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“The Scripture cannot be broken.” John 10:35.

“Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path.” Psalm 119:105.

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“Jesus...
manifested forth
His glory.”

— John 2:11



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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.

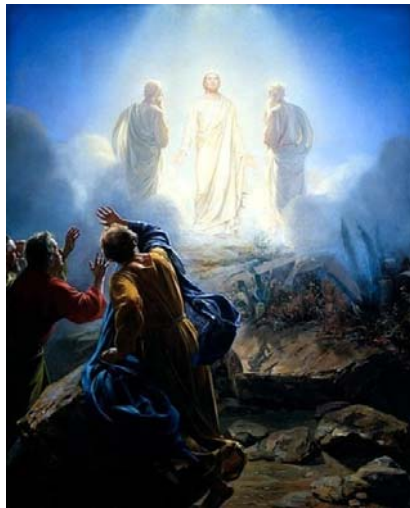
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The Person and Work of Christ Manifested in His Transfiguration

“And, behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory and spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.” — Luke 9:30-31



When we Christians speak of the **Epiphany** of our Lord, we are using a word of Greek origin meaning “appearance” or “manifestation;” and we refer initially to the appearance of Jesus in His infancy already to the **Magi**, the Wise Men from the East. In fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy (Isaiah 60:1-6), the Baby Jesus, at an age of no greater than two years — “according to the time which [Herod] had diligently inquired of the wise men” (Matthew 2:16) — “appeared” or “manifested Himself” to those strangers from afar as the “*Light to lighten the Gentiles*” (cf. Luke 2:32), the Savior of ALL mankind, not just the “*King of the Jews*” (Matthew 2:2). Thus we Christians celebrate that appearance on **January 6th** each year with special rejoicing because of its particular significance for us **Gentiles**, us non-Jews according to our descendancy from barbarian and heathen tribes in Europe and elsewhere. And, while most people take down their Christmas decorations and packed them away as early as a day or two after Christmas, many Christians deliberately keep the celebration going through **January 6th**, the “*Gentiles’ Christmas*,” or the nearest Sunday to it, in grateful recognition of Jesus’ “*Epiphany*” as the Savior of “*ALL people*” (Luke 2:10), including us Gentiles.

But the Epiphany of our Lord also has a wider significance, as we consider, for example, His **appearance** or **manifestation** to men in His public ministry, that is, when, at the age of thirty years (Luke 3:23), He first appeared on the scene to be **publicly recognized** as the long-promised Messiah and Savior of the world. He appeared first of all

“unto **His own**” (John 1:11), to the people of Israel according to the flesh. It was that Epiphany which the Messiah’s “messenger” (Malachi 3:1), John the Baptist, had proclaimed in the wilderness of Judea, as he preached repentance and baptized the people in Jordan, and where the Savior was specially manifested at His own baptism by the voice of God the Father and by the appearance of the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove (Matthew 3:16-17); and John the Baptist personally pointed Him out to his own disciples, saying: “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Shortly thereafter, Jesus “**manifested forth His glory**” (John 2:11) in His first miracle at Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine; and subsequently, throughout the course of His public ministry, He **manifested** Himself as “*the Christ, the Son of God*” and the Savior of the world by His preaching and by His many miracles (John 20:30-31).

But one of the most striking **manifestations** of the Savior’s glory — and a poignant glimpse ahead of His vicarious suffering and death for the sins of the world — occurred on a high mountain, witnessed only by three of His disciples; and we celebrate that event on the last Sunday after Epiphany each year. What a privileged few were those three disciples, Peter, James, and John to have **witnessed** the magnificent **transfiguration** of the Lord Jesus recorded in Matthew 17:1-9, in Mark 9:2-9, and in Luke 9:28-36 from which our title-text is taken! Peter himself refers to their eye- and earwitness of that occasion in his second epistle, chapter one, verses 16 to 18.

Had the other disciples seen that vision — yea, had the many thousands to whom Jesus had preached during His public ministry here on earth seen that vision (including the scribes and Pharisees, who were always looking for “*a sign*” from Him, Matthew 16:1) — would perhaps the coming passion and death of Jesus have taken a *different turn*?? Would God’s chosen people have *deliberately* crucified the “*Lord of Glory*” and cursed themselves and their children with the guilt of His blood?? Our poor, fleshly minds may sometimes entertain such thoughts and speculations; but we should know that it is Satan’s aim and pleasure so to trouble our minds and to lead us to doubt God’s “*determinate counsel and foreknowledge*” (Acts 2:23) according to which He ordained in eternity that His Son suffer and die for the sins of the world. Even a miraculous vision such as this would not have changed the minds of Jesus’ adversaries, would not have prevented Christ’s great Passion, and would not have blocked His *vicarious atonement*. The **Means of Grace** IS and always HAS BEEN the precious **Gospel of Salvation**, pro-

claimed to all men in the Word, NOT miracles, manifestations, and visions specially given by God to confirm the Word. For Jesus Himself says that if men “*hear not Moses and the prophets (the **Holy Scriptures**), neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*” And that is HIS OWN omniscient evaluation to put any speculation on our part to rest! Indeed, the Apostle Peter downplays his eyewitness of the transfiguration in favor of the witness of Holy Scripture, saying: “*We have also a more sure Word of Prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place*” (II Peter 1:19).

Indeed, we have no reason to be at all envious of Peter, James and John, as to what they saw on the Mount of Transfiguration as privileged witnesses of the Savior’s glory; for in the Holy Scriptures of our God, in which “*Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*” (v. 21), we too are eyewitnesses of Christ’s majesty! For, in the Holy Scriptures, *we see*, as surely as did His three disciples on that mountain-top, the brightness of His glory, the surety of His atonement, and the authority of His Word.

We read in Matthew’s account that “*after six days*” (17:1a) or about a week after Jesus had announced to His disciples the fact that He would soon have to suffer at the hands of the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and would be killed, and would be raised again the third day (16:21), “*Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was **transfigured** before them*” (17:1b-2a). He underwent a kind of transformation or change of appearance, not merely in the *minds* of the disciples, not in their *imagination*s or in their *dreams*, as many claim, but a real *metamorphosis* which they *witnessed* with their very own eyes, being fully awake (as Luke tells us in his parallel account).

