just punishments, to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers, to make legal contracts, to hold property, to make oaths when required by the magistrates,....Therefore Christians are necessarily bound to obey their own magistrates and laws, save only when commanded to sin; for then they ought to obey God rather than men, Acts 5:29."

There are those within the pale of Christendom who hold that the words of Jesus, ***"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's,"*** must be qualified. And how do they explain their qualification? They maintain that only if the government is an honorable one and only if the laws are good "in their estimation," only then are we to honor, obey, and serve the government and the laws. But there is no such thing in Scripture any more than there is a passage in which we are told that children are to honor and obey their parents **only if the children think** that their fathers and mothers are worthy of respect and their rules are fair "in their estimation." The Word of God, however, knows of no such qualification. The Apostle Peter writes, ***"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors,"*** (1 Pet. 2:13,14). The Jehovah Witnesses have gone much further. Charles Taze Russell and Judge J. F. Rutherford, the founders of this sect, maintained that all governments are of "Satan's Organization." Is it any wonder, then, that they refuse to salute the flag, to vote, to occupy a public office, or to be in military service? Here we observe their gross inconsistency. If the government is of the devil how can they then make use of the facilities which "Satan's Organization" provides: police protection, the public roads, state and national parks, etc., etc.

The function of the existing form of government deals with the temporal life of the citizens. And in order to promote the welfare of the citizens it is necessary that the government enact laws and enforce them that ***"we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty"*** (1 Tim. 2:2). It is a woeful neglect of duty when the State does not punish the evildoers and thus protect its citizens! Today it seems as though

those who transgress the laws are given a higher status than the law-abiding citizens of the nation!

The function of the Church is given by the Head of the Church in His great commission, ***"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..."*** (Matt. 28:19,20). Thus the task of the Church deals with spiritual things, to lead men to Jesus and everlasting life by faithfully preaching and teaching the Word of God. ***"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God"*** (Rom. 10:17). **Everyone is born into the State, but only those are members of the Church who have been reborn.** The Savior declares, ***"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"*** (John 3:5). And the Apostle Peter writes, ***"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever"*** (1 Pet. 1:23).

Very clearly the Lord Jesus declares the separation of Church and State! Both are divinely instituted, but both have essentially different goals in view, and both use different means to achieve their goals. **The earthly sword (Rom. 13) has been given to the State while the spiritual Sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17) has been given to the Church.** "The State is not governed by Christian principles, based on the divine Word. In that case it would have to require all citizens to go to church, to read the Bible, to forgive all injustice, with the result that criminals would run wild. The State knows no brotherly admonition, no excommunication, etc. Hence the State should not base its laws and acts on the Bible" (The Abiding Word, Vol. 2, page 569ff.). Obviously, it is not therefore the duty of the State to teach religion in the public schools. There have been and are those, however, who hold that the State is to be ruled by the Word of God. Think of Ulrich Zwingli, a Swiss reformer who lived during the time of Luther, as well as John Calvin who also lived during those years. Calvin ruled the city of Geneva during the middle 1500's with an iron hand. Historians tell us that innocent merriment was sternly checked. Attendance at public worship was enforced and watchmen reported all breaches of discipline. When Servetus, a famous Spanish physician, openly denied the Holy Trinity he was condemned and burned at the stake on Oct. 27, 1553. And what about those in the 1600's who came to our shores to escape religious persecution? This is illustrated in

Virginia's first Sunday law, enacted in 1610: "Every man and woman shall repair in the morning to the divine service, and sermons preached upon the Sabbath day, and in the afternoon to divine service, and catechizing, upon pain for the first fault to lose their provision, and allowance for the whole week following, for the second to lose the said allowance, and also to be whipped, and for the third to suffer death." Those things pertaining to faith and salvation cannot be forced upon anyone! ***"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts"*** (Zech. 4:6). And the Apostle declares, ***"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ"*** (2 Cor. 10:4,5).

While, of course, the Church and State are to be kept separate, nevertheless, we Christians are also citizens of the country and the Lord commands us to ***"render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's."*** The Apostle Paul tells us something which every Christian, regardless of his station in this life, can and should do, saying, ***"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority...For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior"*** (1 Tim. 2:1,2). As citizens of the State we Christians should also take an active part in the affairs of the State by seeking to become informed concerning the various laws to be voted upon - voting for the good laws and opposing the bad. If the Lord has blessed us with the necessary qualifications and gifts, then we should offer ourselves for some office and, if elected, be conscientious and faithful in the performance of our duties as Joseph served Potiphar and Pharaoh (Gen. 39-41). We Christians should also let our light shine by striving to be a good example in obeying the laws of the government in an age where lawlessness is increasing by leaps and bounds. Obedience also includes, of course, paying our taxes. We should not seek to excuse ourselves by referring to the fact that the State wastes some of our tax money on frivolous projects or spends a portion of it on those things which are plainly contrary to the Word of God (abortion, etc.). The State will have to give account to the Lord for using our tax dollars in such a manner!

