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 September--October, 1993 Nos. 9 - 10

"For by grace 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

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.

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

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

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

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

To demonstrate, by our Scriptural stand, that our **Concordia Lutheran Conference** is not a sect or a false church, but that the congregations which form it confess, teach, and practice the Word of God in its full truth and purity and use the Sacraments according to Christ's institution. All who do this are the true visible Church on earth.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The President's Column

Pride is a detestable sin. What havoc has been wrought in the world because of this sin! Look at those angels whom God had created holy but who then exalted themselves and were cast out of heaven by God "down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto Judgment" (II Pet. 2:4). Look at our first parents whose hearts were lifted up with **pride** having been tempted by the fallen angel who told them, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5). Look at the first king of Israel, Saul, who in his **pride** chose to disobey the plain command that the Lord had given him (I Sam. 15). When the Lord through the Prophet Ezekiel pronounces His judgment upon Jerusalem because of their sins, He reminds them, "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, **pride**"...(16:49). And who can begin to enumerate all the terrible consequences of this sin in the church, the state, and the home! "Only by **pride** cometh contention"...(Prov. 13:10). And "when **pride** cometh, then cometh shame"...(Prov. 11:2).

This sin of **pride** springs forth from the devil's ally - our sinful flesh. Jesus declares, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, **pride**, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23). No wonder the Apostle Paul in listing the qualifications of a pastor writes that he should not be a new convert, "lest being lifted up with **pride** he fall into the condemnation of the devil" (I Tim. 3:7). For "the fear of the Lord is to hate evil: **pride**, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate" (Prov. 8:13). Therefore every Christian who sincerely desires to please his Savior joins the Psalmist in pleading, "Let not the foot of **pride** come against me" (Psalm 36:11).

There are those who charge that Martin Luther was motivated by sinful pride in his desire to reform the church. But listen to the Reformer's

answer. "Hitherto I have done nothing from criminal, reckless, disordered motives, for the sake of worldly honor and profit; all I have written and taught has been according to my conscience and sworn duty as a humble teacher of the Holy Scripture, for the praise of God, for the benefit and salvation of all Christendom,"....(What Luther Says, Vol. III, page 1183). He did not seek his own honor and glory. He writes in his commentary on Galatians, "we do not preach for the praise of men, or the favor of princes. We preach for the favor of God alone whose grace and mercy we proclaim" (A New Abridged Translation by Theodore Graebner, page 33).

Dr. Plass correctly observes that Luther "had no passion for controversy. He would have liked to remain within the church organization in which he had been reared, which had become dear to him in many respects. But he found that the price he had to pay for such membership was too high. He was expected to deny his Savior by not being permitted publicly to confess and to preach Him. He could not and would not pay this price. To his close friend Spalatin he again unburdens himself: 'It is a hard thing to dissent from all prelates and princes, but no other way is left of escaping hell and God's wrath.' Though the separation made his heart bleed, he had to go through with it. So firmly was Martin Luther convinced that he possessed the very truth of God, immutable forever" (This Is Luther, by Ewald M. Plass, pages 82,83). Dr. Plass quotes Alexander Bower who after a careful study of the Reformer wrote, "Luther's opposition to Rome bears no mark of selfish motives. It implies, on the contrary, a relinquishment and forfeiture of professional advancement. In all Luther's proceedings, various as they are, in his preachings, his treatises, and disputations, we discern no step taken for the gratification of personal advantage. All is disinterested and zealous, all is prompted by an anxiety to understand and promulgate the Word of God." (The Life of Luther with an Account of the Early Progress of the Reformation, quoted on page 211 of This Is Luther).

Luther, too, regarded **pride** as a pestiferous sin. He writes, "All godless doctrines sprout from the root of **pride**. Therefore in many places St. Augustine calls **pride** the mother of heresy"..."The devil is enthroned once the vice of **pride** is current among preachers and theologians"...And he therefore warns pastors, "The Gospel is not delivered unto us that we should thereby seek our own praise and glory and that

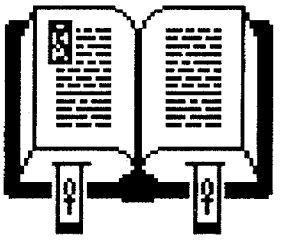
people should praise us who are its ministers, but that the benefit and honor of Christ may be glorified and the Father be praised in the mercy He renders us in Christ, His Son, whom He has delivered for us all and in whom He has given us all things. Therefore the Gospel is a doctrine in which we should by no means seek our own glory"....(This Is Luther, Vol. II, pages 634, 635, 937).

At this time of the year we observe the anniversary of the Reformation of the church which the Lord brought about through the untiring zeal and tremendous courage of His instrument, Martin Luther, who set forth those three great principles: Scripture alone, Grace alone, Faith alone. Love to our dear Savior who has redeemed us from sin, death and hell, with His holy precious blood should certainly prompt us who are the recipients of this pure Gospel message of salvation to follow Luther's example in submitting our reason to the Word of God and fight against all sinful **pride** by humbly accepting **all** of God's Word. As the Lord grants us opportunity we should then, as Luther, seek to defend and proclaim that precious Word of Life until the Lord calls us to our eternal Home.

Your servant in Christ,
Rev. M. L. Natterer

SOLA SCRIPTURA

SCRIPTURE ALONE



Scripture alone, Grace alone, Faith alone, **Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide,** are the three watchwords of the Reformation. Two other articles in this Reformation Issue of The Concordia Lutheran are treating the Sola Gratia and the Sola Fide. The Sola Scriptura, of course, forms the basis for the other two solas. Without the Scriptures alone we would know nothing of salvation by God's **grace alone** through **faith alone** in the Lord Jesus Christ as our only Savior and Redeemer.

There are many phases of our earthly existence which are not spoken of or touched upon in Holy Scripture, for example: God has not told us how to cure the various bodily ailments which afflict mankind; He does not give us specific directions with regard to farming, to manufacturing, to commerce or transportation on land, sea, and in the air, or to the many useful arts, scientific knowledge and inventions of mankind. In these and all other such human undertakings, God **permits** us to learn and to advance in knowledge by means of our own intelligence, reason, senses, and through the various experiences which God gives us throughout our lives.