“*And His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light*” (Matthew 17:2). This was a rare and exceptional *epiphany* or **manifestation** of Jesus’ glory; for, although in His personal union as “*God... manifest in the flesh*” (I Timothy 3:16), Jesus’ divine attributes were fully communicated to or shared by His human nature, He did not always and fully USE them in His *State of Humiliation*. For He didn’t want to attract emotional and hysterical attention to Himself by means of spectacular display; but rather He appealed to the people by the preaching of His Word, confirming the Word with His miracles. And yet, as John reports in the prologue to his Gospel, in this instance “*we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace*”

and truth” (John 1:14). And the Apostle Peter, as noted before, says essentially the same thing: “*We were **eyewitnesses of His majesty**... when we were with Him in the holy mount*” (II Peter 1:16b and 18b).

As much as you and I might wish to have been included in that “*eyewitness*” opportunity, let us not at all feel sorry for ourselves, as if we were somehow left out! For we too are eyewitnesses of His majesty and of the brightness of His glory in the external, objective testimony of His **precious Word**, where these things “*are written*” for our eyes to see for themselves, John tells us at the end of his 20th chapter, “*that [we] might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, [we] might have life through His Name*” (v. 31). Indeed, the brilliance of the verbally-inspired Gospels is the radiance of His Word, “*a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path*” (Psalm 119:105) to guide our souls to heaven.

Moreover, we are eyewitnesses of Christ’s majesty and of the brightness of His glory by the operation of the Holy Spirit WITHIN US by means of the Word, St. Paul tells us, who “*hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*” (II Corinthians 4:6b) as we by faith bask in the radiance of His gracious countenance, in the brightness of our *Beautiful Savior, ...Son of God and Son of Man* (TLH 657, 1)!

But now we note in the narratives of the transfiguration that something else happened there on that mountain-top which impressed the disciples as eyewitnesses of Christ’s majesty, which impressed them with the surety of His *vicarious atonement* for the sins of the world. We recall that Jesus had, just six days before this transfiguration, informed the disciples about His impending **suffering, death and resurrection** (Matthew 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22) —a prospect that none of the disciples wanted to consider, especially Peter! “*Surely Jesus wouldn’t have to go through anything like THAT!*”—the view that Satan himself had planted in their minds, the view that Satan had gotten Peter to express out loud, and the view that Jesus condemned in no uncertain terms (Matthew 16:23)!

“*And, behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias*” (Luke 9:30). These two great Old Testament prophets, both of whom had suffered unmercifully for Jesus’ sake at the hands of God’s own chosen people, **Moses** and **Elijah** suddenly appeared with Jesus and held a conversation with Him, who Himself was about to suffer at

the hands of His people in order to save them from their sins. This was no idle chat that they were having, for Luke tells us that they “*spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem*” (v. 31). How timely this was for the disciples, though they were sleepy and not completely attentive to the conversation, as Luke describes them, how timely to **confirm** what Jesus had told them, yea, to **show them** that these two prophets of the Lord knew and understood full well the **plan of salvation** and the necessity of the Messiah’s **vicarious suffering and death** for the sins of the world. For after His resurrection, Jesus Himself would remind the disciples of this, saying, “*These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me.*’ Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.” And here, even before the fact, Peter, James, and John were “*eyewitnesses,*” as they **saw** Moses and Elijah “*talking with Him*” (Matthew 17:3) about the **surety** of the Messiah’s **atoning sacrifice** for the reconciliation of the world.

Such surety is also OURS, as “*eyewitnesses of His majesty*” with Peter, James and John; for **WE** too have seen “*Moses and Elias talking with Him*” in these very God-inspired texts, in this “*more sure Word of prophecy, whereunto (we) do well that (we) take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place*” (II Peter 1:19). Moreover, when we embark anew upon the holy Lenten season on Ash Wednesday and now have the glorious opportunity to hear and study again the *Passion History of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ*, we are again retrospective “*eyewitnesses of His majesty*” in His suffering and death, and see for ourselves how this majestic vicarious atonement of our Savior was fulfilled to the letter, that “*Christ was delivered [because of] OUR offenses*” (Romans 4:25), that “*Christ died for OUR sins according to the Scriptures*” (I Corinthians 15:3). And then, when the Lenten season comes to a close after Good Friday, with the supreme advantage that the disciples of Jesus didn’t have at this point in time, we shall also review and celebrate with the assurance of hindsight the **resurrection** of the Savior—for which these three witnesses had to wait before they could even report this wonderful vision of Jesus’ transfiguration (Matthew 17:9)! Thus again, as “*eyewitnesses of His majesty,*” we shall see in the Holy Record “*many infallible proofs*” (Acts 1:3) that, after having atoned for the sins of the world on Calvary’s cross, in “*His decease*” which He “*accomplished,*” as Moses and Elijah discussed it with Him, “*Christ was raised again [because of] OUR justification,*” because His *vicarious*

atonement won for us reconciliation with God, the forgiveness of our sins, and the only righteousness that avails before His demanding justice.

But now yet, high on that mountain-top, we witness with Jesus' disciples one other event which *manifests* and confirms to us **the authority of His Word as that of our Divine Prophet**. As Peter was considering how this precious moment might be prolonged with the erection of some temporary shelters for Jesus and the heavenly visitors (Matthew 17:4; Mark 9:5; Luke 9:33), "*behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice out of the cloud which said, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him'*" (Matthew 17:5). Who but a Father can say, "*This is my beloved Son*"? Jesus' own heavenly Father appeared on the scene to certify the Savior's *person and deity*, to certify His *office*, and to certify *the authority of His Word*. Peter says in retrospect: "*For He received from God the Father **honor and glory** when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory... and this voice which came from heaven **we heard** when we were with Him in the holy mount*" (II Peter 1:17a-18). Moses had declared the same in prophecy about 1,500 years before, when he said of the coming Messiah, the Divine Prophet, "*Unto **Him** ye shall hearken!*" (Deuteronomy 18:15). Now the Father Himself says of Jesus, "*Hear ye **Him!***" And **WE** hear that voice with our very own ears in the narratives of the transfiguration.

Moreover, Jesus time and again reminds us and all who would know the truth: "*Continue in **My Word!***" (John 8:31); "*Hear **My voice!***" (John 10:27a); "*Hearken unto **Me**, every one of you!*" (Mark 7:14b). Listen up everyone: "*The words that **I** speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life*" (John 6:63b) —And we are eyewitnesses of His MAJESTY and of His AUTHORITY as our Divine Prophet *manifested* in these precious Gospel accounts, as well as in the other passages where He testifies about His preaching and about the importance of gladly hearing and learning His Word of life.

