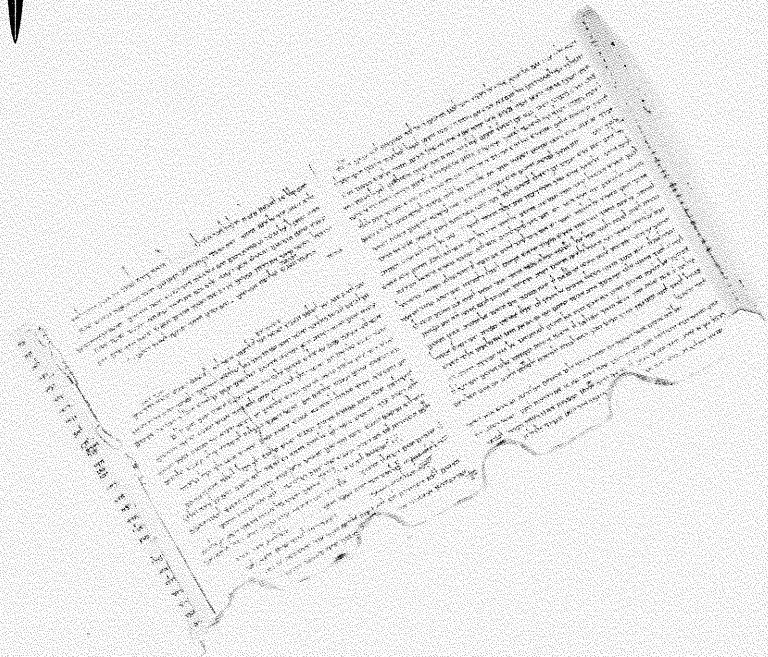




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HUMANISM AND ITS EFFECTS UPON THE CHURCH

Today we hear a great deal about Humanism or "Secular Humanism." What is it? Is it something to be feared? Does it have any influence on the church? In this preliminary essay I shall try to pull together some things I have been exploring. I do feel, however, that the topic merits considerable more study than I have here given it.

Webster's New World Dictionary, Second College Edition (1970), defines Humanism as follows: "Any system of thought or action based on the nature, dignity, interest, and ideals of man; specif., a modern nontheistic rationalist movement that holds that man is capable of self-fulfillment, ethical conduct, etc., without recourse to supernaturalism."

Is it a religion? It is an important question, for the answer to it will have considerable to say about our attitude towards the growing monolithic state school system of education from kindergarten to graduate school. Prof. Pieper points out that there is no common usage with regard to the term "religion," but a pretty good definition, it appears to me, is one found in the ACD: "1. The quest for the values of the ideal life, involving three phases: the ideal, the practices for attaining the values of the ideal, and the theology or world-view relating the quest to the environing universe." I believe that this is an operative definition with which we can work in assessing the ebb and flow of thought that surrounds us. I recognize, however, that some would limit the use of the word "religion" to belief in the supernatural. Recently Prof. W. Gawrisch has wrestled with the problem of what is a religion (See Northwestern Lutheran, Sept. 13, 1970, p. 316), and it appears that he would want to limit the definition to belief in the supernatural. He declares that "in the strict and proper sense 'religion' denotes communion with God. In this sense there is only one religion, the Christian

religion." It seems to be that this is a rather arbitrary limitation to the definition of "religion", not only because this assumed etymology is doubtful, but also because, as Pieper says, "The meaning of a word is in its last analysis not established by its etymology, but by its usage."¹ But Prof. Gawrisch does go on to say that "the word 'religion' is commonly used in a wider sense, however. The dictionary defines it as 'an apprehension, awareness, or conviction of the existence of a supreme being.' In this sense all men have a religion." I do not know which dictionary gives this definition, although I'm sure that several dictionaries would carry similar definitions. But it appears to me that this definition is inadequate. For example, the Secular Humanist would say that on the basis of that dictionary definition he does not have a religion, because he does not consciously acknowledge the existence of a supreme being. On the basis of that dictionary definition, he would not agree with Prof. Gawrisch's assertion that "in this sense all men have a religion."

And, as a matter of fact, we see that this is just what the Humanist says. Sidney Hook in his book, Religion in a Free Society, wants to "identify religion in terms of the familiar denominations organized around a church, whose behavior is differentiated by varied sacral symbols and rituals, and whose creedal beliefs acknowledge the existence of a Supreme Power or an immortal soul or of a cosmic order which is at the same time a moral order, with the corollary that the universe supports our moral ideals and ensures their ultimate triumph."² Accordingly, a Secular Humanist would have no religion. Upon reading further into the book, it becomes clear why Prof. Hook wants to limit the definition as he has outlined it and as the definition as quoted by Prof. Gawrisch limits it: because of his argument regarding the sufficiency of the public school system for all; he says, "If we cannot do this (i.e. distinguish the nonreligious from the religious) then it follows that everyone willy-nilly is committed to some kind of religion" (p. 10). And at the conclusion of his book, Prof.

Hook reveals himself further: "From my own educational point of view, the weightiest reason for doubting the wisdom of the court decisions in Engel V. Vitale and Abington V. Schempp (banned voluntary prayer and Bible reading) is that they will lead to an extension of the parochial system" (p. 110). He concludes that "they (i.e., the court decisions) have enabled the defenders of the parochial school system to argue falsely but effectively that the public schools are hostile to religion and re-enforced the views of religious fundamentalists opposed to any kind of secular education" (p. 110).

It would appear to me that the definition found in the ACD is not only more in keeping with a recent Supreme Court decision,³ but it is also more in accord with the Scriptural view and the view of the Lutheran Confessions. The "gods" which occupy the minds of most men in this universe are very much of this world. Luther says: "That now, I say, upon which you set your heart and put your trust is properly your God" (From the "Large Catechism", Trig. p. 583). "Whoever trusts and boasts that he possesses great skill, prudence, power, favor, friendship and honor has also a god but not this true and only God. . . . The chief explanation of this point is that to have a god is to have something which the heart entirely trusts" (Trig. p. 583). To have a god is then to have a religion, and so Luther applies this in a very broad sense. Prof. John Montgomery is certainly right when he approvingly quotes Tillich's statement that "every man has a god, every man has a religion, no man is in fact an atheist."⁴ But we must remember that these false gods (all false gods, as a matter of fact) are gods of this world. Compare 2 Cor. 4:4, "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." They are never supernatural (except in the sense that they are the products of the devil), although the practitioners may at times claim them to be supernatural, and at other times they may claim that they are purely of this world. In this latter case, their ultimate ground of commitment would be Naturalistic philosophy.

Prof. Colin S. Brown, an English theologian and philosopher, says: "Humanism is a kind of religion insofar as it has a kind of creed, but it is a religion without God. If there is a god, he is unknowable and cannot be taken into account. Man must live for man alone, for whether he likes it or not, man has been dumped into the world and has to fend for himself. In a very real sense he is his own creator. He has to create his own standards. He has to create his own goals. And he has to make his own way towards them."⁵

Leaders of the Humanist movement often speak as though it were a substitute for outmoded Christianity. For example, the Internationalist Humanist and Ethical Union, under the chairmanship of Julian Huxley, drafted a declaration some years ago, which states that "Humanism unites all those who cannot any longer believe the various creeds and are willing to base their convictions on respect for man as a spiritual and moral being."⁶

Modern Humanism was forged in the universities and colleges about 100 years ago, and it has become somewhat of a solidified movement. For example, when Matthew Arnold, the Victorian poet and literary critic, gave up his Christianity, he looked for a philosophy that could take the place of his lost Christianity. He turned to Stoicism and several other forms of thought, but he finally came up with what we would call Humanism. He made a plea for Culture, a term he used broadly and somewhat loosely, meaning that which would bring about the harmonious development of human nature. He called it on occasion "Sweetness and Light." It was especially "Light" or enlightenment that he had in mind, believing that through culture there came a growth of intelligence. And he felt that this pursuit of intelligence would be most profitable in the study of Hellenism to counteract Hebraism with its morality. He felt that one should study the best that had been thought and known about all the questions of human knowledge and that this would lead to detachment, flexibility, openness, and patience. His ideal then was "the liberal mind liberally educated."⁷

This literary humanistic movement then reverted to the Humanists of the Renaissance period, when there had occurred a great explosion in the development of literature, art, music, etc. So, the Humanists lay claim to a very long lineage. The Humanists of the Renaissance were in revolt against much of the medieval society.⁸ Humanist churchmen had accepted the thought of Aristotle, and although they didn't propose to revive a purely pagan conception of life, many of the pagan thoughts were intermingled with thoughts from the Bible. Prof. Lucas says: "The dominant tendency was toward paganism. It seemed that the church had lost its prestige with the elite of the bourgeoisie; its doctrines could not compete with the charm of reviving pagan thought" (Lucas, p. 266). Prof. J. W. Montgomery, in his recent book, In Defense of Martin Luther, also points out that the Humanists of the Renaissance period were biased against supernatural influence.⁹ It should be noted, however, as Werner Jaeger points out, that the Humanism of St. Thomas and Dante in setting forth their ideal of human life "includes the presence of the divine."¹⁰ But when the Naturalistic philosophy became dominant in the 19th century, the divine was totally eliminated.

As is well known, the Humanists of the Renaissance went back to the flowering of Greek literature and thought. The revival of Greek learning during the Renaissance took place because at that time many Greek manuscripts were recovered and the Greek language was relearned. Werner Jaeger points out that in this Greek thought of the 5th century B.C., at first there were religious foundations in earlier Greek life but that they had been crumbling during the fifth century B.C. Prof. Jaeger demonstrates this in the examination of the thought of three Greek dramatists, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. At the beginning of the fifth century, Aeschylus' mind is "deeply rooted in the religious tradition of his people. He is like a wrestler of gigantic strength. That strength is due to his unshakeable confidence in the divine wisdom that governs the life of man in spite of its tragic nature which stirs the poet's human sympathy and fear" (p. 43).

Prof. Jaeger then points out that Sophocles, the second in line in way of time, "has accomplished in his work a perfect balance of the human and the divine aspect of life. He does not question the God-sent character of evil, but he has neither the power nor the desire of Aeschylus to struggle with the problem of God for its own sake. He silently bows to the inaccessible majesty of the superhuman, but he turns with all his intensity toward the human side of the picture" (p. 43).

