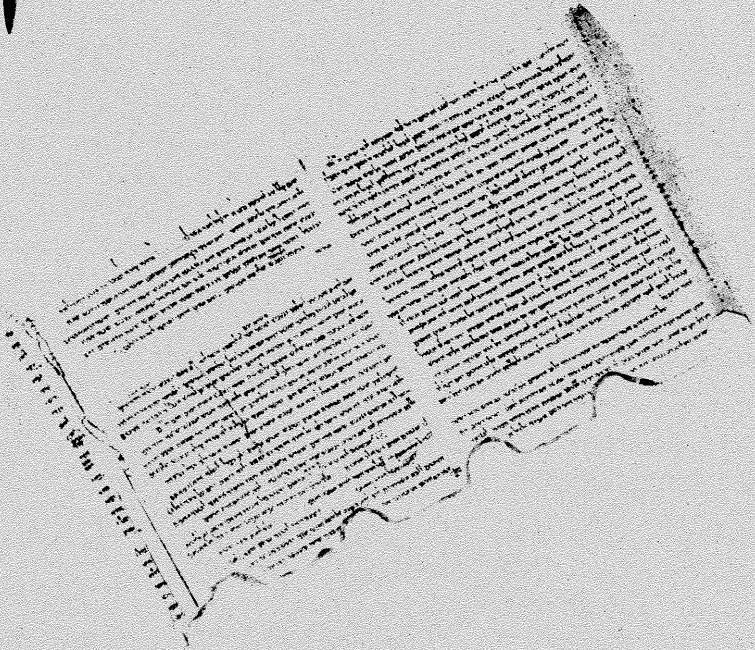




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## F O R E W O R D

We thank Prof. M. H. Otto for his many years of service as editor of the Quarterly, and express the hope that he will continue to help both in writing for, and in assisting with the production of, the Quarterly.

In this issue readers will find a review article by Dr. N. S. Tjernagel of a conference which he attended April 11-14, 1977, in Chicago, commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Formula of Concord. The conference was sponsored by the Div. of Theol. Studies of LCUSA, and the Center for Reformation Research, St. Louis, Missouri, under a grant from Lutheran Brotherhood.

We trust that this opportunity to view a cross-section of present-day Lutheranism, as revealed by the participants of the conference in their varying attitudes toward the Lutheran Confessions, will spur us all on to a renewed dedication to our spiritual heritage.

The articles which follow should help us to that end. This is true of those which deal directly with the Scriptures, as the Exegetical Study on I Tim. 6, by Pastor H. T. Behrens, and the Critique and Evaluation of Beck's Translation of the Psalms, by Prof. R. E. Honsey. It is also true of those which are polemical in nature, as the presentation by Pastor J. A. Krueger on the Effect of Reformed Teaching on the Preaching of Law and Gospel, and that by Pastor W. W. Petersen on the Theology of Campus Crusade.

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## REVIEW ARTICLE

### Conference Commemorating the 400th Anniversary of the Formula of Concord\*

by

Dr. N. S. Tjernagel

#### The Conference Program

1. "The Formula of Concord, Then and Now." by Lewis W. Spitz, Jr., Wm. R. Kennan, Jr. Professor of History at Stanford University.
2. "Legitimate Limits of Doctrinal Pluralism." by Wenzel Lohff, former professor at Goettingen University in West Germany and now pastor at St. Jacobus Church, Hamburg, Germany. In his absence his paper was read by Oliver Olsen, formerly of Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.
3. "The Formula of Concord and the Teaching Ministry." by George W. Forell, professor of the School of Religion of the University of Iowa.
4. "The Formula and Authority in the Church." by Warren A. Quanbeck, professor of systematic theology at Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota.
5. "Act of Confession - Confessing." by Arthur C. Cochrane, former professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, now pastor of Bethel Presbyterian Church, Bethel Park, Pennsylvania.

Invited participants in the conference were members of the three synods comprising LCUSA. Other participants were Rev. McSorley, author of the highly publicized book, Luther, Right or Wrong, now teaching at St. Michael's Seminary, Tornado, Dr. Lotz, of Union Theological Seminary, one active and one retired member of the Seminex faculty at St. Louis, and one participant from each of WELS and ELS. It is regrettable that a number of outstanding specialists in the Lutheran Confessions from Missouri and WELS were not able to accept invitations to participate. Their absence from the conference made it somewhat less representative of contemporary Lutheran thought than might have been desired and devalued the publicity blurb that had promised a conference that would "bring together a 'who's who' of 35 prominent Lutheran theologians."

