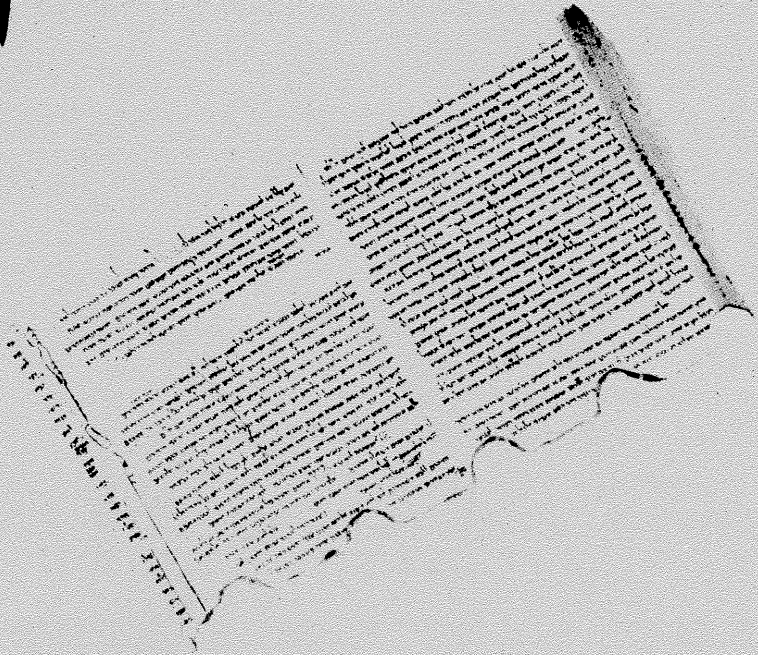




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### LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY

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## GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT ACTS THROUGH BAPTISM\*

In 1520, when Martin Luther wrote "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church", he began his discussion of the Sacrament of Baptism with these words: "Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who according to the riches of His mercy (Ephesians 1:3.7) has preserved in His church this sacrament at least, untouched and untainted by the ordinances of men."<sup>1</sup> This was about as optimistic a statement as Luther could make regarding the Roman Catholic Church and its doctrine of the sacraments. You will recall that in this treatise Luther treated Rome's doctrine of the Sacrament of the Altar and Penance much more roughly. But even as Luther begins his discussion of Baptism, he nevertheless laments the fact that there are "scarcely any who call to mind their own baptism, and still fewer who glory in it." (page 179) This would be reason enough why such a topic should be a proper one for study and discussion.

We should also note that in recent years there has been a new interest in baptism, as evidenced by the spate of books that have been published regarding it. For example, two German Lutheran scholars (Joachim Jeremias and Kurt Aland) have been carrying on a controversy as to whether the early church practiced infant baptism. A Swiss theologian (Oscar Cullmann) has also been involved in this restudy. The English and the Americans have also joined in what has become, more or less, a theological fray. This latest outburst of writings on baptism was no doubt caused by Karl Barth's book, first published in 1943: The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism. He here rejects "the causal connection between the administration of water baptism and regeneration."<sup>2</sup>

\*This paper was delivered at the Lutheran Free Conference, held in Davenport, Iowa, July 29-31, 1969.

Another factor which has driven us back to study baptism is the uneasy feeling that confirmation and other church rites have become more important in the daily life of the Christian than baptism and the other means of grace. In 1948, Dr. Sasse, in one of his "Letters" wrote of baptism, "Every investigation of the Sacrament of Baptism must begin with the assumption that baptism is a sacrament, a Means of Grace in the strict sense, and not a more or less pretty, more or less appropriate custom of the church as confirmation, wedding, and burial."<sup>3</sup>

The church's loss of its youth, the problem regarding the time most suitable for confirmation, the matter of withholding the Sacrament of the Altar from young Christians, are not unimportant and should lead us to think more deeply about how the Holy Spirit acts to engender and preserve faith. Pieper, too, warned us years ago that "we must beware of supplanting baptism with confirmation. There is a trend in our day, also among Lutherans, to exalt confirmation at the expense of baptism."<sup>4</sup>

Any discussion of baptism from the Lutheran point of view must begin with the Lutheran view of the Gospel or the Means of Grace. The Means of Grace are those means by which the Holy Spirit invites us to come to our Savior and at the same time gives us strength to accept His grace. As an altar painting by Lucas Cranach in the state church in Wittenberg, 1547, shows, the Lutheran church thought of "four Means of Grace" (Die Vier Gnadenmittel): Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Preaching, and Individual Absolution. These were the means by which God's grace was conferred upon the individual believer. The Augsburg Confession states: "That we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, Who works faith, where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel, to wit, that God, not for our own merits, but for Christ's sake,

justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake." (Article V) This truth is reiterated again in Article XIII: "Of the use of the sacraments, they teach that the sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them."

Baptism is not only called one of the Means of Grace, but more specifically it is called a "Sacrament". And perhaps we should briefly mention what a sacrament is and how the term is used in the Lutheran Church. The term is not used in Scripture, but it has been used by the church to designate certain Scriptural truths. As Pieper notes (Volume 3, page 115), there is not much use in arguing about the number of sacraments until agreement is reached on the definition of a sacrament. Luther, in the "Babylonian Captivity", declares that he must deny that there are seven sacraments, and "for the present maintain that there are but three: Baptism, Penance, and The Bread."<sup>5</sup> The Apology, following this line of thought, says: "If we call sacraments rites which have the command of God and to which the promise of grace has been added, it is easy to decide what are properly sacraments."<sup>6</sup> With that definition three sacraments are listed: Baptism, The Lord's Supper, and Absolution. Luther, however, in the Large Catechism, takes a more narrow definition of sacrament when he says: "We have now finished the three chief parts of the common Christian doctrine. Besides these we have yet to speak of our two sacraments instituted by Christ, of which also every Christian ought to have at least an ordinary, brief instruction, because without them there can be no Christian."<sup>7</sup> Luther here adds the visible element to the definition of a sacrament, and this definition has become common to us since that time. To summarize, then, a sacrament is a Sacred act instituted by the Lord Himself, in which, by visible means, He gives and seals His invisible grace. Baptism was instituted for "the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38),

and in the Lord's Supper Christ bestows His body and blood "for the remission of sins" (Luke 22:19,20, Matthew 26:26-28).

The sacrament is the Gospel. Heinrich Bornkamm rightly reminds us that "the sacrament is only another form of the Word of God."<sup>8</sup> This basic thought is the key to Luther's teaching concerning the sacraments. Luther used the word "sign" (Zeichen) in a different sense from what we use the word "sign" or "symbol". It was not something "absent or future" but "a form of something present and yet invisible."<sup>9</sup> Bornkamm, speaking of this concept of Luther, says: "the symbol is not necessarily related to its object. The snake is a symbol of deceit, but this does not imply any internal connection between the snake and deceit. ... This is not what Luther had in mind when he used the word 'sign'. ... The sign he had in mind is an effective one. Whatever it represents actually happens. Baptism and Holy Communion do not only speak of forgiveness of sins; they also contain and effect it. They are, therefore, the image of an object that is present and yet invisible. They not only picture a distant reality; they contain it. That applies to whatever Luther calls a sacrament."<sup>10</sup> In developing the theme "God the Holy Spirit Acts in Baptism", we shall in general follow the outline of Luther in his The Small Catechism.

## I. The Nature of Baptism

As a focal point of our discussion, let us keep in mind Luther's questions and answers: What is Baptism? Baptism is not simply water, but it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's Word. What is that Word and command of God concerning Baptism? Jesus says: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to

observe all things whatsoever I commanded you."

We begin with water. But why water? Why did the Lord use such a commonplace substance as water with which to convey such glorious blessings? There are many exotic and mystic liquids, but water is not considered to be one of them. There are still many like Naaman, who when they learned that the water of Baptism is a gracious water of life "turned and went away in a rage" (2 Kings 5:12).

The answer is that God has commanded us to use water. But a second thought should remind us that humanly speaking there could be no more appropriate agent than water. Water is the most abundant and the most essential compound with which man deals. The functions of water in nature are innumerable. A chemist writing a 1969 college chemistry textbook says: "The most important compound of hydrogen is its oxide, water (H<sub>2</sub>O), which is so widely distributed, so abundant, and so important that to discuss it fully would require volumes. It is contained in all plants and animals and in many minerals. . . . Water is essential for the life processes of all living organisms, in addition, it tends to minimize for them the effect of outside changes of temperature. . . . It has much to do with the weather, with transportation, with agriculture, and, in short, with our very being."<sup>11</sup>

In view of the universality of the uses of water, it is not strange at all that the Lord prescribed ritual washings for His people in the Old Testament. The Levitical system of worship was of "divers washings" (Hebrews 9:10). The priests were washed as they began their sacred service (Exodus 29:4). People were ordered to "wash their clothes" (Exodus 19:10). While the New Testament baptism is directly instituted by our Lord and not merely a New Testament development from the Levitical law, one can say that this part of the ceremonial law prefigured New Testament baptism. These ritual washings constantly reminded the Children of Israel that they were defiled by sin and that sin

was a barrier between them and God, sin which needed to be obliterated. You will recall that David cried out in his repentance: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity. . . . Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psalm 51:2,7). Isaiah pleaded with the defiled people of his time: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings" (Isaiah 1:16).

