

The
Concordia Lutheran



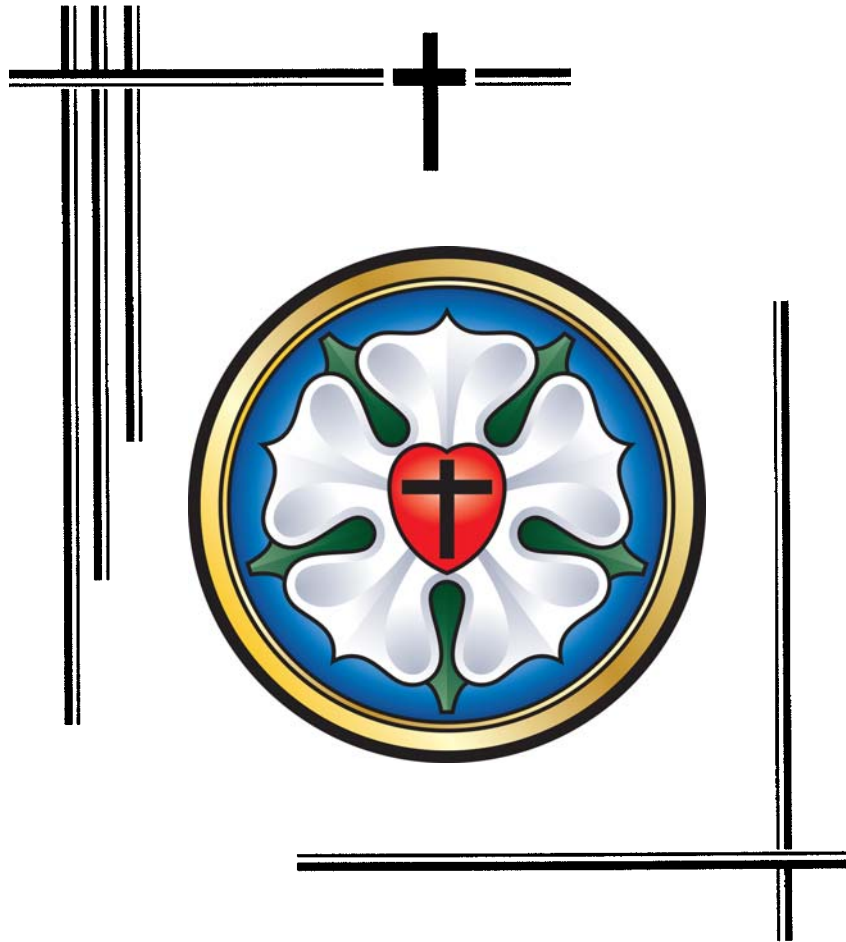
"The Scripture cannot be broken." John 10:35.

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

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The Concordia Lutheran Editor

The Rev. David T. Mensing
17151 South Central Avenue
Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913

Book and Tract Editor

The Rev. Paul E. Bloedel
483 Tangent Street
Lebanon, OR 97355

Lay Member:

Mr. Jason A. Mabe
6249 El Morro Lane
Oak Forest, IL 60452

Address subscriptions, renewals, and remittances to: **Scriptural Publications, 17151 S. Central Avenue, Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913.** A special notice of expiration will be inserted in the issue which terminates your subscription.

Officers of the
Concordia Lutheran Conference

PRESIDENT:

The Rev. Edward J. Worley
9658-54th Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98118

VICE PRESIDENT:

The Rev. David T. Mensing
17151 South Central Avenue
Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913

SECRETARY:

The Rev. Paul E. Bloedel
483 Tangent Street
Lebanon, OR 97355

TREASURER:

Mr. Robert G. Bloedel
10017 – 61st Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98178

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

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

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

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

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

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

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The Role of Faith in Justification

SOLA FIDE

“A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law”

— Romans 3:28

Holy Scripture declares: *“But that no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, it is evident; for the just shall live by faith. And the Law is not of faith, but the man that doeth them shall live in them”* (Galatians 3:11-12). The Law of God demands that man *do* what is commanded and pronounces a divine *curse* upon man for each and every failure: *“For as many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them’”* (Galatians 3:10). The Law is not of faith but of performance (works), demanding holiness in thoughts, desires, words and deeds. The Gospel, on the other hand, is *“of faith”* — *“without the deeds of the Law”* (Romans 3:28). The Gospel is a promise to be believed: *“But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe”* (Galatians 3:22). By the grace and power of God, a sinner is to believe what the Gospel promises: Perfect righteousness and complete forgiveness of sins before God; *“for I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith’”* (Romans 1:16-17). *“Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses”* (Acts 13:38-39).

The Gospel proclaims that these gifts were entirely bought and paid for by the universal, vicarious (substitutionary) atonement wrought by Jesus Christ, the God-Man, in His active and passive obedience. He gained righteousness for every sinner by keeping the Law in their place perfectly, so that every individual has, before God, what the Law demands of him: *“Therefore, as by the offense of one [viz. Adam] judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One [viz. Christ] the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life ... that*

as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 5:18, 21). This gift of righteousness is given to the individual by the Gospel through faith alone: *“For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth”* (Romans 10:4). *“And [that I may] be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith”* (Philippians 3:9). The active obedience of Jesus Christ secured perfect righteousness for all men as God’s gift. The Gospel proclaims this gift, working the faith to receive it.