For all of that, efforts of the sponsoring and funding organizations, prompted by admirable objectives, deserve the gratitude of all of the participants. Historic Lutheranism must stand or fall on its commitment to the Formula of Concord and any effort which induces us to study and rehearse its truths is of great value. We appreciated particularly that Dr. Opsahl and Dr. Kolb, representing the host organizations, had arranged the symposium in the format of a free conference. The gracious hospitality of these men and the facilities provided the participants gave every opportunity for fulfillment of the purposes of the symposium.

Despite deep differences in opinion, the conference discussions were forthright and courteous. But it was clear throughout that American Lutheranism is irrevocably divided, not so much with respect to differing opinions about specific doctrines, though those exist, as it is a fundamental difference respecting the assumptions and the methodology of biblical interpretation. The conference also

gave evidence that the faulty assumptions and methodology of biblical interpretation are being applied to the Lutheran Confessions as well.

Written and verbal statements about the Formula of Concord, made at the conference, were overwhelmingly loyal in their expressions of commitment to this Lutheran symbol. One had to wait for the appearance of the bottom line to see the effects of their inappropriate assumptions and their flawed methodology. Most of the papers represented competent scholarship. Most provided valuable insights both as to the history and content of the Formula of Concord. To detail them is beyond the scope of this review article. It is our purpose to cite from these papers only to illustrate the variant reading of Scripture and the Confessions that is seen in contemporary Lutheranism.

Only one of five of the conference papers spoke clearly in the terms and rationale of the historic faith of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. This essayist was Lewis W. Spitz, Jr., of Stanford University. He referred to the observance of the anniversary of the Formula of Concord as "an event of deep significance" and expressed the hope that "the three years extending from the present remembrance of the Formula of Concord to the festive quadricentennial of the Book of Concord in 1980 be devoted to an intense study of the Lutheran Confessions . . ."

The following quotations will give some sense of the spirit of the presentation of Dr. Spitz.

"In the 16th century the confessions provided a focal point for allegiance and supplied a cohesive force which spared Protestantism from complete ideological disintegration. Confessions must do so again unless churchmen are willing to

preside over the final dissolution of organized Christianity into its atomic particles...

"Churchmen today can learn from the authors of the Formula the meaning of concern for religious truth, the importance of honesty and integrity, and the value of the theological enterprise. They can cherish the concern of the una sancta so evident in the Book of Concord...

"The Formula was addressed to grievous contemporary problems of that day. Certainly its engagement should authenticate the value of credal statements today addressed to contemporary problems within or outside the church. ...Missouri Synod's doctrinal statement, and similar efforts to articulate the concerns and convictions of church bodies are certainly in line with the intent of the Formula."

In the discussion that followed the reading of the paper reference was made to the manner in which the Missouri "Statement" had been "imposed" on the church. One speaker derisively referred to Missouri's "Statement" as an example of what he called "Winkel" theology.

Dr. Spitz insisted that the Missouri Synod's "Statement" was not an innovation in theology. He said that "it is in line with the historic doctrine of the Missouri Synod." Such statements must be made in order to "avoid the disintegration of the church."

. . . . .



Unfortunately, the essay discussing "The Limits of Doctrinal Pluralism According to the Formula of Concord," is like so much of the doctrinal material emanating from Europe in recent years. Words are spun out in a flimsy skein, to little purpose and scant meaning. Consider the statement of the problem at the beginning of the essay:

"Nowhere, as far as can be determined from the history of Christian movements of faith, is there the true Christian faith in one exclusive configuration. The problem is not the multiplicity of the configurations of faith; on the contrary, this has been considered, from the earliest days, to be an enrichment. The problem is rather whether and how, in such multiplicity, there can be agreement and consensus in religious doctrine, which at the same time means whether and just how far Christian faith in its various configurations can identify itself as one faith."