Mankind is the crown of God's creation and the fabulous things which God has permitted man to accomplish down through the centuries, and now especially as we have entered and are continuing on in this Computer Age, is astounding beyond measure. Oh, what changes we have seen and are continuing to see in the world about us! These accomplishments of man, however, are absolutely worthless and really amount to nothing **without** the Sola Scriptura to direct us **in everything** which we are to believe and **in everything** in which we need God's guidance in our lives as Christians. **What we are to believe** for our eternal salvation and **what we need to guide us** in our Christian life never changes. Scripture never needs to be updated or made more compatible with modern society because, in spite of all the great advancements in science and medicine which certainly have an effect on living conditions both at home and in the work place, **the spiritual**

condition of mankind, namely, that **by nature,** all people are lost and condemned, ruined in body and soul, **never changes.** Therefore **that which we need** to show us the only way to heaven by God's grace through faith in Christ without our own good works or merits always remains the same, and likewise that which is necessary to teach us how God wants us to be and what He wants us to do and not do as His own dear children out of love for our Savior also never changes.

This important use of the Bible, as **the only Source and Rule** for a Christian's faith and life, was lost as the Papacy increased in power and influence especially during the Middle Ages and, of course, continues to be lost in that Church of the Antichrist to this day. But the power of the Great Antichrist was broken through the Lutheran Reformation when Dr. Martin Luther once again placed the Bible into the hands of the common people where it indeed belongs--by making it possible for them to read the Scriptures in their own language and to compare what was being taught in the churches with what is plainly written in God's Word.

The **sectarian and reformed churches,** although many still profess to stand 100% on the Bible alone, **have all forsaken the great Scriptural Principle,** namely, that only the Bible shall determine what is taught, defended and followed in their churches and that nothing shall be taught and practiced in their churches which conflicts with the crystal clear passages of Scripture. Whatever God wants us to know for our Christian faith and life is set forth in passages which are so plain and clear that any child of normal intelligence can understand them, and whatever conflicts with such plain and clear passages (the analogy of faith) must be rejected as false doctrine or unScriptural practice. Those who persist in teaching otherwise than God's Word teaches must be recognized and exposed as false prophets and profaners of God's Holy Name who "***with good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple,***" Rom. 16:18, and whom the Lord Jesus calls "***ravening wolves***" of whom the sheep of Christ must "***beware,***" (Matt. 7:15).

When, in the early '50s, numerous errors in doctrine and practice were openly taught and tolerated throughout the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, our little Conference was formed by those who wanted still to confess and practice that which was in harmony with the Full Truth of God's Word, to regard the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod as an heterodox church body, and to "***mark and avoid***" (Rom. 16:17) all those

who "***cause divisions and offences contrary***" to the Scriptures alone. Other so-called Lutheran bodies have long ago fallen away from the Sola Scriptura principle of the Reformation. Even the Wisconsin Synod (WELS) and the Norwegian Synod (ELS) have been overrun by the leaven of false doctrine and unScriptural practice which has been tolerated in their midst--especially in the area of the Church and its Ministry. It has come to our attention that the Wisconsin Synod has even gone so far as to require quotas with regard to the number of new members their pastors, especially those who are supported by the synod, are to gain annually. We should always remember that it is the Lord only who adds to His Church daily such as should be saved (Acts 2:47) and that He accomplishes this only through His Word (I Peter 1:23), Sola Scriptura, as His Law and Gospel are properly taught and applied. The "gain" is not then to be reckoned in numbers but in the spiritual growth of those entrusted to the care of the pastor through patient and thorough instruction in "***all the counsel of God,***" (Acts 20:27).

We see **the world** creeping into the churches of our nation. We see houses of God becoming houses of merchandise through bake-sales, carnivals, bazaars, raffles, and the like entering into competition with the business world. We see church buildings used for dances, rock and roll entertainment, and other forms of questionable amusement meant to attract people, especially the young, and to increase membership. We hear pastors preaching their own wisdom and the wisdom of men rather than "Sola Scriptura"--the true and saving Wisdom of the Most High God.

Although the Bible was written by men, it is not the authority of men, such as Moses, Peter, or Paul, but it is the authority of the Almighty God Himself which stands behind every word, every statement, doctrine, promise, and command in the Bible. "***God...spake by the prophets,***" (Heb. 1:1). "***The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord,***" says the Apostle Paul in I Cor. 14:37. No other authority can replace the authority of Scripture--no pope, no synod, no church council, no synodical handbook--for God says, "***If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing,***" (I Tim. 6:3,4), and again, "***If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which ye have received, let him be accursed,***" (Gal. 1:9). To this authority all men, the wise and the

simple, must submit without reservation, "***bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,***" (II Cor. 10:5). To ignore, disregard, or reject any word or doctrine of Scripture is rebellion against God's authority and will not go unpunished, for Jesus says, "***He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My Words, hath one that judgeth Him,***" (John 12:48).

How fervently we should thank the Lord our God for His precious Word which Dr. Martin Luther, by God's grace, uncovered from the rubbish heap of centuries of man-made teachings and commandments, so that once more it **alone** could, through the power of the Holy Ghost, make true believing children of God out of lost and condemned sinners and lead mankind on the Way of Life. Here we have the Word of the Lord of Lords and King of Kings, a Word of highest authority, a Word which is able to save to the uttermost all who believe it and cling to its precious truths. May we, then, always place Scripture Alone above everything else in our Conference, in our church and in our homes, in our hearts and in our lives.

--PRB

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and practice in the Church of Christ on earth, two other principles had to follow. These other two principles had to follow not only because Scripture teaches them so clearly, but also because the entire Doctrine of Justification, the heart of the Christian faith, rests upon these three principles together. If just once principle is denied, the entire Doctrine of Justification falls and souls are left in fear and doubt. Those other two principles Luther expounded, and upon which the Reformation began and stood the test of time, are *"Sola Gratia,"* that is, **"By Grace Alone,"** and ***"Sola Fide"*** or **"By Faith Alone."** Thus, the battle cry of the Reformation was threefold: **Scripture Alone**, **Grace Alone**, and **Faith Alone!** It is the second part of this threefold battle cry upon which we focus our attention, namely, **GRACE ALONE!**

While it would seem to be totally unnecessary to explain what grace means to any Christian, the fact of the matter is that explanations are necessary. Just as Rome took grace and made of it something it wasn't, so also today the Romish church continues in her errors regarding grace. Tragically, many of the so-called Reformed bodies have also fallen into the same error or a variation of the error as Rome in regard to what grace is and what it isn't. **Grace, simply defined, is the unmerited, unwarranted love of God for sinful man manifested in Christ Jesus.** Grace, the grace by which a man is saved, is something in God, not something in man!