Moreover, the passive obedience of Christ — all He suffered willingly under the guilt and punishment of the entire world’s sin — earned the forgiveness of sins for all men. In the place of every person, the Savior atoned for the whole world, made complete satisfaction for mankind by paying the penalty of man’s guilt with His holy, precious, innocent blood (I Peter 1:18-19). His passive obedience is the work whereby He propitiated God’s wrath forever, satisfying God’s justice and reconciling Him to the world by paying the full price (*“the wages of sin”*) for man’s redemption sin. *“He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world”* (I John 2:2). *“For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell and, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprieveable in His sight”* (Colossians 1:19-22). *“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the Word of reconciliation. ... For He hath made Him who knew no sin [Gk. syntax] to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him”* (II Corinthians 5:18-19, 21).

The Gospel proclaims the gift of reconciliation, of remission of sins, entirely for Jesus’ sake: *“I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake and will not remember thy sins”* (Isaiah 43:25). *“I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins; return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee”* (Isaiah 44:22). *“The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin”* (I John 1:7b). *“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His*

name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47). “Then Peter said unto them, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost’” (Acts 2:38). The Gospel tells us the fact that God has forgiven us “all trespasses” (Colossians 2:13), “blotting out the handwriting...that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross” (Colossians 2:14). Faith, then, is not of the Law but of the Gospel, namely, the personal acceptance of the gifts of righteousness and remission of sins that Christ earned for all mankind: “For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Therefore faith, in so far as it personally justifies an individual sinner, functions solely as the medium or instrument of apprehending (i.e. laying hold on) and receiving the promises of the Gospel: Imputed righteousness and remission of all sins. In other words, faith alone saves because faith has, as its sole object, the Gospel of Salvation in Christ Jesus: “*The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*” (Romans 6:23b). “*For 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. He that believeth on Him is not condemned*” (John 3:16-18a). “*Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the Law; for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified*” (Galatians 2:16). By the Gospel God works saving faith in the individual’s heart (cf. Romans 10:14-17).

Saving faith is the knowledge of Jesus Christ, His Person and Work, so that the individual knows *why* he is forgiven all his sins and declared righteous before God, coupled with trust in the heart that for Christ’s sake those gifts belong to him. The Apology of the *Augsburg Confession* is entirely correct in the definition of saving faith: “Faith is not only knowledge in the intellect, but also confidence in the will, that is, it is to wish and to receive that which is offered in the promise (the Gospel), namely, reconciliation and remission of sins.” (*Triglott*, 205, Art. III, 183).

Saving faith is *personal* faith. Only he who, by the grace and power of God, puts his trust in Christ as his Savior is a true believer. He must be

able sincerely to confess what the Apostle confesses: “*The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me*” (Galatians 2:20b). He must be able to say from the heart what Job confesses: “*I know that my Redeemer liveth*” (10:25a). He must know, accept and trust that, for the sake of Christ alone, he is, himself, “*holy and unblameable and unproveable in [God’s] sight*” (Colossians 1:22c). Again the Apology is entirely correct when it declares: “This special (personal) faith, therefore, by which an individual believes that for Christ’s sake his sins are remitted him, and that for Christ’s sake God is reconciled and propitious, obtains remission of sins and justifies us.” (*Triglot* 133, Art IV [11], 45). To repeat the doctrinal point: Faith saves solely as an instrument or organ, a receiving “hand,” as it were, which personally holds the two-fold gift Christ earned for all mankind: Perfect righteousness and remission of all sins. Justifying faith is always this God-wrought Gospel apprehension of the saving grace of Christ: “*But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they*” (Acts 15:11).

The fact that saving faith can only be an instrument for apprehending (i.e. laying hold on and receiving) what the Gospel offers and bestows should be obvious from the fact that Christ did all that was necessary to save us: “*For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh*” (Romans 8:3). “*But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law*” (Galatians 4:4-5a). “*By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ...But this man (viz, Christ), after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; ...For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*” (Hebrews 10:10, 12, 14). There is nothing left to do but believe what He has done for us, and even that belief must be wrought by God through the very promise; for we “*believe, according to the working of His mighty power*” (Ephesians 1:19b; cf. Romans 10:17; Philippians 1:29). Justifying faith deals only with the Christ *outside* of us, what He has done for us by His holy life and by His innocent suffering and death. The entire “value” of faith is in the object thereof: Jesus Christ, our Righteousness and Redemption. “*But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, ‘He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord’*” (I Corinthians 1:30-31).