-- M. L. N.

Malcom X, *Emancipator* or *Enslaver*?

A recent popular movie recounts the life of the African American, Malcom X. To some he was a hero, to others he was a devil. Born the son of a Christian pastor, he became a civil rights preacher, but a preacher from the pulpit of an Islamic Church. While growing up, he saw his family brutalized. They were threatened by the Ku Klux Klan and suffered the loss of their home to arson. His father was murdered, and his mother was judged incapable of raising her six children. The children, including Malcom, were sent to various foster homes. As a young man, Malcom forsook his childhood beliefs, becoming involved with drugs, organized crime, and burglary, which eventually led up to his incarceration for ten years in a Charleston prison.

While he was in prison, Malcom met a Moslem who spoke of the plight of African Americans. He taught Malcom that only through the principles set down in Islamic teachings can the moral decay (i.e. drugs, crime, prostitution, etc.) of their people be addressed and cured. Malcom was so moved by this Moslem that he became a devout follower of the "Black Muslim" sect. During his early years with this sect, he fervently preached where ever he could, on street corners, and in front of Christian churches. His message was one of extreme segregation advocating a return to Africa. He criticized the African American pastors for not challenging the white man's laws and ways, claiming that Christianity could not save their race, but that complete separation of the races and strict adherence to Islamic ways would save them.

Malcom rose to the position of National Minister of the Nation of Islam, (Black Muslim) in the United States. His beliefs in his organization were soon shattered since he was betrayed by his close associates and leaders who were revealed as fornicators and hypocrites. He found the need to reexamine his beliefs by going on a pilgrimage to Mecca. There he came to a clearer perception of the teachings of Mohammed. Based on these new insights he formed a new Islamic group and guided this new organization to work together with others to achieve goals of justice and equality through civic groups and political unity.

Malcom, the Moslem preacher, is regarded by many as an emancipator and hero. Yet, as Christians, from the Word of God, we must be wary of

his teachings. It is important to recognize that, regardless of race, we are all sinners and the injustices and cruelties of society are due to the inherent evil in all men's hearts - for since the fall of Adam, all men are depraved, enemies of God and inclined only to evil (1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 8:7). From the law we recognize our sinfulness and our need for a Savior, and the Gospel reveals to us the free gift of salvation given to all people, regardless of race, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Out of love for our Savior, we are to spread this message of salvation to all and, in addition, we are to help the needy and oppressed, and do whatever other works our Lord desires in accordance to His Word.

Though sensitive to his people's social needs, Malcom X espoused the Islamic religion. He considered it the core of his teaching and life. As Christians, we must judge that he was a heathen who worshipped a false God! Moslems and Jews claim Abraham as their father, but they do not acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus speaks of them, saying *"Ye are of your father the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth,"* (John 8:39-47). It should be remembered that, as a false prophet, each person he converted to the Islamic faith, was a person enslaved to the devil and going to hell. Regardless of any social insights he might have had, he was an enemy of Christ and the Christian Church. We are told in Scripture, *"Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravening wolves,"* (Matt. 7:15) and again *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."* A Christian must be cautious not to fall into the sin of syncretism, by compromising his faith for social and political reasons. Our society is full of humanitarian organizations appearing charitable, but which subtly espouse anti-Christian values and/or teachings. It is vitally important that we know what an organization or movement teaches before ever joining or supporting it.

In the First Commandment, the Lord demands, *"Thou shalt have no other gods before me,"* (Ex. 20:3). The Lord tells Christians not to be *"unequally yoked together with unbelievers,... for ye are the temple of the living God; as God has said, I will dwell in them and walk with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord,"* (2 Cor. 6:14-17). A stanza from The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH 260:6) summarizes this poetically:

Defend Thy Truth, O God, and stay This evil generation;
And from the error of its way Keep Thine own congregation.
The wicked everywhere abound And would Thy little flock confound;
But Thou art our Salvation.

Submitted by the Mission Committee of St. Luke's Lutheran Church through their Pastor.

W E L C O M E

TO ALL OLD AND NEW SUBSCRIBERS

We appreciate your concern for true orthodox Lutheranism and are certain that, by God's grace, you will receive rich spiritual benefits from your faithful reading of **CONCORDIA LUTHERAN** articles which are based solidly upon the pure and unerring Word of God.