Then there were two great events in the history of God's people in the Old Testament which illustrated not only the destructive power of water but especially the saving power of water for God's people. The inspired New Testament writers, Peter and Paul, assert that both these events are types of the New Testament baptism. Peter calls to remembrance how God, during the days of Noah, saved eight souls by water, which prefigured the waters of baptism through which we are now saved (I Peter 3:20,21).

Paul sees the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea as a type of Holy Baptism: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (I Corinthians 10:1,2).

Before coming to a consideration of Christ's command in Matthew 28 to baptize all nations, we should note that what is called proselyte baptism had been introduced into the Jewish nation sometime before Christ's appearance. Oscar Cullmann holds that baptism as an external act is not the creation of Jesus because "Judaism already knows of the baptism of proselytes coming over from heathenism."<sup>12</sup> Briefly, Gentile converts to Judaism were required to demonstrate their change in beliefs by accepting circumcision in the case of men and, in the case of both men and women, by being baptized.

Baptism was, therefore, not unknown to the Jewish people when John the Baptist appeared "preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins"



(Luke 3:3). When the Jewish authorities came from the Sanhedrin they did not question so much the rite of baptism which John was performing as they did his authority to preach and baptize (John 1:19-27).

John's baptism, it must be noted, was not merely a symbol of purification or an outward confession on the part of the one who received baptism that he was in need of repentance, but John's baptism, like the Christian baptism instituted by Christ, was a baptism for the remission of sins. This very expression employed by Mark and Luke to describe John's baptism is that same used in the Acts of the Apostles (2:38) in connection with the Christian baptism. While it is true, as Pieper remarks, "a correct understanding of John's baptism is, of course, no longer of immediate practical value inasmuch as no one today receives that baptism,"<sup>13</sup> Scripture forces us to acknowledge no essential difference between John's baptism and the one that Christ instituted for the church.

Christ is the author of the Sacrament of Baptism, the author of its command and of its promise. After His resurrection, our Savior had given the express command to His disciples that they should assemble in a certain Mount in Galilee where He gives them the great missionary command. His opening words are majestic: "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." He is not speaking here of His divinity, for He has all power from eternity. It is His human nature that has received this power, given Him at His incarnation. As He stands before them in a spiritual body, true man as ever during His earthly life but no longer in humility and weakness, He now in the state of His exaltation participates in the omnipotence of God in the fullest sense (Formula of Concord, Article VIII). He is the almighty God with unlimited authority, and since this is true, what He now commands is of the chief importance to His followers. As a result of this great power ("therefore"), our Savior now gives His disciples the task to go and preach the Gospel to every creature, to make all nations His

disciples by baptizing and teaching them.

The world is the field. The disciples were to go to all peoples. Discipling should be done by two Means of Grace. First there is baptism into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Dr. Johannes Ylvisaker says: "To baptize to the Triune God is to place the one who is baptized, through baptism, into communion with the Trinity, in such a way that the object of the act is His possession and is dedicated to His service. And the name of God expresses God as He has revealed Himself to men. It is, therefore, the Triune God who is the effective agent in baptism."<sup>14</sup> The second means of making disciples is that of teaching them to observe all things which Jesus had committed to His disciples. With this command, the Savior gave the promise that He would be with His people until the end of time.

It was on the basis of this clear passage of Scripture that Luther asserted that baptism was not simply water but water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's Word. God's command loomed very large in Luther's theology of baptism. In the Large Catechism he declared: "For the kernel in the water is God's Word or command and the name of God which is a treasure greater and nobler than heaven and earth" (Trig. 735).

In 1528, Luther wrote a treatise for two pastors who had inquired about the doctrine of the Anabaptists. His recurring emphasis in that treatise is that we get baptized not because we are sure of faith but because God has commanded it and will have it: "Baptism, too, is a work of God, not invented by man but commanded by God and witnessed to by the Gospel."<sup>15</sup> Against the Anabaptist thesis that children should not be baptized because they can't believe, thus making baptism depend on one's faith, Luther thunders: "For even if I were never certain anymore of faith, I still am certain of the command of God, that God has bidden to baptize, for this He has made known throughout the

world. In this I cannot err, for God's command cannot deceive. But of my faith He has never said anything to anyone, nor issued an order or command concerning it." (p. 252)

We should note that Christ's command is to baptize into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Some have urged that this is not necessary because Peter on Pentecost admonished his hearers to be baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38). Acts 8:16 describe baptism as "in the name of the Lord Jesus", and Acts 10:48 describe it "in the name of the Lord." Luther takes note of this in "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church,"<sup>16</sup> but he refuses to get into a dispute about this, saying "baptism truly saves in whatever way it is administered, if only it is administered not in the name of man but in the name of the Lord" (p. 186).<sup>17</sup> Yet the command of our Lord is very clear that the baptismal formula is the Trinitarian formula. Christ mentioned the individual persons of the Trinity in the formula. Pieper very aptly says, "We agree with those theologians who hold that the Matthew 28:19 formula of baptism is the most fitting, the simplest, and the safest" (Volume 3, p. 261).

Finally, in discussing Christ's institution of baptism, it is necessary to look at the method of baptism. In previous years there used to be a great deal of discussion about the method of baptism, some holding that immersion should be exclusively used. (Compare, for example Krauth's twenty-five pages on immersion in his The Conservative Reformation And Its Theology). No doubt immersion was practiced in the early church and has been practiced more or less since that time. The matter, however, is not greatly discussed today since a study of the use of the word "to baptize" indicates what Pieper has said: "Baptism can be performed by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling, because baptizein merely denotes the application of water without any implication as to the way it is applied" (Volume 3, p. 256). It is well

known that Martin Luther wished that baptism would be performed by immersion, not "because I think it necessary, but because it would be beautiful to have a full and perfect sign of so perfect a thing; as also, without doubt, it was instituted by Christ."<sup>18</sup>

To bring this discussion up to date, let me quote Prof. Dale Moody summarizing Karl Barth's views as set forth in 1943: "Serious questions are raised about the substitution of sprinkling and even mere moistening that has become a part of the innocuous form of present-day baptism, but Barth agrees with Luther in the contention that the mode of immersion, although the most appropriate, is not the main point."<sup>19</sup>

## II. The Benefits of Baptism

Now that it has been established that God commands baptism, one naturally asks, What good is it? Luther, in the Small Catechism, says: "What does baptism give or profit? Baptism works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare. Which are those words and promises of God? Christ, our Lord, says, Mark 16; 16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Baptism is a means of justification. The Lutheran Confessions follow Luther here: "A sacrament is a ceremony or work in which God presents to us that which the promise annexed to the ceremony offers; as, baptism is a work, not which we offer to God, but in which God baptizes us, i.e., a minister in the place of God; and God here offers and presents the remission of sins, etc., according to the promise, Mark 16; 16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Trig. p. 389)

Jesus' words are clear. To the question, what must I do to be saved, follows the answer, he that

believes and is baptized shall be saved. Forgiveness of sins is conferred through the medium of the Gospel, but the great benefits of Christ's salvation are conferred also through baptism. Baptism bestows, and the believing baptized person accepts and receives, the great salvation from the Savior.

With regard to Mark 16; 16, we come to a question whether or not verses 9 to 20 are a part of the Gospel according to St. Mark. Some manuscripts do not carry it, but other important manuscripts do. This is a matter for textual criticism, and the opinions are divided on this. Vincent Taylor, in a recent commentary on Mark, says: "It is an almost universally held conclusion that 16:9-20 is not an original part of Mark."<sup>20</sup> Lutheran commentators, such as Kretzmann and Lenski, accept these verses as genuine. Dr. William Arndt, a great New Testament scholar and co-author of one of the standard New Testament Dictionaries, has this to say about this particular section: "Eusebius (d. 340), for instance was confronted with the problem whether Mark 16: 9-20 was really part of Mark's Gospel. Certain old MMS. in the library of Caesarea did not contain this section. He studied the matter, as he tells us, and he reached the conclusion that these verses were not genuine. It was in my opinion a mistaken judgment." (CTM, April, 1952, p. 282)

But other Scripture passages besides Mark 16:16 are also very clear as to what Baptism is. At the conclusion of his sermon on Pentecost, Peter invites the gathered people to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Ananias told Paul to be baptized and wash away his sins (Acts 22:16). As a further explanation of the blessings of baptism, the Apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians 5:26 that Christ loved the church, gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it by means of the washing of water in the Word. And Peter declares that baptism saves us, not by the

washing away of bodily pollution but because it brings salvation through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (I Peter 3:21--NEB).

It is very evident that the concepts of justification and the remission of sins are clearly and closely connected with baptism. From Scripture it is clear there is forgiveness of sins and reconciliation for the world because Christ was man's substitute. All that Christ won as the substitute Lamb of God is conferred in baptism. Christ's baptism is very intimately connected with our baptism. When Christ requested John the Baptist to baptize Him with the words: "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15), Christ, who had taken upon Himself the nature of sinful men, put Himself in man's stead. He was indeed the Holy One who needed no baptism, for He had no sin, and yet He became the substitute for sinners. Luther says that here Jesus really begins to be the Christ. With just this thought in mind, Luther wrote a baptismal hymn which begins in this way:

To Jordan came our Lord the Christ  
To do God's pleasure willing,  
And there was by St. John baptized,  
All righteousness fulfilling.  
There did He consecrate a bath  
To wash away transgressions.

(Evangelical Lutheran Hymnbook, 401:1)

All this the Apostle Paul set forth in the sixth chapter of his letter to the Romans.

