the Concordia Lutheran

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

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

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"I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Job 19:25

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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.

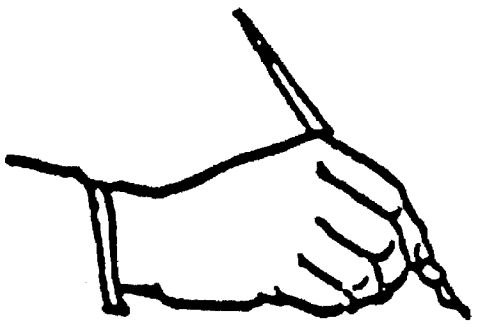
To show that we do not have among us a mixture of divergent teachings but that we are "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

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

One of my members recently told me about a welfare case reported by David Brinkley the last Sunday in January. He stated that 27 years ago an unmarried woman came from Puerto Rico to Boston Mass. where she received public welfare and public housing. She had 17 children, 74 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren. Very few of them ever worked. It costs the taxpayers 1 million dollars a year to support this large clan.

The State of Wisconsin has enacted an innovative program referred to as "two-years-and-out" which many hold may be a solution to the waste in our welfare system. At the present time the United States Congress is considering various bills to remedy what is often referred to as "the welfare scandal."

We Christians know how to correct this deplorable situation which turns many welfare recipients into parasites of society. The answer is given to us by God Himself in His Word - **work**! When God created our first parents and placed them in the Garden of Eden, they were not to lead an inactive life. On the contrary, "*the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it*" (Gen. 2:15). Prior to their fall into sin, work was not a chore but a marvelous joy. After they had fallen, however, the situation changed. What had been a delight would now, because of sin, cause man hardship and weariness. The Lord told Adam, "*Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*" (Gen. 3:17-19).

God's command to work still stands! It is not up to the individual whether he wants to work or not - here is God's plain command that we work. The Apostle Paul reminds the members of the Thessalonian congregation, "*For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread*" (2 Thess. 3:10-12). The Lord says to the lazy, "*Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man*" (Prov. 6:6-11).

It is the responsibility of the father to work in order to support himself and his family. And "*if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel*" (1 Tim. 5:8). Not that the father must provide his family with the "cake and all the trimmings," but with the necessities of life. "*Having food and raiment let us be therewith content*" (1 Tim. 6:8). The command to work refers not only to the husband and father but also to the wife and mother. She is to be diligent and faithful in taking care of her household duties. If they are lazy housewives and despise God's command, then "*they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not*" (1 Tim. 5:13). Laziness brings with it many other sins! The old adage certainly applies: "An idle mind is the devil's paradise."

Thus we Christians should look upon work not merely as a burden, a discipline, nor even as a means of earning a living, but as a God-pleasing service, no matter how lowly it may appear in the eyes of men, as long as it is done out of love to our dear Lord Jesus who loved us and gave Himself for us. "*Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman; likewise also he that is called being free is Christ's servant*" (1 Cor. 7:20-22). And to the members of the Ephesian congregation the Apostle writes, "*Servants, be obedient to them that are*

your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free" (6:5-8).

We are to work not only to provide for our own families but also to help the poor and the needy. The Lord Jesus tells us, "*Give to him that asketh thee*" ... (Matt. 5:42) - those that are truly in need and not those who are able to work and refuse to work because of laziness. The Apostle Paul echoes these words when he writes, "*as we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith*" (Gal. 6:10). "*Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and tomorrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee*" (Prov. 3:27,28). These are all fruits of a living faith in Jesus who redeemed us from sin, death and everlasting destruction.

Where such fruits of faith are lacking, it is to be feared that true faith in the Savior is dead, for "*faith without works is dead*" (James 2:26). And look at the example which the Apostle James gives! "*If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?*" (2: 15,16).

How fitting that we include the words of the hymnwriter in our morning prayers -

Crown all our labors with success,
Each one in his own calling bless.
May all we do or think or say
Exalt and praise Thee, Lord, this day!
(Hymn 547)

Your servant in Christ,
Pastor M. L. Natterer, President

EASTER IN THE LIGHT OF GOOD FRIDAY

There would be no Easter, no resurrection, except for what happened on the first Good Friday! A trial without precedent was held--almost 20 centuries ago; a trial presided over by a spineless and cowardly Roman governor whose name was Pontius Pilate. It was the duty of this man to decide whether or not an accused person was guilty of the charges laid against him and, in this case, whether that person deserved to be put to death. Pilate was personally convinced that the accused person was innocent, BUT because of the riotous disposition of an angry mob of Jews, he withheld making a formal declaration of "not guilty" in behalf of the prisoner and sought to compromise with the people. A compromise of the truth is, of course, always in favor of error and in favor of that which is evil and wicked--and so we see Pilate yielding more and more to the wishes of the Jews and even taking advice from the very people who were seeking an innocent person's death. He asks them such questions as, "Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?" "What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?" "Shall I crucify your King?" The answer we find stated in only four words in Matthew 27:35, "And they crucified Him!"

Historically speaking, the ones who actually drove the nails through Christ's hands and feet were the Roman soldiers--under orders from Pilate. In the strictest and most literal sense, THEY crucified Him! Yet the responsibility and the guilt for the act of crucifying the Savior falls directly upon Pontius Pilate. And in back of Pilate were the Jews who relentlessly insisted that Christ be crucified. And behind the angry mob of Jews were their religious leaders, the members of the Sanhedrin, who had stirred up the people to oppose Christ. These people were indeed guilty of carrying out the actual act of crucifying Christ and, in this sense, THEY crucified Him. BUT the all-seeing eye of God pierces much more deeply than merely scanning the outward actions of men. "The Lord looketh on the heart," (I Sam. 16:7) and He sees the actual unbelief and sin in the hearts of these men and THAT, IN PARTICULAR, is what makes them guilty of the Savior's crucifixion.