Then the third dramatist in time, Euripides, is, according to Jaeger, "an artist of tremendous gifts, but this world entirely humanized and relativistic lacks an absolute center. He is a skeptic, the true contemporary of Protagoras" (p. 44). From this it is evident that the naturalistic element in Humanism is of long standing.

This short review not only gives us some background to the Humanist tradition but also calls to mind two favorite "proof-texts" on which the Humanists like to build their sermons. The first is from the Fifth Century, B.C., philosopher Protagoras (mentioned by Jaeger), who said that "Man's mind is the measure of all things." The other text comes from the classical English poet, Alexander Pope, who said "the proper study of mankind is man."

With this brief background, let us return to Humanism as it manifests itself today. About thirty-five years ago the American Humanists set out a more or less ordered body of beliefs - - a creed - - if you will. It had four points:

1. Man is not natively depraved;
2. The end of life is life itself, the good life on earth instead of the beatific life after death;
3. Man is capable, guided solely by the light of reason and experience, of perfecting the good life on earth;
4. The first and essential condition of the good life on earth is the freeing of men's minds

from the bonds of ignorance and superstition, and of their bodies from the arbitrary suppression of the constituted social authorities."11

F. C. S. Schiller, an eminent Humanist who did much to codify Humanism forty or fifty years ago and who wrote the article on Humanism in Hastings' Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, explicates these beliefs when he says that Humanism "designates the philosophic attitude which regards the interpretation of human experience as the primary concern of all philosophizing and asserts the adequacy of human knowledge for this purpose (Volume VI, p. 830). He goes on to say that Humanism puts man in the center of the intellectual universe. He asserts that the modern intellectual movement of Humanism is a human revolt against the domination of pedantic, abstruse, and sterile speculation and that it is a conscious revival of the critical relativism of Protagoras and appeals so explicitly to his maxim that man is the measure of all things that it may without injustice be described as Neo-Protagoreanism. He approvingly quotes William James who said that humanism was a "ferment that came to stay." He also says that it is primarily the name for a method and not for a system of philosophy; it is more particularly a protest against the dehumanizing of logic, and he states that "all truths should be related to human purposes. He also insists "that the claim to an exclusive possession of absolute truth the humanist takes to be sufficiently refuted by the existence of conflicting claims and by the historic impossibility of finding any two philosophers whose systems are really in agreement." (p. 830).

The influence of Humanism today is staggering because it is centered among the intellectuals, and they control the colleges and universities. Harold Lindsell, the editor of Christianity Today, in a recent article said this about Humanism: "Among the movements that have challenged the Church from within are humanism, liberalism, syncretism, and universalism. The Humanist is one 'whose belief consists of faith in man and

Prof. Stoops describes the atheistic humanist as seeing man as if he were seeing through the eyes of God. He gives up no part of his being. He then further

Prof. Stoops then describes what he calls Humanistic Atheism, also mentioning a couple of other names by which it (or a subspecies) is called: Promethean Humanism or Rebelatstian Humanism. Prof. Stoops' thesis is that "all these forms of humanistic atheism tend to 'co-exist' with theism. It tends to lure the believer from his steadfast theistic position. It seldom makes a direct attack upon theistic ideas" (p. 85). I believe that anyone who has spent some time in a secular university, both undergraduate and graduate schools, will recognize this as a fair statement of how secular humanism operates and how it is virtually the established religion.

He discusses first what he calls the absolute atheist or the dogmatic atheist -- the one who regards God's existence as anathema, and who is aggressive in the ways open to him to defeat the presence of God in the thoughts of man. Prof. Stoops makes an acute observation when he declares that "in recent times . . . he (the atheist) has discovered his favored position in the law and has invoked his legal prerogatives in the spirit of religious freedom" (p. 85).

Proceeding with his analysis, Prof. Stoops charges that "in religious literature atheism is frequently denounced but seldom examined" (p. 84). The Lutheran pastor might, for example, check in the index volume to Pieper's Dogmatics to see how frequently and in what detail atheism is discussed. He may be somewhat surprised at the infrequency of the references. But to return to Stoops' analysis, he feels that "seldom if ever has there been much inclination to seek an understanding of it, and that religious literature seems to contain very little research on the kinds of atheism which exist" (p. 85). Stoops expresses it as a personal conviction that the man of the 20th century will come to regret this defect more as time goes along.

devotion to human well being. ' Faith in man is sub-
 stituted for faith in God. For the humanist there are
 no biblical absolutes. He will not concede that some
 things are objectively and forever true. He is a
 relativist as well as an anti-supernaturalist, and he
 stands on shifting sands at all times. He has no
 Gospel to proclaim, nor does he know man as a sinner
 in need of redemption. He slips easily into the role
 of social engineer.¹²

This whole matter of Humanism (or as it has also
 been called "Secular Humanism" or "Humanistic Atheism")
 has not been sufficiently examined by theologians in
 our day, particularly by conservative theologians.
 John A. Stoops, Dean, School of Education, Lehigh
 University, has written an important book which we all
 could do well to study: Religious Values in Education.
 Prof. Lee O. Garber of the University of Pennsylvania
 writes in the preface that the book is not presented
 as a book in philosophy or religion but as a "work in
 education." But Dean Stoops in his preface states
 that he prepared the book as "a supplementary refer-
 ence for teachers who may be engaged in graduate study
 in the philosophical foundation of education." But
 he adds that it has "attracted the interest of certain
 laymen and clergy who are deeply concerned with the
 religious development of American youth."¹³

From the inside of the educational establishment,
 Dean Stoops makes some observations regarding Humanism
 in the schools which merit serious study. He says of
 himself that "no belief is held for theism over
 against any other God-idea." But he feels that he
 must describe "the irony inherent in the church-state-
 separation and recent court decisions which have re-
 sulted in an educational milieu which includes every
 God-idea except those associated with traditional
 theism." Dean Stoops further feels that the "denial
 of this vision (i.e., theism) is inherently immoral
 in a society which wishes to give men complete freedom
 to develop their own individual religious natures"
 (my emphasis).

defines the thrust of Promethean Humanism: "However, in the Promethean tradition man cares about man" (p. 86). Central, then, to the Humanist is the element of respect for man, an element which is so attractive to our young people today, who somehow feel that the organized church has little respect for the individual human being, and hasn't had this respect for several generations.

After describing several other types of atheism, Prof. Stoops quite severely criticizes the American churches (especially their Sunday School programs) for creating "Apostles of Atheism" (p. 89). He insists that "the greatest losses to theism in America probably occur as consequence of the disillusionment that youth experiences in early adolescence. At the same time the ideas of atheism and pantheism are the youth's environment and they exert a powerful appeal to him. He learns to laugh at countless St. Peter jokes and 'preacher' stories, and he finds himself yielding or not yielding to inclinations which place his churchly idea of God alongside his sentimental childhood memories of dragons, ghosts and Santa Claus" (p. 90). The Lehigh University Dean then demonstrates by example how "atheistic concepts inherent in the school curriculum appear highly credible" (p. 90). Such an examination at this time would take us too far afield, but we can't too strongly urge our pastors to make a more substantial study of these facts than they hitherto have done.

But lest we get too unbalanced a picture, let us remember that the Humanist, too, has some problems today, and his way of life, which appears so attractive to some, has some real obstacles. We should not be hesitant in pointing them out, especially to those of our young people who are attracted to modern secular Humanism. As this 20th century draws to a close, the optimistic humanist creed has been thoroughly shaken. Bertrand Russell, a professed humanist, at the end of his life was not very confident of human progress. So, you find humanists not agreeing with one another today in their optimistic belief that

there is real progress on the earth. Their hopes have "received severe setbacks in the first half of the century," says Prof. Colin Brown. "People are not as rational as they might be; the church and other irrational institutions still have a considerable pull over the masses. Science is not quite the panacea it was once thought to be."¹⁴ As you well know, the two World Wars and the continuing state of the Cold War have pretty well put a damper on the belief in the inevitability of progress. And when one recalls that the influence of the church has waned in these last years and then one looks at the increasing evidence of "man's inhumanity to man", one need not be an absolute skeptic to question the value of the humanistic doctrine. When one realizes that man has set up a great variety of human value systems, where moral values are contradictory, and yet they are the result of humanistic thinking, one can see that the Humanist has some real problems in deciding which value systems he should take for his own. Should it be the majority value systems (consensus gentium)? Should it be the value systems of the intellectually elite? Should it be the value systems set up by a dictator?

Another problem is the one of when and where should values be changed. One might, for example, remember how the Humanists stressed so strongly the primary value system of reverence for life, probably epitomized as well anywhere as in Schweitzer's African hospitals where antiseptic measures were not practiced too strictly since this involved the destruction of life. And then one might compare the current Humanist thrust for unlimited abortion so that the woman is "totally free"! And then do not forget the universal problems that plague every man. There is man's quest for life -- enduring life; his universal fear of death; his desire to have a good conscience; and then there is the one who in at least a vague way is "looking for that blessed hope" (Titus 2:13). These problems are real, and not all are going to be satisfied, for example, with the statement that Bultmann's Jesus is only risen "in the sense that Goethe rises

from the dead for students in the course of lectures about him in a university auditorium."¹⁵

We can easily see where Humanism basically differs from Christianity. We should also take note of the fact that Humanists make some specific charges against Christianity. They say that "religion is other worldly and non-temporal in character and interest, and aims to prepare men for the next world while breeding in them a massive indifference to the opportunities and needs of this one."¹⁶ Prof. Reid also quotes the modern British philosopher, A. J. Ayer, as writing that "until quite recently the humanist's energies were mainly absorbed in a kind of religious war against the churches. This war in which only the humanists themselves took any great interest was waged on two fronts. They set out, on the one hand, to expose the absurdities of Christian theology and, on the other, to demonstrate historically that religious belief had been a source of more misery than happiness, and especially that the churches, as political and social forces, were an obstacle to human enlightenment and progress" (p. 184).

We do well to examine these charges. We freely confess that the fundamental thrust of our faith is authoritative, based on an inerrant Word which reveals to us Christ, the Son of God, Who saves us from eternal damnation through faith in His merits. This may seem absurd, but it is a fundamental fact to our belief. If, however, the church has bred in its adherents a "Massive indifference to the opportunities and needs of this one (world)" and if one can "demonstrate historically that religious belief (I would take it that Ayer means essentially organized Christianity) has been the source of more misery than happiness," then we must take a very close look at ourselves, and at our beliefs that guide and control our lives.