Faith has no *intrinsic* value of itself. This is not only clear from the fact

that Christ did all that was necessary to save us, but by the fact that Scripture places justifying faith in opposition to all human works and merit: *“Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, ‘Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin’”* (Romans 4:4-8). Faith justifies not as an act of itself but because of the object which it grasps. The *Formula of Concord* gives this summary of the true doctrine regarding saving faith: *“Faith justifies and saves, not on the ground that it is a work in itself worthy, but only because it receives the promised mercy (in the Gospel promise)”* (*Concordia Triglotta*, 919, *Formula of Concord*, Solid Declararion, III, 13). Christ has perfectly redeemed the entire world, and the Gospel is the declaration of this gracious, completed salvation, offered and bestowed by God as a gracious gift; *“for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God, to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law”* (Romans 3:23-28). The Apostle summarizes this work under the simple phrase, *“Christ died for our sins.”* *“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures”* (I Corinthians 15:1-3). Whether the Bible designates the work and merit of Christ, the holy life and bloody suffering and death of Christ, as the cause of our salvation (in a positive way), or excludes human works, merit, and the Law (in a negative way), the meaning is clear: Sinners are justified by faith alone in Christ, *“knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified”* (Galatians 2:16). Finally, it should be noted for the record that all the errors that have

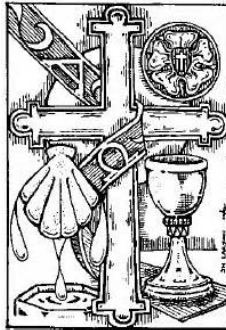
arisen over time regarding the role which faith plays in individual justification stem from some form of work-righteous denial of grace alone in the work of Christ alone for salvation. Those who deny that Christ has perfectly redeemed the world and that righteousness and remission were secured for all sinners as a gracious gift will also teach that faith saves in some sort of intrinsic manner (in and of itself), because it has some good quality or because it produces some good in man, thereby mixing the Law with the Gospel. Sadly, the manifold errors that have been produced by Satan, through false teachers, are still rampant today. May God preserve us! May we, by the grace and power of God alone, ever heed the sober warning of the Apostle Paul to the Galatians: *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. ... Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith”* (5:1, 4-5).

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

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

(*T.L.H.*, #373: 1, 5)

— **E. J. W.**



The Importance of Retaining Luther's Doctrine Pure

(Meditation on Hymn 288)

October of each year ought to be “Remembrance of God’s Mercies Month,” or “Memorial of God’s Grace Month,” or “Gratitude to The Triune God Month.”

Why? Every October, we, God’s “*people*” (I Peter 2:10b), ought to be stirred up with ever more, ever increasing thanks and ever greater praise as we remember (II Peter 1:12-15) the “*marvelous things*” (Psalm 98:1b) which our God, the Triune God, has done to restore, to bring back to precious souls, through the 16th Century Reformation, His pure, true, never-changing doctrine revealed in His written Word, especially the restoration of the most important doctrine of all, the teaching “*that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing [not charging] their trespasses unto them. ...For He [God] hath made Him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin [Christ was sinless], that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him [in Christ]*” (II Corinthians 5:19a and 21).

This is the priceless “*Gospel of Christ*” (Romans 1:16a), the doctrine of God’s objective justification of the world of sinners “*through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*” (Romans 3:24), the doctrine of God’s universal reconciliation of all people (Luke 2:14) through “*the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*” (Revelation 13:8b). This changeless Gospel of “*her Seed*” (Genesis 3:15) is the very same Gospel of which the Lord spoke when He said to Abraham: “*In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*” (22:18a), and that “*Seed*” promised to Abraham was none other than “*Christ*” (Galatians 3:16b). It was this very same Gospel that the angel shared with the shepherds outside of the city of Bethlehem many centuries ago when he said: “*Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord*” (Luke 2:10-11). Can we ever thank and praise our God sufficiently for His great work of not only giving us this objective, never-changing Gospel in eternity, His great work of restoring that objective, never-changing Gospel through the Reformation,

and His great work of preserving that objective, never-changing Gospel for us in the Scriptures up until this very day?

It was this saving Gospel which was hidden, buried, and distorted prior to the Reformation, but was graciously restored by God, using His faithful, human instruments/servants, such as Martin Luther, to do the work of restoration for all precious souls, including our souls today, so that we and all other sinners would be brought to believe, to receive, to feast on, to be comforted by, and to be reassured of the mercy of God manifested in His precious Gospel. Therein the righteousness of God is revealed, the righteousness that God has declared in Christ for all mankind, the righteousness that we receive by faith (Romans 1:16-17). His saving Gospel assures us that God has most certainly forgiven the sins of all mankind (II Corinthians 5:19), and that God has most certainly declared you, me, and all other sinners “*righteous*” (Romans 5:19b) in His sight, not because of anything which we have done, but solely on account of Jesus’ perfect obedience to God’s Law (Romans 5:19) and His innocent suffering and death in payment for our transgressions (Galatians 3:13). Thus Jesus perfectly satisfied God’s justice with respect to sinful mortals and became “*the propitiation [the full satisfaction and ransom to God] for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world*” (I John 2:2); “*for God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him [the Son of God, Jesus Christ] is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*” (John 3:17-18).