Now, it is NOT difficult to see how this truth applies to us and to all sinners of all ages. The Bible says, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all;" (Is. 53:6); "He was delivered for our offences, ... wounded for our transgressions, ... bruised for our iniquities," (Rom. 4:25, Is. 53:5); "He is the Propitiation for our sins ...," (I John 2:2). Yes, the Lord Jesus died on the cross for the sins of each and every sinner who has lived, or is living, or is yet to live on this sin-cursed earth so that each and every one of us must consider himself guilty of the blood of this just Man. If you, therefore, look closely, in the light of God's Word, at the scene of the crucifixion you cannot help but recognize yourself, your family, your friends, and even your pastor among those who took part in that terrible act! Because of OUR sins, all of us must be included in the act of crucifying Christ.

The inevitable answer of SIN, to this day, to the question of Pilate, "What shall I do then with Jesus?" is still, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" And if we, who have tasted the grace of God in Christ Jesus and profess to be Christians, persist in opposing the Lord and His Word in our lives, we will thereby reiterate that same murderous cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" The Bible says of those who persist in willful sinning, in spite of their knowledge of Christ and His precious Gospel, that "they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame!" (Heb. 6:6).

It is therefore necessary for all those who believe in Jesus as their only Savior and Redeemer to take heed NOT TO CRUCIFY HIM ANEW by unholy living. The Apostle Paul was indeed cognizant of this danger and wrote about it frequently in his epistles. Christians are not merely to suppress their sinful flesh or to keep sin down to a minimum in their lives. They are to CRUCIFY the flesh with its affections and lusts, (Gal. 5:24) and then, in place of the dead man of sin, the Old Adam, they are to substitute the LIVING CHRIST! This was the practice of the Apostle Paul, for he writes, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me!" (Gal. 2:20).

Faith, therefore, answers the question, "What shall I do then with Jesus?", differently than sin answers that question. The answer of the

New Man in the Christian is the very opposite of the answer of his Old Adam. Sin puts the FLESH FIRST and the result is CRUCIFYING CHRIST. Faith puts CHRIST FIRST and the result is CRUCIFYING THE FLESH! This is the very ESSENCE OF OUR CALLING as Christians--the very heart of our Christian profession! It is the true significance of our Christian Baptism! The Apostle Paul elaborates on this very point in His epistle to the Romans, saying, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are DEAD TO SIN, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are BURIED with Him by Baptism into death: that like as Christ was RAISED UP FROM THE DEAD by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin!" (Rom. 6:1-6) Without the significance of Christ's crucifixion on Good Friday, Christ's resurrection on Easter morning would also lose its significance.

Let us therefore keep the feast, "not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us!" (I Cor. 5:7,8).

--PRB

THE EASTER ANGEL'S MESSAGE

Brings Us a Fourfold Comfort and Assurance from Christ's Resurrection

"And he saith unto them, 'Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: He is risen; He is not here: Behold the place where they laid Him. But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: There shall ye see Him, as He said unto you.'" --Mark 16:6-7

On Easter Sunday we Christians marked once again, as we do each and every year, the most **significant**, the most **essential**, the most **glorious**, and to be sure the most **comforting** festival on our church calendar: The Festival of the ***Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, from the Dead.*** Indeed, the event we commemorate on Easter Day is **absolutely central** to our entire Christian faith, as central as the hub is to a wheel; for virtually every fundamental doctrine of Holy Scripture is inseparably linked to the *fact* of Christ's resurrection --either pointing **to** it, stemming **from** it, or depending **upon** it! In fact, Jesus' life here on earth, His entire public ministry, and His death on the cross for the sins of the world --all would be **for NOTHING** if He had not truly risen from His grave on Easter morning! For Jesus of Nazareth would have been the greatest fool, fraud, and "flim-flam" con-artist the world had ever seen, a liar and deceiver without equal in the annals of history! And WE, His disciples, would be fools as well to have fallen for His "line" and placed our confidence in Him!

The devil, of course, would have us, and all men for that matter, believe precisely that very thing about the Savior and His mighty resurrection; for Satan deeply **resents** that final and ultimate victory which Jesus won over him when He rose from the dead on the third day! And so the Foe's **adherents** have, from that very moment, sought to discredit, disprove, and even poke fun at the resurrection account in hopes of destroying our most holy faith and leading us to everlasting destruction! But these enemies of

Christ and His Word are **doomed to failure** from the outset, for they fly in the face of the TRUTH, of established FACT, of incontrovertible EVIDENCE and eye-witness TESTIMONY. For *Jesus of Nazareth did in fact rise from His grave* on Easter Sunday morning after having *died* the previous Friday afternoon! His **true death** was certified by *objective medical evidence* and by *professional evaluation*, and His **true life** after His resurrection was amply demonstrated *"by many infallible proofs"* (Acts 1:3). Consequently, the claims of unbelieving scoffers notwithstanding, the **FACT** of the Lord's resurrection **speaks for itself!**

Therefore, what we want to examine in this present article is not so much the FACT but the **RESULT** of Jesus' resurrection, namely, what it **accomplished** and why it is of such **importance** to us Christians. We note that the Easter angel's message to the women at the empty sepulchre brings us a ***fourfold comfort and assurance*** from the Savior's resurrection.