I think that we must admit that at times organized Christianity has sided with the Status Quo, with the Establishment, the Ruling Majority generally in

power, usually with the "Haves" over against the "Have-nots".

How many of us have not winced when we have heard some well-meaning (I hope) pastor suggest that the church can't do anything to help alleviate the condition of the less fortunate because thus life is structured, the fact of poverty being a part of the order of life: "For ye have the poor with you always"? One seldom or ever in this connection gets the context of Christ's words when He says: "And whensoever ye will ye may do them good" (Mark 14:7). And in connection with the use of this text, I can't recall ever hearing Christ's other words about the poor, the hungry, the unclothed, the stranger, the prisoner: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40). We should not duck this "fast ball" coming from a Humanist.

In conclusion, I want to say that as we study Humanism and discuss it with those who are exposed to it in massive doses, we must searchingly study three questions for ourselves which Scripture poses: What is the ultimate purpose of man's life? What think ye of Christ? Who is my neighbor, or whose neighbor am I? The humanistically inclined person and the devout Christian must be led to face up to them. Perhaps no better text than Titus 2: 11-15 can be selected for such a self-study: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee."

Here we have a short summary of Paul's teaching. The hope which God would have man to have in this

life is a blessed hope of the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. This is God's ultimate purpose for man. Secondly, Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, in Whom is revealed for mankind the universal saving grace of God. That grace has now appeared in the historic Christ, Who has rescued man from his evil ways and made for Himself a people of His own. Through faith man possesses personally this unmerited gift of grace. And finally, with that grace and that hope dwelling in man's heart by faith, he now lives here in this life, a life which has no more to do with godlessness, and he has a heart set upon living a life that is good. Every man is his neighbor whom he will love as himself, and to whom he will be a "Christ" (Luther), full of compassion and mercy.

NOTES AND DOCUMENTATION

1. Pieper, Franz, Christian Dogmatics, St. Louis: CPH, 1950, Vol. 1, p. 8. Prof. Pieper discusses the etymology of the word in some details, showing that scholars are not agreed on it. Apparently no new light has been shed on the problem, since recent dictionaries still suggest that the etymology is doubtful.
2. Hook, Sidney, Religion in a Free Society, Lincoln: U. of Nebraska Press, 1967, p. 10.
3. Compare the Torcaso Case (1961), where the Supreme Court considers Secularism a religion, maintaining that there are "religions based on a belief in the existence of God and religions founded on different beliefs." One of the latter religions which "do not teach a belief in the existence of God," said the court, is "Secular Humanism."
4. John Warwick Montgomery, in a filmed lecture, "Christianity: Fact or Fiction."
5. Brown, Colin, Philosophy and the Christian Faith, Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1969, p. 229.

6. Quoted by J. K. S. Reid, Christian Apologetics, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969, p. 183.
7. See British Literature, ed., Spencer, Houghton, Barrows, Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., Vol. 2, pp. 715-718.
8. Lucas, Henry S., The Renaissance and the Reformation, N.Y.: Harper & Brothers, 1934, p. 193.
9. Montgomery, John Warwick, In Defense of Martin Luther, Milwaukee: NPH, 1970, pp. 97,98.
10. Jaeger, Werner, Humanism and Theology, Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1943.
11. Colin Brown, p. 227, quoted from Carl Becker's The Heavenly City of the 18th Century Philosophers (Yale, 1932, p. 102).
12. Harold Lindsell, editorial in Christianity Today, 9/11/70, p. 106.
13. Stoops, John A., Religious Values in Education, Danville, Ill.: The Interstate, 1967, Preface.
14. Colin Brown, p. 228.
15. Harenberg, Werner, Der Spiegel On the New Testament, N.Y.: Macmillan, 1970, p. 9.
16. Reid, p. 183. In this respect one should note that the resemblances between Humanism are very close, so close in fact, that Prof. Reid declares that "Communism may be regarded as a politico-economic variant of Humanism" (p. 186). Marx himself said: "The criticism of religion ends with the teaching that man is the highest essence for man, hence with the categoric imperatives to overthrow all relations in which man is a debased, enslaved, abandoned, despicable essence" (from Marx's "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," p. 50, quoted by S. Paul

Schilling, God In An Age of Atheism, Abingdon Press, 1969, p. 28). It seems ironic to me that many Christians (especially the so-called conservative ones) expend a tremendous amount of energy doing battle against an exotic Russian Communism (a real threat, to be sure) but they not only overlook, but sometimes actually promote the cause of Secular Humanism by insisting that a monolithic state educational system grounded in Humanistic principles should receive virtually exclusive support. How a common garden variety of the weed Humanism can continue to choke the tender plants of Supernatural Christianity in a systematic way, without being very seriously challenged in our own back yard, can probably be explained on the poet's dictum that distance lends enchantment to the view. But it doesn't save us from the present and immediate danger that confronts all of us.

B. W. Teigen

VISIT WITH YOUR SOUL FOR A FEW MINUTES

The Old Testament calls your soul "nephesh." The New Testament calls your soul "psyche." Both the Old and the New Testaments also use figurative language in speaking about your soul.

In the Book of Proverbs, Solomon used the term "leb" (heart) as a synonym for soul.

Proverbs 4, 23: "Keep your 'leb' (heart) will all diligence; for out of it are the 'totsaoth,' outgoings, issues of life."

Matthew used the same figure of speech in quoting the statement of Jesus: "Blessed are the pure in 'kardia,' heart" (Matthew 5, 8).

Whether it employs figurative or literal language in a given passage, the Bible indicates that your soul is the vital force in your life, that your soul puts the sparkle into your existence.

The exact instant when your soul joined into the merger of sperm and ovum to become you has been debated rather profusely of late in discussions concerning abortion. There has been considerable study of Bible passages but not much agreement on the subject. As far as you are concerned, the exact instant in which God breathed your soul into the beginning you is not as important as the truth that God gave you your soul.

You are a great deal more than a well arranged series of cells because your Creator put your soul into your embryonic, or emerging physical structure. Your soul is the inner you, the center of your being, which more than anything else distinguishes you from the animal world.

There is an interesting paragraph about this matter in the book What, Then, is Man? In speaking of Luther, the writer of this section of the book stated:

Although the word soul is used hundreds of times in the Bible in a number of meanings, and the word spirit as well, it is interesting to note that Luther thought of the soul first of all as the life of the body, operating through it, pervading it, and making itself known through it. He took issue with the idea that the soul emanates from the body, and ascribes this confusion to Aristotle.¹

Your soul is joined to your body so fundamentally that it will not leave your body until you die. Your death gives your soul a temporary leave of absence from your body until the great reunion on the day of the resurrection of the dead.

Your soul is the arena in which the Holy Ghost

works to bring you to believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior and to sustain this faith within you. When Lorenz Wunderlich writes "this life-giving Spirit of God achieves His highest purpose for Christians by establishing and maintaining spiritual life in them through His word,"² he is writing about the work of the Holy Spirit upon the soul.

The Apostle Paul prayed that Christ might dwell in the hearts of the Ephesians by faith (Ephesians 3, 17). Although he used figurative language (ev tais kardiais umon), he was obviously speaking about Christ dwelling in their souls.

When the Apostle wrote, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you" (I Corinthians 6, 19). he is indicating that the body responds to the impact which the Spirit of God exerts upon the soul.

This faith-giving and faith-maintaining work of the Holy Spirit is necessary because your soul does not have the holy and sinless character of that soul which God breathed into Adam and of that soul which God installed in Eve. Somehow in the transmission of your soul from your holy God into your body, it becomes infected with the hereditary contamination of sin passed on from fallen Adam and Eve to each of us human beings.

Just how your soul catches the infection of sinful heredity is not explained. The Bible simply states that it does take place. Paul said quite a few things about the contamination of our souls. One of his statements is in the Epistle to the Romans 5, 12: "As by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Here the Apostle states the fact but does not explain the method.

Apparently, some confusion has arisen about whether or not your soul and your spirit are one and the same thing. The Bible often uses soul and spirit

interchangeably. However, Thayer believed that Paul always distinguished between the two:

I Thessalonians 5, 23 according to which "to pneuma" is the rational part of man, the power of perceiving and grasping divine and eternal things, and upon which the Spirit of God exerts its influence.³

Thayer implied that Luther followed Paul in maintaining this distinction:

"pneuma," says Luther, "is the highest and noblest part of man, which qualifies him to lay hold of incomprehensible, invisible, eternal things; in short, it is the house where Faith and God's word are at home."⁴

It is probable that one could make a case against Thayer's interpretation of Luther. It is possible that Luther is using "pneuma" in the same sense in which he might use "psyche."

It seems probable that when the Bible makes a sharp distinction between soul and spirit, it is indicating that the spirit is a function of the soul. It seems rather safe to say that your "neshamah," your "ruach," your "pneuma," your "spirit," emanates from your soul as that function by which you experience consciousness, by which your mind gets the ability to perceive and to think.

Francis Pieper warned against thinking of man as being composed of three different parts:

The assumption that man consists of three essentially different parts: of the "soma" (body) as the material part, the "Psyche" (soul) as the lower, or animal, principle of life, which man has in common with the animals; and the "pneuma" (spirit) as the higher, or spiritual, principle of life, which distinguishes man from the animals, is not sufficiently supported...⁵

No doubt, using spirit as a function of the soul when a distinction between soul and spirit is desirable is helpful in confronting impairment of perception and of the capacity to think clearly.

Your believing soul may be blessed with a healthy faith at the same time as your spirit may be handicapped by a concussion of your brain so that your mind is incapable of confessing your faith in your Savior for the consolation of your grieving relatives. Many similar illustrations might be used to indicate the need for caution in speaking about soul and spirit.

It seems that there is ample room for careful research in various areas that pertain to the soul and its functions. Perhaps some of our younger theologians may find research in this area to be highly interesting as well as profitable in counter-acting the materialistic viewpoint of many scholars in the field.