The author goes on from this point to a discussion of "the relationship between identity and plurality" and comes to the conclusion that the Formula of Concord was the result of a 16th century effort to establish the identity of Lutheran religious doctrine. Later the author says that eventually the Formula of Concord established the limits of doctrinal pluralism. Lohff has much to say about the articles of crucial importance and, not uniquely, gets a good deal of mileage out of Article VII of the Augsburg Confession: "...it is sufficient for the true unity of the church..., etc."

Eventually the author gets to the point of saying that research may be in a position "to establish the limits of doctrinal pluralism:" and adds that "the critical-historical research which got an

increasing voice in theology, by making only too plain the historical varieties of the understanding of faith in church history, even in the New Testament itself, and by showing the historical relativity of every creed." Thus, to him, "confession is reduced to the concrete expression of my faith in a specific situation." The author continues: "On the basis of such a position there are no longer any limits at all to the pluralism of Christian doctrine." Later in the paper this extreme position is modified in reference to the doctrines of justification and the means of grace as minimal doctrinal standards.

I must confess that I can not understand his concluding comment that "the reformational method of connecting the identity of the testimony of faith with the plurality of theological doctrines, establish(es) thereby at the same time, the legitimate limits of doctrinal pluralism."

The last sentence of this paper is readily understood as being a representation of the end result of the historical-critical method of interpretation as it applies to Scripture and to the Lutheran Confessions. It is a classic example of the Gospel-reductionism that is withering the vine of Lutheran orthodoxy.

"The great torso of the Formula of Concord's Christological article is an impressive proof of the way in a reformational pattern in line with AC VII one can differentiate between that which is sufficient for church unity; the testimony of the unconditional sacrifice of God in Word and Sacrament - and that, wherein agreement is not necessary: theological terminology,

doctrines, schools - as far as the testimony for the one Gospel is not obscured."

. . . . .

Prof. George Wolfgang Forell is a dynamic lecturer whose presence always enlivens a professional conference of historians or theologians. Professor of the School of Religion at the University of Iowa, his list of publications is impressive. Two popular handbooks, Understanding the Nicene Creed (Philadelphia, Fortress, 1965) and The Augsburg Confession: A Contemporary Commentary (Minneapolis, Augsburg, 1968) are attractive studies. Every conservative Lutheran ought to read Forell's Faith Active in Love (Minneapolis, Augsburg, 1964) as a corrective for the main deficiency in contemporary conservative Lutheran theology.

Everything Forell writes, including his conference essay, "The Formula of Concord and the Teaching Ministry," is eminently readable and understandable. The content of his paper has numerous factual and interpretive nuggets of great value. His essay is initially projected from the teaching ministry of Martin Luther, whose influence radiated from the University of Wittenberg and was developed in:

"...the adversary system in theology as practiced by means of the disputation system of the time, a teaching device in order to present his ideas to his students and colleagues - not only at Wittenberg, but also at Heidelberg and Leipzig. It was in this manner by the full and competent utilization of an existing teaching method, the academic disputation, that he created the Wittenberg theology which carried the reformation from Saxony across the entire world."

Having paid his dues by these remarks and by extensive reference to recent authors who have dealt with the Formula of Concord, Forell quickly places himself in an adversary relationship with conservative Lutheran theologians. The key to his presentation is in this sentence:

"First of all we must appreciate the Formula as an historical document that speaks specifically to the problems and conflicts of an age which is not ours."

This is followed by the assertion that:

"The very fact that the Formula states that the 'prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments as the only rule and norm according to which all doctrines and teachers alike must be appraised and judged,' precludes using this document and any other document besides the Scriptures as 'rule' or 'norm' today."

What Forell is missing here is the fact that the authors of the Formula of Concord believed that their confessional statement, drawn from the Scriptures, and offered in writing in accordance with the Scriptures, was the Word of God. Though they did not place this or any other credal statement on a level with God's inspired Word, they insisted that it was conformed to God's Word. It bore, therefore, an impregnable and timeless authority. The confessors explicitly submitted their statements to their contemporaries and to posterity with the same authority. They believed that what they said was true and in accordance with Scripture. They could, therefore, never have conceded that what they said might be false in another century or under other circumstances. They only conceded that further explanation and more ample statements might be required at another time.