The first of these is that, by rising from the dead, ***Jesus of Nazareth proved Himself to be the very Son of God.*** The words of the angel were plain enough: *"He is risen; He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him."* The fact of Jesus' resurrection was clear for anyone to see who cared to look at the evidence. *"**Behold!**"* said the angel; "**LOOK** at the place where you yourselves saw Him laid out on Good Friday afternoon, unmistakably dead, as the Roman centurion also saw and testified. **Look NOW** at the empty slab before you, the linen clothes neatly folded and laid aside as no hurried grave robber would have bothered to do. **See** for yourselves!" And this word *"behold"* points not only those women but also **US**, who have the additional Gospel accounts and their evidence, as well as the eyewitness testimony of literally hundreds who saw the Savior alive during the forty days following, yes, that word directs **US** to recognize ***without doubt*** the **FACT** of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

But the words *"**He is risen!**"* give us much more than a mere report of this fact. They convey to us the **assurance** that, in this mighty act, ***Jesus proved Himself to be the very Son of God!*** For who but **God alone** has the ability to raise Himself from the dead?? Who but the **almighty Lord of heaven and earth** could have exercised such superior might that, concerning His very own life, He could declare in advance: *"**I** have power to lay it down, and **I** have power to take it again"*?? Thus the Apostle Paul, writing to the Romans, chapter 1, verse 4, **confirms** this first

assurance of the Easter angel, saying: *"He was declared to be the SON OF GOD with POWER ...* ***by the resurrection from the dead.***"

And, lest anyone dare claim that Jesus' words and promises were mere empty boasts and vain prophecies, the angel brings us his second Easter comfort and assurance, saying: *"Be not affrighted"* --don't be so **amazed** and **astonished**, as if this were an unexpected development-- for, by His mighty resurrection from the dead, ***Jesus of Nazareth has shown His Word to be the truth!***-- *"He is risen; He is not here ... But He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him,* ***as He said unto you.***" Jesus had not only promised to rise again on the third day, but He had told His disciples that they would see Him face-to-face thereafter in Galilee. And Matthew's record shows that the angel's words, *"as He said unto you,"* refer not only to Jesus' appearance in Galilee but to the **resurrection itself**; for Matthew quotes the angel as saying: *"He is risen,* ***as He said!***" And St. Luke, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, adds striking detail, quoting TWO angels at the grave giving the women this assurance of the truth of Jesus' Word: *"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen:* ***Remember how He spake unto you*** *... saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day* ***rise again.'*** *And they remembered His words."* (Luke 24:5-8)

Why, even Jesus' enemies knew well His words concerning His resurrection from the dead. Oh, they **pretended** at first not to have understood them, when at His trial before Caiaphas they introduced false witnesses to make it seem as if He had threatened to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem and to rebuild it in three days. But they **gave themselves away** when, after His death, they went to Pilate for a seal on the grave, saying: *"Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, 'After three days* ***I will rise again.'*** Pilate should have marked well and believed those words, for Jesus had told him in advance, *"Everyone that is of the* ***truth*** *heareth* ***My voice.***" Yea, **ALL** of Jesus' Word --not just the red print highlighted in modern-day Bibles, but **ALL** of the Holy Scriptures, which He identified as **His precious Word**-- is the **TRUTH**, absolutely reliable in every detail; for He assures us: *"If ye continue in* ***My Word,*** *then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the* ***TRUTH,*** *and the truth shall make you* ***free.***" (John 8:31-32)

And it is this very freedom to which the angel refers in the third assurance we have in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, namely, that ***His heavenly Father accepted His vicarious sacrifice as payment-in-full for the sins of the world.*** *"Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth,* ***which was crucified,"*** said the Easter angel. The very purpose of Jesus' crucifixion, yea, of all His suffering, was to provide, **in our place** and **on our behalf**, a ransom-price of sufficient value that God in heaven would accept its payment as complete satisfaction of divine justice. Thus Isaiah had prophesied concerning Jesus in his 53rd chapter: *"The Lord hath laid on* ***Him*** *the iniquity of* ***us all."*** Yes, *"Christ suffered* ***for us,"*** Peter writes in his first epistle, chapter 2, *"who His own self bare* ***our sins*** *in* ***His own body on the tree,"*** *--"Jesus of Nazareth,* ***which was crucified."***

And yet, if Jesus had suffered all that anguish, including the very pains of hell itself (Matthew 27:46, etc.) in our place, but then had **remained in the grave**, helplessly bound in the chains of death, His entire sacrifice would have been **for nothing**! For He would have been "shown up" to be a mere man, just another human being, *"none of [whom] can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of their soul is* ***precious!"*** (Psalm 49:7-8) Then indeed we would be fools for trusting in Him as our Redeemer, for St. Paul writes in I Corinthians 15:17, *"If Christ be* ***not*** *raised, your faith is* ***vain;*** *ye are yet in your sins!"* We would still be lost and condemned, headed for hell!

But thanks be to God, beloved fellow-sinners, that Jesus of Nazareth did **NOT** remain in His grave but **rose victoriously** on Easter morning as the **Mighty Conqueror** of sin, death, and Satan --**not** just a mere man whose sacrifice of Himself would otherwise have been an empty gesture and completely in vain, but as the **certified Redeemer** of lost mankind! For the Bible tells us, Romans 4:25, *"Christ was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again* ***for our justification,"*** as the sure sign that His payment **made good** our debt to God! That was God the Father's *seal of approval,* so to speak, *"which* ***He*** *wrought* ***in Christ*** *when* ***He raised Him*** *from the dead."* (Ephesians 1:20)

What a wonderful assurance and comfort to us Christians is this glorious fact of God's own Word, that the Father in heaven raised Jesus of Nazareth from the dead as **ironclad testimony** that **He fully accepted the sacrifice of His Son for the reconciliation of the world** unto Himself, and has,

because of what Jesus paid on our behalf, forgiven the sins of the whole world and declared all sinners righteous in His sight. This free gift of *objective justification* He has published to all men in the Gospel, earnestly desiring *"all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth"* (I Timothy 2:4), *"that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* (John 3:16) Thus, as His adopted children and heirs of salvation by faith in His Son, we rejoice to praise Him with the Apostle Peter, saying: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope* ***by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*** *to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven* ***for YOU!"*** (I Peter 1:3-4)