Only $3.00 per year!

Give a subscription to a relative or friend.

The following is an excerpt from Christian Dogmatics, by John Theodore Mueller, THD., St. Louis, MO, Concordia Publishing House, 1955. pp. 86-89.

The Acquisition of the Theological Habitude

Our Lutheran dogmaticians have rightly emphasized the great truth that "the theologian is not born, but made." *(Theologus non nascitur, sed fit.)* By this axiom they wished to say that no man by nature is a theologian nor can become a theologian by his own reason or strength. Theology is a God-given habitude. *(Theologia est habitus practicus* θεοσδοτοζ.*)* Hence the Holy Spirit Himself must make a person a theologian. How the Holy Spirit accomplishes this is excellently described by Luther in the famous dictum: *Oratio, meditatio, tentatio faciunt theologum.* This is the best description of theological methodology which has ever been attempted; for it names, briefly, yet fully, all the elements that cooperate in the making of a true theologian.

It recognizes first of all the necessity of *prayer.* With regard to prayer as a means by which to acquire the theological habitude, Luther writes: "For this reason you should despair of your wisdom and reason; for with these you will acquire nothing, but by your arrogance cast yourself and other into the pit of hell, as did Lucifer. Kneel down in your chamber and ask God in true humility and seriousness to grant you His Holy Spirit through His beloved Son in order that He may enlighten you, guide you, and grant you a true wisdom." (St. L., XIV, 434 ff.) That sincere and constant prayer is an indispensable factor in the acquisition of the theological habitude is attested not only by all true theologians who have served the Christian Church in the spirit of its divine Lord, but also by Holy Scripture itself. John 15, 7.8: "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples"; 16,24: "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." Jas. 1,5: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

The second requisite in Luther's methodology is *meditation*, or study. Of this Luther writes: "In the second place, you should meditate, and not only in your heart, but also outwardly, the oral Word and the express words that are written in the Book, which you must always consider and reconsider and read and read over with diligent attention and reflection to see what the Holy Ghost means thereby. And take care that you do not become weary of it, thinking that you have read it sufficiently if you have read, heard, or said it once or twice and understand it perfectly. For in this way no great theologian is made, but they [who do not study] are like immature fruit, which falls down before it is half ripe. For this reason you see in this psalm [Ps. 119] that David is always boasting that he would speak, meditate, declare, sing, hear, read, day and night and forever, yet nothing else than alone the Word and the commandments of God. For God does not purpose to give you His Spirit without the external Word. Be guided by that. For He did not command in vain to write, preach, read, hear, sing, and declare His external Word." By meditation, Luther, then, understands the constant study of Holy Scripture as the pure and infallible Word of God, by which the Holy Ghost not only converts and sanctifies sinners, but also renders the theologian capable of doing the work of a truly Christian teacher in the fear of God, in other words, by which He bestows the theological habitude. It is clear that such constant study of God's Word is commanded also in Holy Scripture. 1 Tim. 4,13: "Till I come, give attendance to reading"; v.15: "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all"; 6,20: "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely so called."

Concerning *temptation* as a means by which the Holy Spirit creates or enhances the theological habitude, Luther writes: "In the third place, there is *tentatio*, that is, trial. That is the true touchstone, which teaches you not only to know and understand, but also to experience, how true, sincere, sweet, lovely, powerful, comforting, the Word of God is, so that it is the wisdom above all wisdom. Thus you see how David, in the psalm just mentioned, complains about all manner of enemies, wicked princes and tyrants, false prophets and factions, which he must endure because he always meditates, that is, deals with God's Word in every possible way, as stated. For as soon as the Word of God bears fruit through you, the devil will trouble you, make you a real teacher, and teach you through tribulation to seek and to love the Word of God. For I

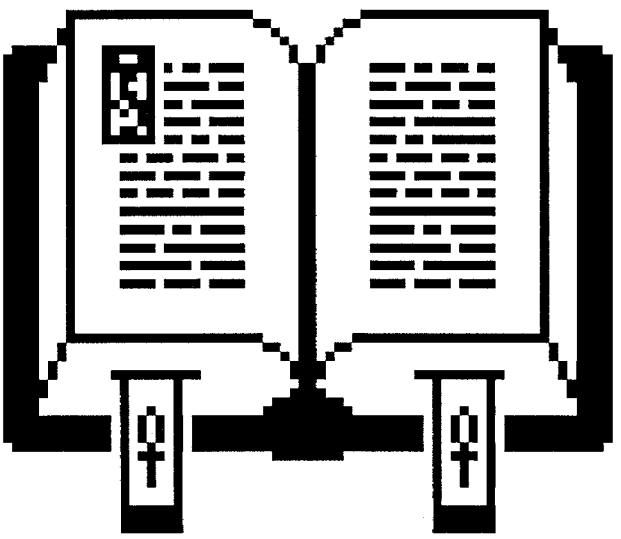
myself -- if I am permitted to voice my humble opinion -- must thank my papists very much for so buffeting, distressing, and terrifying me by the devil's fury that they made me a fairly good theologian, which otherwise I should never have become."