Olav Valen-Sendstad wrote:

From the shelter of the idealistic axiomatics the most violent anathemas are hurled against those who do not think and understand in a psychologically correct fashion.⁶

FOOTNOTES

1. Martin H. Scharlemann, et al, Appendix C. "The Dualism Problem," What, Then, Is Man? A Symposium of Theology, Psychology, and Psychiatry. (St. Louis: Concordia, 1958), p. 316.
2. Lorenz Wunderlich, The Half-Known God (St. Louis: Concordia 1963), p. 97.
3. Joseph Henry Thayer, D.D. A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament (New York: Harper and Brothers 1889) p. 520.
4. Ibid., p. 520.

5. Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, Vol. I (St. Louis: Concordia 1950) p. 476.
6. Olav Valen-Senstad, The Word That Can Never Die (St. Louis: Concordia 1966) p. 27.

Ahlert H. Strand

S E R M O N O U T L I N E S I

(Festival Half of Church-year)

These outlines are prepared by pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod on the Second Series of texts listed in the LUTHERAN HYMNARY, the hymnal of the former Norwegian Synod.

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

John 18:33-37

Theodore A. Aaberg

THE KINGDOM WHICH BECKONS AT THE TURN OF A NEW CHURCH YEAR

I. A Kingdom Not of This World.

A. Not in nature, manner, or characteristic. v. 36. If it were, Christ would not have been a meek prisoner in bonds before Pilate. His servants (incl. the legions of angels, Mt. 26:53,) would have seen to that. If it were, the Jews would have accepted Him gladly; and not delivered Him to Pilate. Cf. their eagerness for a king. Cf. AC, 28, Par. 12ff., p. 85, Triglotta. Also Lk. 12:14; Phil. 3:20; 2 Cor. 10:4. Cf. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, meek and lowly. Cf. need for God-given meekness on part of all who would become, remain, and serve as members of this Kingdom.

B. Not in origin. V. 36a; 37a. True, its King and Founder, Jesus Christ, was born into this world, hence true man, one of us. Yet this same King came into this world, hence true God. Cf. Gospel for day with its "Hosanna to the Son of David," the Messianic

prophecies, the hope of the OT people. All emphasized the eternal, divine origin of Christ's Kingdom.

II. A Kingdom of Truth.

A. Jesus has come to bear witness unto the Truth of that Kingdom. V. 37b. The Truth, of which Jesus speaks in text, is the Gospel, yes, Christ Himself, as He says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Cf. Jn. 1:17, "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Jesus bears witness unto the Truth through his three-fold office, as prophet, priest, and king.

B. Everyone that is of the Truth, that is, is a member of Christ's Kingdom, hears Jesus' voice. v. 37b. "Hear" in sense of believing and following after. Cf. Jn. 8:47; Jn. 10:16,26-27. Through the Gospel Jesus calls Christians anew to that Kingdom of Grace in this new church year. As members of this Kingdom by grace through faith in Christ, Christians are to hear the Truth, the Gospel, gladly and faithfully, and earnestly strive to bring the Gospel to others worldwide that they also may hear Jesus' voice, believe, and become members of Christ's Kingdom.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Luke 12, 39-40

Ahlert Strand

Warning signs are plentiful. Highway, railroad, manufacturing plants, power lines, poison. Also warnings for dangers to our souls. Text: "If the goodman..."

THE TRAGEDY OF IGNORING GOD'S WARNING

I. Illustration in text easily understood. If goodman had known, he would have taken precautions.

Goodwoman who drove around crossing gate didn't know how fast train was coming. If she'd known she would not have been killed.

II. God's warning system against eternal

condemnation is His holy Word, the Bible. Works perfectly. Amos 4, 12: "Prepare to meet thy God." Text: "Be... ready..."

Most Christian homes have God's warning system installed in their homes. Often ignored by non-use. Result is unequipped to resist temptations to unbelief. Strong faith in Christ through gospel usage. Means of grace. Familiarity with gospel promises. Affliction overcome by using God's warning system. It tells us to turn on the gospel. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time... not worthy to be compared."

III. Savior wants us ready to meet Him any time. Has secured eternal happiness for us. Gives this happiness through gospel. Love our children therefore warn and demonstrate our love.

Life of readiness not dull. Excitement and joy of apostles. Life of Mary, Martha, Dorcas, Lydia not dull, dynamic. This is what a life of faith in Christ does with the warning signals God gives us. e.g. devout VBS teacher, gospel-centered home, rehabilitation of legal offenders through gospel atmosphere in relationship.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Matthew 11:11-15

M. Dale Christopherson

Throughout its history the Holy Christian Church has on the Third Sunday in Advent directed its attention to the ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus said, "Among them that are born of Women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist:" (vs. 11). Why was he important to the church, and what was the purpose of his ministry, and does his ministry have any meaning for us today? As Christians let us consider the question -

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM JOHN THE BAPTIST?

I. We can learn the real purpose of John's ministry, which was -

To prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah, and thus fulfill God's promise concerning the coming of Elijah (vs. 14; Mal.4:5), God's messenger (vs. 10; Mal.3:1).

To awaken a world which had grown dead in its religion by preaching true repentance (Matt. 3:7-8, 11).

To direct those who were truly repentant to the kingdom of Christ, then soon to be established, wherein was God's forgiveness to all who would receive it.

II. We can learn the real purpose and message of the church for today, which is -

To preach the same Christ as did John; a Christ who has come and has established His kingdom; who this Christ is, and where He can be found (Word & Sacraments alone).

That the old covenant under the Law ended with John (vs. 13).

To preach, as did John, repentance and forgiveness of sins in His name (Luke 24:20).

In so doing he that is little in the eyes of men will be esteemed by God as greater than John the Baptist (vs. 11).

CONCLUSION: From the ministry of John the Baptist, we, in this blessed Advent season can learn of the glorious message of salvation through Christ the Savior. This wondrous Gospel message is for all people, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (vs. 15).

In Jesus' name, Amen.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

John 3:25-36

Rodger Dale

Dispute among Lutherans about who Jesus became or ever was. Skepticism. Disciples of John the Baptist asked to ascertain John's belief.

WHO CAN THIS BE?

I. True God, Son of the Father.

A. John's testimony: "From above...not given Spirit by measure" (v. 31-34).

B. No ordinary infant. Don't let stable fool you. "Words of life...all things in His hand." God's dealings with man delegated to Him. These are His credentials.

II. Mediator.

A. Focus of law mediated by Moses was death, consequence of sin.

B. Focus of Christ's mediation is life, gift of grace. Sin cancelled. God satisfied. Cf. Isaiah 53:11.

III. Truly known by believers.

Believers only have meaningful answer to question, "Who can this Be?" Faith sees Jesus, true God, true man. Humility result of his awareness of sinfulness. Nothing to be proud of in self. Humble believer, grateful for knowledge of Christ and God's many blessings. We have a soul that needs Christ.

God, grant us the answer of a living faith to the question, "Who can this be?" as we prepare to celebrate Christ's birthday.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

Matthew 1:(18-)21

Roger W. Falk

Christmas is a God-given opportunity to appreciate how precious is the meaning of the name J E S U S.

SPANNING TWO WORLDS

I. The World of Sin. Sin--original, actual--is God's enemy and man's destroyer. Only people bereft of reason deny its existence (I Jn.1:8). Sin is a deadly reality--has deadly consequences (Rm.6:23). It has separated man from God--divided heaven and earth. Who can restore--rebuild? Man? Never! He is unable to (Job 42:6; Isaiah 64:6; Daniel 9:7a). What then? Is there no help? No rescue? Yes--J E S U S (Mt.1:21).

II. The World of Salvation. He was prophesied (Ps. 40:7; Is. 7:14). The Father testified to Him after He had come (Mt.3:17; 17:5; Mk.1:11; 9:7; Lk.3:22; 9:35; 2 Pet.1:17). He became our Jesus--our Savior--by sacrificing Himself (I Jn.1:7). No "slaughter-house" religion. The sacrifice shows the bitter, awful, glorious, infinite price paid to redeem us from sin, death, and hell, and forever establish our salvation. Man is saved from guilt, consequence, and power of sin when Christ dwells in his heart.

The Name of JESUS is great, precious, all-powerful, divine! There is nothing which Name of Jesus has not hallowed, glorified. Labor, Childhood. Womanhood. Manhood. Penitence (the Magdalen). Death, Grave. Cross. Yes, even sinners become saints (Jn.1:12).

That Name still exerts influence and power in and on a sinful world. It is a saving power on this sin-cursed earth. The saving wonders wrought by Him Who bears the Name of JESUS are here today.

"He shall save his people from their sins."

SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Luke 2, 25-32

Wilfrid Frick

SALVATION IS OF THE LORD

A wonderful thing has happened. Hymn: "Salvation unto us has come, By God's free grace and favor". Titus 2,11: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men." Text: "For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." Jonah said: "Salvation is of the Lord".

I. Salvation means being rescued from something bad. This salvation is from something worse than the trouble and pain on this earth, something worse than war. It is salvation from an everlasting fate--from hell itself. This salvation is more important than any seemingly good thing which might come to us in our earthly affairs -- money, fame, power, popularity, long life, health.

Only God can give this salvation. He made it possible by sending His Son to do what we could never do ourselves--bring about our redemption so we might be rescued from the punishment of our sins. That same Jesus Whom Simeon held in his arms went through terrible suffering and died on the cross, that our sins would be paid for. Is. 53, 5: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed". Because of Jesus, God declares us righteous -- "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him", 2 Cor. 5,21. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," Acts 4,12.

II. As God revealed this salvation to Simeon, so also to individuals today through the Gospel. As the Holy Spirit led Simeon to see the Savior in the flesh with his bodily eyes, so He leads us to see Him in the Gospel with the eyes of faith. As Simeon could depart

in peace, so can all who have seen the Lord's salvation as it has been shown them in the Gospel and who have accepted it with the arms of faith. Christ and His salvation are indeed a "light to lighten the Gentiles". Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall have the light of life."

When the shepherds learned of the Savior and the salvation He brought, they told others. So should we tell others be word of mouth, by the printed page, and by sending missionaries.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

John 1:16-18

G. F. Guldberg

Many face new year with fear and anxiety. They need hope and guidance. Trusting in self and temporal things does not help. Difference between believer and unbeliever. Set affection on things above. Look to Christ and His Word.