And the promise of that blessed inheritance brings us now to the fourth and final assurance and comfort we have in the message of the Easter angel, namely, that ***we too shall see our Savior face-to-face at our own resurrection on the Last Day.*** For the angel instructed the women to tell Jesus' disciples that He would go before them into Galilee; *"there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you."* We can well imagine the JOY that these words brought to the disciples with the prospect of seeing their Savior alive, face-to-face, just as He had promised them! But the angel's words should fill also **OUR HEARTS** with the very same **joy of anticipation**! For the Lord's promise to **US** is **just as sure** as His promise to the disciples! Yes, the FRUIT of **Jesus' resurrection** will be **our own resurrection**, for He Himself links them together, saying: *"Because* ***I*** *live,* ***ye*** *shall live also."* (John 14:19) *"I go to prepare a place* ***for you,"*** He tells us, *"and I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where* ***I*** *am, there* ***ye*** *may be also."* (John 14:2-3)

In Christ, our risen and ever-living Savior, we have the very **prototype** of **our own** resurrection from **our own** graves on the Last Day; for as St. Paul assures us in I Corinthians 15, *"If in* ***this life only*** *we have hope in Christ, we are of all men* ***most miserable!*** *But now IS Christ risen from the dead and become the* ***firstfruits*** *of them that slept ... but every man in his own order: Christ, the* ***firstfruits"*** [that is, the *prototype*] *"afterward* ***they that are Christ's*** *at His coming."* Even Job in the Old Testament was confident of his resurrection to eternal life as an heir of God through faith in Christ his Savior; for he declared: *"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though, after my*

skin, worms destroy this body, yet ***in my flesh shall I see God****, whom I shall see* ***for myself****; and* ***mine eyes*** *shall behold, and* ***not another****, though my reins be consumed within me!"* (Job 19:25-27)

O what sweet joy and gladness is ours this holy Easter season --joy not merely in the FACT of Jesus' mighty resurrection from the dead, but, even **better**, joy in the blessed **RESULT** of this miracle-of-miracles, yea, His own **assurance** to quell our fears and His own **comfort** to dry our tears! For Christ's resurrection ***proves*** without a doubt that He is truly the almighty **Son of God**. It ***establishes*** beyond any question the **truth** and **absolute reliability** of **His Word**. It ***testifies*** that God the Father was **completely satisfied with Jesus' sacrifice** for the reconciliation of the world. And it ***assures*** every believer, according to Jesus' own promise, of **resurrection in like manner** to everlasting glory on Judgment Day.

May the words of the Easter angel ever remind us of all these blessed assurances and strengthen our confidence in them day-by-day, until by God's matchless grace in Christ, our crucified and risen Redeemer, we enter the mansions He has prepared for us in His heavenly home and glorious kingdom!

He lives! All glory to His Name!
He lives, my Jesus still the same!
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives:
"I KNOW that my Redeemer LIVES!"

--D. T. M.

CHRIST'S SITTING ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD

"He ascended into heaven And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty." (The Apostles' Creed, L.H., p.12)

Each time we confess the Creed, we confess the above words. We confess to believe on the basis of the clear Word of God that Jesus Christ, upon completing His redemptive work on earth, bodily and visibly ascended into heaven, and that He then sat on the right hand of God. What a shame if we confess these truths without having a clear, correct understanding of what we confess.

In this article, we shall do two things: 1) Explain briefly what the Bible means by Christ's sitting on the right hand of God; 2) Expand on the three-fold answer to Question #155 of our synodical catechism, "What comfort do you derive from Christ's sitting on the right hand of God?"

First, what exactly does the Scripture mean when it says that Christ sits on the right hand of God? For example, in Mark 16:19 the Bible says, "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." Here as in other places, the Bible uses an anthropomorphism (a man-form) to describe a profound divine action. The phrase, sitting on the right hand of God, does not denote a visible, localized action, but an eternal, divine action of the God-man, Jesus Christ. Christ is not seated on a chair on the right side of God. God is everywhere, and therefore His right hand is everywhere. Hence, Christ's sitting at God's right hand expresses the truth that, even according to His human nature, He exercises fully His divine powers, the very powers originally communicated to His human nature when He was conceived and born of Mary. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matthew 28:18)

As soon as the divine nature took unto itself the human nature, without sacrificing any of its powers and attributes, it communicated those very attributes and powers to the human nature. Yet the human nature, from the time Christ was conceived until He was buried, did not fully and

always use the divine powers communicated to it. Hence this was the period of Christ's State of Humiliation.

However, once Christ came alive in the grave on Easter morn and descended into hell, and then rose again, this began His State of Exaltation which "consists in this, that according to His human nature, Christ always and fully uses the divine attributes communicated to His human nature." (Synodical Catechism, page 116) Therefore, even now at God's right hand, "Christ, also according to His human nature, rules and fills all things with divine power and majesty." (Synodical Catechism, page 119)

Hence, Christ's sitting on God's right hand is not to be thought of as some static, holding pattern, wherein He virtually does nothing until He returns in glory on the Last Day. Even now at God's right hand, Christ remains our very active Prophet, Priest, and King. In fact, since Christ is exalted to God's right hand, He is now our EXALTED Prophet, EXALTED Priest, and EXALTED King. It is in this regard that our synodical catechism asks this: "What comfort do you derive from Christ's sitting on the right hand of God?" Answer: "We derive the comfort that it is the **exalted** Christ who - A. As our **Prophet sends men** to preach the Gospel of redemption; B. As our **Priest intercedes** (pleads) for us before God; C. As our **King governs and protects His Church** and as Head of the Church **rules the world in the interest** of the Church." We shall take up this three-fold answer and see how practically important it is in our everyday lives as Christians.