As Luther here says, his whole theology grew out of his trials and troubles, which forced him to seek strength and comfort in Holy Scripture. And Luther experienced trials both from within and from without. First he was troubled by *tentationes* within his heart. Before he became a Christian theologian, he was plagued with the agony of a troubled conscience, produced by his insistence on work-righteousness as the means of obtaining pardon. From this state of dread and anguish he was at last rescued by the knowledge and understanding of the blessed Gospel, from which he indeed learned how "true, sincere, sweet, lovely, and powerful the Word of God is." Afterwards, when he began to proclaim the Gospel of Christ in its purity and truth, trials came to him from without. He was stigmatized as a heretic and schismatic, not only by the Romanists, but also by the enthusiasts of his time, so that again he was forced "to seek and love the Word"; and thus he became so established in, and convinced of, the divine truth that he could say: "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise." Trials, or *tentationes*, therefore, made Luther a "fairly good theologian," because they compelled him to anchor his hope only in the Word of God. And so every Christian who aspires to become a true theologian must seek, study, and cling to, Holy Scripture until he regards it as the "wisdom above all wisdom."

Luther concludes his remarks on his famous axiom with the words: "Then [namely, if you follow the rule of David exhibited in Ps. 119] you will find how shallow and unworthy will appear to you the writings of the Fathers, and you will contemn not only the books of the opponents, but also be ever less pleased with your own writing and teaching. If you have arrived at this stage, you may surely hope that you have just *begun* to be a real theologian, one who is able to teach not only the young and unlearned, but also the advanced and well-instructed Christians. For Christ's Church includes all manner of Christians -- young, old, weak, sick, healthy, strong, aggressive, indolent, simple, wise, etc. But if you consider yourself learned and imagine that you have attained the goal and feel proud of you booklets, teaching and writing, as though you had done marvelously and preached wondrously, and if you are much pleased because people praise you before others and you must be praised

or otherwise you are disappointed and feel like giving up, -- if you are minded like that, my friend, just grab yourself by the ears, and if you grab rightly, you will find a fine pair of big, long, rough donkey ears. Then go to a little more expense and adorn yourself with golden bells, so that, wherever you go, people can hear you, admiringly point at you with their fingers, and say, 'Lo and behold, there is that wonderful man who can write such excellent books and preach so remarkably!' Then certainly you will be blessed, yes, more than blessed, in the kingdom of heaven -- indeed, in that kingdom in which the fire of hell has been prepared for the devil and his angels! In fine, let us seek honor and be haughty wherever we may. In this Book, God's glory alone is set forth, and it says: *'Deus superbis resistit, humilibus autem dat gratiam. . . . Cui est gloria in secula seculorum. Amen'*"

Luther's emphasis upon true humility as a requisite of a true theologian is certainly in place, since the Holy Spirit with His sanctifying and sustaining gifts is present only in a contrite, humble heart. To the humble alone God gives the grace of true theology.



Around the World

with editorial comment

by M. L. Natterer

While still governor, President Clinton had developed an intense relationship with the Rev. W. O. Vaught of Immanuel Baptist, a biblical scholar known for his erudition, whose sermons were drawn directly from Scripture. Friends of both men say Clinton, who lost his father to a car accident before he was born, was drawn to him for his paternal and nonjudgmental counsel. Vaught, who died of bone cancer three years ago, helped Clinton reconcile the conflict between his pious instincts and his political ones on two major positions - his defense of the death penalty and abortion rights. According to Vaught's son Carl, the Governor summoned the minister for breakfast one morning to discuss the morality of capital punishment. Vaught argued that in its Hebrew translation, the Sixth Commandment does not say one is never allowed to take the life of another; what it forbids is murder. From a sermon he delivercd, Vaught also helped Clinton come to terms with his ambivalence about abortion. According to his son, Vaught argued that "the Hebrew word for life is 'breath,' and that life is connected to the moment when one is born and takes one's first breath."