WHAT YOU NEED FOR A BLESSED NEW YEAR

I. The Fulness of God's Grace. High on list for new year - grace of God, grace - His loving kindness toward undeserved sinners. John 3:16. Christ came as our brother in flesh. Now have assurance of forgiveness of all sins. I John 3:8. Christ has reconciled us to heavenly Father by death and resurrection. Eph. 4:25. This forgiveness ours by faith in Christ. Sin still clings to us. Where sin abounded grace did much more abound. We have received grace upon grace (Luther). As waves wash to the shore so God's grace ever there, more and more. Ps. 103:11-12, I John 1:7.

II. The Right Understanding of Law and Gospel. Text. The law given by Moses. The person and law of Moses to instruct in the correct understanding of law and demands on sinner (Luther). Moral law still binding upon all men. Man by nature cannot meet demands of

law. Even Christian imperfect. Law condemns. We must look to person and office of Christ for salvation. Text. Gospel tells us He has fulfilled law and suffered, died in our stead. Must not mix law and gospel, or make a Christ out of Moses. Eph. 2:8-9. Proper distinction between law and gospel key to knowledge of truth and grace and salvation. Great blessing!

III. The Knowledge of the Heavenly Father's Presence. Natural man cannot see future. Like man blinded in snow storm. He dwells in darkness. Needs knowledge of the God of grace and truth. Holy Spirit directs Him to this revealed knowledge in His Word of Truth. Father revealed by Christ who fulfills His will. Heavenly Father through Christ is viewed as gracious, kind, loving and merciful God who is concerned about temporal and eternal welfare of His children. Now face new year with confidence, guided and directed by God who loves us in Christ and comforts us in His Word. Rom. 8:31-39.

EPIPHANY

Matthew 4:13-17

Ahlert H. Strand

Epiphany: Show, bring to light, become visible, appear, manifestation. Christ showed Himself to be the Savior of the world.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S EPIPHANY

I. Light to those in darkness of unbelief. Light to those in the shadow of death (the wages of sin). Light through the preaching of Christ.

II. The light of the preaching of Christ, particularly the preaching of the Gospel, shows forth the gracious love of God in Christ. This light of the Gospel is the instrument by which the Holy Spirit brings us to see Christ through the eyes of faith.

III. Because the Spirit of God has brought us to see the light of Christ through the Gospel, we have both a privilege and a responsibility. We have learned to see the astounding fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies in minute detail. We have learned that He is the Savior of Jew and Gentile. We see our entire world as the field in which we operate to show forth the Savior of the world.

The "Christmas of the Gentiles" is a mission appeal to start the New Year by sharing God's Christmas present to the world with all people in the world, those of our own household, those of our community, those outside our region. Nazareth, Capernaum, "the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim."

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

John 7:14-18

George A. R. Gullixson

God's people go to God's house. It is not surprising that Joseph and Mary found their 12 year old Son there, "about His Father's business". In our text we find Him in the temple again- not as a pupil this time, but as a teacher. We could rightly call Him

THE GREATEST TEACHER

Let us sit as His feet. We learn that

I. He was divinely instructed.

Great store was set by the people of Jesus' day, as in our day, on education, or "letters" v.15. They described Jesus a "never having learned"- no degrees- no university training. We would not belittle education in itself, by no means. God gives many admonitions to obtain wisdom- Prov. 22:6; Prov. 2:2; 3:13 et al. But it must be the right kind. To limit it to the things of this world is a serious fault. What about the things of God? Where did Jesus get His learning? He tells us, "from Him that sent Him". Thus He attests

to His divine nature. This is what those who heard Him in the temple failed to recognize.

II. He taught divine truth.

How can we know the truth? Much confusion in our day- many universities and colleges teach a 'dialectic materialism' (explain). It reaches down to the grade school level, too- a 'this world' philosophy which leaves God and the supernatural out of all consideration. But this is only a half-education.

The visible Church presents a sad picture with its divided state- many denominations-many sects-even our beloved Lutheran Church presents a sad picture. Some would like to sweep all differences under one big carpet and thus seek to hide them by saying they don't exist - but that is bad house-keeping and basically dishonest. But can we know? Where and How?

Jesus teaches that: "know from the doctrine whether it be of God". Where is that? The Bible of course. There God has spoken to His people for 3500 years now - and this is not idle speculation. John 5:39. They tell of sin and grace. Who can deny the reality of sin? But how much more glorious the reality of God's grace that Christ came to earn and preach about. Let us cherish it - learn it - and spread it!

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

John 4:24

Ahlert H. Strand

Our Savior has something to tell us about worshipping Him. He is quoted in the Gospel according to St. John 4:24 as saying: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

WORSHIPPING IN SINCERITY AND IN TRUTH

I. Our thoughts and feelings have a lot to do with our worship. The Samaritan woman to whom Jesus was

speaking tried to get away from facing up to her behavioral problem by turning the conversation into a theoretical discussion of the proper location in which to worship God. Christ brought her right back to her confrontation of self.

II. Christ here warns against ritualism as a substitute for sincerity and truth in worship. Saying the words, getting up and sitting down at designated intervals without being internally involved is ritualism. God is observing our innermost thoughts. When our soul is really involved with the forgiveness of sins and thankfulness to God for His grace in Christ, we are worshipping God in sincerity and truth.

III. Jesus is speaking about an on-going attitude of worship intended to dominate our thinking. The woman of Samaria understood that Jesus was confronting her with her entire outlook on life, including her relationship with her fellowmen. Jesus convinced her that He was the promised Messiah. Worshipping in spirit and truth, she invited the men in her town to come and see Jesus.

Her action illustrates the constructive excitement of worshipping in sincerity and truth.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

John 4:28-30

Ahlert H. Strand

While people try to trace their origin to primal ooze and seek their human heritage and personal identity in the family tree of the animal world and grope for meaningful concepts of enduring value, we have a special incentive for sharing the Good News about our Savior.

FAITHFUL IN SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

I. This requires action on our part. The Samaritan

woman sensed this. Having met Christ, she went into action to bring her fellowmen to Him. "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did."

II. The Samaritan woman used a good approach. She did not become dogmatic. She did not try to sell a bill of goods. She asked for their reaction: "Is not this the Christ?"

III. She explained the insight the Messiah had into her life and the gracious approach He had used. This she did on the basis of her own experience with Jesus. She could not change her past but she could pick up the broken pieces and bring them to Jesus for restoration and become free to live a constructive life.

IV. Quick results from sharing the Gospel are not often as evident as in her case. The men "went out of the city, and came to Jesus." God does not demand of us that we get quick results. In fact God alone can cause people to respond favorably to our invitations. Our assignment is to be faithful in sharing the Good News.

LAST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Matthew 17:5

Ahlert H. Strand

How do we go about getting the necessary instruction for a life that in God's sight is worth living? The answer is:

HEAR YE HIM

I. By hearing him, Peter, James and John, received the instruction they needed for a life worth while.

Jesus showed His competence as an instructor by permitting them to have an experience of His glory. They reacted by wanting to retreat from life, build tents for Jesus, Moses and Elias because: "It is good

for us to be here." Jesus brought them down from the mountain and plunged them into diligent service of God and man.

II. We can't live on a mountain cut off from our fellowmen if we follow Christ's instructions to share our experiences with our fellowmen. We hear Him telling us to live in the delightful climate of His love at the same time as we go about our business of sharing His love. His instruction puts us into the business of meeting the fundamental need of our fellowmen. We do not promise three sumptuous meals per day, a guaranteed annual wage, low cost housing and abundant recreation. What Jesus teaches us is to promise forgiveness of sins through His sacrificial death and justifying resurrection.

III. Can the teachings of Jesus, who traveled about on foot and by boat in a limited area have meaning for us in the age of space vehicles? Yes. Man's soul is disquieted, disconcerted and groping. He needs Christ's teachings for valid peace within and God-pleasing relationships with others.

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY

Matthew 19:27-30

Paul E. Jecklin

Students on "Dean's List" understand: "burning the midnight oil." Successful Fuller Brush man rings door bells and goes after his customers. Experience tells us, "The more we do - the more we get." A rich young ruler wouldn't give up his possessions to follow Jesus. Disciples gave up everything (v. 27). They wondered, "What Shall We Receive?" Do we have the same question?

WHAT SHALL WE RECEIVE?

Jesus says there are two possibilities.

I. You Shall Receive A Reward.

A. For your good works. They are necessary. Not enough to say, "I believe - I have faith." (Mt. 7:17-18; Eph. 2:10; Col. 1:10; Tit. 2:14) They are done in response to God's gift of grace - done for Him ("for my name's sake" v.29). Shall be rewarded (a hundred-fold; eternal life v.29). (Mt. 10:42)

B. From the treasury of grace. (I Pet. 5:10; 2 Cor. 4:17; Rom. 8:30) Grace is the key in believer's life: saved by grace, lives responding to grace, hope for the future based on grace.

OR

II. You Shall Receive A Payment.

A. For your works. This is unbeliever's attitude, "The more we do - the more God owes." Claim of merit; what one deserves because of his labor. (Rom. 2:6) Believer is ever tempted to become too self-related over his spiritual blessings and privileges and assume this attitude. (Cor. 12:7) Child of grace thus becomes a child of wrath ("first becomes last" v. 30).

B. According to the Law. Workrighteousness deserves eternal condemnation (Gal. 3:10; James 2:10; Ps. 5:5; Rom. 3:23)

Conclusion? "What Shall We Receive?" Important question! Only two possibilities!! God help us to ever live in His grace. Amen.

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY

John 12:35-43

E. G. Unseth

It was getting on toward the end of the school year and little Jimmy and Mary were spending a lot of time with their books in preparation for the closing

examinations. Their grandmother had been staying at their home now for a few weeks and they couldn't help but notice how much she read her Bible. One day Mary wondered about this and asked, "Why do you suppose Grandma is always so busy reading her Bible?" "Well, I don't really know," Jimmy replied, "But perhaps she is cramming for her finals, too!" At this season of the year the days are getting longer, but for each one of us, with every passing moment, our life, our time of grace here on earth is getting shorter. Let us consider our text under this theme:

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

I. "Abide with me....I need Thy presence every passing hour....Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!" Jesus Christ abides with us in His Word. "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth," John 8:31-32. The truth regarding sin and salvation, heaven and hell, time and eternity. Jesus is "the Light of the world," John 8:12. Following Him we shall not go astray nor walk about in darkness or doubt. Make diligent use of the Means of Grace while we may. "Redeem the time," Eph. 5:16. Life is brief. Youth speeds away. Old age comes quickly. "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light," v. 35. "Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life; Grant us that Way to know, That Truth to keep, that Life to win, Whose joys eternal flow." (Hymn 355). The result of walking is to put behind you what was once before you. To walk in the light is to put behind you something displeasing in the sight of God. To walk is also to leave footprints. Walking in the light of God's saving truth we are safe ourselves and also set a good example so that others be not led astray. Believing in the Light (Jesus) we walk toward a goal--we know where we're going--to God and our home in heaven.