In the first place, it is a comfort for us to know that as Christ sits on God's right hand, He still exercises His Prophetic office, however not preaching and teaching visibly and personally as He did during His earthly ministry, but through His called ministers of the Word. According to Scripture, upon His Ascension, Christ gave gifts unto men, namely, He gave the Church men gifted and able to be made qualified for the purpose of carrying out in His stead His Prophetic Office. Ephesians 4:10-12 says, "[He] ascended up far above all heavens that he might fill all things. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." This passage is a sedes or proof text which proves that Christ ordained the office of the ministry, the pastoral office, to continue on earth His prophetic office.

What is important about this truth? Even though Christ is visibly absent from us, nevertheless, He still preaches to us His Holy Word. He still communicates to us the words of eternal life. We are not deprived of His Prophetic Office. However, if we are to avail ourselves of Christ's Prophetic Office, we must be willing to submit to and be instructed by the pastors and teachers (one and the same office) which Christ has given His Church. In our day the Office of the Ministry has been reduced to little more than the office of "spiritual cheerleader," or "public relations executive." People want their pastor to be a great promoter of programs which will appeal to their and the community's carnal appetites. In bowing to such carnal wishes, most of today's so-called ministers have long ago given up on being strictly ministers of the Word of God. As such they do not carry out the prophetic Office of Christ. They are people-pleasers, and not God-pleasers. It is just as Paul prophesied in II Timothy 4:3-4, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." This is precisely what we have in visible Christendom today! Fables (false teachings of all sorts) are preferred in place of sound doctrine!

At the same time, however, where God provides faithful, orthodox men of the Word, and men despise the pure teaching of the Word, they are despising Christ and His Prophetic Office. As Christ once said to His disciples: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me." (Luke 10:16) Sometimes congregations give their faithful pastors a rough time. They are willing to come to church, but feel burdened if they are urged to stay for Bible Class or come to a mid-week Bible study or some additional study of the Word. They ask the self-condemning question: "Do we HAVE TO come to Bible Class?" Where is the hunger and thirst after righteousness? Does not Scripture say, "As newborn babes, **desire** the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby"! (I Peter 2:2) So often, even when they do hear the Word, they are offended when the preaching of the Law exposes their sins, or they are indifferent to the Gospel because they are satiated with their own self-proclaimed righteousness. Therefore, if we appreciate the fact that Christ is still our Prophet on the right hand of God, we will listen to Him through our called minister of the Word. As the Scripture says, "Receive with meekness the engrafted Word which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21)

In addition, from the fact that Christ sits on the right hand of God, we derive the comfort that He "as our Priest intercedes (pleads) for us before God." As Christians, as sinner-saints, we must continue to confess that daily we sin much. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (I John 1:8) Even if we do not sin willfully and fall from grace, we nevertheless must remain a repentant people such that we never defend our sins, even our sins of weakness. Hence, we must daily confess and repent of our sins. Yet as we do so, we have the comfort of knowing that at God's right hand, Christ our Savior intercedes or pleads for us before the throne of His heavenly Father. He ever pleads and reminds the Father of His shed blood which reconciled God to us. As the Bible says, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (I John 2:1-2) Another Scripture says, "Who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Romans 8:34) Thus, even as we pray to our Father to ask His forgiveness, we have the comfort of knowing that our very Savior who shed His blood for our sins also prays for us. As the Bible says, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Romans 8:33-34)

Indeed, let it be said here that more often than we may realize, we do fall from grace, but due to our Savior's grace and His faithful intercession for us, we quickly repent and are restored. Remember what Christ once said to Simon Peter? "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:31-32) So also now on the right hand of God, Christ prays for US that OUR faith fails not!

Furthermore, from the fact that Christ sits on the right hand of God, we derive the comfort that Christ "as our King governs and protects His Church and as Head of the Church rules the world in the interest of the Church." What a blessed truth this is! In these last days of sore distress, we as Christians can see how wickedness abounds in our world. It appears as if the devil, the prince of this world, is actually in charge of the world! There is corruption at every level of government. In response there are

many who, in spite of the fact that government, the powers that be which are ordained of God (Romans 13:1), believe that government in any form is inherently wicked and must be overthrown. We see people taking the law into their own hands. We also see nation rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. We hear of wars and rumors of wars.

Yet despite all this, Jesus Christ on the right hand of God is still our King. He is King of the universe. He is the King of kings. He is also the King and ruler of the Church. As the King over all, Christ is actually ruling this wicked world in such a way that it results in the best interest of the Church! The Bible says, "[God] set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; **and hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."** (Eph. 1:20-23)

In fact, Scripture reveals how God has ever ruled this world in the Church's interest. Cyrus the King of Persia permitted the Hebrew people to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild their temple around 535 B.C. God also had the sceptre depart from Judah so that Shiloh (Christ) could come to be the Messiah. Indeed, unwittingly, the rulers of the world are used of God such that without their realizing it, they are carrying out the will of the King of kings! Even when existing governments are most oppressive, Christ is still in charge and has all enemies as His footstool. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Psalm 110:1)

This is why our Savior reminds us, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) This means that although we should be good citizens who remain reasonably informed of what is going on around us, we need not become overwrought with the evils of this world and join quasi-religious and therefore unionistic political organizations whose goal is to make this world a "better place to live." The Bible says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." (Col. 3:1) As Christians, we are to be busy listening to and spreading our Exalted Prophet's Word of grace; come boldly before Him our sympathetic High Priest and His throne of grace, that we might obtain

mercy and find grace to help in time of need, knowing that He ever intercedes for us; and finally entrust our entire bodily and spiritual welfare into the hands of our Savior King who has put all things under His feet in the interest of His Church! *Hallelujah! Hallelujah!*

On Christ's ascension I now build
The hope of mine ascension;
This hope alone has ever stilled
All doubt and apprehension;
For where the Head is, there full well
I know His members are to dwell
When Christ shall come to call them.