The author of this essay makes an effort to illustrate changed conditions of life in their application to Scripture and the Confessions by referring to the demands of Romans 13 ("Let every soul be subject to the higher powers,") AC XVI (. . . all established rules and laws were instituted and ordained by God,) and the demands of citizenship in a 20th century democracy. But where is the problem? Our contemporary responsibilities as citizens are in no way limited or minimized by Romans 13 or AC XVI. We may well need a fuller exposition of our 20th century responsibilities as Christians. That is by no means to say that Romans 13 or AC XVI are invalid for our time.

Prof. Forell touches one of the twelve articles of the Formula of Concord in a detailed discussion of Article IX, The Descent Into Hell. He calls attention to the manner in which one of Luther's sermons was confessionally incorporated into Article IX and praises, with all propriety, the fact that Luther dismissed the legendary speculations about the descent in favor of a simple assertion about the significance of that event. From that point Forell goes on to say:

"Luther was a strangely unliteralistic literalist. Paintings, plays, songs, poetry were for him, all means to point to the Christ who conquered hell and bound the devil. We must form our ideas of such cosmic events by means of images."

The obvious inference to be drawn from this is the unacceptable thought that Luther considered all biblical interpretation a matter of poetic imagery. We may recall that Luther made no reference to "painting, plays, songs, poetry," or other forms of imagery at Marburg. On the subject at issue there he was as emphatic and specific as the Bible itself.

The essayist's two concluding paragraphs are, it seems to us, argument by ridicule, lacking in any decent sense of respect for the views of his intellectual adversaries. The second of the two following quotations is presumably a reference to the Missouri Synod "Statement."

"In view of the history of a tortured literalism which has plagued the Lutheran Churches through the generations and is still troubling them today it would be well for a teaching ministry faithful to the Scriptures and the Confessions to take Luther's emphasis in his Torgau sermon and utter seriously: 'If I hold on to that which I am to believe concerning Christ,' all other questions fall into their proper place."

"...We observe ... (a) rationalistic obscurantism which assumes that salvation is deserved by those who assent to the largest number of theological propositions having the lowest degree of plausibility or credibility."

. . . . .

Prof. Quanbeck's essay, "The Formula of Concord and Authority in the Church" is as explicit as the two previously reviewed papers in acknowledging the Scriptures as the authoritative source of the Formula of Concord, as well as the source of the entire spiritual and institutional life of the church. Note the following inclusive statement:

"The sola scriptura of the reformers states their conviction that everything in the church, creeds, confessions, doctrines, liturgy, structures of government

and discipline, stand under the authority and judgment of the Scriptures and dare never oppose or contradict the prophetic and apostolic message."

It seems to us, however, that Quanbeck's position deteriorates to the bottom line of effective denial of the reality of the authority of both the Scriptures and the Confessions more rapidly and explicitly than his fellow essayists.

Note how, in the following quotations from Prof. Quanbeck's paper, human intellectual intervention in revelation breaks down the real authority of Scripture, and the confessional authority of the Lutheran symbols:

"(The confessors') understanding of the sola scriptura differs from that of literalistic, atomistic, and legalistic interpreters of all ages can be shown both by their teaching and their practice. The Reformers did not attempt to isolate the Scriptures from the interpretive tradition which has accompanied them in the church, nor did they suggest that the Holy Spirit's guidance had been withdrawn from the church by the time the New Testament documents were written or acknowledged as canon."

In a listing which Quanbeck derives from the Formula of Concord we find the following statement:

"The Scriptures are on the one hand like other books produced by humans, growing out of and addressing historical situations, and requiring for their interpretation the entire range of hermeneutical equipment, paleography and textual criticism, literary and historical methods

of interpretation, lexicography and grammar."

This last quotation indicates how far inappropriate hermeneutics may become destructive of the biblical record itself:

"The study of language and of the historical development of dogma have shown us that we cannot distinguish as sharply as the reformers did between divine and human origin of doctrines and institutions. We now see the doctrine of the Trinity and christological definitions as children of mixed parentage, their mother the prophetic-apostolic tradition of the Scriptures and the Christian community, their father the hellenistic philosophical tradition. Like the Jewish community we settle the question of citizenship with reference to the maternal parent. These are Christian doctrines, growing out of the Christian mission in the ancient world and making a necessary truth-claim by using the resources of hellenistic metaphysics."

After comments of this kind affirmations of loyalty to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions can hardly be taken seriously.

. . . . .