We do not have time for an extended study of this chapter, but let us briefly point out the important truths Paul sets forth with regard to baptism. The Apostle had just developed his theme that in the Gospel the righteousness of God is revealed as coming through faith and that the sinner's justification, therefore, consists purely in the grace of forgiveness.

Sanctification and renewal were not an integral factor in the doctrine of justification. Hence, some might mistakenly infer that one could continue in sin since grace was free and abundant. Paul emphatically rejects the thought that God's pardon gives us license for more sinning. We have died with reference to sin. This happened when we were justified by faith, and this justification is tied to baptism: "Know ye not that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death" (verse 3)? "He who is baptized puts on Christ, the second Adam; it is the same thing as if, at that moment, Christ suffered, died, and was buried for such a man, and as if such a man suffered, died, and was buried with Christ" (Gnomon, Vol. III, p. 78). Having been baptized into Christ's death, we are to share the fruits of His death,—forgiveness of sins and freedom from the power of sin. Joined by faith to Christ, the Christian will not live in sin, for he has a new life that is opposed to sin. Deliverance from sin, as offered by Christ and conferred through baptism, is not only deliverance from the penalty of sin (but it is that) but also deliverance from its power. And this is Paul's answer to the question asked in verse one: "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?"

A modern commentator, Oscar Cullmann, summarizes these words of Paul in this way: "As Paul in the sixth chapter of Romans shows, this means that our individual participation in the death and resurrection of Christ results from baptism. Here everyone obtains participation in the forgiveness of sins which Christ has achieved once for all upon the cross"<sup>21</sup> (Emphasis by the author).

What Paul teaches in Romans 6, he teaches also in Colossians 2:10 ff. In Christ the head of the church, the Christian is complete. Physical circumcision is inferior to what the Christians have in baptism, the circumcision of Christ. In baptism they were buried with Christ. In baptism they were also raised to life with Him through faith in the active

power of God who raised Christ from the dead. And even though they had been dead in their sins, God has now made them alive with Christ, having forgiven them their sins. Luther is indeed setting forth a Scriptural truth found in Colossians 2, when he says that in baptism God forgives sin, delivers from death and the devil.

We should note particularly that Colossians 2:11. 12 states that baptism has supplanted the Old Testament sacrament of circumcision. It is, therefore, a means of grace, particularly for children. Later on we shall see that this fact is important in the case of infant baptism. Here we want to stress the fact that baptism is a means whereby God's grace is conferred to the individual. Modern commentators recognize this truth and support the Lutheran dogmaticians in their interpretation. For example, Oscar Cullmann says that "it must be emphasized that the understanding of Christian baptism as a fulfillment and thus a repeal of Jewish circumcision is not just a theological founding, appearing only at a late date after the Apologist Justin. . . . This conception is already present explicitly in Colossians 2:11."<sup>22</sup> He states further: "Our modern knowledge, especially of New Testament writing, makes it the more necessary for us to let Christian baptism be illuminated both formally and factually by circumcision and proselyte baptism. . . . Jewish circumcision is reception into the Old Covenant, just as Christian baptism is reception into the New: (p. 57). Joachim Jeremias makes the same point: "Paul here (i.e., Colossians 2:11) names baptism 'the Christian circumcision' and describes it thereby as the Christian sacrament which corresponds to Jewish circumcision and replaces it."<sup>23</sup>

Baptism works forgiveness of sins; but where there is forgiveness of sins there is life and salvation. All other spiritual gifts and activities flow from the forgiveness of sins. As we shall see in the next two sections of our study on the power and significance of baptism, baptism bestows not only the



remission of sins but also regeneration, implantation into the body of Christ, and also sanctification.

### III. The Power of Baptism

Blessings such as those previously enumerated here, cannot but lead to the question which Luther next asks: How can water do such great things? Chiefly on the basis of Titus 3:5-8, he says that it is not water indeed that does it but the Word of God which is in and with the water, and faith which trusts this Word of God in the water. For without the Word of God the water is simply water, and no baptism. But with the Word of God it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says, Titus 3:5-8: "According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

We must look more closely at what Paul is telling us in this passage. The young preacher at Crete, Titus, is to remind the Cretans, who were not the most docile people but rather had a reputation for being quite belligerent and coarse, to subject themselves to the authorities. Furthermore, Paul indicates how Christians should conduct themselves towards non-Christians in general: they should slander no one, not pick quarrels, show forbearance, and have a gentle disposition towards all men. Now there had been a time when the Cretans had not been so-minded. As a matter of fact, they had been slaves of passion, disobedient, full of envy, living in such a self-centered life that they were not only hated and detested by other people, but that they themselves hated one another. But a marvelous change had taken place in them. First, the grace, kindness, and love of God the Savior toward man had dawned. In a few sentences previous to this text, Paul had reminded Titus that this grace which brought

salvation was universal, encompassing the world (Titus 2:11). And it had already appeared (a past event). Then God saved them individually: "According to His mercy He saved us." No works on their part might have effected their salvation, because they who were in a state of unrighteousness before God, had no good deeds of their own to offer. On the contrary, it was God's mercy that saved them, His pity for their deplorable condition. Therefore Paul concludes that all Cretans should entertain mercy and pity for their fellowmen, especially those who are still in their wretched, natural state of depravity, where they are hated and hateful.

Paul, now explaining how this grace and mercy of God was made their own, says that God saved them. It is Christ's vicarious life, death and passion that saves them, but Paul does not deal with that now since he had already outlined that in chapter 2, verses 11 and 14. Rather here, Paul emphasizes what we call "subjective justification", that is, how the objective reconciliation is applied to and appropriated by the individual: through baptism. Baptism is described as "a washing of regeneration" (compare Ephesians 5:26 and I Corinthians 6:11). This is a washing which has regeneration as an effect, a result. Regeneration belongs to baptism since it is brought into reality by baptism. The rebirth is a spiritual one, the creation of a new spiritual life. We have here the same essential truth as contained in other passages of Scripture, such as John 3:3,5, I Peter 1:3, and I Peter 1:23.

Paul adds a further explanation: it is a washing of renewal, a renewing, which is effected by the Holy Ghost. This renewal is the same thing as regeneration, and it is worked by the Holy Ghost through baptism. This work of the Holy Spirit is our salvation, for the faith that is conferred thereby accepts Christ's merit won for us, and accepts thereby also righteousness and salvation. Thus by baptism God appropriates to everyone personally the justification

won by Christ. God has indeed saved us by baptism: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27). Indeed our theme is Scripturally true: "God the Holy Spirit Acts Through Baptism."

Paul even tells us more about the activity of the Holy Spirit. In our baptism, God poured out His Spirit richly (plentifully). The outpouring is sufficient to create new life in us and to renew this new life constantly. And this outpouring took place through Jesus Christ our Savior. As our Savior, He had obtained for us the gift of the Holy Spirit, without which His redemption would not benefit us for we would be unable to accept it personally (compare John 16:7).

Thus we are justified by God's grace and the merit of Christ, which the sinner accepts in faith. By justifying us, God looks upon us as clothed in the merits of His own Son, and therefore considers us adopted sons. But if we are sons, then we are also heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ (compare Romans 8:17 and Galatians 3:26-29). This is a gift of our baptismal rebirth. This heritage is eternal life, not that we have it yet in hand, but we possess it according to hope. But the hope is reliable and certain, and it will not make us ashamed (Romans 5:5). Paul ends by telling us, "These are words you may trust" (NEB).

All this is in harmony with the words of our Savior. To Nicodemus Jesus stressed the necessity of regeneration. And He points out to Nicodemus the means of regeneration, baptism with water and the Spirit (John 3).

Baptism does not confer the blessings which Christ has won for the whole world automatically, merely through the act performed (ex opere operato). This is not the teaching of Scripture, nor of Luther, with regard to baptism. Luther has told us that it is not the water indeed that does this but the Word of

God which is in and with the water, and faith which trusts this Word of God in the water. In Lutheran theology baptism is firmly connected with the doctrine of faith. In the Large Catechism Luther says, "Faith alone makes the person worthy to receive profitably the saving divine water, for, since these blessings are here presented and promised in the words 'in and with the water,' they cannot be received in any other way than by believing them with the heart. Without faith it profits nothing, notwithstanding it is in itself a divine superabundant treasure" (Trig. 741). And in the Apology Melancthon strongly asserts that it is "absolutely a Jewish opinion, to hold that we are justified by a ceremony, without a good disposition of the heart, i.e., without faith. . . . The promise is useless unless it is received by faith" (Trig. p. 313). And so the Danish Lutheran hymn-writer, T. Kingo, confesses the Lutheran doctrine in these words:

He that believes and is baptized  
Shall see the Lord's salvation;  
Baptized into the death of Christ,  
He is a new creation;  
Through Christ's redemption he shall stand  
Among the glorious heavenly band  
Of every tribe and nation.

(Lutheran Hymnary 141:1)

To sum up, then, faith is indeed necessary, not to make baptism efficacious but to receive its blessings. Baptism creates faith; baptism requires faith. Christ saves; faith saves; baptism saves.

The test whether one will actually accept these Scriptural truths confronts one when he must consider whether he will accept or reject Infant Baptism. Pieper's remarks are to the point, "At the bottom of the opposition to Infant Baptism is usually the singular notion that adults indeed can believe, but not children."<sup>24</sup> To illustrate that the Reformed Church has not really changed its position with regard to the Sacraments, let me refer you to the recent book by the

Dutch Reformed G. C. Berkouwer, The Sacraments (1969).<sup>25</sup> On the one hand, Prof. Berkouwer, using the Augsburg Confession, Article XIII, declares, "It is striking that so much agreement exists between Lutherans and Reformed precisely in the rejection of ex opere operato. Both continually point to the relation between Word and Sacrament, and therefore to the relation between faith and Sacrament" (p. 64). On the other hand, in discussing Infant Baptism Berkouwer says, "For one cannot speak of a believing use of baptism on the part of children" (p. 163).