Since He returned to claim His throne,
Great gifts for men obtaining,
My heart shall rest in Him alone,
No other rest remaining;
For where my Treasure went before,
There all my tho'ts shall ever soar
To still their deepest yearning.

Oh, grant, dear Lord, this grace to me,
Recalling Thine ascension,
That I may ever walk with Thee,
Adorning Thy redemption;
And then, when all my days shall cease,
Let me depart in joy and peace
In answer to my pleading. L.H. #216

--ERS

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

I. Going to Church is--

A. an old custom. Luke 2:41. The early Christians had their Church Services. Heb. 10:25; Acts 2:42.

B. a divine institution.

1. God has instituted the Office of the Ministry. Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; Acts 20:17,28. Since God has commanded that His Word be preached, 2 Tim. 4:1,2, He therefore expects people to *hear* it preached. Luke 10:16. One reads and the other listens. Rev. 1:3.
2. God has instituted the Sacraments. The congregation is to come together for the administration of these Sacraments. Acts. 20:7.
3. It is God's will and ordinance that the Christians who dwell in one locality form a Christian congregation. I Cor. 1:2, Gal. 1:2; Thess. 1:1.

C. To attend or not to attend Church is therefore not left to the whim of the Christian. But the place, time, and order of service, are matters of Christian liberty.

II. Who should go to Church? Everyone. Luke 2:41,42, the whole family.

A. Fathers: List and refute some objections which many men give for not attending Church.

B. Mothers: how many women feel that they must remain home to tend the children and see to it that dinner is served on time? Luke 10:38-42.

C. Children: Whoever allows his children to remain at home so that they do not become accustomed to attending Church, can hardly expect them to be diligent in their Church attendance in later life. Prov. 22:5; Eph. 6:4.

III. Where should a Christian attend Church? Mary and Joseph went to the Temple of the Lord. A Temple of God is that place where the Word of God is taught in all of its truth and purity and the Sacraments administered according to Christ's institution. False churches are to be avoided. Rom. 16:17; I Tim. 6:3 ff.

IV. How should we go to Church?

A. Regularly. We should not miss the Divine Service because of-
   1. the weather. "It's too hot, too cold, too wet, etc."
   2. the distance. In 1703 the Huguenots in Rochelle traveled 20 miles during the night so that they might attend the Divine Service on Sunday morning.
   3. company. Bring the company along if they will come. If not, let them wait until you return.
   4. the ridicule of so-called friends. Such are not real friends if they are not interested in the welfare of your soul.
   5. inability to contribute generously. 2 Cor. 8:12; 9:7.
   6. Can you mention others?

B. Willingly. Attending the Divine Service should not be a drudgery. It should be a joyous privilege. Ps. 26:8; 122:1; 84:2,10; 27:4; Acts 2:46

V. Why should we go to Church?

A. God demands it. (3rd Commandment). We should not despise preaching and His Word.

B. By going to Church we give testimony of our faith.

C. By attending Church we also foster true Christian fellowship. Is it not the same with coals? Together they glow, but spread out individually they quickly die out.

D. We should set a good example. Matt. 5:16.

E. We need to go to Church. Our faith is not self-sustaining. It needs to be nourished and strengthened by the preaching of the Word of God.

F. The blessings and benefits in attending the Divine Service are great.
   1. Through the preaching of the Word of God the sinner is converted, Rom. 10:17; faith is kindled and preserved; the carnally secure are aroused, and the terrified sinners are comforted.
   2. What treasures are dispensed to us in the Church Service! Matt. 18:20; Gen. 28:17.

VI. False motives in attending Church. Many go to Church--

A. merely to be seen of people and to show off their finety. (Think especially of Easter!) Matt. 6:5.

B. for business reasons.

C. Can you add some more?

VII. A blessed Church attendance.

A. Arrange our affairs in such a manner on Saturday so that we are ready and eager to hear God's Word on Sunday morning.
B. Come a little early so that we have time to offer a prayer before the Divine Service begins. Eccl. 5:1; Hymn 5, v.1.
C. Boisterousness and loud talking are most disturbing in the Church and should be avoided.
D. Sing along with all of the hymns and join in the prayers.
E. Receive the preaching as the Word of God and apply it to ourselves. I Thess. 2:13; Luke 10:16.
F. If there are any visitors present, make it a point to greet them after the Service. Out-of-town visitors could be invited for dinner, and, if necessary, be given overnight lodging. I Pet. 4:9; Rom. 12:13.
G. Put into practice what we have learned from the Word of God. Luke 8:14-15.

VIII. Excuses which people often give for not going to Church.
A. "I can listen to a sermon over the radio." Heb. 10:25.
1. Whoever does not come to the Divine Service usually does not bother to read or listen to a sermon at home.
2. Such an attitude shows contempt for the Office of the Ministry. Luke 10:16.
B. "I know everything that the Pastor preaches."
1. Is that really true?
2. "I am also a doctor and preacher . . . And I must still read and study daily, and yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and a pupil of the Catechism, and am glad so to remain." (Luther)
C. "Church-going does not save one." It is true that the *outward* attendance in Church does not save one. (The Pharisee, Luke 18). Sitting at a table does not fill a person unless he eats. But one thing is certain, whoever *despises* the preaching of God's Word will not be saved! John 8:47.
D. "I don't trust the Pastor. I was cheated once and I don't intend to be cheated again." Would you blame *all* mechanics for the bad job which *one* mechanic may have done on your car?
E. "I still have plenty of time to go to Church and be good; I want to enjoy life first." Luke 12:16-21; Gal. 6:7,8.
F. "My faith is strong enough so that I do not have to attend Church every Sunday." I Cor. 10:12.

IX. What are some of the reasons for *irregular* Church attendance?

A. Self-complacency and unbelief. Luke 14:16-20.

B. Through irregular Church attendance a person not only robs himself of many blessings, but his spiritual life grows weaker and weaker and he becomes an easy prey for the devil who is really behind irregular attendance at the Divine Service.