II. "Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day." If we reject the light, then, like the Jews mentioned here, we must walk in darkness. If we refuse to follow the Holy Spirit's leading, then we will grope

about in the bleak darkness of our own Messianic misinterpretations. The same sun melts wax and hardens clay. A time may come when a person's heart, once as wax, is transformed to clay. If we feel no need for God, repentance, faith, forgiveness, then we're not ready for our finals.

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY

Luke 18:31-34

Ahlert H. Strand

Understanding the sacrificial death and justifying resurrection of Jesus Christ beyond the historical event poses certain problems. That becomes evident from Luke 18:31-34.

UNDERSTANDING THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

I. The twelve knew what had been written in the Old Testament. They did not understand the application of these promises to Christ and to themselves.

They observed that being with Jesus brought advantages. He could heal the sick, feed the hungry, speak as never before man had spoken. They could not truly grasp His set of values. They argued about who should be greatest. They wanted fire to come down from heaven to eradicate those who did not show proper respect for Jesus. They were thinking in terms of human reason not in terms of the sacrificial work of Christ.

II. We may subscribe to the inerrancy of the Bible, such a full knowledge of the prophecies and their fulfillment that we can quote them from memory and yet not have a clear concept of their application to Christ and to us.

Difficult to sense our need for forgiveness. We may pray for forgiveness and scarcely finish the "amen" before we are finding excuses for our sins.

Our attitude often gets to be: "We're pretty good, O God, if you would surround us with better people. With fine people about us, we would never say or do anything that is not acceptable in your sight. Actually, those other people need forgiveness more than we do."

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Matthew 16:21-23

Adolph M. Harstad

In Genesis 3, we have the prophecy concerning the Seed of the woman and His work of crushing the head of the serpent. His heel would be bruised in so doing. He would have to suffer. This is a prophecy of:

JESUS AND HIS PASSION

I. He announces it, verse 21. He must go to His passion.

A. It was because of my sin that He must go. I was in bondage under sin and the devil, Rom. 6:17a; 2 Cor. 4:4; I was without hope and without God in the world, Eph. 2:12; I was in a most terrible condition that well might strike terror into my heart.

B. Necessary for me to realize this that I might know why Christ must go to His suffering. The only way by which I could be rescued was this: The Almighty One had to come and conquer the devil to release me from his power. The perfect One had to come and suffer in my stead. The righteous One had to give me His righteousness. He makes announcement of His forthcoming passion by which He won my release, and of His resurrection that proves that He accomplished it.

II. The devil tried to turn Jesus away from His vicarious work. He tempted Jesus, Matt. 4:1-11. Therefore, verse 22, he used Peter as his agent to try to lead Jesus away from the cross. But Jesus did not

yield for one moment, verse 23. The final victory is in His death. "It is finished."

III. No one can fully realize the greatness of the gift of God to us in Christ's passion.

Instead of sin, a wrathful God and death, we have the forgiveness of sin, righteousness, a gracious God and life eternal.

This makes us thankful, and we follow Jesus in going forth to announce it to others.

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Luke 7:36-50

Paul E. Jecklin

We love in direct relation to the degree we experience the love of God in Christ Jesus.

"Your sins are forgiven for you loved much." Sounds like absolution from hippie priest. Rubs us wrong; violates fundamental article of faith: Sola Fide. Find much fault with this idea until we realize it comes from the lips of Jesus. Possibly, He's only suggesting:

LOVE STIMULATES LOVE

I. Love Caused God To Forgive.

A. He Became Man To Forgive. Illustration of parent/child showing love is expressed in many ways - forgiveness real test. God in many ways shows He is a God of love. Supreme demonstration - "He became man." John 3:16 might be paraphrased, "God so loved that in Christ He forgave."

B. He Went To Simon's House To Forgive. Entire life was an offer of forgiveness. Accepted Simon's invitation so salvation might be offered to sinners:

Simon, the guests, and the woman.

II. Forgiveness Causes Man To Love.

A. Jesus' illustration (v. 41-43).

B. Simon's lack of love indicates his lack of faith in what Jesus offered. Jesus was nothing special to him (scorn v. 39, no water v. 44, no kiss v. 45, no oil v. 46).

C. The Woman's Act Of Love Indicates Her Faith. Jesus was special to this known sinner and she showed it. Forgiven-"for she loved much." (v.47) Love is not the reason for but the proof of forgiveness. (compare v.50) Example: "It has rained for it is wet." Wetness is the visible proof. Love is visible proof of forgiveness.

"Your sins are forgiven for you loved much." Beautiful words for a believer to hear from the lips of His Savior! May God grant we too may love much.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

Luke 4:31-37

A. V. Kuster

Many -- wish devil out of existence. A few years ago, debate on this among theologians in Norway attracted international attention. Might and dominance of evil in the world (hardly to be contained by governments) and in ourselves, tells us devil is real. Bible takes for granted. I Peter 5:8. I John 3:8. Temptation. Gethsemane. Cross. Text sets before us:

THE WORD OF THE DEVIL AND THE WORD OF CHRIST

I. The word of the devils is "Let us alone."

II. The word of Christ is "Come out."

"Legions" of demons, fallen angels. Head is Satan, or the devil. Catechism. Took over the man's body and possession of his faculties 33. Now a siege, attack, spasm, fit. 34. 35. Speaks the devil's mind. Knows the Lord, His name, hometown, who He is. Cf. PEK. Comm. and John 6:69. Satan and hosts fear their ultimate state, to which they are doomed. 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 20:10.

34A Cry of Satan and his followers today. Oft-used ruse of Satan. Easily and eagerly learned. Fact: The devil and allies, flesh and world -- source of rebellion and sin in world -- yours too!

Christ says: "Come out of him." People already impressed with Christ's Word. 32. Astonished almost to stupefaction. Not like cut and dried legal mouthings of average rabbi. Hit the mark with power of Word. Rom. 1:16. Law and G. pierced through, Heb. 4:12. John 6:63 and 68; 7:46.

A little hubbub in the service. 36. "Word:" Wonderful teaching, substantiated by such works! There can be no peace between Christ and the devil. Christians, like Christ, are here to destroy the works of the devil and there can be no peace between them and evil. Essence of sanctification?! Essence of mission work?! To the plea "Let us alone" reply of Christian: "Come out."

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

John 6:24-36

Thomas Kuster

"I could never worship a God like that." Common response when we tell unbelievers that God demanded satisfaction for sin. The death of His own Son.

THE JESUS REVEALED THE JESUS WE NEED

I. Some people try to create a Jesus to suit their

own desires. People sought Him vv. 24-25. But expected Him to conform to their desire v. 25b. Wanted material things. Would work v. 28., if payoff was guaranteed vv. 30-31.

That's a contemporary attitude. Desire a political radical, revolutionary, solver of social problems: hunger and racism. Try to remodel Jesus to their own specifications.

We're tempted to be selfish, want a heavenly "Santa." Little girl skipped prayer. Mother asked why. "I don't want anything tonight." Underestimate own sins. Not as serious as those of others. Think of the comforts and joys of Christianity, ignoring the responsibilities of the Gospel.

Trying to make Jesus something He isn't means we are departing from Him. Incident in text marked the decline of Christ's popularity -- at last forsaken by all v. 36.

II. Jesus fills our needs, not our natural desires.

He pleads with us to turn our attention away from materialistic values, away from selfishness v. 26. In spite our inadequate responses, He brings His truth to us (passim).

Urges us, v. 26, into spiritual consciousness instead of materialistic preoccupation, into spiritual discernment, v. 32, giving us God's view, provides nourishment, vv. 27 and 33, for humble faith as our basic response v. 29.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Luke 1:39-45

J. H. Larson

Christ was born, lived, died, rose again to become our Redeemer. We are saved by the grace of God through faith in our Redeemer.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF BELIEVING IN CHRIST

I. Everyone believes in something or someone. Atheist a fool. Ps. 14:1. Agnostic believes he can't know. Searches for proof in wisdom of the world. I Cor. 1; 2 Tim. 3:7. Humanist believes in man. Man dead in trespasses and sins, without spiritual understanding. I Cor. 2:14. None of these has joy of believing. "Whistling in the darkness." "Bubble of their optimism" will burst.

II. Blessedness of believing in Christ shown by Elizabeth. "The babe leaped in my womb for joy." Believed there would be a "performance of those things..." Believed in the Christ to be born of Mary. "The mother of my Lord." She experienced blessedness of having her faith rest upon Christ, the Rock. Matt. 7:24-25 in light of Matt. 16:16-18. Hymns: "How Firm a Foundation." "Now I Have Found...Foundation."

III. Blessedness of not being in a daze. Cf. Syndicated columnist, Sydney Harris, 9/2/70, Daily Courier, Waterloo, Iowa. "...things are changing faster than we can keep up with, therefore, we are in a daze." Contrast this with "I know..." 2 Tim. 1:12. Rom. 8:38-39. Eph. 4:14. I Peter 1:25.

"Blessed is she that believed."

PALM SUNDAY

John 12:1-16

S. E. Lee

Garments - carpeted streets - a sea of waving palm branches,-the shouts of the multitudes singing the Messianic Hymn,-the delightful chorus of children's voices - all these combine to give this first Palm Sunday a gay, festive air. But in the midst of this joyful singing we note a deep overtone of pathos and melancholy. The Lamb of God is about to be led to slaughter.

THE ANOINTING OF THE KING

The greatest Passover in Israel's history was at hand; the Lamb of God, of whom all the Passover lambs were types, was on His way to Jerusalem.

In Bethany His friends prepare a festive meal for Him in the home of Simon the leper. Lazarus was there, a living witness of the great miracle performed by Jesus in raising him from the dead. Martha showed her love for Him by serving the food. Mary decided to show her love in a very special way. She anointed Jesus with some very expensive ointment.