Furthermore, as Peter writes concerning this incident and of **the voice of authority** which he and the others heard: "*We have also a **MORE SURE Word of prophecy**,*" more sure even than earwitness testimony, namely, the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures, which are **Jesus' Word** every bit as much as the verses printed in red type in most Bibles nowadays! "*For the prophecy came not in old time by the **will of MAN**; but holy men of God spake as they were **moved by the Holy Ghost***" says Peter (II Peter 1:21). And you and I have **advantages right here** and

right now as **eyewitnesses of Christ's majesty** that His own disciples didn't have in spite of their day-in and day-out intimate contact with Him: We have His Word —Old and New Testaments, complete— in their truth and purity, the full, clear, authoritative, inerrant, infallible, and all-sufficient Word, "*which is able to save [our] souls!*" (James 1:21b). Hear the preaching of **His Word!** Hear your Savior! "Hear ye Him!" Then, indeed, "*ye shall know the **truth**; and the truth shall make you **free***" (John 8:32) — free from **error**, free from "*cunningly devised **fables***" (II Peter 1:16a) or **myths**, free from those who "*by good words and fair speeches **deceive** the hearts of the simple*" (Romans 16:18).

May God grant to each and every one of us, as the holy Epiphany season has now drawn to a close, that we **hold fast** in humble, childlike faith to our dear Savior, **manifested** and "mirrored" to us in His Holy Word as "*the Light of the world*" (John 8:12a), the "*Redeemer of Israel*" (Isaiah 49:7a, the "*Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*" (John 1:14b), "*[God's] beloved Son, in whom [He is] well pleased*" (Matthew 3:17), whose perfect **earned righteousness** (Romans 5:18) and **vicarious suffering and death** (Isaiah 53) — all rendered to God in our place and in our stead as full satisfaction ["*propitiation*"] of divine justice (I John 2:2) — won forgiveness of sins, life and salvation for every sinner —yea, for **you** and for **me**. And let us never forget that His precious Word is the very means, the powerful, efficacious, and authoritative means, whereby His Holy Spirit creates, strengthens, and preserves in us the **saving faith** which lays hold on, confides in, and takes comfort in God's objective justification of the world (II Corinthians 5:19) in eternity already — based on Christ's foreordained and foreseen *vicarious atonement* (I Peter 1:18-20; Revelation 13:8) — and His personal justification of US here in time by creating the light of faith in our sin-darkened, perverse hearts (II Corinthians 4:6) —all for **Jesus'** our Savior's sake!

*...And may Thy Word, that Light Divine,
shine on in splendor holy,
that we repentance show, in faith ever grow!
The power of sin destroy, and all that doth annoy!
Oh, make us faithful Christians!*

(TLH, 477, 3)

— D. T. M.

God's Universal Will of Grace

The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.

—Titus 2:11

During the season of Epiphany, one of the commonly focused upon church-themes is the manifestation of God's grace to the world in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The saving grace of God is, indeed, for *all men*, because Christ purchased the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation for all people by His substitutionary life of holiness, suffering, and death (Romans 5:18–19; II Corinthians 5:15, 19). This comforting doctrine is beautifully expressed in the above quoted passage (Titus 2:11), which can be more accurately translated from the original Greek as: “*The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men.*” (The Greek word translated as “*appeared*” in this verse is “*epiphaino*,” from which we get the word “Epiphany.”)

Though the Calvinists say that God's grace is seriously intended only for a select few (the *elect*), the Scriptures very clearly teach that the Lord God, in Christ, loves *all people* and desires to save them all. This doctrine of *God's universal will of grace* can be observed in so many different Bible passages. Consider, for example, these that describe Christ's purpose for coming into the world: “*God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved*” (John 3:16–17); “*I am the Light of the world*” (John 8:12; 9:5); and “*The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost*” (Luke 19:10). Consider also the passages that speak of how many were redeemed by His suffering and death: “[*Christ Jesus*] gave Himself a ransom for *all*” (I Timothy 2:6); “[*Christ*] died for *all*” (II Corinthians 5:15); and “*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29). This includes even those who *deny Him* and are eternally *damned* (II Peter 2:1). That Christ's substitutionary active and passive obedience (His perfect life and His innocent suffering and death) appeased God's wrath against the sins of the *world* and were accepted for the reconciliation and forgiveness of *all mankind* is shown in such passages as I John 2:1–2, II Corinthians 5:19, and Romans 5:18–19. And because the saving faith that receives God's gracious forgiveness is worked through the Gospel (Romans 1:16; 10:14–

17), Jesus commissioned His disciples to carry the Gospel to all people, saying: “*Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth*” (Acts 1:8); and “*Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature*” (Mark 16:15). Finally, consider the passages in which the Lord our God unequivocally states that He does not want anyone to remain in unbelief and be damned but desires to bring *all* to repentance and faith for their eternal salvation: “*As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live*” (Ezekiel 33:11); “*The Lord is...not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance*” (II Peter 3:9); “*God our Savior...will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth*” (I Timothy 2:3–4). Indeed, the Scriptures leave no doubt about God’s universal will of grace!

Sadly, however, even though the Lord sincerely desires to save every human being, the vast majority of people are *not* saved, but are eternally damned. Jesus says: “*Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction; and **many** there be which go in thereat because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and **few** there be that find it*” (Matthew 7:13–14). Now the fact that most people are not saved is taken by the Calvinists to be proof that God does not want to save all. Of course, the many passages cited in the previous paragraph are sufficient to refute that false claim. Arguing against all the Scriptural proof for the doctrine of God’s universal will of grace, the Calvinists employ three basic tactics: 1) They assert that some Bible passages show that God never wanted to save certain people; 2) they claim that the “hidden will of God” (what He has *not* revealed in the Scriptures) is the opposite of what He *has* revealed about His will in this matter; and 3) they appeal to “logical” deductions.