The Apostle Paul declared by inspiration of the Holy Ghost with reference to himself and all true believers of all time: “*Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God*” (Romans 5:1-2). God-wrought, saving faith believes “*the Gospel*” (Mark 1:15b), takes comfort in “*the Gospel of peace*” (Romans 10:15b), “*receives remission of sins*” (Acts 10:43) and “*lays hold on eternal life*” (I Timothy 6:12), not as a meritorious work deserving of God’s favor, but as simple, childlike confidence which clings to what God has already given. Thus, the doctrine of subjective or individual, personal justification is summarized so precisely in Romans 3, “*Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law*” (v. 28), and in Ephesians 2: “*For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast*” (vv. 8-9). Prior to the Reformation, many souls were deceived and misled into thinking

that their own works were necessary to get them into heaven. We can never sufficiently thank and praise our God for restoring through the Reformation the true Gospel of salvation by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith — the Gospel whereby He *“called [us] out of darkness into His marvelous light, which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy”* (I Peter 2:9b-10).

Yes, God used Martin Luther, during the time of the Reformation, as one of His human instruments or servants to restore the doctrines of His Word in their full truth and purity, especially those two priceless doctrines from God's Word, objective and subjective justification, as spelled out earlier in this article.

The title for this article is “The Importance of Retaining Luther's Doctrine Pure,” with a meditation on one of our favorite hymns from *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941). Accordingly, let us now focus on the first stanza of Hymn 288:

Lord, help us ever to retain
the Catechism's doctrine plain,
as Luther taught the Word of truth
in simple style to tender youth.

This entire hymn is a prayer from us, God's children, to our dear heavenly Father. We ask our Father in heaven to “help us” hallow His name in the faithful preaching and teaching of His Word in its truth and purity. Is this request pleasing to our God? Absolutely! He assures us of His gracious help *in general* in these and in so many other passages of Holy Writ: *“God is our refuge and strength, a **very present help** in trouble; therefore will not we fear”* (Psalm 46:1-2a). *“**My help** cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth”* (121:2). *“Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, **I will help thee**; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness. ...For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee: Fear not, **I will help thee**”* (Isaiah 41:10 and 13). Our God is our never failing, ever faithful, daily Helper; He wants us to look to Him again and again for help; He wants us to rely more and more on His promises to help us. The psalmist, in Psalm 27, confessed and counseled in these words: *“I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord”* (vv. 13-14).

We need God's help to "retain," to hold on to, to preserve, to keep, to put into practice, and to apply His doctrines as they are plainly, clearly set forth in Luther's *Small Catechism*, as we pray in the first stanza of Hymn 288. What has been passed on to us by our God in His written Word, by His grace alone through His work of restoration during the Reformation, we are to stick with; we are not to turn away from it, as many did after hearing the teachings of Jesus in John 6. What happened at that time to many of Jesus' disciples? We are given this sad report: "*From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him*" (v. 66). Jesus then placed an important question before His twelve apostles: "*Will ye also go away?*" (v. 67). Peter, one of the apostles, gave this answer to Jesus' question: "*Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God*" (vv. 68-69). Jesus not only spoke the following words to the congregation at Philadelphia (in Asia Minor), but He also spoke these words to each of us: "*Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown*" (Revelation 3:11). The Apostle Paul wrote to young Timothy and to us: "*Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, but continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them. And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation though faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*" (II Timothy 3:13-16). Jesus said "*to those Jews which believed on Him: '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).

The only source of true, pure doctrine and teaching is the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures. Whatever is "*faithfully*" (Jeremiah 23:28b) written, preached, taught, confessed, practiced, and applied from this source is God's true, pure doctrine and teaching. Jesus said to those "*seventy*" who went out, two by two (Luke 10:1), and faithfully spoke His Word: "*He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me, and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me*" (v. 16). The Apostle Peter wrote by inspiration of God: "*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles [the very words or sayings] of God*" (v. 11a). Let us keep these two verses in mind as we consider the words in Hymn 288: "Lord, help us ever to retain the Catechism's doctrine plain, as Luther taught the Word of truth." God

taught Luther His Word of truth in the Holy Scriptures, and then, thereafter, Luther taught that same Word of truth to others. The *doctrine*, the teaching, was first and foremost *God's* doctrine, but it was also *Luther's* doctrine because he learned it from God's Word. The right, pure, true doctrine originated with God Himself and was passed on in the Scriptures as "*holy men of God spake [and wrote] as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*" (II Peter 1:21); and, as Luther searched the Scriptures and discovered therein "*the doctrine which is according to Godliness*" (I Timothy 6:3), Luther then passed along that right, pure, true doctrine of God to us and to our children in his *Small Catechism*, in his *Enchiridion* or "handbook" of the chief parts of Christian doctrine, specifically intended for Christian pastors (cf. Luther's **preface** to his *Small Catechism*) and particularly for Christian fathers "as the head of the family," to use in the instruction of their children.

It is important for us Christians, living in the 21st Century, five centuries after the Reformation, to "retain" God's doctrine and teaching as Luther taught that doctrine and teaching in the *Small Catechism*, "in simple style to tender youth." In the title of each of the six chief parts in the *Small Catechism*, you will find this instruction: "As the head of the family should teach them/it in a simple way to his household." This instruction agrees with the Word of God in Psalm 78: "*That the generation to come might know them [the words and wonderful works of God], even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments*" (vv. 6-7). See also God's instruction to parents in Deuteronomy 6:6-9.