Judas raises serious objections - this was a waste of money which should have been given to the poor - his love for money came to the front. Jesus did not expose him at this time but explained that Mary was anointing Him for His death.

In the Lenten season we behold the Savior giving His life "for us". Do those words mean anything to you? There are too many like Judas who have let the love of money capture their hearts.

Mary had often sat at Jesus' feet - came to know Him as the Messiah - she declares her faith by her special offering. May we who have sat at the feet of Jesus, listening to His Word, show our love and devotion to Him at all times.

EASTER SUNDAY

Luke 24:1-9

David Lillegard

There are many "preachers" nowadays, each bringing his own "good news." As Christians we have the only lasting good news.

Luke tells us about the visit of the women to Jesus' grave on Easter morning. They find that Jesus'

body is gone. An angel announces, "He is arisen." Jesus Himself also says this, Rev. 1:18.

WHAT DOES THE EASTER GOSPEL MEAN FOR US?

- I. We have forgiveness of sins. Jesus died for our sins, was raised again for our justification, Rom. 4:25.
- II. We shall also rise from the dead, I Cor. 15:12ff. These glorified bodies will no longer be subject to death, sin, sorrow, etc., Rev. 21:3ff.
- III. Many do not believe this gospel message. Impossible for natural man to accept it, I Cor. 2:14. Thus many attacks on resurrection by the "Neo-orthodox," etc.
- IV. But by Holy Spirit we believe and have supreme comfort, peace. Death loses its terror, sin its power, the devil his influence, I Cor. 15:19ff.

Martin Luther says in preaching on this text: "Know ye, then - sin, death, devil, and everything that assails me - that you are missing the mark. I am not one of those who are afraid of you. For Christ, my dear Lord has presented to me that triumph and victory of His by which you were laid low. And from this very gift of His I derive my name and am called a Christian. There is no other reason. My sin and death hung about His neck on Good Friday, but on the day of Easter they have completely disappeared. This victory He has bestowed on me."

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

John 21:1-6

James H. Lillo

Many important questions in life. Most important: "How do I reach heaven?" Text answers that question in a symbolic way. It speaks to us about:

THE WAY THAT LEADS TO ETERNAL LIFE

I. Not the way of self-direction. Disciples followed their own inclinations. Went fishing. Result: Fished all night but caught nothing. Same today. Following human reason not way to heaven. Such a night on the "sea of life" as fruitless as the one the disciples spent on sea of Galilee.

II. The way that leads to eternal life is Christ directed. Symbolized by disciples directed by Christ to lower nets. Unexpected success. Full nets.

Our reason and emotional conditioning directs us to the Law to earn our way to heaven. Christ directs us to the Gospel, the good news about His vicarious atonement. God's wrath over our sins satisfied by Christ's sacrifice. Is. 53:6; 2 Cor. 5:19.

The Holy Spirit working through the words of Christ convinced the disciples to do what Jesus directed them to do. The Spirit of God working through the Gospel persuades us to believe in Christ as our "door" into the eternal inheritance in heaven. John 3:16.

Because God has brought us to believe in Jesus Christ for justification, redemption, eternal life, we ask Him to grant us grace to show our thankfulness through lives dedicated to Him and devoted to the service of our fellowmen.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

John 21:15-25

Norman Madson

One word describes Christian religion - LOVE. God's love for us. Our love for God. Distinguish between the two. God's first, perfect. Our love second, imperfect. Compare sun and moon. Moon reflection of sun. Text demonstrates:

SOME OF THE QUALITIES OF TRUE CHRISTIAN LOVE

I. Willing to serve. Relate history leading to three-fold question. Peter's promise, denial, repentance, possible wondering if still in good grace of Savior. Willing to feed flock. Willingness to serve still mark of true Christian love. "Not lords...ensamples" (I Peter 5:3). All should be willing to serve, young and old. Promise - "shall eat the good of the land" (Is. 1:19). Hymnary 457, 2.

II. Love willing to follow. Not self-willed but follow Christ's directives. "Follow me." I Peter 2:21. Road of suffering. Rom. 8:18. 2 Cor. 4:17. Worth it? Asaph's experiences. Psalm 73. Bear the cross - wear the crown. Matt. 10:39.

III. Love content with what God has revealed. Peter overly anxious to know what would happen to John. Too preoccupied with what others are going to do may reduce our own capacity for service. Love restrains us from probing what God has not revealed. "Follow thou me." Hymnary 505, 1.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

John 17:1-8

Paul Madson

Most familiar prayer is Lord's Prayer. Less known but equally important is "highpriestly prayer." Sublime prose and exalted content. Indicates:

THE GLORY OF GOD'S PRIESTLY WORK

I. Gives glory to God. Glory not at first apparent. Appeared helpless and unsuccessful. Did not make full use of His divine power. Father glorified by death and resurrection of Son. God glorified where Gospel is believed even to this day. God glorified in fulfillment of His plan for salvation. Philippians 2:11.

II. Christ's priestly work brings glory of salvation to believers. Isaiah 53:11. Only one salvation v. 3. He finished the work of gaining salvation for them. v. 4. In future is fulness of bliss and glory. The "Author of salvation" made possible the comfort of looking forward to the glory won for all by His sacrificial suffering and death. John 6:40.

III. Christ's priestly work gives believers the incentive to glorify God by living in awareness of their relationship to Him through whom God has spoken to us in these last days. Hebrews 1:2-3.

Accept Jesus' testimony of Himself as disciples did. His words are true. God has glorified His Son. Son has glorified the Father. They who receive Him shall also glorify Him and be glorified in Him.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

John 17:9-17

William F. McMurdie

Living in a crisis age. All people do not have same outlook on life. God-fearing attitude is challenged by humanism. Result confusion. Christian may be uncertain about remaining true to Christ. Text counteracts this uncertainty. It indicates that:

CHRIST'S PRAYER FOR PERSEVERENCE IN THE FAITH IS REASON FOR JOY

I. Joy because we are His (v. 9).

A. Christ also concerned about unbeliever, desires salvation of all.

B. Especially concerned about those Father has given Him (v. 9-15).

C. Father has graciously given us to Him. What belongs to the Father belongs to Christ (v. 10).

II. Joy because He realizes the dangers which confront us.

A. He knows world hates us because we reject its philosophy of life. e.g., man evolved, life meaningless and purposeless, death ends all.

B. He knows world is evil (v. 15). e.g., Satan rules unbelievers; natural man in rebellion against God; tempted to "follow the crowd."

C. Knows Father can give us power to remain in the faith. Why else would He pray for us? Why else leave us in the world, if all fall away?

III. Christ's prayer reason for joy because it points to the means by which God keeps us steadfast in the faith.

A. Not something in us, our attitudes, our works, not something meritorious about our meditations and prayers.

B. Christ points to His Word as means by which we are brought to faith (v. 12-13), (sanctification in broad sense), means by which we are preserved in the faith by which we are conditioned to bring forth the fruits of faith (v. 13).

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

John 17:18-23

Alf Merseth

The difficulties the church faces in a world where the human being and material security have taken the spotlight, front and center on the stage. Easy to become discouraged in such adverse circumstances. But remember we are backed by the Lord Himself. He shows us this:

CHRIST'S PRAYER FOR HIS CHURCH

I. For those who do the work of the kingdom. vv. 18-19. They are sent with the same purpose as Christ - cf. John 20:21. - salvation of souls. Need for this in view of population explosion and deterioration of religion. This rather than a discouragement is a challenge. Christ "sanctified Himself", gave himself as a sacrifice to prepare salvation. This is the only worthwhile and effective message. Disciples remaining in the truth of that Word (forgiven and saved by faith in Christ) will find the strength to bear that message to others. Cf. I Cor. 6:11; Heb. 2:11.

II. Christ prays for the unity of the church. vv. 20-21. His prayer is also for future believers - those who are won for Christ by the Gospel preaching of the disciples. His prayer is for unity of faith--oneness in doctrine. cf. Rom. 12:5; Eph. 4:13-16. This is the basic unity of the whole Christian Church, the Communion of Saints, wherever it is found in the world. By faith, individual Christians have a unity similar to the unity between the Father and the Son--The Godhead. Complete misunderstanding of this passage by the ecumenical movement which stresses outward merger at the expense of pure doctrine.

III. Christ prays for the exaltation of the church. The Church's unity of doctrine and faith is its present glory before the world. Thus it shares Christ's glory. cf. Matt. 19:28. This testimony should make the world realize the love of Christ and the love of the Father for all people. Will thus serve as a mission tool. An example of the ultimate and glorious unity of eternity in the presence of Christ and the Father.

ASCENSION

John 17:24-26

Ahlert H. Strand

The report of the Gospels, the testimony of the Book of Acts, the references of the Epistles, the imagery of the Book Revelation, give us a preview of:

THE GLORY WE SHARE WITH CHRIST

I. We behold His glory, not only as spectators but as participants. We view and share the glory inseparably linked with His human nature in His state of exaltation.

II. Sharing the glory of Jesus is a privilege of grace bestowed upon us. By grace, we are among those "which Thou hast given Me." By nature we do not know the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Savior has made the Father's name known to us with all the connotations of gracious love. By grace, we know that our heavenly Father sent His only begotten Son to humble Himself and become obedient unto death for our redemption. By grace, we know that our heavenly Father has highly exalted Him for His sacrifice on our behalf. By grace, the Holy Ghost has drawn us to Christ through the Gospel.

III. We experience small samples of this glory while we are still here in His kingdom of grace. We are with our Savior because He is in us through our God-given faith. We here and now share in a small measure the glory of His resurrection and ascension. This present sharing is only a small preview of the glory we shall share with Him in our eternal, face-to-face relationship in the life that awaits us in heaven.

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION

Luke 11:5-13

Robert A. Moldstad

Prayers of heathen are vain repetitions (Chinese prayer wheel, rosary), will not be heard.

PRAYER OF THE BELIEVER WILL BE HEARD

Text follows giving of Lord's Prayer, probably first giving, since Mt. 6:9-13 is more complete form. Position in pericope series is good: Christ ascending gave gifts. Prayer gift. v. 13 praying for blessing of Spirit leads to joyful expectation of Pentecost. Nestle, and modern translators leave out v. 11: "ask for bread...stone." Cp. Mt. 7:9. Suggest these words are valuable part of text. v. 11 artos - not the loaf size we're used to; small, flat cake of bread actually resembled a stone, Cp. Mt. 4:3. v. 13: Spirit mentioned as highest and greatest gift because He is involved in every gift.