So, what Bible passages could the Calvinists possibly cite that would argue against God’s universal will of grace? It should be understood that no passages of Scripture actually do argue against, or contradict, any other passages of Scripture. A contradiction in His Word is an impossibility because “[*God’s*] Word is truth” (John 17:17); and a contradiction would imply an error. But false prophets twist the Scriptures (II Peter 3:16), put their own private interpretations upon the Bible (II Peter 1:20), and thereby seek to set Scripture against Scripture. One way that the Calvinists do this is by attacking God’s universal will of grace using passages that set forth God’s *secondary* (or *consequent*) will to

punish those who reject His grace in Christ—even punishing them in their earthly lives by increasing their opposition to the Gospel. “*God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness*” (II Thessalonians 2:11–12). Such passages do not, however, argue against the fact that God wants to save all people by faith in Christ Jesus; they simply set forth the consequences of *rejecting* God’s grace in Christ (II Thessalonians 2:10), namely, they “*bring upon themselves*” God’s wrath and punishment (II Peter 2:1b). Take, for example, how God says of the Israelites who rebelled against Him: “*I gave them up unto their own hearts’ lust; and they walked in their own counsels*” (Psalm 81:12). Now that verse might be taken by a Calvinist as proof that God never wanted to save those people and had even predestinated them to damnation, *since He gave them up unto their sinful ways*. But that opinion is quickly disproved by what God says in the very next verse: “*Oh that My people had hearkened unto Me, and Israel had walked in My ways!*” Thus He clearly expresses His desire that they would have followed Him instead of going their own way. Again, a Calvinist might think he has proof that God never wanted to save those who go to hell when he reads in Isaiah 63:10 that the Lord actually “*fought against*” the rebellious Israelites as their Enemy. But reading that verse in context shows the great *love* that the Triune God had for them (according to His *primary will*), but that His *secondary will* to punish them came as a result of their rejection of His love. “*He was their Savior. In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them. In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled and vexed His Holy Spirit; therefore He was turned to be their Enemy, and He fought against them*” (Isaiah 63:8–10).

But even if the Calvinists concede that the Scriptures *do* teach **God’s universal will of grace**, that does not mean that they actually accept it to be true. This is because they regard the true, *hidden will* of the Lord to be *different* than (even the exact *opposite* of) what is revealed in the Gospel about God’s desire to save all people. Commenting on II Peter 3:9, which states that “*the Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,*” Calvin writes: “No mention is here made of the hidden purpose of God, according to which the reprobate are doomed to their own ruin, but only of His will as made known to us in the Gospel” (*Calvin’s Commentaries*, II Peter 3:9). Such an opinion is quite blasphemous for two basic reasons: 1) Calvin dares to presume to know something about God’s “hidden purpose”; and 2)

What Calvin claims to be “the hidden purpose of God” is a contradiction of “His will as made known to us in the Gospel”—thus making Him a liar. Yes, those who argue against what the Lord has plainly declared in His Word are calling Him a liar (I John 1:10; 5:10)!

Now on other occasions, Calvin warned against speculating in the matter of God’s hidden will—“when puny man endeavors to penetrate to the hidden recesses of the divine wisdom” (*Institutes*, Book 3, chapter 24, §4). And yet Calvin still felt justified in ascribing the cause of man’s damnation to the “hidden purpose of God,” because he regarded this to be the only *logical* and *reasonable* answer to the question: “If God wishes none to perish, why is it that so many do perish?” (*Calvin’s Commentaries*, II Peter 3:9). Simply put, the “logical” argument of the Calvinists is this: Since God can do anything He wants, and since not all people are saved, it proves that God does not truly want to save all people. Now this particular defense of the Calvinistic heresy is actually the *origin* of the heresy—it is the only “reasonable” explanation that Calvin could imagine to explain why God does not save all people, when He certainly has the ability to do so.

In trying to solve the seeming mystery concerning why God does not save all people, the only solutions that occur to the fleshly or “*carnal mind*” of man, in which “*dwelleth no good thing*” (Romans 7:18) and which is “*enmity against God*” (Romans 8:7), are that there must either be a difference in God’s initial disposition toward some people (as opposed to others), or a difference in some people’s (as opposed to others’) natural disposition toward God. *Calvinism* maintains that the difference is in *God*—that the Lord does not truly want all to be saved. *Synergism* (the teaching that man must assist in his conversion) maintains that the difference is in *man*—that some people in their natural condition resist the Holy Ghost more or less than others do. The Scriptures, however, show both of those opinions to be false.

The Jews of Jesus’ day often contrived questions intended to “*entangle Him in His talk*” (Matthew 22:15). Similar insidious questions still today are phrased in such a way as to “set up” the Christian to give a *false* answer no matter how he addresses them. In some cases, the “trick” or self-contradiction is obvious: “If God is almighty, could He create a stone so great that He couldn’t move it?” Other questions, however, simply trigger carnal rationalism and suggest that a *false* answer is completely “reasonable.” At the behest of Satan, such questions are *offensive* and come from those who “*savor not the things that be of God but those that be of men*” (Matthew 16:23; Mark 8:33).

Dr. Franz Pieper noted in the *Brief Statement* of 1897 that such questions “[have] been frequently raised in the Christian Church, especially in our day” — certainly not on the part of the orthodox but on the part of the heterodox in outward Christendom — to trap believers into espousing either *Calvinism* or *synergism* in the matter of conversion. He cites one in the following words: “What is the cause why not all men are converted, seeing that the grace of God is universal, and that all men are alike found in a state of utter depravity?” We also find the trap worded in other ways: “Why some and not others?,” “Why some instead of others?,” and “Why not all?” This trap has been called the *crux theologorum* or the “cross of theologians,” a cross certainly not of **God’s** making to strengthen us (cf. Hebrews 12:10b-11), but a trap of the **carnal mind** to ensnare us (cf. II Timothy 2:23). We “cannot answer” such tempting questions because of *the way they are worded*, neither should we be made compelled to answer them *according to the way they are worded* (Proverbs 26:4) because of the disastrous results that occur when people do so.

Restricting ourselves to what God has revealed in the Bible, we *are* able to answer these separate questions: “Why are those saved who are saved?” and “Why are those damned who are damned?” The *cause of man’s salvation* is the grace of God in Christ apart from any merit on the part of man (Ephesians 2:8–9; II Timothy 1:9); and the *cause of man’s damnation* is his own sins, unbelief, and rejection of the Gospel (Matthew 23:37; II Thessalonians 1:7–9). These truths do not, however, permit us to explain why one person is saved as opposed to another, because God’s grace in Christ is universal (I Timothy 2:3–6), and because man’s opposition to the Gospel by nature is also universal (I Corinthians 2:14). Holy Scripture does not allow us to say, or imply, that the Lord is even partially to blame for a man’s damnation; nor does Scripture allow us to say, or imply, that man is even partially responsible for his own salvation. God says: “*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thine help*” (Hosea 13:9).