The above is a quotation from a lengthy article appearing in TIME, April 5, 1993 entitled Clinton's Spiritual Journey. There are, of course, many rationalizing excuses offered to justify abortion. We expect such excuses from the sin-darkened and perverted reason of the unbelievers. But surely not from those who claim to be the children of God through faith in Christ! Rev. Vaught's specious argumentation does not stand when we examine it in the light of God's Word of Truth. For *"the entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple"* (Psalm 119:130). To begin with, a human life begins at conception which means that the fetus is a person. In Luke 1:26-56 we are told that the unborn six-month-old infant in Elisabeth's womb, John, leaped for joy at the greeting

of Mary. Elisabeth speaks of Mary as the "mother of my Lord," not of a "lifeless lump." Moreover, every child at the moment of conception bears Adam's sin and all its consequences. How many infants have died while still in the womb! David confesses, *"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me"* (Ps. 51:5). And the Lord Jesus tells Nicodemus, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh"* (John 3:6). The Apostle Paul reminds us that *"we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others"* (Eph. 2:3). It is not an "inanimate object" that inherits original sin but a person! God's Word instructs us that every person is made up of a body and soul. The Lord Jesus warns, *"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"* (Matt. 10:28). Compare also Matt. 22:32; Luke 16:19-31; 2 Cor. 5:6-8; Philip. 1:23,24; Rev. 20:4. And when the Savior returns on the Last Day He will then bring with Him the souls of those who have died in the Lord (1 Thess. 4:14). It was the modernists at the time of Christ's public ministry who not only denied the resurrection (Matt. 22:23), but also that man has a soul (Acts 23:8). It is God who forms us in the womb (Psalm 139:13-16; Jer. 1:5); it is God who gives us life (Job 33:4; Psalm 100:3).

The CONCORDIA LUTHERAN
110 Grasmere Ct.
San Antonio, TX 78218

Non Profit Organization
U. S. Postage
PAID
San Antonio, Texas
Permit No. 322

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE CHURCH DIRECTORY

GOOD SHEPHERD EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

4050 South Melpomene Way
Tucson, AZ 85730
Worship Service ..... 10:00 a.m.
Sunday School and
Bible Class ..... 11:15 a.m.
REV. DAVID G. REDLIN, Pastor
4050 South Melpomene Way
Tucson, AZ 85730
Telephone: (602) 721-7618

HOLY SCRIPTURE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

San Antonio, TX 78218
(Currently meeting at **La Quinta Inn-Airport East**, 333 NE Loop 410)
Worship Service ..... 9:30 a.m.
Sunday School and
Bible Class ..... 11:00 a.m.
REV. E. R. STALLINGS, JR., Pastor
110 Grasmere Court
San Antonio, TX 78218
Telephone: (210) 656-2125

PEACE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

Central Avenue at 171st Place
Oak Forest, IL 60452
(South Suburban Chicago)
Sunday School and
Bible Class ..... 8:30 a.m.
Worship Service ..... 10:00 a.m.
REV. DAVID T. MENSING, Pastor
17151 South Central Avenue
Oak Forest, IL 60452
Telephones: Church office and Pastor's Study: (708) 532-4288
Parsonage: (708) 532-9035

Note: On the 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month, services are held in our Midland, MI chapel at 2409 Rodd Street:
Worship Service ..... 7:30 p.m.
Sunday School and Bible Class following the service.
(Taped services on other Sundays)

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

6th and Tangent
Lebanon, OR 97355
Sunday School and
Bible Class .....10:00 a.m.
Worship Service .....11:00 a.m.
REV. M. L. NATTERER, Pastor
483 Tangent Street
Lebanon, OR 97355
Telephone: (503) 258-2941

ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

55th Ave. S & S. Fountain St.
Seattle, WA 98118
Telephone: (206) 723-7418
Sunday School and
Bible Class ..... 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service .....10:30 a.m.
REV. PAUL R. BLOEDEL, Pastor
9658 - 54th Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98118
Telephone: (206)723-7418

Note: Services are also held in Victoria, British Columbia on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. Please call the Pastor for current location.
Sunday School ..... 3:00 p.m.
Worship Service ..... 3:45 p.m.
Bible Class ..... 5:30 p.m.

ST. STEPHEN'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

Wilmot, SD 57279
Worship Service .....
(June 1st through September 30th)
..... 9:30 a.m.
(October 1st through May 31st)
.....10:00 a.m.
Sunday School and Bible Class
..... after the service.
REV. MARK W. DIERKING, Pastor
Box 33
Wilmot, SD 57279
Telephone: (605) 938-4710