And so we pray: "Lord God, our dear heavenly Father, help us to continue to retain, continue to hold onto, continue to teach, continue to confess, continue to support, and continue to apply to ourselves and to our children the teachings, the doctrines, in the *Small Catechism* because they teach Thy Word of truth. We thank Thee that Luther taught that Word of truth from the Holy Scriptures when *he* retained, held onto, taught, confessed, supported, and applied to himself and to others those teachings, those doctrines, the foundation of faith, and incorporated them in the *Small Catechism* for our learning, so that we continue to be "*built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone*" (Ephesians 2:20). Hear and answer our prayer as we pray according to Thy will in the name of Jesus, Thy Son, our only Savior (I John 5:14-15; John 15:7)."

Let us now focus on stanza 2 of Hymn 288:

“Help us Thy holy Law to learn,
to mourn our sin and from it turn
in faith to Thee and to Thy Son,
and Holy Spirit, three in One.”

Once again, we pray to our heavenly Father to help us, in this case, to help us to learn more and more of His holy Law, to “hide” (Psalm 119:11) more and more of His Commandments in our heart. God teaches us in Romans 3 that “*by the Law is the knowledge of sin*” (v. 20b). When we know and see our sins in its holy mirror, what are we to do? We are to “mourn” over our sin, “*confess [our] transgressions unto the Lord*” (Psalm 32:5b), “*confess [our] faults one to another*” (James 5:16a), and with “*a broken and a contrite heart*” (Psalm 51:17) cast them down before our merciful and gracious God, “*believ[ing] the Gospel*” of forgiveness in Christ Jesus (Mark 1:15b), and then “*bring forth fruits worthy of [giving evidence of, showing forth] repentance*” (Luke 3:8a). One of the fruits of repentance is, with the help of God’s Holy Spirit (Psalm 51:10), to amend our sinful lives, turning away from sin, “*abhor[ring] that which is evil, and cleav[ing] to that which is good*” (Romans 12:9b), “in faith to Thee and to Thy Son, and Holy Spirit, three in One,” always motivated and enabled by the love of Him who loved us first (I John 4:19).

What is our prayer in stanza 3 of Hymn 288?

“Hear us, dear Father, when we pray
for needed help from day to day,
that as Thy children we may live,
whom Thou in Baptism didst receive.”

“O dearest Father, our dear ‘*Abba*’ (Romans 8:15b), help us to live more and more for Thee in gratitude for all that Thou hast done for us and for our salvation in Thy Son, our Savior, and for having received us as Thine own adopted children through our Baptism. What comfort the Apostle Paul gives to us in Galatians 3: ‘*As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ*’ (v. 27), who is ‘*The Lord, our Righteousness*’ (Jeremiah 23:6b), our ‘*Good Shepherd*’ (John 10:11a), ‘*who loved [us] and gave Himself for [us]*’ (Galatians 2:20b), that we might be a special people, ‘*zealous of good works*’ (Titus 2:14) to the praise of Thy grace.”

Our prayer in the final verse of Hymn 288 is:

“Lord, when we fall and sin doth stain,
absolve and lift us up again,
and thro’ the Sacrament increase
our faith till we depart in peace.”

“If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope” (Psalm 130:3-5). *“For Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee. Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer and attend to the voice of my supplication”* (Psalm 86:5-6). When we, in the General Confession, pour out our hearts to the God of our Salvation, humbly confessing our sins and confiding in His mercy, we have the assurance that, for Christ’s sake, He has put all our sins behind His back and remembers them no more (Isaiah 38:17). Thus, in the absolution of His precious Gospel, we have hope to see another day as His dear child (cf. Matthew 9:2); and in the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ we receive strength to fight the good fight of faith, doing battle with the devil, the world, and our old sinful flesh, and to lay hold in confident faith upon our *“inheritance of the saints in light”* (Colossians 1:12) when we depart this present life in peace and joy like Simeon of old (Luke 2:29).

What a privilege we Lutheran Christians have, as we rejoice in the purity of doctrine preserved to us in the Word of our God and faithfully set forth in Luther’s *Small Catechism* and in the other confessional writings included in our precious *Concordia Triglotta*, to confess with the poet this simple phrase:

“God’s Word and Luther’s doctrine pure
shall now and evermore endure!”

—R. J. L.



Luther Explains His Seal — in His Own Words



To Lazarus Spengler, written by Luther from Coburg on July 8, 1530:

Grace and peace in Christ. Honorable, kind, dear Sir and Friend! Since you ask whether my seal which you sent to me has come out correctly, I shall answer most amiably and tell you of those thoughts which come to mind about my seal as a symbol of my theology.

There is first to be a cross, black and placed in a heart, which should be of its natural color, so that I myself would be reminded that faith in the Crucified saves us. *“For if one believes from the heart, he will be justified”* (Romans 10:10). Even though it is a black cross, which mortifies and which also should hurt us, yet it leaves the heart in its natural color and does not ruin nature, that is, it does not kill but keeps alive. For *“the just shall live by faith”* (Romans 1:17), but by faith in the Crucified One. Such a heart should be in the midst of a

white rose, to symbolize that faith gives joy, comfort, and peace; in a word, it places the believer into a white, joyful rose; for this faith does not give peace and joy like the world gives (John 14:27), and, therefore, the rose is to be white and not red, for white is the color of the spirits and of all the angels (cf. Matthew 28:3; John 20:12). Such a rose is to be in a sky-blue field, symbolizing that such joy in the Spirit and in faith is a beginning of the heavenly future joy; it is already a part of faith, and is grasped in hope, even though not yet manifest. And around this field is a golden ring, symbolizing that in heaven such blessedness lasts forever and has no end, and in addition is precious beyond all joy and goods, just as gold is the most valuable and precious metal.