Our orthodox Lutheran forefathers strenuously warned against trying to explain why not all people are saved—warning against falling into Calvinism or synergism. Consider what was written by Dr. Pieper in his original *Brief Statement* of 1897 concerning the question “What is the cause why not all men are converted?” —

We profess that on Scriptural ground we know only this much, that it is due to the grace of God, and to it alone, if men are *converted*, while it is due to men, and to them alone, and is not due

to a defect in grace, if men are *not converted*, as is written, Hosea 13:9: “*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.*” Here we rest the matter, since Scripture has revealed nothing further.

And in the *Brief Statement* of 1932 (which, by God’s grace, is still our confession today) under the section *Of Conversion*:

As to the question why not all men are converted and saved, seeing that God’s grace is universal and all men are equally and utterly corrupt, we confess that we cannot answer it. From Scripture we know only this: A man owes his conversion and salvation, not to any lesser guilt or better conduct on his part, but solely to the grace of God. But any man’s non-conversion is due to himself alone; it is the result of his obstinate resistance against the converting operation of the Holy Ghost, Hosea 13:9.

And, regarding reiterate conversion *versus* judicial hardening:

As regards these things in this disputation which would soar too high and beyond these limits, we should with Paul place the finger upon our lips and remember and say, Romans 9:20: “*O man, who art thou that repliest against God?*” The Formula of Concord describes the mystery which confronts us here not as a mystery in man’s heart (a “psychological” mystery), but teaches that, when we try to understand why “one is hardened, blinded, given over to a reprobate mind, while another, who is indeed in the same guilt, is converted again” [*Triglotta*, p. 1081, 57–59, 60b, 62, 63; Mueller p. 716ff.] we enter the domain of the unsearchable judgments of God and ways past finding out, which are not revealed to us in His Word, but which we shall know in eternal life, I Corinthians 13:12. Calvinists solve this mystery, which God has not revealed in His Word, by denying the universality of grace; synergists, by denying that salvation is by grace alone. Both solutions are utterly vicious, since they contradict Scripture and since every poor sinner stands in need of, and must cling to, both the unrestricted universal grace and the unrestricted “by grace alone,” lest he despair and perish. (*Brief Statement* of 1932, Sections 14–16)

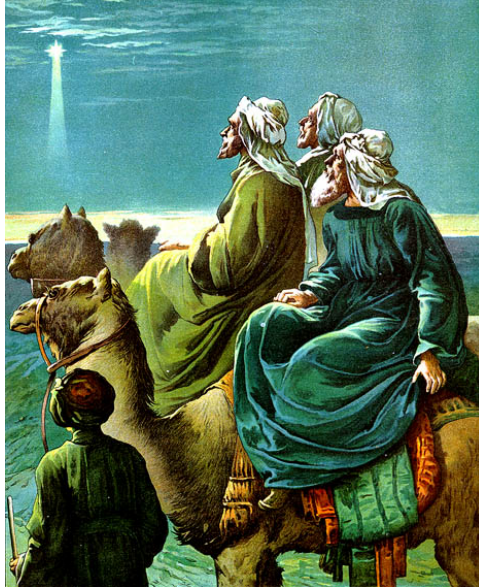
“In answering questions,” Dr. Pieper concludes, “we do not proceed further than Scripture leads us, and Scripture teaches that whoever is converted is converted solely by the grace of God, and whoever re-

mains unconverted must ascribe this fact to the resistance which he has offered to the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost” (*Brief Statement of 1897*).

Clinging to the glorious Gospel of God’s grace in Christ Jesus, we can all rejoice in the fact that the Lord truly loves us and desires to save each and every one of us, because the Bible clearly teaches that He loves and desires to save *all mankind!* Moreover, we can all rejoice that our eternal salvation in heaven is not in the least bit dependent upon our works (or lesser resistance of the Spirit), but is completely the result of the gracious working of God in our behalf. May the Lord, therefore, graciously preserve us from all rationalism and human speculation that would undermine His precious Word and mercifully grant unto us true humility of spirit to believe and confess only that which is in full harmony with the sacred Scriptures!

— P. E. B.

(Reprinted from January-February 2015)



The Prophetic Significance of Christ's Miracles in His Epiphany

Jesus answered and said unto them, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me."

—Matthew 11:4–6

At the end of the above-quoted section of Scripture, Jesus says something that might sound a little strange at first hearing, namely: "*Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me.*" Certainly Jesus was never the cause of anyone stumbling in his faith, but sadly many people were "*offended in*" Jesus (Matthew 13:57), due to the deceptive influence of the devil, the world, and their own sinful flesh. When Jesus began His public ministry—preaching and performing miracles openly before the people—there was a great division of opinion about Him. In seventh chapter of the Gospel according to St. John we read: "*There was much murmuring among the people concerning Him; for some said, 'He is a good man;' others said, 'Nay, but He deceiveth the people'*" (v. 12). "*Then said some of them of Jerusalem, 'Is not this He, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, He speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? Howbeit we know this Man whence He is; but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is'*" (vv. 25–27). "*And many of the people believed on Him, and said, 'When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this Man hath done?'*" (v. 31). "*Many of the people therefore...said, 'Of a truth this is the Prophet.' Others said, 'This is the Christ.' But some said, 'Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?'* So there was a division among the people because of Him" (vv. 40–43). Though Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea (Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:4–7), as had been prophesied (Micah 5:2), He grew up in the city of Nazareth, in Galilee (Matthew 2:22–23; Luke 2:39). So He was known as "*Jesus of*

Nazareth” (John 18:5), a “Galilaean” (Luke 23:6–7); and that disqualified Him, in the minds of some, from even being potentially considered to be the Messiah (John 7:52). And in Nazareth, most of the people could only see Jesus as “*the carpenter*” (Mark 6:3), the son of Joseph the carpenter (Matthew 13:55; Luke 4:22). Consequently, Jesus declared: “*No prophet is accepted in his own country*” (Luke 4:24).