Progression of thought (v. 5-10, friend to friend; v. 11-13, son to father), contrasts that argue from lesser to greater, the certainty that we will be heard: a friend vs God the Father; good for God; asking on behalf of a stranger vs we, His children; a slight need (could wait till morning) vs our greater needs; selfish, unfriendly excuse for not helping vs Father's perfect love and kindness; v. 11ff what faulty fathers do vs what the all-perfect Father does.

Beggar had no shame. Bothered friend to point of stretching friendship too far, succeeded because of his very shamelessness. If rule holds good even among men, that no one will refuse to hear prayer of a friend, but will grant any reasonable request, even though this may cause him temporary inconvenience, how much greater is God's desire to hear the prayer of His children adopted to be His own through faith in Christ?

PENTECOST

John 15:1-11

Ahlert H. Strand

"...the Holy Spirit was to be and indeed is the only true vicar of Christ on earth" (The Half Known God, Lorenze Wunderlich, p. 77). The Holy Spirit brings about:

THE INTIMATE UNION OF BELIEVERS WITH CHRIST

I. The Holy Ghost creates in us the faith by which we are grafted into Christ. Works through Gospel, heard, read, connected with baptism. V. 11. Jesus spoke preceding and following context. Holy Spirit worked through word. Intimate union between persons of Trinity, involvement of all. Cf. Half Known God, p. 66. 12 line from bottom.

II. Branches drawing nourishment and support from vine bring forth fruit. Cf. Concordia Triglotta, 587, 16. God works in us to will and do. Philippians 2:13. So closely connected with vine that we can't exist without Him. Apart from Him we can do nothing, wither, unfruitful, branches for burning. Cf. Lenski, p. 1010. Unattached to the vine, humanity pollutes environment with self-righteousness and immorality.

III. This intimate and indispensable union with Christ is of great comfort and hope to us. Romans 8:32-39. It assures us of the Love of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Also serves to guide us in our aspirations. "Remain in my love." Philippians 2:14-16. Hebrews 11. I Peter 1:8-13. This is important to us in a time when psychotherapy must free itself from "concepts of man as 'nothing but' an organism; and to achieve a psychodynamic understanding of man as a person, whose significant and real life is on what may broadly be called the spiritual plane..." Psycho-therapy and Religion, by Henry Guntrip, p. 130.

BOOK REVIEWS

Harley Schmitt. For Now and Forever. A New Study Course for Instruction in the Christian Faith. Color Charts, Instruction and Outline of Presentation. Lake Mills, Iowa: Graphic Publishing Co., Inc., 1969, 36 pages, \$2.00 per set.

This instruction manual has several commendable features. It covers the basic doctrines of Scripture in the usual Catechism-sequence but in a question-outline form. The reader is thus led to take more than a passive role when using it. Another characteristic is its flexibility -- it can be used for an adult instruction class or by such as wish to re-examine their beliefs in greater depth. Its manner of presentation is simple and the 10 color charts are very illustrative. The pastor can easily add any supplementary material he deems necessary. We believe this manual will be welcomed as a change that is as refreshing as it is loyal to the Scriptures.

M. H. Otto

The Concordia Pulpit for 1971. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970, \$7.50.

This current issue of The Concordia Pulpit contains a series of sermons on the Standard Gospels, plus a Thanksgiving Day sermon, a Reformation sermon, and a Lenten series on the seven words of Christ. The quality of the sermons vary, as must be expected in a collection of this kind.

Glenn E. Reichwald

Effective Bible Study. By Howard Vos. Grand Rapids:
Zondervan Publishing House, 1969, \$1.95.

Sixteen methods of Bible study are suggested in this interesting book, all of which in varying degrees would help to make Bible reading into Bible study. The author might have had a brief section also on basic approaches to the Scriptures, which would give direction to people's thoughts.

Glenn E. Reichwald

The Holy Bible: The New Berkeley Version in Modern English. Editor-in-Chief Gerrit Verkuyl. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1969, \$8.95.

This admittedly conservative translation of the Bible will be welcomed by students of the Bible. The New Testament section is a reworking of the older New Testament translation, but the Old Testament section is new, reflecting the work of conservative Old Testament scholars such as Gleason Archer, Merrill Unger, J. Barton Payne, and others. A more detailed review will follow, but this translation should be called to the attention of our readers.

Glenn E. Reichwald

Life in Two Worlds. By Lewis W. Spitz. St. Louis:
Concordia Publishing House, 1968, \$3.95.

William Sihler, the center of this biography, was one of the fathers of the Missouri Synod. Students of church history will be interested in his life and also in the theological world in which he lived, moved, and contributed. Of interest particularly is the development of conservative Lutheranism among American Lutherans and Sihler's reactions to Lutheranism in the American setting, particularly against the various sects.

Glenn E. Reichwald

The Book of Isaiah, Volume II. By Edward J. Young.
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1969,
\$9.95.

Students of the Old Testament will be happy to see the publication of this second volume of Young's commentary on Isaiah, covering chapters 19 to 39. The late Dr. Young, a strong Calvinist, believed firmly that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. This is reflected in this commentary. While a more detailed review of this work will follow, it should be called to the attention of our readers now.

Glenn E. Reichwald

All the Children of the Bible. By Herbert Lockyer.
Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970,
\$5.95.

While readers may not always agree with the author's handling of materials, they will find it a handy source of information on children of the Bible and on Biblical statements on the conduct, the training, etc., of children.

Glenn E. Reichwald

Wagner, C. Peter. Latin American Theology: Radical or Evangelical. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970, \$2.45.

This paperback is a study of the leading Latin American theologians of today. The Protestant church in Latin America is the result of mission work done by evangelicals, but under the influence of liberalism and the pressure of social problems a number of the significant leaders reflect changes in varying degrees in their theological position. Conservatives also are being forced to express themselves. Anyone looking for a book to give him an overview of the various trends in Latin American theology will find this book helpful.

Glenn E. Reichwald

Read, William R., Victor M. Monterroso, and Harmon A. Johnson. Latin American Church Growth. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1969, \$8.95.

This book achieves its goal: to be a resource book on the church history, the church work, and the church life of Latin America. In its 421 pages are compressed a comprehensive overview of Latin American church life based on a wide knowledge and also personal interviews. Protestant missions are growing at an annual rate of ten percent. Something must be happening there! After the authors present a historical overview of the problems of getting started in Latin America, they review the work that has been done and is being done in the individual countries. They also discuss the mission methods used by various groups in the crowded urban areas and the rural areas. Those who wish to have insights into the Latin American mission fields, their needs, their special problems, and their opportunities, will find this book most helpful. The ELS now has its own foreign mission in Peru. The section dealing particularly with Peru is rather brief, pages 112-117, but other material will add considerable detail. Those interested in our ELS's mission in Peru will find this book most stimulating.

Glenn E. Reichwald

Marty, Myron A. Lutherans and Roman Catholicism. Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame University Press, 1968, \$6.95.

The purpose of this book is to trace the decline of criticism of the Roman Catholic Church in the literature of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The author uses the doctrine of the Antichrist as a case in point. According to the author, the early literature of the LCMS was full of criticisms of the papacy as the Antichrist, but that the last major public treatment of that doctrine was in the Concordia Theological Monthly in 1953. He also notes a marked

shift in attitude, especially during the years of Pope John XXIII. He concludes the section by stating that "the papacy as the Antichrist had been little more than a popular abstraction long before it was recognized that the literal application of it in the practical situation had ceased to make sense." (pp. 169-170) This reflects the author's approach in several other areas also. While he feels there are differences, many are the result of misunderstandings and lack of clarity. One wonders, after reading the book whether the author is encouraging his readers to revisit Worms, just as so modern Lutherans have revisited Marburg.

Glenn E. Reichwald

MINORITY RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Additional Titles to the List of MINORITY RELIGIOUS GROUPS on which Bethany Lutheran Seminary has a file. (Original list printed in Volume VIII, No. 4, Summer, 1968. Supplied by Mr. James V. Geisendorfer.)

Agni Yoga Society, Inc.

American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, Inc.

American Mission for Opening Closed Churches

American Scripture Gift Mission, Inc.

Anthroposophical Society in America

Association of Evangelicals for Italian Mission (The)

Bible Sabbath Association (The)

Blessed Martin Spiritual Church

Christian Church of Fellowship

Christian Israelite Church

Christian Metaphysics
Church of All Christian Faiths
Church of Ontology (The)
Church of The New Testament (The)
Church of the Open Door
Church of Tzaddi
Congregation of the Servants of Christ
Evangelical Ministers and Churches
International, Inc.
Fellowship Deaconry, Inc. (The)
First Zen Institute of America, Inc. (The)
Foundation Church of the New Birth
HISACRES New Thought Center
International Society for Krishna
Consciousness, Inc.
League to Uphold Congregational Principles
National Federation of Spiritual Science
Churches
National Negro Evangelical Association (The)
People of The Living God
Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center
Self-Revelation Church
Society of Christ, Inc.
Spirit Guided Friends
Spiritual Episcopal Church (The)
Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship
Spiritual Life Institute of America (The)
Sufism Reoriented, Inc.
Temple of Truth (Unitive Spirituality)
The Bible in the Hands of Its Creators, Inc.

Theocentric Foundation (The)
United Spiritualist Church
United Timothy Temples, Inc.
Universal Faith and Wisdom Association, Inc.
Wider Quaker Fellowship

EDITOR'S NOTE

Re: The post-humous publishing of the essay, "Church and Ministry" by the Rev. Neil Hilton in the Fall, 1968, issue of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Quarterly, Vol. IX, No. 1, as requested by the Southern Circuit Pastoral Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod:

To indicate the purpose for requesting publication of this essay in the ELS Quarterly the Southern Circuit Pastoral Conference desires that its original resolution be published. It reads as follows:

"Since there was not enough time to discuss this whole paper, and since it would be good that all pastors of the Synod be able to study it, it was moved and seconded that Pastor Hilton's paper be published in the Lutheran Synod Quarterly, and it be given further study."

S/Rev. Herbert Larson, Chairman
Southern Circuit Pastoral Conference
Evangelical Lutheran Synod