To really understand grace, it is necessary that man understand why the grace of God is necessary. In our Synodical Catechism we find these words defining what man is without the grace of God: **"Man by nature is 1) without true fear, love and trust in God. He is 2) without righteousness, 3) is inclined only to evil, and is 4) spiritually blind, dead, and 5) an enemy of God." (Note: Numbering added.)** As Lutherans we're all familiar with these words, perhaps many have even committed these words to memory. But when was the last time we thought through the meaning of these words? Thinking through what these words really mean is an absolute necessity to properly understanding the grace of God as revealed in Christ Jesus our Savior.

Luther, on the basis of God's Word, says first of all that **"man by nature is without true fear, love and trust in God."** In Scripture King

David says, ***"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me,"*** Psalm 51:5. From the moment a person is conceived in the womb of his mother, his heart is evil, steeped in sin, and therefore incapable of fearing, loving or trusting in God in any way, shape or form. He is therefore **"without righteousness."** Each and every person must confess with the Apostle Paul, ***"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing,"*** Rom. 7:18. There is absolutely nothing in man that merits his salvation, for by nature all men are evil, all are completely polluted by sin. And that situation cannot change, for man is by nature spiritually **"blind."** Again as Paul confesses: ***"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned,"*** I Cor. 2:14. In short, no man can find the gracious God of Scripture as long as he remains a "natural man," that is, a man unchanged, or unregenerate. Indeed, such a man not only cannot and will not receive the gift of God's grace in Christ Jesus, but is in actuality an **"enemy of God"** and is quite literally hostile to the Gospel. Such things as the Gospel are not worthy of his attention in his blinded estimation, and so he rejects them outright. As one commentator once observed, when considering the grace of God in Christ Jesus, the natural man is like a deaf man trying to judge music. Such a person is **"spiritually dead."** When was the last time you saw a dead person do anything? Someone who is spiritually dead is completely incapable of doing anything towards his own salvation, anything at all! Dead men do no works!

Since man is by nature completely incapable of doing anything which contributes to his salvation, since he is by nature spiritually blind, dead and an enemy of God, if man was to be saved, God had to do it--from beginning to end. That, dear readers, is essentially what the grace of God is, God, in Christ, doing for sinful man what sinful man could never do for himself. God, being a just and righteous God, could not just ignore man's sin, for that would be contrary to His very nature. Thus, in order to save man from his own folly, ***"when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,"*** Gal. 4:4,5. God's grace is manifest in Christ Jesus, His Son, and God sent His Son

into the world as a true Man so that His Son could keep the Law of God perfectly for us, in our stead, because we couldn't. Christ came into this world because, as Scripture says, ***"Forasmuch then as the children (the human race) are partakers of flesh and blood, [Christ] also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage,"*** Heb. 2:14. Thus, Christ also came into this world to suffer and die in our stead, to deliver us from the bondage of Satan and the death that was most certainly ours as the due reward for our sins. And all this was made sufficient for all men by the fact that Christ was not only true man but also true God, ***"for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,"*** Col. 2:9. All this God did for sinful mankind, not because man deserved it, but because of God's unwarranted, unmerited love for sinful man--in other words, because of **GRACE**!

When Luther posted the ninety-five theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, this grace of God in Christ Jesus had been polluted to the point where it no longer was taught in visible Christendom. The Roman Catholic Church, through the various popes, the very Antichrist who had sat on the Papal thrones for nearly 1000 years at that time, had robbed the Church of the truth of the grace of God in Christ Jesus by turning it into something with which they could bind hearts and souls to the power of the pope. Grace was no longer an attribute in God but, according to the damnable doctrine of the popes, was a power infused into man whereby man could quite literally earn his way to heaven. And what made it even more insidious was that the popes could point to Scripture and pervert passages in such a way as to say, "See, Scripture teaches this!" Indeed, Scripture does teach a "***gratia infusa***," that is, an infused grace. Such grace is something in man, worked in him by God, a **fruit** of his justification. According to Lutheran dogmaticians and God's Word, infused grace is the "good qualities (powers) and the good works which God, because of His gracious disposition works in the believers...I Peter 4:10-11: **'As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.'** Here the manifold grace of God

is the gift received; not the *favor Dei* (favor of God, grace of God) forgiving sins, but the ability which God giveth, the ability inhering in the Christians to teach what is right and to serve one another....Grace in this sense is *donum gratiae* [gift of grace],...*gratia infusa* [infused grace]." (Christian Dogmatics, F. Pieper, p. 9.) In short, these gifts of God are a **fruit** of man's justification, **not the cause**. Indeed, these gifts of God to those who already believe **are never regarded in Scripture as a cause for which God calls, justifies and saves sinful mankind.** For salvation, Scripture teaches only one cause, the grace of God in Christ Jesus toward poor, lost sinners, God's merciful mind and disposition or His favor in Christ (*favor Dei*) to sinful mankind.

And yet to this day the Romish Church holds to this perversion of grace stating their opposition to the grace of God unmistakably with such statements as that written in the Council of Trent (Sess. VI, Canon 11): "If anyone says...that the grace of God whereby we are justified is only the favor of God: let him be anathema," that is, let him be damned (Christian Dogmatics, F. Pieper, Vol. II, p. 11, footnote 20). Thus, the Pope still condemns all who cling to the grace of God in Christ Jesus without the works of the Law. The Pope insists that a man, in order to earn his salvation, must perform certain works--do penances, have masses said on his behalf, partake of the sacraments even without faith, observe holy days of obligation, say the rosary, pray for the dead, etc.--as requirements for salvation. Indeed, according to the theology of Rome, the more of these things that you do, the more grace is infused into you, and the holier you become. And the more grace that is infused into you, the more good works you are able to do, and thus earn even more grace. This process goes on and on and on until you can actually earn more grace than you need. Thus, the so-called saints of the Romish Church supposedly have an excess of grace so that they can give that grace to others. Everything the Romish Church teaches regarding grace and justification is completely contrary to what the Bible itself teaches, and not only condemns lost and searching souls if they believe it to eternal death in the life to come, but also to the purgatory of uncertainty in this life about their salvation, for they can never know whether or not they've done enough works to earn their way to heaven.