Since the Bible tells us that all people in their natural state are spiritually blind (I Corinthians 2:14), dead (Ephesians 2:1), and enemies of God (Romans 8:7), how is it that anyone came to recognize Jesus as the Messiah and to trust in Him as the only Savior of lost mankind? This could only have happened through the revelation of the Holy Ghost (I Corinthians 12:3) by means of the very *Gospel* that was proclaimed by the prophets in the Old Testament, by Jesus Himself, and by others, such as John the Baptist (Luke 16:29–31; Mark 1:14; Romans 1:16; I Corinthians 4:15; Mark 1:4; John 1:29; Luke 1:76–79). Two of Jesus’ first disciples were directed to Him by John the Baptist, who testified that Jesus is “*the Son of God*” and “*the Lamb of God*” (John 1:34–37). But not all of John’s disciples immediately started following Jesus. Until John’s imprisonment, he continued his work of preaching and baptizing (John 3:23–24); but he also made it clear to his disciples that he would “*decrease*,” while Jesus would “*increase*” (v. 30).

In Matthew chapter 11, we read that, when John was in prison, he sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus: “*Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?*” (vv. 2–3). It was not that John the Baptist was having personal doubts about Jesus’ messiahship; for we read in Matthew 3:13–17 and in John 1:25–34 that John was certainly convinced by the occurrences at Jesus’ baptism that He was indeed “*the Son of God*” (v. 34); and, as noted above, he had identified Jesus specifically as “*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” (v. 29 and v. 35). But since it was important for the *disciples of John* to recognize for themselves Jesus as the Messiah, he sent them to Him with that question.

Jesus’ response was this: “*Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them.*” Now Jesus could have simply told them: “Yes, I am the Messiah; no need to look for another.” And some might think that such an answer would have been clearer and more convincing than what Jesus actually said. But, obviously, just because someone claims to be the *Messiah* (the *Christ* in Greek) does not make it true. On a different occasion, Jesus warned His disciples that there

would be deceivers who would pretend to be the Christ (Matthew 24:24). So then how could the disciples of John know that Jesus was not a deceiver but the actual Messiah, the Son of God? Had they believed Him to be the Son of God, they would of course have accepted His own testimony concerning Himself without question (Mark 8:38; John 3:34; 6:68; 12:48; etc.). But the *miracles* that Jesus did testified to His divine power and authority (John 5:17–27), as He told the Jews: “*I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me*” (John 5:36; cf. John 20:30–31).

But the testimony that Jesus made in His response to John’s disciples (“*the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them*”) was much stronger and more significant than if He had merely highlighted the fact that He performed miraculous works with His own divine power. Jesus’ miracles were in direct fulfillment of a prophecy in Isaiah 35: “*Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing*” (vv. 5–6). The last part of Jesus’ answer was a reference to another prophecy of Isaiah: “*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek*” (61:1). Thus Jesus directed the disciples of John the Baptist to the very testimony of God Himself in the Old Testament Scriptures. Evaluating the work of Jesus in His prophetic office (His preaching and His miracles) on the basis of such Messianic prophecies would give those disciples of John all the evidence they needed to conclude that Jesus was, indeed, the promised Messiah; so they should not be looking for anyone else beside Him. Seeing the fulfillment of those Scripture passages in Jesus of Nazareth, their God-wrought faith in the promised Messiah could then be focused directly upon *Jesus* as their Savior and Redeemer.

The divine works to which Jesus directed John’s disciples were such important proofs of His Messiahship that if He did *not* perform those miracles, it would have provided a legitimate reason to reject Him as a false Christ and to “*look for another.*” Accordingly, Jesus told the Jews: “*If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not*” (John 10:37). Interestingly enough, John the Baptist, whom many people thought might have been the Messiah (Luke 3:15), performed no miracles at all (as far as can be determined from the historical record of the Bible); and that fact (together with the clear verbal testimony of both John and Jesus) should have made it very easy for the people to distinguish between the Messiah and His forerunner.

There were other Messianic prophecies that were also shown to be fulfilled in Jesus by His miracles, such as those that name the promised Messiah as “*the mighty God*” (Isaiah 9:6) and “*the Lord [Jehovah]*” (Jeremiah 23:6), since by His own miracles Jesus demonstrated His ability to do the exact same works as God the Father (John 5:17–19). Even though, during His *state of humiliation*, He very much limited the use of His divine attributes communicated to His human nature for the purpose of carrying out His redemptive work as the Substitute for sinful mankind (Philippians 2:5–8), yet His miracles revealed His divinity as the only-begotten Son of God, so that those who witnessed Jesus’ miracles “*beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father*” (John 1:14).

Divine grace, mercy, and loving kindness were also clearly demonstrated in the miracles that Jesus performed, since they brought help and healing to those in need. But without the important connection between those miracles and the Word of God, specifically the Gospel, the people would not have truly been helped with their greatest needs, namely, their spiritual and eternal needs—deliverance from sin and the wages of eternal damnation in hell (Romans 6:23). The people who knew and trusted the promises of God’s grace in the prophesied Savior to come could recognize Jesus as the Messiah on the basis of His preaching and miracles. The Gospel in the Old Testament Scriptures was a solid foundation for their faith. Likewise, the Gospel preached by Jesus and His disciples created, strengthened, and preserved saving faith. The miracles performed by Christ (as well as by the Apostles in Christ’s name) did not, in and of themselves, create, strengthen, or preserve saving faith; but they were still important for “*confirming the Word*” (Mark 16:20)—grabbing the people’s attention and focusing them on the Gospel for their spiritual welfare.

Simply observing Christ’s miracles never brought anyone to faith. The enemies of Jesus saw His miracles and admitted that He had done something miraculous, but then accused Him of sinning when He performed a miracle on the Sabbath Day (John 5:15–16), or claimed that His miracles were done “*through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils*” (Luke 11:15). Others saw a great miracle of Christ and followed Him, not in true faith, but merely desiring to have their bodies fed by Him (John 6:5–14, 26) or their sick healed by Him (Matthew 4:24). Then there was Herod, who was very excited by the prospect of seeing Jesus perform a miracle purely for its entertainment value (Luke 23:8). Though the Philippian jailor had seen a great miracle of God, he was still an unbeliever, completely ignorant of his Savior, until the Gospel of Christ was preached to him (Acts 16:25–34). If the Word of God is despised and rejected, then even seeing a great miracle will not create saving faith in the heart (Luke 16:31).