Ever since the time of the Reformation the matter of Infant Baptism has been hotly discussed, and the discussion goes on today. The Lutheran teaching is simply that the child is brought to baptism, first, because it is God's ordinance and command, and then because of the conviction based on Scripture that God will create faith. Luther sums it up in the Large Catechism, "Thus we do also in Infant Baptism. We bring the child in the conviction and hope that it believes, and we pray that God may grant it faith; but we do not baptize it upon that, but solely upon the command of God." (Trig. p. 747). Luther, in 1528, in a letter to two pastors "Concerning Re-Baptism",<sup>26</sup> elaborates on this point in considerable detail. While he admits that "we cannot prove that children do believe with any Scripture verse that clearly and expressly declares in so many words, or the like, 'you are to baptize children because they also believe'" (p. 254), he at the same time challenges the Anabaptists with these words, "When they say, 'children cannot believe,' how can they be sure of that? Where is the Scripture by which they would prove it and on which they would build? They imagine this, I suppose, because children to not speak or have understanding, but such a fancy is deceptive, yea, altogether false, and we cannot build on what we imagine" (p. 242). He then proceeds to build up the case for Infant Baptism on the basis of Scripture, which Lutherans have ever since followed. One can find this case briefly summarized in Pieper (Volume 3, pp. 277,

279). God would have all men to be saved (I Timothy 2:4). The command in Matthew 28:19 is very general, to make disciples of all the nations by baptizing and teaching. Little children (Mark 10:13-16, Luke 18:15) are to be brought to Christ. Infants are members of the Kingdom of God with an actual faith (Matthew 18:6). Colossians 2:11,12 states that baptism has replaced the Old Testament Sacrament of circumcision. Christ cleanses His church, which certainly included children, by means of the washing of water in the Word (Ephesians 5:26). Furthermore, Scripture indicates that children were baptized through its use of the so-called "oikos formula". Entire families or households were baptized (I Corinthians 1:16, Act 11:14, Acts 16:15,33, cf. also Acts 2:38,39).

In 1960, Prof. Joachim Jeremias of the University of Göttingen (a Lutheran) published in English his book, Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries, in which he said that "the early history of Infant Baptism is much more clearly defined today than in any previous age" (Preface), and he proceeds to marshal the historic evidence that Infant Baptism was the practice of the early church. A year or two later, another Lutheran theologian, Prof. Kurt Aland of the University of Münster, in a book, Did the Early Church Baptize Infants, looks at virtually the same historical material and comes to the conclusion that Infant Baptism was not generally introduced into the church until the end of the second century (p. 100 ff.).<sup>27</sup> It is significant to note, however, that in the final chapter of his book, Prof. Aland insists that for theological reasons Infant Baptism should be practiced today, agreeing with Luther that one gets baptized not because he is sure of faith but because God has commanded it and will have it (p. 115).

Prof. Dale Moody, in his significant book, Baptism: Foundation for Christian Unity, reveals his inability to take seriously the Lutheran position on the power of baptism. He insists that "Luther's effort to harmonize Infant Baptism with justification

by faith drove him to his theory of infant faith" (p. 298). He notes that this theory has been revived in modern scholarship and "it is a popular theory often advanced by pious Lutherans in America" (p. 298). Prof. Moody, on another occasion, in summarizing the Mennonite position on baptism, says that Luther's strong Sacramental view is subjected to criticism at two major points: the statements of Lutheran theologians as great as Schleiermacher who failed to find Infant Baptism in the New Testament, and the argument for infant faith. Moody concludes that "without the support of Scripture and justification by faith, Lutheran theology is in serious difficulty" (p. 224).

This judgment upon our doctrine we readily acknowledge. Without Scripture and its central teaching of justification by faith we would indeed be in serious difficulty. And we should be in serious difficulty. For Confessional Lutheran theology holds equally to Scripture (the formal principle) and to justification by faith (the material principle).

#### IV. The Meaning of Baptism for the Christian's Daily Life

The Holy Spirit through baptism works the new life. This new life is the fruit of the Spirit and the fruit of baptism, and ultimately also the fruit of faith. Baptism made us children of God, and as children, heirs (Romans 8:17), yes, heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:7). But that is not the whole story. God the Holy Ghost wants us to be kept in the grace of our baptism and finally attain eternal life, and hence our baptism has far-reaching implications for our entire Christian life. So Luther asks, What, therefore, does such baptizing with water mean? It means that the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts; and again, a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever. St. Paul writes,

Romans 6:4: "We are buried with Christ by baptism into death; that like as He was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Once again we are face to face with the Christian paradox of the sinner and the saint, simul justus et peccator; Luther: "So you understand how in baptism a person becomes guiltless, pure, and sinless, while at the same time continuing full of evil inclinations."<sup>28</sup> The Small Catechism directs us to Romans 6:3,4, where Paul demonstrates the impossibility of the Christian living in sin from the meaning and effect of the Sacrament of Baptism. By it the Christian has been taken into communion with Christ. We were baptized into fellowship of His death, and so we receive all the merits which Christ has procured for all mankind. We are dead and buried with Christ, not that we may continue dead, but that we may rise again in and with Him who rose for us.

On another occasion, Paul, on the basis of their baptism, appeals to the Corinthians to lead sanctified lives. Once some of them had lived in the grossest open and wicked sins, but that was now past for them: "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (I Corinthians 6:11) God washed them in baptism; they were justified and became holy. God did all this for them, hence they could no longer walk in sin. Baptism does all this, so that Luther says that baptism "not only signified such a new life, but also produces, begins, and exercises it. For therein are given grace, the spirit, and the power to suppress the old man, so that the new man may come forth and become strong" (Trig. 751). Baptism is, indeed, more than a symbol of Sanctification.

When one is justified by faith, God dwells in him; he has become mystically united with God. According to Ephesians 4, there is one body and one



spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and in us all. Baptism is also a means by which we are planted into the body of Christ, namely, into the church. We are told, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Corinthians 12:13). There is a most intimate relation existing between Christ and the believers. The gift of baptism is also communion with the Triune God.

Baptism embraces and covers the entire earthly life of man and finally leads to eternal life, that for which he now lives in hope. Luther never tires of emphasizing the enduring value of baptism over against the aberrations of Rome which discarded the good ship baptism, and instead threw out a second plank by which people could possibly be saved, namely, penance. In "The Babylonian Captivity" (1520) he wrote, "For the truth of the promise once made remains steadfast, always ready to receive us back with open arms when we return" (p. 181). Nine years later he writes, "The unchanging Word of God, once spoken in the first baptism, ever remains standing, so that afterwards they can come to faith in it, if they will, and the water with which they were baptized they can afterward receive in faith, if they will. Even if they contradict the Word a hundred times, it still remains the Word spoken in the first baptism. Its power does not derive from the fact that it is repeated many times or is spoken anew, but from the fact that it was commanded once to be spoken."<sup>29</sup> In baptism God made a covenant, and Luther was simply taking literally God's Words regarding His covenant: "My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee" (Isaiah 54:10); "This is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Romans 11:27); "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful" (2 Timothy 2:13); "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Romans 11:29).

But one of the great offenses in the visible

church is the case with which we, as Luther says, forget our baptism and what it means, and he urges us that "we must also beware lest a false security creep in and say to itself, 'if baptism is so gracious and great a thing that God will not count our sins against us, and as soon as we turn again from sin everything is right by virtue of baptism, then for the present I will live and do my own will. Afterward, or when about to die, I will remember my baptism and remind God of His covenant, and then fulfill the work and purpose of my baptism.'"<sup>30</sup> Also today one can well understand the lament of the Christian poet when two hundred years ago he looked at the organized church around him:

Come, Jesus, come and contemplate  
Thy vineyard's sad estate:  
Baptized are millions in Thy name,  
But where is faith's pure flame?  
Of what avail that we  
Know of Thine agony,  
So long as we do not o'erthrow  
In faith the wicked foe?

(Lutheran Hymnary 245,2)

In order that this life-long union with our God can be consummated in eternity, we must remember that the Lord's original command was to make disciples by baptizing and teaching. When a child is grafted into the body of Christ by baptism, a great responsibility falls on the other members of the body of Christ, namely, to teach that child. Not only the family who are members of the body of Christ, but all others are to be involved, so that he may grow in the grace and knowledge of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This responsibility surely does not end at the time of confirmation. Right now we lose most of our people through the years of high school and college. Prof. Jungkuntz reminds us all in his recent book on Baptism that there is no room for complacency here. We all have an awesome responsibility. Christ not only speaks a blessing on those who receive a child in

Christ's name, but He follows it up with a sternest woe upon any who would cause one of these little ones who believe in Him to sin. Prof. Jungkuntz concludes, "But just because the responsibility is so awesome, the temptation to evade it is correspondingly great. And the warning sign that the temptation has taken effect is that curious complacency which piously acknowledges the responsibility while secretly shifting its burden. 'All is well, the church is instructing my child.' 'All is well, the child comes from a Christian home.'"<sup>31</sup>

## V. The Sacrament of Baptism Today

At a Lutheran Free Conference such as this it would be unthinkable not to attempt to make an evaluation of the present status of the Biblical doctrine of baptism in the church. From a rather cursory look one cannot say that a rosy picture emerges. Orthodox confessional Lutheranism, under the impact of the ecumenical movement, is fast waning, with little or no significant evidence that it might begin to wax in the near future.