The Reformed church bodies, while paying lip service to the grace of God in Christ Jesus, also destroy this precious doctrine, either by

denying universal grace (the grace of God extended to all men) or by teaching that there is human cooperation in coming to faith (synergism), either by lesser guilt, lesser resistance, or a decision for Christ, etc. Whenever the grace of God is mixed with human works of one kind or another, either active or passive, infused grace is substituted for the doctrine of the free favor of God in Christ Jesus. Either our coming to faith is the work of God alone or we are at least partially responsible to some degree for our salvation, whether actively or passively. Scripture makes it clear: Salvation is a gift of God! ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*** As Scripture says, ***"If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace,"*** Rom. 11:6. To recap, then: If man is in any way involved in his own salvation, whether it be the active working the poor, deluded Roman Catholic is compelled to do, or by the so-called passive working, that is, lesser resistance to the Holy Ghost, lesser guilt, a right decision, a decision for Christ and the like, which the Reformed bodies teach, he substitutes the works of man for the free grace of God in Christ Jesus. St. Paul states the case clearly: ***"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the Law: for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified,"*** Gal. 2:16.

What practical value does this have for the Christian other than being able to properly explain it? Its value cannot be measured for the Christian, for God's grace in Christ is beyond any measure of value. Just as grace is limitless, so is its value. When the Christian is troubled in his conscience because of his sins, he need not look to himself to make changes so that God will accept him; he need not seek a sign of God's grace in Christ in a special revelation; he need not torture himself with the question as to whether or not he has made a real decision for Christ, for Jesus says, ***"Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you,"*** John 15:16. The only thing necessary for a Christian to do when he is troubled by his sins is to look to the grace of God in Christ Jesus as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Open your Bible and hear God speak to you about His grace in Christ Jesus, a message summed up beautifully by the hymnist who wrote:

"By grace I'm saved, grace free and boundless;
My soul, believe and doubt it not.
Why stagger at this word of promise?
Hath Scripture ever falsehood taught?
Nay; then this word must true remain:
By grace, thou, too, shalt heav'n obtain.

"By grace! None dare lay claim to merit;
Our works and conduct have no worth.
God in His love sent our Redeemer,
Christ Jesus, to this sinful earth;
His death did for our sins atone,
And we are saved by grace alone.

"By grace! Oh, mark this word of promise
When thou art by thy sins opprest,
When Satan plagues thy troubled conscience,
And when thy heart is seeking rest.
What reason cannot comprehend
God by His grace to thee doth send.

"By grace God's Son, our only Savior,
Came down to earth to bear our sin.
Was it because of thine own merit
That Jesus died thy soul to win?
Nay, it was grace, and grace alone,
That brought Him from His heav'nly throne.

"By grace! This ground of faith is certain;
So long as God is true, it stands.
What saints have penned by inspiration,
What in His Word our God commands,
What our whole faith must rest upon,
Is grace alone, grace in His Son.

"By grace to timid hearts that tremble,
In tribulation's furnace tried--
By grace, despite all fear and trouble,
The Father's heart is open wide.

Where could I help and strength secure
If grace were not my anchor sure?

"By grace! On this I'll rest when dying;
In Jesus' promise I'll rejoice;
For though I know my heart's condition,
I also know my Savior's voice.
My heart is glad, all grief has flown,
Since I am saved by grace alone!"

(TLH 373)

May God grant that this would be our prayer day in and day out, and that He would preserve this precious doctrine unto us and our children and that we may proclaim it to others as our Savior has commanded. In Jesus' Name and to His glory, Amen.

--MWD

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*(**Sola Fide**)* as the one and only means whereby a poor, undeserving sinner can personally lay hold upon the forgiveness, life and salvation offered to him in the Gospel and make it his very own *(medium leptikon)*. In this special Reformation issue of the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN*, the first two of this glorious threesome, ***Sola Scriptura*** and ***Sola Gratia***, have already been treated in separate articles; and it is our intended purpose now, without being unnecessarily repetitious, to address the so-called "third *sola*", which by God's grace continues to stand as an uncompromising *shibboleth* or distinctive hallmark of orthodox Christianity and of truly confessional Lutheranism in spite of an incessant bombardment of attack from the enemy: ***SOLA FIDE -- Faith Alone!***

"Faith" according to its simplest definition is nothing but **trust** or **confidence**. But, especially with reference to justification and salvation, faith is much **more** than "believing in God" --namely, acknowledging that He exists, that He exercises divine providence over all things, that He has standards for and expectations of mortal man, and that all men will one day have to give account to Him for their actions; for even the unregenerate can have **such** a "faith", based solely on the **natural knowledge of God**, and be headed for eternal damnation. Neither is it faith, even in a general sense, blindly to accept what a church professes and teaches, or diligently to adhere to the same, without first of all knowing what that profession is and then being personally convinced of it. Nor is saving faith a virtuous act, a display of moral conduct, correct behavior, outward compliance with the Law, or the achievement of ethical superiority which gains God's attention and merits His favor; otherwise justification and salvation would be by the Law, attainable by man's own efforts.

Moreover, the object of saving faith is not the Law of God, for *"no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God." (Galatians 3:11)* Such a "faith" would either drive a poor sinner to despair because of his inability to keep the Law, or it would make of him a Pharisee, bent upon earning his own salvation. Neither are the entire Scriptures (including all the doctrines and all the historical portions of Holy Writ) the object of saving faith, as if **orthodoxy** and **saving faith** were one and the same thing. For, while true orthodoxy is in every case the result of saving faith (as Dr. Pieper points out in his *Christian Dogmatics*, II, 424), there are cases where justifying faith has not as yet produced either the

knowledge or the acceptance of every Scripture doctrine (Luke 23:39-43; Acts 8:26ff.; 19:1-7; etc.).