X. What can be done to improve Church attendance?

A. False inducements.

1. Offering rewards (Trading stamps, CL., Nov. 1957, p.167 ff.)
2. The formation of clubs and organizations *with the express purpose in mind* of bringing people to Church through social activities.

B. The Scriptural method.

1. The preaching of the pure Word of God is the only means by which we should get the people to attend Church. "There is nothing that attaches the people more to the Church than a good sermon." (Luther) Rom. 10:17.
2. Brotherly admonitions from the pastor, elders, and members. Col. 3:16; Heb. 10:25.
3. Set a good example by diligently attending Church *ourselves*.

--M.L.N.

The 44th Annual Convention

of the

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

will be held, the Lord willing, at

Peace Ev. Lutheran Church

Central Ave. at 171st Place
Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913
Phone (708) 532-4288

Rev. David T. Mensing, Host Pastor

June 23, 24, 25, 1995

CONVENTION MOTTO

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven." Matt. 5:16

CONVENTION ESSAY

The absolute necessity of good works
in the life of every true Christian

Rev. Paul R. Bloedel, Essayist
Pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Seattle, Washington

Pastoral Conference to be held on June 20th & 21st
Board of Directors Meeting to be held on June 22nd

A MEMORABLE DAY

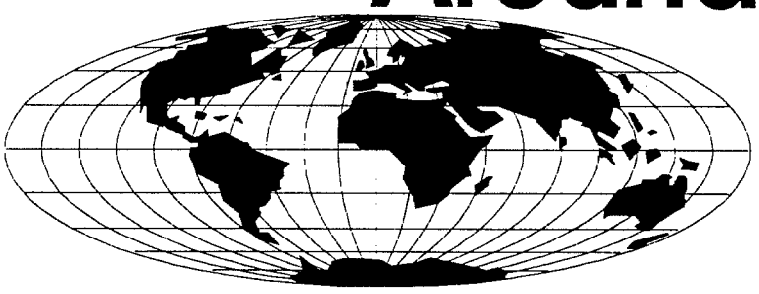
On May 7, 1995, one of our sister congregations, Holy Scripture Ev. Lutheran Church of San Antonio, TX, E.R. Stallings, Jr., Pastor, observed a very special two-fold celebration.

May 7, 1995 was the Twentieth Anniversary of the congregation. In a special 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion service, the congregation praised and thanked God for twenty years of grace. The special anniversary sermon was entitled, "We Celebrate Twenty Years of God's Grace," with the text being Genesis 32:10. Special guests at the anniversary service were Pastor M.L. Natterer, Pastor of St. John's Lutheran, Lebanon, OR, and his daughter Mrs. William (Linda) Schrader, also of St. John's, Lebanon. In addition, Mrs. Mark (Linda) Dierking, wife of Pastor Mark W. Dierking, and Mrs. Richard Jurgens, both from St. Stephen's Lutheran of Wilmot, SD were in attendance.

Then, at 3:30 p.m., the congregation held a special Dedication Service to dedicate to the Glory of God their "new" church building at 5605 Windsong Drive. The guest preacher for the dedication service was Pastor M.L. Natterer, President of our Concordia Lutheran Conference. His excellent sermon was based on Psalm 122:1, "*I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.*" The service of dedication was begun with the traditional door-opening and entry ceremony as set forth in The Lutheran Agenda. Immediately following the service of dedication was a reading of Scripturally edifying congratulatory letters sent by the pastors of sister congregations of the Conference. After a fifteen minute recess, the congregation along with visitors and guests re-assembled for a lovely informal reception. Included in the reception was the presentation of certificates of appreciation to various individuals whose unselfish and tireless labors were manifestly exemplary.

As the day came to a close, the members of the congregation were filled with the realization that the Lord has been superabundantly good to them. As they sang in the morning Anniversary Service, "The Lord Hath Helped Me Hitherto." For this reason, the members of the congregation wish to share their joy and thankfulness with our readers.

Around the World



with editorial comment

by M. L. Natterer

Profanity seems to be one of those problems about which almost everyone agrees something should be done. Yet few of us ever do anything about it. On the contrary, most of us contribute, if not to its proliferation, at least to its continuation, by swearing ourselves or making no attempt to curb it in others. I recalled with guilt all the less-than-delicate language that had rolled off my tongue through the years - when I was mad, when I was glad, when I was trying to be dramatic and, yes, even when I had to wait in line for a few seconds ... Recently I read a newspaper article that stated although Americans do have a concern about all the unbridled profanity around us every day, the reality is that we are swearing more, hearing it less ... (NEWSWEEK, October 17, 1994)

The excerpts above were taken from a lengthier article written by Sandra Maurer, director of college relations at Grand View College, Des Moines, Iowa. She relates an experience she had in a convenience store about a man who burst forth with a stream of curse words and foul obscenities. As we well know, cursing is very commonplace. Whether it be in the work place, social functions or sport activities, cursing is seldom a stranger. Twenty years ago we never heard a curse word either on radio or TV. Now the programs on which there is no cursing constitute the minority. It used to be said that the reason why some people curse is due to their limited vocabulary. But this is not true. Presidents Johnson, Kennedy, Nixon, Clinton, for example, - all very well educated men - yet their language, at least when not before the public, was invariably laced with profanities. How often we even hear so-called Christians yield to this sin in a moment of weakness. Writing to the Christians the Apostle James admonishes, "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (3:10). Remember the example of that disciple who had been with the Savior for three years

and had witnessed the miracles He performed and heard the gracious words of life from His lips? What a sad scene is pictured to us as that disciple denies his Lord and Savior with cursing and swearing! (Mark 14:71). We Christians should therefore constantly pray with the Psalmist, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips" (141:3). Let there be no mistake! Taking God's Name in vain is a sin against God Himself who commands, "Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain" (Exodus 20:7). Taking God's Name in vain is a trait of God's enemies. The Psalmist says that those that hate God "speak against Thee wickedly, and Thine enemies take Thy Name in vain" (139:20). In the Old Testament those who cursed were stoned to death (Lev. 24:10-16). A far worse fate awaits those who take God's Name in vain and do not repent! Such "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. 1:9). God has given us our tongues not to curse, but to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (2 Pet. 2:9).