The Lutheran view of baptism is anchored in the following scriptural truths: The universal depravity of man, i.e., that by the fall of Adam all men have become sinners and are, therefore, under the condemnation of God's law; the redemption of the world of sinners designed by God from eternity and accomplished in time by the vicarious suffering and death of His only begotten Son Jesus Christ; the justification of the sinner by grace alone, through faith in Christ or in the Gosepl; and the creation and preservation of faith by the Holy Spirit solely through the Means of Grace.

Contrasted with this position, the traditional Reformed refuse to accept baptism as an actual Means of Grace, but regard it in some way merely as a demand for, or a symbol of, regeneration and not as a

cause of regeneration. That this position has not been significantly changed in recent years is evidenced by G. C. Berkhouwer's recent book, The Sacraments (1969), in which he expounds and defends the Reformed teaching on the Sacraments. Reference has already been made to his refusal to speak of the believing use of baptism on the part of children (p. 26, Note 25). In discussing Titus 3:5 and John 3:5, Professor Berkouwer wonders whether "this seemingly obvious conclusion that baptism is 'causal' has not been furthered by some tendentious thinking" (p. 112). In analyzing Romans 6 and Colossians 2, Berkouwer again cannot find baptism as a means of regeneration because it bestows the forgiveness of sins. On the contrary, he says, "Nothing happens in and through baptism. Rather, baptism is meaningful only through its pointing at another event in which those who were dead in their transgressions are truly reconciled." (p. 117).

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that baptism imparts grace ex opere operato, that is, even though the person baptized does not have personal faith. The liturgical movement, however, which has been promoted during the last 40 years especially by the Benedictines within the Roman Church, may have caused some modification in this belief.<sup>52</sup> One aspect of this movement, emphasized by Dom Odo Casel of Maria Laach, is the so-called "Mystery Theology", which holds that Christ acts personally in the present liturgical actions of the Church. Christ in the baptismal liturgy incorporates the infant into the mystical body of Christ. But this is probably not an essential change from the old Roman position, since it is held that the church and the parents lend "faith to children." Professor Moody sums up this position by saying, "Corporate life in which the church and parents apply faith bridges the gap between belief and baptism." (p. 21).

The New Catholic Encyclopedia (1967) has this to say:

Catholic theologians grant the importance of personal faith together with the ex opere operato aspect of the Sacrament. Faith is not absent from the baptism of infants; they are baptized in the faith of Christ and of the church (My emphasis). Although in baptism the virtue of faith is infused and exists in the infant as a "habit," as a personal act it will play its indispensable role only later. The gratuitous character of salvation and its community nature justify the Baptism of those who cannot yet have personal faith.<sup>33</sup>

Then we have the recent Neo-Orthodox existentialist movement which cuts across Lutheran, Reformed, and even Roman Catholic boundaries. Since one does not know how much of the Bible the particular Neo-orthodoxist regards as myth, it is difficult to pin-point what they in the aggregate believe with regard to baptism. It is probably true of the theology of most of these theologians what Professor Leigh Jordahl of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg says of his own. In a sermon on St. Michael and All Angels Day he asserts with regard to angels and devils that "for better or for worse, modern man (and that certainly includes us) simply don't believe in these things anymore."<sup>34</sup> He makes the further suggestion, "I think that's true even of those who say we do. We neither live in any existential fear that the devil may catch us, nor are we in any vital sense comforted by the thought that angels are watching over us." The reason he cannot accept some of the "common baggage" set forth for belief in the Scripture is that "men of the Bible shared in the mythology of the world just as we share in that of ours." Almost wistfully, one is inclined to think, Prof. Jordahl confesses, "to be sure we also have our mythology and five hundred years from now much of what we believe will have an

air of total unreality about it."

Those who believe that revelation is given through certain events which appear as God's mighty acts and that revelation also involves a second moment of God actually giving himself in revelation and man spontaneously responding, probably would not have too high a regard for baptism as a Means of Grace. As you no doubt know, Scripture according to this modern view, is not a mode of revelation, but to get at the revelatory kernel in Scripture one must sift out the divine revelation from the Bible, a process requiring trained literary and historical skills.<sup>55</sup> An existential confrontation or encounter would seem to be a pretty complex undertaking, especially for children, and baptism seems so simple that it can't be effective. And to be sure, one of the high priests of the Modern Neo-orthodox movement, Emil Brunner, attacked infant baptism in 1937 at the University of Uppsala on these very grounds.<sup>56</sup> The element he found 'missing in the extreme objectivism of infant baptism' was the "I-Thou Relation." (Hoody, p. 53).

Six years later Karl Barth attacked the doctrine of infant baptism.<sup>57</sup> He denied the power of baptism to bestow faith and asserted that baptism is a matter of cognition of salvation and that it is not causal. "Now faith is the essential thing, and hence baptism is not legitimate within the Kingdom of God (Berkouwer p. 165). "The causal connection between the administration of water baptism and regeneration is rejected (by Barth) on the grounds that it is 'a confounding of the subject' i.e., those who administer the rite and that with which it is administered are confused with the sole agency of Jesus Christ in Regeneration." (Hoody, p. 60).

Considering how highly Brunner and Barth are held in esteem by the Lutheran Neo-Orthodox theologians, it would not be surprising to find some of them downgrading baptism and, in particular, infant baptism. And that, we find, is precisely the case. When Pro-

fessor David Scaer of Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, presented the Lutheran Doctrine of baptism in Christianity Today (April 14, 1967, pp. 8-11), Professor Leigh Jordahl objected via the letters-to-the-editor-department:

It is unfortunate that David Scaer based his defense of infant baptism on what is probably the worst possible argument in favor of the church's traditional practice. The whole concept of "infant faith" is unconvincing, speculative to the extreme, and, in fact introduces a peculiarly Anabaptist apologetic. . . . Let us drop this feeble and unnecessary argument from "infant faith." It confuses at the same time as it seriously undercuts the doctrine of Grace.<sup>38</sup>

One does not know whether Professor Jordahl's position is typical of the modern Lutheran Neo-orthodoxist or merely indicative of a certain fringe element.

All of us who confess to be Lutheran must be on our guard lest we lose the Scriptural doctrine of baptism. Those who are of a more Confessional frame of mind tend to read periodicals such as Christianity Today, where, apart from Professor Scaer's article, one will have to thumb quite a few pages to find a Scriptural presentation of baptism or, for that matter, the lord's supper. The reference books that this magazine promotes (Baker's Dictionary of Theology, Basic Christian Doctrine, etc.), though they may have an occasional Lutheran contributor of the conservative stripe, consistently present the Reformed point of view on baptism. And we should not forget that the appeal of Billy Graham for personal decision in repentance sometimes leads some to want to make a dramatic confession of their new birth and even to be re-baptized.

The Ecumenical Movement has encountered some rough weather in trying to adjust the differences in the doctrine of baptism. Some reject the idea of unbaptized church members; others call for infant baptism; some only for adult baptism, or what is usually called "believer's baptism." One hears little or no call for the position that baptism is a Means of Grace through which God forgives sin and bestows faith. The Consultation on Church Union (COCU), one of the most active ecumenical movements for organic union, rejects the practice of rebaptism and permits both forms of baptism, "Both infant baptism and believer's baptism shall be accepted as alternative practices in the united church. Neither shall impose contrary to conscience."<sup>39</sup> Professor Moody suggests that "as an interim solution toward organic unity this may be the only way." (p. 305). But it certainly is not the Scriptural way towards a God-pleasing unity.

In conclusion, I can think of no better way to end this essay than to bring to your memory the words with which Luther closed his confession of baptism in the Large Catechism:

Thus it appears that what a great excellent thing baptism is, which delivers us from the jaws of the devil and makes us God's own, suppresses and takes away sin, and then daily strengthens a new man; and is and remains ever efficacious until we pass through this estate of misery to eternal glory.

For this reason, then, let everyone esteem his baptism as a daily dress in which he is to walk constantly, that he may ever be found in the faith and its fruits, that he suppress the old man and grow up in the new. For if we should be Christians, we must practice the work whereby we are Christians. But if any one fall away from it, let him again come



into it. For just as Christ, the Mercy-seat, does not recede from us nor forbid us to come to Him again, even though we sin, so all His treasure and gifts also remain. If, therefore, we have once in baptism obtained forgiveness of sin, it will remain every day as long as we live, that is, as long as we carry the old man about our neck. (Trig. p. 753).

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8. Heinrich Bornkamm, Luther's World of Thought, trans. Martin H. Bertram, St. Louis: CPH, 1965, p. 95.
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15. L W, Vol. 40, "Concerning Rebaptism," p. 239.
16. Three Treatises, p. 185,186.
17. For a discussion of the words of baptizing, recently suggested changes in the baptismal liturgy, see David P. Scaer's "The Proposed Rite for Holy Baptism--Biblically Considered," The Springfielder, Winter 1968, pp. 29-35.
18. Quoted by Henry F. Brown, Baptism Through the Centuries, Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1965, p. 40.
19. Baptism, etc., p. 57.
20. Vincent Taylor, The Gospel According to St. Mark, London: Macmillan, 1963, p. 610.
21. Cullmann, p. 21.
22. Cullmann, p. 56.
23. Joachim Jeronias, Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries, trans. David Cairns, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962, p. 39.
24. Pieper, Vol. 3, p. 277.
25. G. C. Berkouwer, The Sacraments, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960.