No, the sole object of saving faith is **the Gospel**, pure and simple-- the good news that, because of Christ's **vicarious atonement**, by which He rendered to the Father complete satisfaction for the sins of all mankind and perfect obedience to the just demands of His holy Law in the place of sinners, God, as the gift of His mercy and grace, fully and freely forgave the sins of the whole world and declared all men righteous for Jesus' sake *(Objective Justification--II Corinthians 5:19).* **SAVING FAITH**, then, is *the **reliance of the heart** on the assurances of God's grace published to all and offered to all in the Gospel.* It is a **personal faith** by which the believer applies those promises to himself and is assured that his own sins have been forgiven for Jesus' sake (Galatians 2:20; Job 19:25; etc.). It is an **active trust**, that is, the **laying hold on** those promises *by an act of the intellect and will* (knowledge, assent, and confidence) created in the believer by the Holy Spirit through the Means of Grace. Saving faith "desires" Christ, "seeks" Him, "runs after" Him, "embraces" Him and "clings to" Him. It is a **certain trust**, confirmed to the believer not by the "strength" of his faith but by the **sure promises of God in the Gospel**, for professed faith in Christ without faith in Christ's Word is a sham (Matthew 8:35-38).

And how does this faith **justify** a poor sinner before God? In our first paragraph, we defined ***Sola Fide*** as "the one and only means whereby a poor, undeserving sinner can personally lay hold upon the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation offered to him in the Gospel and make it his very own". Justifying or saving faith, therefore, is merely the **receptive instrument** *(medium leptikon)* by which God's grace in Christ is "apprehended" or "laid hold on" (I Timothy 6:12). Saving faith has no intrinsic value of its own, as if it merited anything in the sight of God as an act of man. Rather, faith justifies **because of its object.** The *Apology* states that "faith justifies and saves, not on the ground that it is a work in itself worthy, but only because it receives the promised mercy." Even the fact that saving faith is a creation of God's Holy Spirit adds no merit or justifying power to it, nor the fact that saving faith is identified in Holy Scripture as "obedience" (Romans 1:5, etc.), "doing the will of God" (John 7:17), "working the works of God" (John 6:28-29) and "doing the Word" (James 1:22ff.). "Faith may be called a **work** if the word is not used in the specific sense..., signifying a work

commanded by the **Law**, but in a general or wider sense signifying a movement, an activity, in the intellect and will of man. It is not the Holy Ghost, but **man** who believes through the operation of the Holy Ghost." (Pieper on Quenstedt, *Christian Dogmatics*, II, 442) Thus **justifying faith** is wholly outside of the realm of good works! (Romans 3:28; 4:3 & 5; Galatians 2:16; etc.)

This is precisely why the Church of Rome, through its popes and councils, *anathematizes* or curses the doctrine of **Justification by Faith Alone *(Sola Fide)***, stating, for example, in the *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, Sess. 6, Canon 12:* **"If anyone saith that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified, let him be anathema."** And this curse stands still today as the official teaching of Rome, as surely held by Pope John Paul and all those who are seeking to minimize the differences between us and the church of the Roman Antichrist-- as surely as it was held on the day when the ink was not yet dry upon the page! **BE NOT DECEIVED!** The chief article of faith, the article upon which the Christian Church stands or falls, the doctrine of **justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith**, still bears the Pope's official curse and therefore remains the chief wall of partition that separates us. After all, take away that grave error by which the Antichrist leads precious souls to hell, and with it will fall all the rest: Indulgences, the Mass, intercession of saints, their works of supererogation, purgatory, penances and satisfactions, holy days of obligation, the rosary, prayer for the dead and masses on their behalf, holy orders, the indelible character of the priesthood, and so on down the line! For they all hinge directly upon **justification by works**!

Since this is a Reformation issue, the rejection of ***Sola Fide*** by the Church of Rome and its complete perversion of the doctrine of Justification has been our chief "target." Nevertheless, there are also, sad to say, among the so-called "Protestant" and even "Lutheran" churches and church-bodies, many patently false doctrines taught which actively militate against ***Sola Fide*** --so many that an entire booklet could be written identifying and refuting them! No wonder that, in the climate of "ecumenism" so popular today, most "Protestants" and, to be sure, many "Lutherans", either cannot see or are not all that concerned about the Pope's vile curse upon the central doctrine of Holy Scripture!

Apparently many simplistically think that the only difference between us and Rome is that Roman Catholics pray to Mary and other saints, while we do not. In their ignorant folly, such uninformed "ostriches" play into the hands of the Roman Antichrist, abet his plan of deceiving the entire world, and fall victim to his snare without even realizing it!!

God be thanked, that He has preserved to us in its purity the precious doctrine of Justification by Grace for Christ's sake through Faith -- the **Gem of the Reformation** -- and that He emboldened Luther and his brethren in the 16th Century to hold fast to it, to proclaim it to the comfort of precious souls, and to teach it and to write it in the clearest of terms for our benefit! O may we never take this precious doctrine for granted, but let us zealously guard it against any and all perversion in doctrine or practice, teach it diligently and faithfully in our churches and in our homes, and cling to it with all our heart, making its comfort our very own by confidence in the promises and assurances of our gracious and merciful, faithful God and Lord, for Jesus' sake!

Salvation unto us has come
by God's free grace and favor;
Good works cannot avert our doom,
they help and save us never.
Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone,
Who did for all the world atone;
He is our one Redeemer!

Faith clings to Jesus' cross alone
and rests in Him unceasing;
And by its fruits true faith is known,
with love and hope increasing.
Yet **faith alone doth justify**;
Works serve thy neighbor and supply
the proof that faith is living.

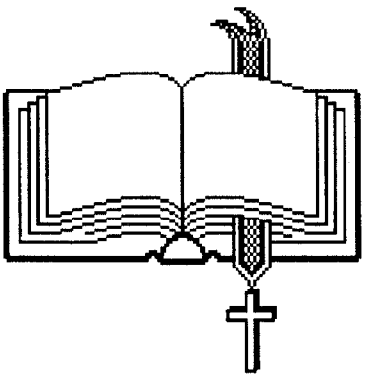
TLH 377, 1 & 9

--DTM.