May Christ, our dear Lord, be with your spirit until the life to come. Amen.

(From *Luther's Works*, American Edition, Vol. 49, pp. 358-359)



Concordia Lutheran Conference

Board of Directors

Thursday, September 13, 2018

Whereas a breach of fellowship in our Conference was occasioned by **Pastor David J. Mensing** of Sauk Village, Illinois, who taught publicly in his congregation a new and variant position in doctrine and practice regarding marriage and divorce, a position unsupported by Scripture, namely, that *adultery in the heart* (Matthew 5:28) *is grounds for divorce*; and

Whereas this breach was recognized by the Board of Directors, and its findings were unanimously ratified by the delegates to the Sixty-seventh Annual Convention; and

Whereas, to the praise of God's grace, Pastor Mensing, in a letter to his congregation dated July 27, 2018, and confirmed in a letter to the pastors of the Conference both the following week and in a subsequent letter on September 7, expressed repentance for having publicly taught false doctrine contrary to God's Word in Matthew 5:28-30; for having caused offense, confusion and frustration in the congregation and in the Conference by his persistence in that effort; repented also for his lack of communication with the pastors throughout the whole process as they endeavored to correct him; and begged the congregation's and the pastors' forgiveness; and

Whereas Pastor Mensing expressed to the congregation his earnest intention, by the grace and with the help of God, to study and to grow in his ability rightly and clearly to set forth the doctrines of Holy Scripture and thus to be a workman approved unto God, settling all questions on the basis of Scripture alone and demonstrating that to others for the salvation of men and for the honor of God; and

Whereas Pastor Mensing has agreed to discuss and to work through with his fellow pastors any differences of opinion, definitions of terms or vocables, or questions of interpretation he may still have that are not in and of themselves doctrinal matters and therefore not divisive of fellowship, to the end that they too are cleared up and resolved in the spirit of meekness for a proper mutual understanding;

Therefore be it resolved that we recognize the breach in fellowship to have been healed in a Godpleasing manner and rejoice in the fact that, by the grace of God in and through His efficacious Word, Pastor David J. Mensing was brought to repentance and is once again our brother in the Lord, in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3), of the same mind and judgment with us (I Corinthians 1:10) on the basis of Scripture alone (I Peter 4:11), to the glory of God (I Corinthians 10:31).

(Unanimously adopted by the Board of Directors)



(Series: Exposition and Application of the Ten Commandments)

IX and X. The Ninth and Tenth Commandments

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

—Exodus 20:17

The verb “*to covet*” is variously defined as to want, to lust after, to desire, or to long for a thing. While this word *can* be used to indicate a Godly desire for that which is good (I Corinthians 12:31; 14:39), that is not its common English usage. Rather, it almost always (cf. as *an exception* I Corinthians 12:31) indicates a *sinful* desire for that which belongs to someone else. Since both the Ninth and Tenth Commandments deal with the same sin of *covetousness*—the only difference being the objects that are coveted—it makes sense to examine and expound these last two commandments at the same time, as Luther also does in his *Large Catechism*.

But why do we even have two different commandments dealing with the same basic sin? Many churches combine them into one. We Lutherans tend to follow the traditional numbering of St. Augustine, as it is similarly done in Roman Catholic churches (dividing the prohibitions of coveting into two commandments); but basically all other churches have only one commandment concerning coveting, and they then divide the prohibition of idolatry in the First Commandment into two separate commandments (“*Thou shalt have no other gods before Me*” and “*Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image*”). Reasonable arguments can certainly be made against dividing either the proscription concerning idolatry or that concerning coveting; nevertheless, if no such divisions are made, then there would only be *nine* commandments. However, the Bible refers to the entire collection as “*the ten commandments*” (Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 10:4). Since the Lord did not assign numbers to the individual commandments as we find them recorded in Exodus 20:3–17 and Deuteronomy 5:7–21, the order and numbering of those commandments is not a doctrinal matter and is,

therefore, not an issue that should divide Christians. There are, however, obvious benefits for spiritual brethren to be consistent in the use of the exact same numbering system, so that, in “*teaching and admonishing one another*” (Colossians 3:16), a commandment may be cited by number—saying things like, “such behavior violates the Fourth Commandment,” or “be careful that you do not transgress the Eighth Commandment”—and the Christians in fellowship with one another can correctly understand the intended reference.

Using the numbering as we have it in the *Small Catechism*, Lutherans often make the following distinction: If the object of the coveting is a *non-living* thing (our neighbor’s house, car, boat, etc.), then it is categorized under the *Ninth Commandment*; and if the object of the coveting is a *living* thing (our neighbor’s spouse, children, servants, animals, etc.), then it is categorized under the *Tenth Commandment*. Such a distinction may then be used when considering how covetous thoughts can lead to different sinful actions in the pursuit of that which belongs to one’s neighbor—either seeking to lay claim to another’s property through trickery or a show of right (Ninth Commandment), or by attempting to estrange and entice away from the neighbor those who should be loyal to him (Tenth Commandment). But whether or not such a distinction is observed or emphasized, whether or not the Commandments are numbered as we have them arranged in our Catechism, no one can dispute on the basis of Scripture that the Lord does not want us to covet *anything* of our neighbor’s, for He clearly says: “*Thou shalt not covet...anything that is thy neighbor’s*” (Exodus 20:17).