26. L. W., Vol. 40, pp. 229-262.
27. See also Kurt Aland, Did the Early Church Baptize Infants? trans. G. K. Beasley--Murray, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1965. Subsequently Jeremias wrote a reply to Aland: The Origins of Infant Baptism: A Further Study in Reply to Kurt Aland, London: SCM Press, 1965. Here he insists that the "Oikos" phrase as including children must stand, because in no place in the N. T. is there any evidence that the term is restricted to adult members of the household only (see Moody pp. 153ff). It is instructive to note that Jeremias makes the cogent point that Acts 2: 38,39, from the context and Joel 2:28, must have reference to children and not the coming generations (See Infant Baptism, etc. p. 40). One more note: In the English edition of Infant Baptism, etc. as contrasted with the earlier German edition Jeremias no longer accepts as evidence, I. Cor. 7:14, at least at Corinth, that they did not baptize children born of at least one Christian parent: "I no longer venture to draw the conclusion that I. Cor. 7:14 presupposes that the Christians of Corinth forebore to baptize the children of Christian parents.: (Preface, Infant Baptism, etc.).
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B. W. Teigen

#### QUMRAN AND CHRISTIANITY

The dates of the Qumran Community, approximately 150 B.C. to 68 A.D., show that this Community was active at the very threshold of the birth of Christianity. It spans the entire period of the life of John the Baptist, the life and ministry of Jesus, and the beginning of the Christian Church, as narrated in the Book of the Acts, almost up to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem.

Thus it would have been possible for some exchange to take place between the Qumran Community and John the Baptist, Jesus and His Apostles, and the early Christian Church. The Qumran Community was situated

not far from the place where John the Baptist was born and where he dwelt "till the day of his showing unto Israel." Luke 1:80. And the place where John was baptizing in the River Jordan was only 10 or 12 miles from the Qumran Community. Bethlehem and Jerusalem likewise were only a few miles distant from Qumran.

Was John the Baptist acquainted with the Qumran brethren? Some have even conjectured that he was brought up in the Qumran Community. But this is a question which, as far as we can see now, will have to remain unanswered. Certain expressions and practices can be pointed out that are somewhat similar in both. For example, the Qumran sectarists speak of preparing the way of the Lord in the desert. (Manual of Discipline, VIII, 14) And John likewise says that he is "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Matt. 3:3. However, nothing more can definitely be asserted concerning this than that both were well acquainted with the Book of the Prophet Isaiah which evidently was held in high regard by the Qumran Community. This is the only book of the Old Testament that has been found in its entirety among all the Qumran Scrolls.

The Qumran Community practiced ceremonial washings, and John baptized in the River Jordan. But here, too, there is a great difference because the Qumran washings were repeated, while John's baptism was a once-in-a-life-time performance. John did not emphasize any kind of a ceremonial washing, as in the case of Qumran. Likewise, John asserted that he had been sent by God to baptize, John 1:33, and that his baptism was for the forgiveness of sins. Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3. This shows that his baptism was not something he had taken over from the Qumran sectarists.

Furthermore, John the Baptist was not one who sought to withdraw from society in carrying on his work, as was the case with the Qumran brethren. John brushed shoulders with the Pharisees and Sadducees,

Matt. 3:7, with the publicans, Luke 3:12, with soldiers, Luke 3:14, and even with Herod the Tetrarch, Luke 3:19. And while John lived a very simple life in diet and attire and also practiced fasting and abstaining from the use of strong drink, he was not an ascetic of the kind that the Qumran sectarists demanded that their followers be. These were required to withdraw from society, enter into the Community and live according to the strict rules of the sect and yield their possessions to the Community.

While the Qumran brethren spoke of at least two, if not three, messiahs, John pointed to the one Messiah who was already in the midst of the people, a Messiah who, though coming after him, was before him and whose shoe's latchet he was unworthy to unloose. John 1:27. And John's Messiah was none other than the Son of God, John 1:34. Indeed, he had heard the Father declare so from heaven at Jesus' baptism. Matt. 3:17.

And now we proceed to the discussion concerning any connection that Jesus might have had with the Qumran Community. The Gospels do not recount any word of Jesus about them or about the sect of the Essenes to which they likely belonged. Here the situation is also the same as in the case of John the Baptist: No proof can be brought to show that Jesus had any connection with the Qumran Community.

Jesus' temptation by the devil may well have taken place in this area of the Judaeian desert where the Qumran Community was established. And the account of Jesus' temptation also sets forth the battle which He, the righteous One and the Light of the world, had with the wicked one who is the prince of darkness, and that the angels also had a part in this matter by way of serving Him after the battle was over. Matt. 4:11. Likewise the Qumran Scrolls speak of the battle between the sons of light and the sons of darkness and that the angels align themselves on the side of the children of light. But this is no foundation on which

to build a theory concerning a connection between Christ and Qumran.

The Qumran covenanters were great sticklers on ritual and formality, demanding strict observance of the Sabbath and times and seasons. In the matter of the observance of the Sabbath they went even farther than the Pharisees of Jesus' day. The Pharisees would evidently allow such a thing as drawing an ox or a donkey up out of a pit on the Sabbath day. But the Qumran brethren forbade even this. The Zadokite Document says:

"No one is to foal a beast on the Sabbath day. Even if it drop its young into a cistern or pit, he is not to lift it out on the Sabbath." (Page 78, The Dead Sea Scrolls, Gaster.)

But Jesus was no sabbatarian in this sense, as evidenced by His frequent encounters with the Pharisees over the matter of healing on the Sabbath, Matt. 12:10; Luke 14:3, and allowing His disciples to pluck and thresh the heads of grain as they walked through the grain fields on the Sabbath day and were hungry. Matt. 12:1.

Whereas the Qumran brethren were required to keep themselves apart from all froward men (Manual of Discipline, p. 47 of Gaster), Jesus associated with publicans and sinners. Matt. 9:10. And if Simon, the Pharisee, was surprised that Jesus would allow a sinful woman to touch His feet as He reclined at the table in his house, Luke 7:39, no doubt the Qumran brethren would be doubly surprised and throw up their hands in holy horror at such a thing. They forbade associating with froward men "in every respect". (P. 48, Gaster.) The Qumran Community was extremely seclusive and would not even speak of the meaning of the Law in the company of froward men. (Gaster, p. 59. Their doctrines were kept secret from anyone not of their number. The practice of Jesus and His disciples was entirely different. Jesus said, "What ye hear in

the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." Matt. 10:27. While Jesus said that the believers were not OF THE WORLD, John 17:14, He certainly did not advocate their withdrawing from association with the world. John 17:15. The Qumran Community evidently thought they could work toward the preservation of their nation by withdrawing into their secluded community. But Jesus wanted His followers to be a salt and a light out in the world. Matt 5:14-16.

The Qumran sectarists taught that they should hate every worker of iniquity and love only the brethren. But Jesus' word stands out in sharp contrast: "Love your enemies." Matt. 5:44. "For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?" Matt. 5:46.

The Qumran Community had great respect for their "TEACHER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS". Attempts have been made to find a likeness between their Teacher of Righteousness and Jesus. However, an investigation of the matter shows clearly that the theology of the Teacher of Righteousness differed from that of Jesus in its most basic emphases. The Teacher of Righteousness was vitally interested in the purity of the priestly line, in following a sacred solar calendar, and in the strictest observance of the Law. Jesus was very different in these respects. Jesus claimed sinlessness for Himself, John 8:46. The Teacher of Righteousness, on the other hand, confesses himself to be a sinner.

It is significant indeed that in the midst of the legalistic writings of the Qumran people there emerges from time to time deeper spiritual insights which are more in the spirit of the Gospels. We wish to draw attention to the following verses from the hymns appended to the Manual of Discipline:

But as for me I belong to an evil humanity  
And to the company of wicked flesh.  
Mine iniquities, my transgressions, my sin...  
Belong to... the things that move in darkness.



For a man's way is not his own  
A man cannot direct his steps:  
But to God belongs justification  
And from his hand is integrity of way....  
And if I stumble, God's mercy is my  
salvation for ever.  
And if I stumble in carnal evil,  
My justification through God's righteousness  
shall stand everlastingly....  
Even from the pit he will draw forth my soul,  
And will direct in the way my steps.  
In his compassion he has brought me near,  
And in his mercy he will bring my justification;  
In his steadfast righteousness he has  
justified me;  
And in his great goodness he will atone for  
all mine iniquities,  
And in his righteousness he will cleanse me  
from man's impurity,  
And from the sin of the children of men.  
(Manual of Discipline, XI.10ff, quoted in  
Black, The Scrolls and Christian Origins,  
p. 125, 126.)

Concerning this, Dr. Millar Burrows remarks:

"The point of prime importance here is that while man has no righteousness of his own, there is a righteousness which God, in his own righteousness, freely confers. The meaning of the righteousness of God in Rom. 3:21-26 is thus illustrated and shown to be rooted in pre-Christian Judaism." (Quoted in Black, The Scrolls and Christian Origins, p. 126.)

Much as we would like to delight in this statement that sounds somewhat like the Christian doctrine of justification by grace through faith, yet we cannot help note that the very foundation of the Christian doctrine of justification is lacking in this statement, namely "The redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Rom. 3:24. Of course, we would not expect to find Jesus mentioned in this hymn since it belongs to the Old Testament period. But we also fail to find any statement in the Qumran Writings that any one of the messiahs of whom they spoke would be divine or would give himself into a sacrificial death for man's sins, as Jesus so clearly states concerning Himself that His blood was shed for the remission of sins. Matt. 26:28.