(The following is the second segment of a serialized presentation of this year's Convention essay.)

The Proper Interpretation and Use of the Holy Scriptures

(Presented to the 42nd Annual Convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference, held at Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Oak Forest, IL June 25-27, 1993)



Principle #9: In any passage of Scripture, there is but one intended sense.

Fuerbringer states, "Every word in the Holy Scriptures can have only one intended meaning in any one place and in any one relation. *'Sensus literalis unus est.'*" This means we are to take the words of Scripture in their natural, literal sense. Only if the context or the analogy of faith (the clear texts) forbid it, we must read and interpret the Scriptures in their literal, natural, and commonly employed sense.

Among the Early Church Fathers, Origen, although a notable teacher and scholar, had a penchant for finding an allegory or a symbolic meaning in virtually every text of Scripture. Such allegorizing strips the Scriptures of its one intended sense. Our responsibility is ever to obtain that one Holy Spirit-intended sense in any word, phrase, statement, or passage. Fuerbringer writes, "Unless there are cogent reasons to the contrary, the exegete must take it for granted that the author has used his words according to their real meaning, and that he wishes to have them so understood." (#23, p. 13) Fuerbringer also states, "The literal meaning (*sensus literae*) of a word should therefore in all cases be accepted as the intended sense (*sensus literalis*), unless sufficient reasons prompt us to accept a trope." (#23, Note 1, p. 13)

While certain texts have been interpreted in two different ways wherein neither interpretation conflicts with the analogy of faith, this does not nullify the fact that the Holy Spirit has authored but one intended sense. Therefore, even when two different interpretations are rendered neither of which violates the analogy of faith (the clear texts of the Bible), one of the interpretations is not actually what the Holy Spirit is saying. Yet the person holding the incorrect position is not a false teacher since his position still harmonizes with the analogy of faith. He has not taught, as such, false doctrine.

This essayist has been informed that some years ago here in our own Conference a few pastors held a differing interpretation of Romans 14:23b which reads, "***for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.***" Some have taken this to be a statement of a general principle that whatever is not done out of saving faith is sin. This is certainly a Scriptural truth. In this respect, everything an unbeliever does, even his civic righteousness, is sin before God. Others understand this passage to say that whatever is not done with faith, that is, with faith in the sense of a good conscience, is sin. The context seems to favor the latter since the entire fourteenth chapter of Romans concerns how to deal with a weaker brother, particularly how we must take care not to cause a weaker brother to violate his erring or not fully instructed conscience. As Paul says a few verses prior, "***For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.***" (v.20) Since however a man who eats against his conscience is thereby sinning against his conscience and is not doing what he does with faith, there is not a substantial difference in interpretation, and neither position contradicts the analogy of faith.

Principle #10: In determining the one Holy Spirit-intended sense of any passage, it may be necessary to abandon the literal sense because the usus loquendi (the common or popular usage) differs from its etymological or extra-Biblical meaning.

When examining the Holy Scriptures, it is sometimes not the original etymological meaning of a word nor the use of a word in the secular world which is meant, but the *usus loquendi* (the common use) of the word in the Scriptures themselves. For example, the word, propitiation,

is used in secular literature and is also a most important word frequently found in Scripture. A dictionary definition reads as follows, "The act of propitiating; something that propitiates; an atoning sacrifice." The last used meaning, atoning sacrifice, is nearest to the Biblical meaning. However, the Scriptural use of the word, propitiation, has a special Biblical connotation anchored in the Old Testament practice of the sprinkling of blood on the mercy seat (the cover of the ark of the covenant). Hence, the special Biblical connotation and sense of the word, propitiation, is "the covering of the mercy seat," and with particular reference to Christ's own blood being *THE COVERING OF OUR SINS* just as the sprinkled blood on the mercy seat covered the law contained in the ark of the covenant.

With respect to recognizing the *usus loquendi*, Fuerbringer makes the following statement: "The exegete must cling to that meaning which a word most generally carried in common usage unless there are sufficient reasons to compel him to accept some other meaning; for it is evident a priori that the speaker or writer would use his words in that sense in which those to whom he speaks or writes are accustomed to use them." (#16, Page 10)

Thus, as we read our Bible, we can usually expect a word to mean what it commonly and normally means. If this were not true, we could never read our Bible with any assurance that what we understand the words to say really mean just that. Indeed, only if the context forbids such a meaning, or if such a meaning would contradict the analogy of faith should the normal, common meaning be abandoned. Once again, we must always be reminded that there is but one Holy Spirit-intended sense, and usually it is the common, normal sense of the words.

Principle #11: "Although the Bible contains seeming and apparent contradictions, in fact it does not and cannot contain even one actual contradiction."

On this point we quote from Fuerbringer's Principle #28 which reads, "The complete agreement of Scripture with itself must be accepted a priori as a basis in its interpretation. This claim must under no circumstances be surrendered, because the divine origin of the Scriptures

makes impossible any inconsistency of thought, speech, any contradiction, or even the smallest error." (Fuerbringer, Page 14)

Although we have treated of the inerrancy of Scripture earlier in this essay, it is important to emphasize that this requires that we cannot allow for even the smallest error or contradiction. For example, Bible critics will cite what appear to be actual contradictions or errors in fact. For example, in Numbers 25:9 we are told, "***And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.***" Yet in a parallel passage in I Corinthians 10:8 it says, "***Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.***" There appears to be a real contradiction of fact. Yet we must, on the basis of the complete inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible, hold that no contradiction actually exists. In this particular instance there is a very plausible explanation as cited by Dr. P.E. Kretzmann in his Popular Commentary. He writes, "Note: There is no discrepancy between this passage and the text in Numbers, since Paul expressly gives the figures for one day, while the historical account mentions the total number dead."

Another seeming contradiction concerns whether Christ healed two blind men or one blind man. Luke 18:35-43, which is a part of the Gospel Lesson for Quinquagesima Sunday, tells us that Christ, upon coming nigh to the city, met a certain blind man who sat by the wayside begging. Yet in a parallel passage in Matthew 20:30-34, we are told that Christ met two blind men who sat by the wayside. Again, although there appears to be a contradiction of facts, we hold that there is none, and that there are plausible explanations. One is that Jesus healed one man while entering the city, and another upon leaving the city. Another explanation is that Luke simply refers to the first man to be healed and simply does not mention the second man who might have been healed a few minutes later.