Understanding the prohibitions of covetousness in the Ninth and Tenth Commandments can help us to understand the true nature of sin in general, as that which has its root in the corrupt desires of the heart. “*Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies*” (Matthew 15:19). In his letter to the Christians in Rome, the Apostle Paul says: “*I had not known sin, but by the Law; for I had not known lust, except the Law had said, ‘Thou shalt not covet’*” (7:7). Not that the command, “*Thou shalt not covet,*” caused Paul to lust; but it did cause him to understand that lust is a transgression of God’s holy Law—that covetousness is a *sin* (I John 3:4). Furthermore, God’s prohibitions concerning coveting in the Ninth and Tenth Commandments set forth an important point that has application for the proper understanding of all Ten Commandments, even the entire Law of the Lord, namely, that God’s requirements of perfection (Leviticus 19:2; Matthew 5:48) extend also to the heart and mind (Deuteronomy 15:7–10; II Corinthians 9:7).

Yes, without the Ninth and Tenth Commandments, a person might feel justified in viewing Commandments 1–8 in a very superficial way—thinking that a mere outward performance (which even a hypocrite could render) is all that God really requires. Those who hold to such an erroneous opinion will think that they have perfectly kept the *First Commandment* if they have never bowed down before an idol, while they overlook such sins as loving family members more than God (Matthew 10:37). They will think that they have perfectly kept the *Second Commandment* if they have restrained themselves from saying things like “Oh, my God!” while they overlook such sins as thoughtlessly using His name in vain prayer (Matthew 6:7). They will think that they have kept the *Third Commandment* if they attend a worship service every Sunday, while they overlook such sins as not having their minds engaged at all upon the Word of God when it is preached (Ecclesiastes 5:1). They will think that they have kept the *Fourth Commandment* if they have never cursed or struck their parents, while they overlook such sins as despising, that is, thinking little of, parents and superiors in their hearts (Proverbs 23:22). They will think that they have kept the *Fifth Commandment* if they have not murdered anyone, while they overlook such sins as nursing hatred in their hearts (1 John 3:15). They will think that they have kept the *Sixth Commandment* if they have not had sex with anyone but their spouse, while they overlook such sins as lusting after another (Matthew 5:28). They will think that they have kept the *Seventh Commandment* if they have never forcibly taken their neighbor’s property, while they overlook such sins as neglecting to help their neighbor recover and protect his property (Exodus 23:4). And they will think that they have kept the *Eighth Commandment* if they have given no false testimony under oath, while they overlook such sins as imagining evil of their neighbor without just cause (Zechariah 8:17).

When such a superficial opinion of the Commandments is held, then the false conclusion can easily be drawn that man has the ability to satisfy the requirements of God’s Law. Such was the case with the rich young ruler who did *not* seek Jesus as his Savior from sin but regarded Him as one who could give additional instruction (beyond the commandments of God recorded in Scripture) concerning works to be done in order to secure eternal life in heaven (Luke 18:18). When Jesus told him, “*Thou knowest the commandments: Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother,*” his response was: “*All these have I kept from my youth up*” (vv. 20–21). Christ then exposed the imperfection of the man’s *heart* by challenging

him to divest himself of all his earthly treasures and follow Him, which he could not bring himself to do (vv. 22–23). Similarly, in the *Ninth and Tenth Commandments* when the Lord says, “*Thou shalt not covet,*” He does not mention an external act that one might think is easy to accomplish, but directly targets the *heart* of man—exposing how wicked that heart is (Jeremiah 17:9), and setting forth the standard of purity that He requires even in thoughts and feelings (I Timothy 1:5).

Though covetousness is a sin even when it goes no further than the heart, it is also important to remember that sins of the heart often give rise to outward sins—words and deeds that compound sin upon sin and can do a great deal of physical, mental, and spiritual harm to one’s neighbor. “*An evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil*” (Luke 6:45; Mark 7:20–23). In the explanations to the Ninth and Tenth Commandments in his *Small Catechism*, Luther therefore emphasizes that covetous thoughts can lead to various outward sins, such as “craftily [seeking] to get our neighbor’s inheritance or house,” or attempting to “estrangle, force, or entice away from our neighbor his wife, servants, or cattle.”

It is, of course, pure foolishness to think that the Lord—who perfectly knows every thought in the mind of man and every feeling in his heart—would only require *outward* conformity, while excusing fleshly thinking, attitudes, motives, and desires contrary to His Law (Jeremiah 17:10; I Kings 8:39). Jesus, therefore, called the scribes and Pharisees “*fools and blind*” (Matthew 23:17, 19) on account of their false beliefs and sinful practices, which included a fixation upon the outward appearance of purity while hypocritically ignoring inward spiritual filthiness. “*Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity*” (Matthew 23:24–28).