While Jesus' miracles were certainly glorious manifestations of His divine power and grace, they had to be connected to the Word of God—the actual foundation of faith—in order for a person to be *spiritually* benefited. Saving faith can most certainly exist in the hearts of those who have learned the Gospel, but never had the opportunity to watch Jesus perform miracles. However, *saving* faith cannot exist in the hearts of those who have only seen Jesus' miracles, but are completely ignorant of the Gospel. Accordingly, when the Apostle Peter recounts an amazing display of Christ's glory, which only he and two other men were privileged to witness, he describes how wonderful it was to be an eyewitness of Jesus' majesty (II Peter 1:16–18), but then he adds in the very next verse: “*We have also a more sure Word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed*” (v. 19). Yes, that “*Word of prophecy*” is “*more sure*” than seeing something miraculous, because it is the powerful, authoritative, infallible Word of the Lord our God.

Since you and I were not alive during Jesus' public ministry, we never had the opportunity to witness His miracles. And yet on the pages of Holy Scripture, the inspired Word of God, we are able to read about those miracles in the New Testament and recognize how they perfectly fulfilled Old Testament prophecies. Thus in the Bible Jesus is clearly manifested, or revealed, to us as the promised Messiah, the only-begotten Son of God, the Redeemer of the world (John 20:31-32). And by the power of the Holy Ghost, working through His Word, we trust and believe, rejoice and take comfort in Jesus—our dear Savior from sin, death, and hell!

*Manifest in making whole
palsied limbs and fainting soul;
and at Cana, wedding-guest,
in Thy Godhead manifest;
manifest in pow'r divine,
changing water into wine.
Anthems be to Thee addressed,
God in man made manifest.*

*Grant us grace to see Thee, Lord,
mirrored in Thy holy Word.
May we imitate Thee now
And be pure as pure art Thou,
that we like to Thee may be
at Thy great Epiphany
and may praise Thee, ever blest,
God in man made manifest.*

(Adapted from *TLH* 134, vv. 2, 3, 5)

— **P. E. B.**

Update on Our Conference Missionwork

“So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

— Isaiah 55:11

During this present 2018-2019 Fiscal Year, our Conference is giving monthly assistance to three congregations:

1. Orthodox Lutheran Church of Ekaterinburg, Ekaterinburg, Russia (Pastor Roman G. Schurganoff)

This congregation’s monthly assistance from our Conference is \$900.00 for Pastor Schurganoff’s salary, which is intended to help make it possible for him to devote full-time to his pastoral office (I Corinthians 9:14). Our Conference also provides monthly assistance of \$100.00 for Pastor Schurganoff’s debt reduction and \$200.00 for the rental of a room for the congregation’s Sunday Worship Services, Sunday School Classes, Bible Classes, and Confirmation Classes.

For the preaching of God’s Word (II Timothy 4:2) in the Sunday Worship Service, an average of 10-12 are *assembled together* (Hebrews 10:25) in “*the House of the Lord*” (Psalm 122:1).

Before the Sunday Worship Service, Pastor Schurganoff has two students in Confirmation Class, teaching them the “*testimonies*” (Psalm 119:24) of God.

After the Sunday Worship Service, there is Sunday School for 2-3 students. At the same time, Pastor Schurganoff teaches the Adult Bible Class, where they are following the 2018-2019 Suggested Schedule for Sunday School Lessons (Series II). The average attendance at this class is 5-6.

Recently Pastor Schurganoff wrote: “Praise the Lord! Two more people became permanent members of our church. One of them has a country house, where he offered to [host] all of us for Worship. This is a good, quiet place; but there is a problem, [in] that [not] all our members can get there. So many of them, including me, do not have a car. Therefore, now in the church we are discussing various options for making such

‘outreach’ services available to all. Perhaps it could be with a bus rental, which would collect all the parishioners in the city and bring them to the services and then take them back to the city. In general, if there are any changes, I will certainly inform you.”

In a later e-mail, Pastor Schurganoff passed on the following information: “At our church meeting, a positive decision was made to hold services in a country house. Now there active preparation of this place for the [accommodation] of the parishioners. I hope we will complete all preparations for the winter period.”

On Wednesdays, twice a month, Pastor Schurganoff also has a Mid-week Bible Class in his apartment. This class is studying the Epistle to the Galatians. Attendance for this class averages 4-5 persons.

Concerning the regular, weekly teaching and preaching of God’s Word, may we, together with the members of the Orthodox Lutheran Church of Ekaterinburg, remember, rejoice in, and be comforted by the reassuring words and promises of our God: *“So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it”* (Isaiah 55:11).

**2. St. Mark’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, Sauk Village, Illinois
(Pastor David J. Mensing)**

This congregation’s monthly assistance from our Conference is \$700.00, which is intended to help make it possible for Pastor Mensing to devote full-time to his pastoral office (I Corinthians 9:14).

For the preaching of *“the Word”* (II Timothy 4:2) in the Sunday Worship Service, which is held at 3:30 p.m., an average of ten are in regular attendance to *“grow in grace and in the knowledge of [their] Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”* (II Peter 3:18) in the place where His honor dwelleth. (Psalm 26:8).

After the Sunday Worship Service, there is Sunday School at 4:45 p.m. for four students. In this class, they are following the 2018-2019 Suggested Schedule for Sunday School Bible Lessons (Series II). At the same time, Pastor Mensing teaches the Adult Bible Class, where they are currently studying the Acts of the Apostles.

The congregation has a Midweek Bible Class on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. This class is studying I Samuel.

Pastor Mensing is currently instructing one adult in his Adult Instruction Class; and there are two students in the Confirmation Class, who are being taught the “*testimonies*” (Psalm 119:24) of God, specifically the six chief parts of Christian doctrine from Luther’s Small Catechism and their exposition in its explanation.

“Thank you,” says Pastor Mensing, “for all of the past prayers and brotherly concern; and we pray that they continue, confident that they will, for Jesus’ sake. It is truly a blessing and a privilege to have brethren to pray for and to have pray for you --- that there is an assembly of us all approaching the throne of grace with boldness by our great High Priest (cf. Hebrews 4:15-16).”

Concerning this regular, weekly teaching and preaching of God’s Word, may we, together with the members of St. Mark’s in Sauk Village, remember, rejoice in, and be comforted by the reassuring words and promises of our God in the title-text of our article: “*So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it*” (Isaiah 55:11).

**3. Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tucson, Arizona
(Pastor Daniel P. Mensing)**

This congregation’s monthly assistance from our Conference is \$900.00, which, as in the case of the other subsidized congregations, is intended to help make it possible for Pastor Mensing to devote full-time to his pastoral office (I Corinthians 9:14).