Perhaps the most difficult seeming contradiction to be found in the New Testament is that which concerns the hour Jesus was placed on the cross. Mark 15:25 says, "***And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.***" According to Jewish time the third hour is nine o'clock in the morning. Yet in the Gospel of John, chapter 19, verse 14 we read, "***And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!***" In this passage Jesus is still

standing before Pilate and it is the sixth hour or noon. Yet Luke said it was the third hour when Jesus was placed on the cross. Indeed, the accounts of Matthew and Luke agree with Mark's account in that both Matthew's and Luke's accounts indicate that Jesus had already been on the cross well before the darkness was over the earth from the sixth to the ninth hour. Here there appears to be a real contradiction, and there is no plausible explanation. All attempts to find a solution are quite wanting. Nevertheless, since Scripture cannot and does not in fact contradict itself, we must simply say that we cannot explain this apparent contradiction. But just because we cannot reconcile an apparent contradiction does not mean there is an actual contradiction. No doubt God permitted this seeming contradiction to occur to test men's hearts. For those who refuse to believe the Word of God and are bent on denying its divine authorship, such a seeming contradiction serves to reinforce them in their stubborn unbelief. As Peter says in his Second Epistle, they "***wrest the Scriptures unto their own destruction.***" (II Peter 3:16) For those who humbly believe and stand in awe of God's Word, they leave the matter to God whose hidden ways are past finding out.

Principle #12: "There is a close connection between the Old Testament prophecies and their fulfillment in the New Testament. This relation has been fixed by God Himself, and, therefore no one has a right to change it or ignore it." (Fuerbringer, #34, page 17)

Although the New Testament is a clearer light than the Old Testament, the two Testaments do not constitute a conflict with each other. Indeed, the New Testament and the Old Testament stand in perfect harmony with each other. The Holy Ghost is the author of both Testaments. Hence, as Fuerbringer points out, "The same relation exists also between the prophecies and the inspired account of their fulfillment." The Old Testament prophecies and their directly corresponding New Testament fulfillment were foreordained by God and were carefully overseen and carried out by God. We made mention of the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 and its fulfillment in Matthew 1:22-23. Consider also a few other examples. Consider the direct relation between Hosea 11:1 with Matthew 2:15. Hosea 11:1 says, "***When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.***" Its fulfillment in Matthew 2:15 reads, "***And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be***

fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." Compare Numbers 21:8-9 with John 3:14-15. Numbers 21:8-9 says, "***And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.***" John 3:14-15 says, "***And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.***" Where we have such an explicitly stated fulfillment of an Old Testament prophecy in the New Testament, there is no question but that we do indeed have its fulfillment.

However, there are some Old Testament prophecies whose fulfillment are not so easy to identify. For example, we have recorded in Daniel, chapters 7, and 11, prophecies of the Antichrist. The Old Testament prophecies are strictly descriptive and do not label this man of sin in so many words as, The Antichrist. Then, even in the New Testament where the designation, Antichrist, is used, namely in I John 2:18, it does not give any description which would enable us to identify specifically the Antichrist. Indeed, all that John says in his First Epistle is this: "***Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.***"

Where, then, do we find the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Antichrist such that we may identify him? The fulfillment is found, not in Scripture, but in history after the Scriptures were written. However, II Thessalonians 2 sets forth the complete description of the Antichrist. This passage says in part, "***and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.***" (II Thess. 2:4) While this passage matches or harmonizes with the Old Testament prophecy in Daniel, again, even this passage does not specifically state who this Antichrist is. Nevertheless, Luther was correct is declaring the Roman papacy as the Antichrist prophesied in Daniel and further described in II Thessalonians 2. Luther, and even some who eventually broke from Luther and formed the Reformed camp, recognized that the Roman

papacy fleshed out completely and in detail the description which Scripture sets forth of the Antichrist. Unfortunately, many, especially of the Reformed churches, improperly and incorrectly still look for the Antichrist. Not only do they err in failing to identify the papacy with the Antichrist, they err in looking for a future figure which at the outset fails to conform with the description of the Biblical fulfillment. While II Thessalonians directs us to one who sits in the temple or church of God, the Reformed and others look for a political figure, that is, one who is not even in the church! The Antichrist as portrayed in Scripture is not only a personage who is against Christ, but who presides within visible Christendom and sets himself up as having authority equal with God. Therefore, we rightly conclude that the papacy must indeed be the Antichrist, because the papacy conforms with all the Biblical elements prophesied.

On such a post-Biblical fulfillment of a Biblical prophecy, Fuerbringer says the following: "In case no passage can be found in which a particular prophecy is expressly recorded as having been fulfilled, an investigation should be made to find out whether in a particular person or a particular event all the essential parts of the prophecy are found to have been fulfilled. If this is the case, the exegete is justified in considering the two passages as being related to each other, especially if no other historical person or event shows all the details of the respective prophecy." (Fuerbringer, #34, 2, Pages 17-18).

On this same point of matching a Biblical prophecy with a specific historical phenomenon, it is interesting to note that in His foretelling of the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ gave the saints as a warning the sign of the Abomination of Desolation as found in the prophecy of Daniel. In Matthew 24:15ff. Jesus says, "***When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains...***" Hence, Christ directs the believers' attention back to Daniel's prophecy of the Abomination of Desolation, and then tells the saints of Jerusalem to look for the fulfillment to unfold before their very eyes.

Yet it should be emphasized that any prophecy of the Bible which has been fulfilled since the Scriptures were written such that the fulfillment itself is not recorded in the Bible, Scripture remains the norm and the

standard of the fulfillment. We have certainty that the post-Biblical fulfillment is indeed the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Scripture because the prophecy itself so carefully circumscribes the conditions and the requirements of the fulfillment.