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When it comes to determining an individual's desire to commit suicide, physicians rely heavily on experience and intuition. There has never been a laboratory test that doctors could order that would help them measure the risk more precisely. That predicament seems likely to change in the next few years, as scientists learn more about the biochemistry of behavior. Some of the latest research ... suggests that measuring the levels of certain chemicals in the brain can identify those people with a biological predisposition to self-destruction. "More than 95% of the people who commit suicide show these changes in the brain (at autopsy)." says Dr. John Mann of the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City. "But the bio-chemical abnormality is there even in those who attempt to kill themselves. And it is most pronounced in those who make the most dangerous attempts." A lab test for suicide - the eighth leading cause of death in the U.S. - sounds incredible. Yet it is only one of the promising developments being pursued in the hot new field of biological psychiatry ... There have been setbacks. Despite compelling evidence that manic depression, a mental illness characterized by extreme mood swings, runs in families, no one has isolated the genes responsible for the disorder ... (TIME, November 28, 1994)

Suicide is the termination of one's own life by personal choice. The reasons for ending one's own life vary. It may be a bitter divorce, a disease, a physical handicap, the loss of a loved one, financial ruin, etc., which triggers the individual into thinking: "I have nothing more to live for. I might as well end it all now." Behind all such thoughts stands the father of all lies - the devil. Is it any wonder that the Scriptures refer to him as "the destroyer" (Rev. 9:11). This enemy of our body and soul knows that his time is short (Rev. 12:12), and he seeks with diabolical cunning to destroy the works of God and take with him as many souls as he can gather into the everlasting fires prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). Those who contemplate suicide and think that once they are dead they shall have eternal peace, had better think twice! The Word of God tells us that "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31) who has given us our life and who alone has the right to end it. When Job lost his seven sons and three daughters in death he exclaimed, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away" ... (Job 1:21). It is God who brought us into being within the womb of our mothers (Job 10:8ff) and it is the Lord who has determined the time of our death (Cp. Job 14:5). But it is also true that man can terminate his life as did King Saul and Judas Iscariot by committing suicide (1 Sam. 31:4; Matt. 27:5). What a horrible thing it is for loved ones to find a father, mother, etc., who has committed suicide! Such a scene leaves an indelible lifelong imprint upon the mind! But that is of no concern to the one who has committed such a cowardly act! Christians must also beware lest in a moment of weakness they succumb to the voice of the tempter! We must cling to the precious promises of our dear Lord who is always mindful of His dear children and will never allow those to be put to shame who cast their burdens upon the Lord and trust in Him! (Ps. 55:22).

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God was the essence of Paul Hill's defense. He dismissed his court-appointed lawyers, called no one to the stand and didn't even try to cross-examine any of the prosecution's witnesses. Hill, a former Presbyterian minister, doesn't deny shooting John Britton, an abortion doctor in Pensacola, Fla., and his volunteer escort. Instead, he told the jury, "To the

extent that we take part in this evil, we will answer to God, and may God have mercy on us all." ... No one was watching the Pensacola trial more attentively than those whom Hill describes as evil ... Some are guided by religious beliefs they say are no less profound than those of the pro-life activists. "You can be deeply religious and perform abortion services. I perform abortions because of my religion," says Curtis Boyd, a Texas abortion doctor and former Unitarian minister ... Suzanne Poppema, a Seattle abortion doctor, declares that "Every day I feel I've made a small difference in the world." ... Religious abortion doctors want more support from their clergy. Dr. Boyd is often asked by Native American women to bless the aborted fetus, and by Roman Catholic women to baptize it ... (NEWSWEEK, October 17, 1994)

The Lord Jesus has given the commission to the Church, "to preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). It is the sacred responsibility of every true Christian to bring the message of salvation to everyone as the Lord grants him the opportunity during his lifetime. With the Apostle Paul a Christian confesses that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (2 Cor. 10:4). We Christians are to make use not of earthly weapons to spread this message of salvation but "the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Eph. 6:17). It is the State which must use the earthly sword to punish the evil-doers (1 Pet. 2:13,14) and not the Church whose sole duty it is to proclaim among all nations repentance and remission of sins in Jesus' Name (Luke 24:47). The fact that the State does not fulfill its specific duties in punishing the evil-doers, yea, even permitting evil deeds legally to be performed, does not mean that the Church must step in and make use of the earthly sword. This is precisely what Paul Hill has done. Let there be no mistake. Although abortion doctors may attempt to appease their consciences by claiming the legality of their abortions, they sin grievously against the Word of the Lord by being guilty of murder! Nonetheless, one sin does not excuse another sin! The end does not justify the means! God's Word does not teach "let us do evil, that good may come" (Rom. 3:8). The fact that the State may allow and even encourage something which is contrary to the Word of God rests upon the heads of those who have enacted such evil laws and they, together with those who carry them out, shall have to stand before the Judgment Seat of God and give account. While we Christians are not to make use of the earthly sword to thwart such evil endeavors, we are certainly to rebuke such sins and never to assist

in carrying them out! "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

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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

5605 Windsong Drive
Windcrest, TX 78239
Telephone: (210) 650-9053

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: Services are also held each Sunday in our Midland, Michigan chapel at the **Ramada Inn**, 1815 South Saginaw Road:

Sunday School and
Bible Class ..... 6:30 p.m.
Worship Service ..... 7:30 p.m.

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