Worldly minded individuals greatly underestimate the seriousness of coveting, especially when such sinful thoughts and feelings do not lead to the commission of overt actions in an attempt to acquire what is right-

fully another's. However, the Bible never minimizes this sin! Since it involves fastening one's heart upon that which the Lord has chosen not to give him, covetousness is a form of *idolatry* (invisible idolatry in the heart). Accordingly, in his letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul says that a "*covetous man...is an idolater*" (5:5); and to the Colossians, he writes: "*covetousness...is idolatry*" (3:5). Obviously, the sin of idolatry (holding to a false god) is a very serious matter and carries serious consequences when there is no repentance; the same is true of covetousness. In his first letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul lists those that are "*covetous*" among those who "*shall not inherit the kingdom of God*" (6:9–10); and in his first letter to Timothy, he speaks of some who, as a result of coveting after money, "*have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows*" (6:10). It is no wonder, then, that the Lord Jesus, who cares so deeply for our souls' welfare, tells us to "*take heed and beware of covetousness*" (Luke 12:15).

It is true that we all deserve eternal damnation even on account of a single, ever-so-brief covetous thought (James 2:10; Galatians 3:10). Thankfully, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all our sins, including every covetous thought we have ever had (I John 1:7). His redeeming love constrains us not only to serve Him with our outward lives, but also with the invisible thoughts and feelings of our hearts and minds (II Corinthians 5:14–15; Psalm 51:17). While hypocrites, who follow in the footsteps of the scribes and Pharisees, are merely interested in receiving the praise of men through an outward show of righteousness (Matthew 6:2, 5, 16; 23:5–7), true Christians desire to please the Lord, who is not interested in an outward show (Matthew 6:3–4, 6, 17–18) —knowing that "*the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart*" (I Samuel 16:7). Thus we pray that God would cleanse our hearts (Psalm 51:10), and that all our thoughts would be acceptable in His sight (Psalm 19:14). And while we understand that, on account of our sinful flesh, our hearts will never be completely holy as long as we live on this earth (Romans 7:14–23; Galatians 5:17), yet the Gospel assures us that through the imputed righteousness of the Redeemer (Romans 4:22–25), our hearts and lives are acceptable before God for Christ's sake (I Peter 2:5; Philipians 1:11).

Through the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost, let us strive out of love for the Savior to put away all covetous thoughts and feelings, be content and thankful to the Lord for all the gracious blessings that He has given us, and, rather than wanting to get for ourselves the good

things that belong to our neighbor, be sincerely happy for him and do what we can to help him retain the blessings that God has given him.

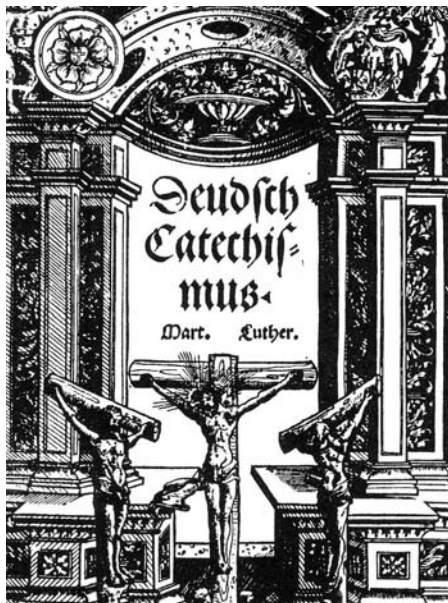
Thy neighbor's house desire thou not,
his wife, nor aught that he hath got;
but wish that his such good may be
as thy heart doth wish for thee.
Have mercy, Lord!

God these commandments gave therein
to show thee, child of man, thy sin
and make thee also well perceive
how man unto God should live.
Have mercy, Lord!

Help us, Lord Jesus Christ, for we
a Mediator have in Thee.
Our works cannot salvation gain;
they merit but endless pain.
Have mercy, Lord!

(*TLH* 287, vv. 10–12)

—P. E. B.



Churches in Fellowship

ORTHODOX LUTHERAN CHURCH OF EKATERINBURG

Ekaterinburg, Russia

The Rev. Roman G. Schurganoff, Pastor

P. O. Box 27

620039 Ekaterinburg, RUSSIA

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

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

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

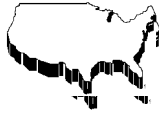
Abonnema, Nigeria

The Rev. Nimi B. Fyeface, Pastor

P. O. Box 123

Abonnema, Akulga, Rivers State, NIGERIA

E-Mail: njohnfyeface@yahoo.co.uk



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

Saving Faith

Saving faith is the knowledge of Jesus Christ, His Person and Work, so that the individual knows *why* he is forgiven all his sins and declared righteous before God, coupled with trust in the heart that for Christ's sake those gifts belong to him.

The Apology of the *Augsburg Confession* is entirely correct in the definition of saving faith: "Faith is not only knowledge in the intellect, but also confidence in the will, that is, it is to wish and to receive that which is offered in the promise (the Gospel), namely, reconciliation and remission of sins." (*Triglot*, 205, Article III, 183).

Excerpt from *The Role of Faith in Justification*, page 121