For the preaching of God’s Word (II Timothy 4:2) in the Sunday Worship Service at 9:30 a.m., the attendance is about ten *assembled together* (Hebrews 10:25) in “*the House of the Lord*” (Psalm 122:1).

After the Sunday Worship Service, there is Sunday School at 10:45 a.m. for 3-4 students, divided into two classes. At the same time, Pastor Mensing has the Adult Bible Class, where they are studying the Gospel of John.

The congregation has two Midweek Bible Classes, on Tuesday mornings

studying the Catechism and on Wednesday evenings studying Church History. Attendance for both of these classes averages 2-4.

To grow in giving witness (Acts 1:8b) to the Word of God for precious souls, the congregation is using some on-line tools to reach out to the local community. Recently, for the Reformation Festival, they extended an invitation to people in nearby neighborhoods, wanting to set before them the precious, living, “powerful” (Hebrews 4:12) seed of God’s Word.

Again, concerning the regular and consistent teaching and preaching of God’s Word in their midst, may we together with our brethren of Good Shepherd, Tucson, take to heart, rejoice in, and be comforted by the reassuring words and promises of our God through the Prophet Isaiah: “*So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it*” (Isaiah 55:11).

In our private, family, and congregational prayers, let us remember these three congregations to the Throne of Grace, making requests on their behalf with joy (Philippians 1:1:4), and heeding the counsel of the Lord our God through the Apostle Paul concerning their various needs, trials and tribulations: “*Be careful [that is, worried or anxious] for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests [for these congregations] be made known unto God; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*” (Philippians 4:6), through faith in Him who “*was wounded for our transgressions [and] was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed*” (Isaiah 53:5).

— R. J. L.



Churches in Fellowship

ORTHODOX LUTHERAN CHURCH OF EKATERINBURG

Ekaterinburg, Russia
The Rev. Roman G. Schurganoff, Pastor
P. O. Box 27
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E-mail: Schurganoff@mail.ru

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Olu-Ama (Kula), Nigeria
(Pastoral Vacancy at present)

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Abule Egba, Lagos, Nigeria
(Pastoral Vacancy at present)

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Idama, Nigeria
The Rev. Innocent Karibo, Pastor
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
Idama, Rivers State, NIGERIA
E-Mail: kariboinnoent@yahoo.com

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

Abalama, Nigeria
The Rev. Balaiyi Thompson and The Rev. Bateinm Bestman, Pastors
Thompson Compound Abalama
Abalama, Rivers State, NIGERIA

ST. CLEMENT'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Elem-Sangama, Nigeria
The Rev. Timothy Biobele Aaron, Pastor
St. Clement Lutheran Church,
Elem-Sangama Arch-Deaconry
Elem-Sangama, Rivers State, NIGERIA
E-Mail: tbaaron2@gmail.com

ST. MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

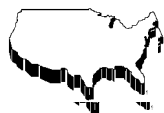
Port Harcourt, Nigeria
(Pastoral Vacancy at present)
76 Abba Street, Mile 1 Diobu
Port Harcourt, Rivers State, NIGERIA

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Kula, Nigeria
(Pastoral Vacancy at present)
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Kula, Rivers State, NIGERIA

ST. PAUL'S NYEMONI LUTHERAN CATHEDRAL

Abonnema, Nigeria
The Rev. Nimi B. Fyeface, Pastor
P. O. Box 123
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Directory of Member Congregations

www.concordialutheranconf.com

GOOD SHEPHERD EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

4090 S. Melpomene Way, Tucson, AZ 85730 On the Web at: *GoodShepherdLutheranChurchTucson.com*

Worship Service 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

The Rev. DANIEL P. MENSING, Pastor

8464 East Wildcat Drive, Tucson, AZ 85730

E-mail: goodshepherdlutherantucson@gmail.com

Telephone (520) 721-7618

Pastor: (520) 448-8694

PEACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Central Avenue at 171st Place, Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913 On the Web at: *PeaceEvLutheran.com*

Sunday School & Bible Class 8:30 a.m.

Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

The Rev. DAVID T. MENSING, Pastor

17151 South Central Avenue, Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913

E-mail: pastormensing@yahoo.com

Telephone: (708) 532-4288

Pastor: (708) 532-9035

Pastor's Cell: (708) 601-3943

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sixth and Tangent Streets, Lebanon, OR 97355

Sunday School & Bible Class 10:00 a.m.

Worship Service 11:00 a.m.

The Rev. PAUL E. BLOEDEL, Pastor

483 Tangent Street, Lebanon, OR 97355

E-mail: revbloedel@gmail.com

Telephone: (541) 258-2941

Pastor: (541) 258-2941

ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

5350 South Fountain Street, Seattle, WA 98178

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

Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

The Rev. EDWARD J. WORLEY, Pastor

9658 - 54th Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98118

E-mail: revworley@comcast.net

On the Web at:

StLukes-CLC.com

Telephone: (206) 723-1078

Pastor: (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.

Worship Service 7:00 p.m.

Adult Bible Class 4:30 p.m.

Adult Catechism Class 8:30 p.m.

ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

22012 Torrence Avenue, Sauk Village, IL 60411

Worship Service 3:30 p.m.

Adult Bible Class 4:45 p.m.

The Rev. DAVID J. MENSING, Pastor

22012 Torrence Avenue, Sauk Village, IL 60411

E-mail: d_mensing@hotmail.com

On the Web at:

StMarksEvLutheran.com

Telephone: (708) 757-6859

Pastor: (708) 655-7549

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

300 North Ridgeland Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60302

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

Worship Service 10:15 a.m.

The Rev. ROBERT J. LIETZ, Pastor

233 North Cuyler Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60302

E-mail: robertjlietz@gmail.com

On the Web at:

TrinityEvLutheran.com

Telephone: (708) 386-6773

Pastor: (708) 386-4145

Announcing the
Sixty-eighth Annual Convention
of the
Concordia Lutheran Conference

June 28, 29 and 30, 2019

at

Peace Ev. Lutheran Church

Central Avenue at 171st Place
Oak Forest, Illinois 60452-4913

The Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastor

with

The Plenary Pastoral Conference on June 25th & 26th

The Board of Directors Meeting on June 27th



Motto:

The Providential Preservation
of Holy Scripture

I Peter 1:25

The essay will be delivered by

Pastor Edward J. Worley

of Seattle, Washington