The Habbakuk Commentary, in speaking on the well known passage in Habbakuk chapter 2:4, "The just shall live by his faith," says:

"This refers to all in Jewry who carry out the Law (Torah). On account of their labor and of their faith in him who expounded the Law aright, God will deliver them from the house of judgment." (Gaster, p. 253.)

Some translations speak here of "faith in the teacher of righteousness." (Howie, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Living Church, p. 92.) However, faith in the Teacher of Righteousness is something entirely different from that which the New Testament means by faith in Christ.

"The teacher of righteousness taught that salvation came by adherence to the Law: Keeping apart from the world, swearing allegiance to the Law of Moses, participating in the life and knowledge of the community, was in fact the way of salvation. Faith in the Teacher of Righteousness meant acceptance of what he stood for and adherence to the principles which he laid down as the true ways of righteousness and justice. It is quite correct to say that the salvation by personal faith in this figure actually amounted to salvation by works of law which Paul so desperately denied and detested." (Carl G. Howie, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the

When we read the Manual of Discipline and observe all the rules and regulations of this Community and all the severe penalties that were placed upon infractions of these rules, we are struck by the extreme legalism of these people in contrast to the free spirit of service in love advocated by Jesus and His disciples.

The New Testament doctrine of "faith which worketh by love," Gal. 5:6, and that does not need the coercion of the Law to bring it into line, is in contrast to the legalism of Qumran.

Jesus was a Missionary for His cause and instructed His disciples to be such also. This, too, is in great contrast to the seclusiveness of the followers of Qumran. Any additions to their number had to come of themselves without being sought. Jesus, however, advocated going out to seek the lost sheep and bringing them in with rejoicing.

The Qumran Community had a teaching about predestination, holding that the members of their Community were the elect, while at the same time they maintained that God has ordained that some should be the sons of darkness. That view amounts to double-predestination. According to the New Testament, predestination is not something that is to be looked for apart from being called by the Gospel and justified by faith, Rom. 8:30, but it is to be ascertained by these very marks. The New Testament certainly does not bid anyone to seek his predestination in the fact that he belongs to some outward organization like the Qumran Community that claims to be the company of elect people. And the New Testament does not have a doctrine of predestination unto membership in the band of the sons of darkness.

Qumran speaks of messiahs, as we have already indicated--at least two, a Davidic and a priestly.

These messiahs may well be simply the anointed priest and the anointed king. The New Testament points to one true Messiah. The Qumran messiahs are not spoken of as pre-existent, as being God come in human flesh, nor are they spoken of as suffering messiahs who rise again from the dead. However, the fact that there were so-called messiahs is, in a way, reassuring to New Testament Christians, for it shows that the real Messiah was not one who appeared all unexpectedly on the pages of history. The Old Testament speaks of this coming One both in shadows and pictures, as well as in direct prophecy. And the Qumran sectarists evidently had knowledge of this. It is striking that we find this just at the very time of His advent into the world as the Son of Dauid and David's Lord, Matt. 22:41-46, who also is the High Priest after the order of Melchisedic, and not of the line of Levi, Aaron or Zadok. Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:10. The New Testament is very explicit in delineating the genealogy of Christ and in setting forth His teachings and His spotless character. This is in complete contrast to the Teacher of Righteousness or the messiahs of the Qumran Scriptures. These persons are set forth very vaguely, and no attempt is made to identify them definitely. The Dead Sea Scrolls veil persons and dates, while the Gospels are as explicit as possible.

There is also a contrast between Christianity and the Qumran Community in the matter of the authority that is adhered to in each. In Christianity, authority is centered in Christ who rules through His Word, the holy Scriptures. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Matt. 23:8. And Jesus bids His followers to search the Scriptures, John 5:39, and to continue in His Word, which is truth. John 8:31,32. And He points to the Word of His apostles as that by which men shall learn to believe in Him. John 17:20.

The Qumran sectarists also studied the Scriptures. After all, every book of the Old Testament is represented among the finds, except the Book of Esther.

But alongside of this they set up other guides, namely the interpretations of the Scriptures on the part of their Teacher of Righteousness, and the college of twelve laymen with three priests was at the head of the Qumran Community. The Manual of Discipline VIII.1ff. reads:

"In the Council of the Community (there are, or shall be) twelve men and three priests, perfect in all that is revealed from the whole Torah." (Quoted in Black, The Scrolls and Christian Origins, page 116.)

And wherever as many as ten men of the Community were together it was required that there be an interpreter of the Scriptures with them. In Dr. Menahem Mansoor's book, The Dead Sea Scrolls, we read on page 106:

"The Community was to be led to salvation by a series of spiritual guides sent by God. 1. Moses was the most important. His name was so holy that the Damascus Document forbids its use in the taking of oaths. 2. The second guide was Zadok, the anointed one, who presumably founded the sect. 3. The Teacher of Righteousness was the third guide; only through faith in him and fidelity to his doctrine could a member be saved."

If by Moses is meant the five Books of Moses in the Scriptures, well and good. But it also appears from this that other authorities are set up besides the inspired Scriptures. In the Manual of Discipline V, 1-7 we read:

"They are to abide by the decisions of the sons of Zadok, the same being priests that still keep the Covenant, and of the majority of the community that stand firm in it. It is by the vote of such that all matters doctrinal, economic and judicial are to be

determined." (P. 46 of Gaster.)

The kind of doctrine that was inculcated by the Teacher of Righteousness has already been indicated. And we remember Jesus' word: "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matt. 15:9. "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." Luke 16:29.

From the document called The War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness it is seen that the Sons of Light were to take up arms against the Sons of Darkness and would defeat them though the war would be spread over 40 years, with 35 years of actual fighting. The New Testament nowhere bids the Christians to use physical arms as the means by which to spread Christianity. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal." 2 Cor. 10:4.

Not long after the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls it was stated by some that this discovery would revolutionize the New Testament studies and change the understanding of it. But this has not materialized. Millar Burrows writes:

"For myself I must confess that, after studying the Dead Sea Scrolls for seven years, I do not find my understanding of the New Testament substantially affected."  
(The Dead Sea Scrolls, Millar Burrows, p. 343.)

We wish to close with another quotation from Millar Burrows (page 343):

"Is it not enough that we can interpret the New Testament with more assurance of perfect understanding because we know better the intellectual and spiritual setting in which it was written? And, knowing more fully the world into which the Gospel came, its deep devotion and

high hopes as well as its pathetic aberrations, we can better realize what the Gospel brought to the world. Perhaps the best thing the Dead Sea Scrolls can do for us is to make us appreciate our Bible all the more by contrast."

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### A TEXTUAL STUDY OF ACTS 27:37

Many students have a verse or two by which they judge manuscripts and versions of the Bible. Acts 27:37 tells of the number of souls in the ship in which Paul was shipwrecked.

The number given in the King James version is "Two hundred three score and sixteen". The phraseology is rather archaic. The versions of 1881 and 1901 continue thus but with marginal notes, suggesting variant readings.

NEB and TEV and Taylor have the words "two hundred seventy six". Weymouth and Beck use numerals "276". In view of what we shall discover about numerals it would seem desirable to use words.

Moffatt, C. B. Williams and Schonfield have "about seventy six". Phillips and New World have "about two hundred and seventy six". There are marginal notes in various versions. The 1881 text has this: "Some ancient authorities read 'about three score and sixteen souls'". The RSV has a footnote, "Some ancient authorities read seventy six or about seventy six". The New World version has a footnote informing us of readings "two hundred seventy six, two hundred seventy five, or about seventy six."

Moffatt has a footnote that one manuscript and



one version read "hos" instead of "diakosiai".

The United Bible Society Greek text of 1966 lists six readings in its footnote:

"diakosiai hebdomekonta hex" (two hundred seventy six) by Aleph, C and many other manuscripts, the Byzantine texts and lectionaries and some versions.

"diakosiai hebdomekonta pente (two hundred seventy five) by A etc.

"hos hebdomekonta hex" (about seventy six) by B and one version.

"hos hebdomekonta" (about seventy) by Epiphanius.

"diakosiai hebdomekonta" (two hundred seventy) by Mss. 69.

"hebdomekonta hex" (seventy six) by Mss. 522 and lectionary 680.

Bruce Metzger in THE TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, IT'S TRANSMISSION, CORRUPTION AND RESTORATION, N.Y. 1968, p. 190 says, "Sometimes the eye of the scribe picked up the same word or group of words a second time and as a result copied twice what should have appeared only once....Instead of the generally accepted text of Acts 27:37. "We were in all two hundred and seventy six ( $\bar{c}\bar{o}\bar{s}$ ) persons in the ship (en to ploio). codex Vaticanus and the Sahidic Version read 'about seventy six'  $\bar{o}\bar{c}\ \bar{o}\bar{s}$ . The difference in Greek is slight ploio $\bar{c}\bar{o}\bar{s}$  and ploio $\bar{o}\bar{c}\bar{o}\bar{s}$ .

It is noteworthy that Metzger is thus upholding the reading of Aleph and the Byzantine texts over against A and B and the other readings. Beck calls Aleph and B the two oldest and Best manuscripts (at Mark 16).

It is noteworthy that Phillips and New World have

"about two hundred and seventy six" inasmuch as there is no support for this reading given by the UBS Greek text.