At this point we may wonder if we today are to be looking for any additional post-Biblical or extra-Biblical fulfillments of any Bible prophecy. Now that the Antichrist has been revealed, and now that all the signs of the end of the world and of Christ's coming to judgment have been and continue to be fulfilled, there is no other specific prophecy that is yet to be fulfilled other than the very return of Christ on Judgment Day. As Christ says, "***And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.***" (Luke 21:28)

--to be continued...

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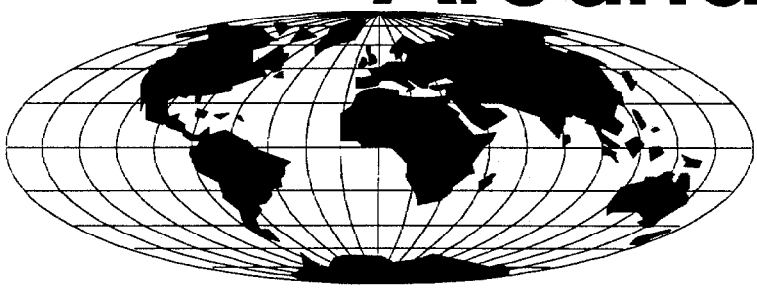

with editorial comment

by M. L. Natterer

A Christian Science couple asked the Massachusetts Supreme Court to overturn their manslaughter conviction for relying on prayer alone and failing to seek medical attention for their ill son. Lawyers representing David and Ginger Twitschell argued before the state's highest court that the convictions should be overturned on several constitutional grounds, including the free exercise of their religion. The Twitchells, life-long members of the Church of Christ, Scientist, were convicted by a Boston jury in 1990 of manslaughter in the death of their 2-year-old son, Robyn, who became ill in 1986 due to a bowel obstruction and died five days later. The Twitchells relied on prayer alone, in accordance with their religious beliefs, and did not seek medical treatment for the boy. The couple was placed on a 10-year-probation and ordered to take their two sons for periodic medical checkups as a condition of probation. The State Supreme Court late last year agreed to hear their appeal.

First of all, it is certainly strange to read in the above UPI report that "the Twitchells relied on prayer alone." How can there be any place for prayer in Christian Science when they deny the Triune God of the Holy Scriptures? How can a Christian Scientist pray to God to deliver him from sin, when taught that there is no sin? How can he pray that God would heal him from sickness when he has learned that there is no sickness? There is no actual place for prayer in Christian Science! Listen to the testimony of their founder, Mary Baker Eddy! "A self-evident proposition, in the science of mind healing, is that disease is unreal"..."All disease is the result of education"..."One disease is as much a delusion as another"..."The evidence of the senses is not to be accepted in the case of sickness, any more than it is in the case of sin"..."Man is never sick" (Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures). Secondly, not to make use of the means which God has placed at our disposal and which are available to us when we are sick runs

contrary to His command, "*Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God*" (Matt. 4:7). At the same time, however, we are not to place our trust in medical doctors and their medications as King Asa did (II Chron. 16:12), but always recognize that it is the LORD who heals us through these earthly means (Exodus 15:25). While we are bound to earthly means, what comfort for us Christians to know that God's power is not limited! "*He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think*" (Eph. 3:20). For "*with God nothing shall be impossible*" (Luke 1:37). When in accord with His command we cry unto Him in our sicknesses, He hears and answers according to His good and gracious Will. He is our dear heavenly Father for Jesus' sake and knows what is best for our spiritual welfare. If He chooses not to remove our sickness then He will grant us the necessary strength to endure until He finally delivers us from every evil of body and soul by taking us into the joys of heaven.

"This piece of wood is so precious - and a gift from God." These moving words were spoken reverently by George Jammal as he displayed the relic that he said had come from Noah's ark. His appearance was one of the highlights of **The Incredible Discovery of Noah's Ark,** a two-hour prime-time special that aired on CBS in February. What the network didn't know - and didn't bother to find out - was that Jammal was a hoaxer and that large segments of its program were based on blatant and ludicrous pseudo science. Jammal had obtained the wood, he unblinkingly told the network audience, during a 1984 search for Noah's ark on snow-covered Mount Ararat in Turkey. With his companion "Vladimir," he had crawled through a hole in the ice into a wooden structure. "We got very excited when we saw part of this room was made into pens, like places where you keep animals," he recalled. "We knew then that we had found the ark!" To prove he had been in the fabled vessel, Jammal hacked out a chunk of wood. Then he went on, tragedy struck. As Vladimir backed up taking photos of Jammal and the site, "he fell, and that made some noise, and there was an avalanche...and that is where he died." The film was lost and Jammal was so distraught, he had been unable to tell his story - until now. In fact, Jammal is an actor who has been telling versions of this story for years but has never been on Mount Ararat. Vladimir is a fictitious character, and the supposedly venerable hunk of "ark" wood is a piece of

contemporary pine Jammal soaked in juices and baked in the oven of his Long Beach, California, home.

The above excerpt from Time, July 5, 1993, indicates how shrewdly the father of all lies (John 8:44) seeks to discredit the Word of God. The devil laughs in glee whenever he can make the truths of God's Word appear ridiculous in the eyes of the children of this world and lead the weak Christians to doubt that Word. Thanks be to God, that our faith does not rest upon what men must discover to substantiate the truths of God's Word. God's Word does not need the verification of archaeological findings to prove its authenticity. Jesus, the almighty Son of God, declares concerning Scripture, "*Thy Word is truth*" (John 17:17). And the Apostle Paul echoes those words of the Savior when he writes, "*All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God*"...(2 Tim. 3:16). Thus what is written in Genesis, chapters 6-9, wherein we are told that God commanded Noah to build the ark, and that only Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives, plus the animals which God instructed Noah to take into the ark, remained alive, is true because it is the Word of God! And when we are told that it rained for forty days and nights and that the water covered all the mountains destroying every living substance, we know that it is true because it is written in the Word of the Lord who can not lie (Hebrews 6:18). The Flood is mentioned in a number of places in the Old Testament (Job 22:15,16; Is. 54:9) and the New Testament (Luke 17:26; I Peter 3:20; II Peter 2:5; 3:6). Let the skeptics scoff at the Biblical account of the Flood, the hour is coming when they shall have to acknowledge the truth of God's Word to their everlasting dismay!

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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) 650-9053

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) 723-1078
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