The INTERPRETERS BIBLE gives a defense of "about" by saying that "Luke qualifies numbers, cf. 2:41, 5:36, 19:7" We confer these passages and discover that Luke 2:41 reads "about 3,000 souls", Luke 5:36 reads "about 400 joined Theudas" and Luke 19:7 reads "about 12 of them in all". These can all be accepted as round numbers. But only Epiphanius comes with the round number "seventy" and "two hundred seventy five" is not prefixed by "about".

Summary: The footnote by UBS is certainly instructive, especially when taken with Metzger's comment. It is surprising that one verse can provide such variety in transmission.

N. Oesleby

THE PSALMS FOR MODERN MAN. TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION.  
New York. American Bible Society. 1970.  
Paperback. 211 pages. No price listed in book.

Five years ago the predecessor to this volume, "Good News for Modern Man The New Testament in Today's English Version," now generally known as the TEV, was published, and immediately became a best-seller, partly on account of its colloquial language and partly, no doubt, on account of its amazingly low price, made possible largely through heavy subsidizing. Judging by its inexpensive format, this volume on the Psalms must also be low-priced. Like the volume on the New Testament, it is in paperback format and includes a number of simple illustrations. Unlike the

New Testament volume, however, which mentions Dr. Robert G. Bratcher as the chief translator, this volume mentions no translators by name. It would appear that some of the same men worked on the two projects. It is also evident that this volume on the Psalms is to be followed by other volumes on books of the Old Testament until the entire Bible has been translated.

At first it would seem that TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION would happily fill a need by making available the Holy Scriptures to the average reader of today in a language more closely akin to the language he understands and uses than is the language of the King James Version. To a certain extent that is surely true. One need not read far in THE PSALMS FOR MODERN MAN to come to the conclusion that the language is simple and down-to-earth -- sometimes too much so. And there are some passages that are well translated. For example, Ps. 119:147a reads: "Before sunrise I call to you for help." That is clearer than the King James Version's rendering: "I prevented the dawning of the morning," in which one must understand that the word "prevent" originally meant "go before," and only later came to mean "hinder." There are a few other verses which may be considered an improvement on the KJV; however, in comparison to the number of instances in which the opposite is the case, they are very few.

To the discriminating reader it must soon become evident that the level of the English language in the TEV is rather low. It is truly a literary "let-down" to read a psalm in the TEV after having read it in the familiar KJV. What might occasionally be gained in understanding is lost in its lack of dignity and poetic beauty.

However, that is only a minor matter compared to the most serious shortcoming of TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION: its unreliability. It is truly deplorable that a translation of the Bible is unreliable. Such is

clearly the case with the TEV. A comparison of this new translation with the Hebrew text of the Psalms reveals that time and again the translators take liberties with the text. In this respect the TEV is similar to the NEW ENGLISH BIBLE. Repeatedly the NEB has the footnote "Hebrew obscure" or "Hebrew unintelligible." Choosing a slightly different term, "Hebrew unclear," the TEV time and again impresses upon the reader the alleged unclarity of the Hebrew. The effect of such a remark is very damaging, for it leads the reader to conclude that the Bible is an unclear book, a viewpoint which is a concoction of the devil himself. The unclarity does not lie in the Bible, but in the minds of those who would place themselves above the Word of God, instead of bowing to that Word and praying for more light and understanding in studying it. The reader will also notice that frequently the footnotes give preference to the readings of ancient translations of the Psalms and relegate the Hebrew reading to a footnote. Furthermore, the headings of the Psalms are either omitted entirely, as in the NEB, or, in a few cases, given in the footnotes. This practice is unfortunate, since the headings are included in the Hebrew text and therefore ought to be retained in the translations.

The modernistic bias of the translators is evident from the manner in which they handle the Messianic passages in the Psalms. For example, the passage in Psalm 8 which is clearly quoted as referring to Jesus Christ in Hebrews 2:6ff is rendered in the TEV: "What is man, that you think of him; mere man, that you care for him? Yet you made him inferior only to yourself." (Compare Ps. 8:4,5 in the KJV.) One more example must suffice. In Psalm 110:1, which Jesus repeatedly referred to Himself, the TEV betrays its anti-Messianic bias in its failure to capitalize where it ought to, and also arbitrarily adds a word. It reads: "The Lord said to my lord, the king," whereas the King James version reads: "The LORD said unto my Lord." Note three differences in those few words. First, it fails to spell the name for God

(Yahweh or Jehovah) with four capital letters when it writes Lord instead of LORD. (LORD and GOD, when in capital letters only, tells us it is His name, not a title, in the KJV.) Then, it fails to capitalize the title Lord, which in that form applies only to God, not to man. By its lack of capitalization, the TEV either denies that it refers to Jesus Christ, or denies that He is God, or both. And by its arbitrary addition of the phrase "the king," it operates too freely with the text, as it does in numerous other passages. In its translation of many passages, it is too free, and frequently loses the concrete imagery of the original Hebrew. To cite any further examples would unduly lengthen this review.

By this review, the writer would not deny the usefulness of THE PSALMS FOR MODERN MAN. It can surely have a place on the Christian's book-shelf. He would, however, urge care and caution in reading it, and recommend that the reader compare passages with the rendering of the King James Version or some other reliable version. Then he could profit from its modern language without being led astray by its modernistic theological viewpoint.

Rudolph E. Honsey

OF THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS  
TO JOIN AN ORTHODOX LOCAL CONGREGATION\*

Thesis 1.

Christ came into the world not only to save men but also even here to bring them together as a congregation of saints or as a Holy Church. (John 11:51-52; 10:16; Matthew 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23; Rom. 12:5)

Thesis 2.

This Holy Church is indeed invisible and scattered over the whole earth, but Christ wants those who have the faith in their hearts and thereby belong to that invisible church, not only to confess their faith openly (Matthew. 10:32-33; Luke 9:26; John 12:42-43; Rom. 10:9-10), but also join together in visible churches or in local congregations with those who with them profess the same faith, in all places wherever they are situated, for the Lord has

1. not only instituted the public preaching office or pastoral office (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11-12; Acts 20:28), but also commanded that it be established from city to city (Tit. 1:5), and ordered all Christians to be obedient to the same (Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; Luke 10:16; James 5:14);

2. prescribed the administration and joint use of the Holy Sacraments, which presume an outward fellowship of Christians with one another (1 Cor. 12:13; 11:20-22; 10:17);

\*Theses from the brochure by Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "VON DER PFLICHT DER CHRISTEN, SICH AN EINE RECHTGLAEBIGE ORTSGEMEINDE GLIEDLICH ANZUSCHLIESZEN." St. Louis.

3. commanded that Christian discipline be exercised not only by the individual with regard to his fellow believers, but also by entire local congregations with regard to their members (Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:9-13; 6:1-6);

4. expressly ordered them to provide care for their fellow believers in need, physical or spiritual (Rom. 12:13; Acts 6:1ff; 4:34-35; 11:19-23);

5. finally, commissioned them to bring others in (Matthew. 28:19-20; Gal. 4:26).

### Thesis 3.

Whoever will be a Christian therefore, is obligated, if and when he has the opportunity to do so, to join an orthodox Christian congregation (Acts 2:41-42, 47; Heb. 10:24-25).

### Thesis 4.

One becomes a member of a local congregation either

1. through baptism administered therein (Acts 2: 41-47), or

2. in this manner, that his parents are or become members of a congregation, provided that he, although already baptized, is not of age and therefore still under parental authority (Acts 2:39 ((Compare Gen. 17:7, 12-14)); Mark 10:14; Eph. 6:1-3), or

3. through reception in the same upon request (3 John 9-10).

### Thesis 5.

Anyone who does not wish to be affiliated with a

local congregation of his confession, even though he has opportunity to do so, or separates himself from it even though he remains within reach of the same, or anyone who nevertheless does not wish to be a member even though he was in fact made such through baptism or through the entrance of his parents into membership before he became of age -- such an one acts in an unchristianlike manner, walks disorderly, and is therefore, in case he rejects all admonition, not to be regarded as a brother, nor is he to be treated as such (1 John 2:19; 2 Thess. 3:6).

#### Thesis 6.

Subscription to the constitution of the congregation is merely a good human requirement, through which those subscribing do not first become members of the congregation, but are merely received into the number of those members of the congregation who are of age and belong to its church government (1 Cor. 14:40; Col. 2:5).

#### Thesis 7.

Those who indeed partake of the benefits of the ministry provided and supported by the local congregation, but not only do not wish to belong to the congregation but also are not willing, even though able, to contribute anything in any way toward the support of the same and all that pertains to it, act contrary to God's clear Word (Luke 10:5-7; 1 Cor. 9:13, 14; Gal. 6:6; 2 Cor. 8:13, 14a); therefore, in case they do not allow themselves to be instructed, the privileges of Christian congregation members are not to be accorded them.

#### Thesis 8.

As guests, properly only those orthodox Chris-



tians who are not members of the local congregation should receive its privileges, who are undertaking a journey, or who come from distant places where there is either no congregation at all or leastwise no orthodox one, or in case they have been put under the ban unjustly (1 Peter 5:2; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 4:15; Romans 12:13; 3 John 5-10; John 9:34-39).

The above translation is intended to be a modest contribution toward present discussions. The translation is from the second edition of Dr. Walther's brochure, dated 1893. The brochure is referred to in Dr. F. Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik* III, 485, *Christian Dogmatics*, III, 421.

A. V. Kuster