We may conclude this review by a mere acknowledgment of the Presbyterian theologian, Arthur C. Cochrane's commendable effort to interpret the practical and spiritual significance of Christian confession.



I left the conference fully convinced that the primary problem of conservative Lutheranism is the preservation of the doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible and the rejection of the historical-critical methodology of biblical interpretation.

We must fortify our determination to follow Martin Luther in belief that our reading and study of Scripture is based on the assumption of its truthfulness, and to avoid all principles of interpretation that are not based on that assumption.

-- N. S. Tjernagel

\*Center for Continuing Education at the University of Chicago, April 11-14, 1977. Sponsored by the Division of Theological Studies of the Lutheran Council in the United States of America and the Center for Reformation Research, St. Louis, Mo., under a grant from the Lutheran Brotherhood.

THE EFFECT OF REFORMED TEACHING  
ON THE PREACHING OF LAW AND GOSPEL

by

The Rev. John Alan Krueger  
Cottonwood, Minnesota

This essay addresses itself to the question:

What Does Reformed Teaching on the Sovereignty and Glory of God Do to Correct Teaching of Law and Gospel, with Special Reference to the Danger or Pitfalls for Us in Reading Extensively in Reformed Literature?

This Treatment of the subject involves three sections:

1. Reformed Teaching on the Sovereignty and Glory of God as it is Related to Some Particular Reformed Teachings
2. Some Possible Effects of This Teaching on the Proclamation of Law and Gospel
3. Some Possible Pitfalls and How They Might Be Avoided

I.

None of us would deny that God is sovereign and that He is both glorious and majestic in Himself

and deserves from us all honor and glory as His rightful due. We say that every time we repeat the doxology at the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer: "Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever."

This confession is in full accord with God's own description of His sovereignty and glory, too. His sovereignty, Psalm 103: "The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom ruleth over all." His majesty, beyond human comprehension, beyond even the capacity of sinful man to behold and still survive, Exodus 33: "Thou canst not see My face; for there shall no man see Me, and live."

We believe and confess the sovereignty of God, and His glory and majesty. Why should Reformed teaching on this subject be expected to have any adverse effect on the proclamation of the Law and Gospel which are the heart of God's Word?

Because Reformed teaching on the sovereignty and glory of God is drawn, not wholly from the Word of God, but also from the speculation and imagination of men; and hence can distort the teaching of God's Word -- as sinful minds are prone to do, when uncorrected by the Word of God itself.

The Reformed teaching is that God is sovereign in an ultra-absolute sense, accepting no restraints on His ruling activity from His creatures, and imposing none Himself, nor indeed, able to choose to do so. That He does not permit His creatures to usurp His rule, we agree, as does the Word of God. But we part company with Reformed teaching at that point where it denies the limitations He sets upon His own actions, and even His very ability to set such limitations. This denial is summed up, for one instance, in the slogan employed in denial of

the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Holy Supper. "Finitum non est capax infiniti." Phrased as it is, that sounds plausible: The finite cannot contain the infinite, hence the body of the eternal Son of God cannot be in a piece of bread. The trouble with it is that it does not take into account God's true sovereignty, His capability to do whatever He wills, even when His finite creatures could not do it. Above all, it ignores His own declaration that He has done it: "This is My Body." Though the finite cannot contain the infinite of its own volition and power, it can when God says it can and causes it to do so.

Similarly, as a result, in considering God's majesty and glory, the Reformed teach what cannot be taught, the hidden majesty of God, which is beyond our power to grasp or even to survive unprotected -- as Moses was told: "Thou canst not see My face; for there shall no man see Me, and live." For that reason God shielded Moses from that withering, overwhelming experience of His naked majesty by hiding him in the cleft of the rock and covering him with His hand while He passed by, so that when Moses could see anything of God, it was only His back parts, not His face. Thus God shields us from the devastating effect of His raw, naked majesty, coming to us through means our human constitution is capable of taking: Words, water, bread, and wine. Reformed teaching regards such means as unworthy of the high majesty of God, and hence denies their power and efficacy as true means whereby God can impart Himself or His grace to men.

The effects of these teachings on the sovereignty and glory of God are seen in other particular Reformed doctrines -- or perhaps the effects of other Reformed doctrines are showing up in the first two -- or maybe it's a little of both.

Whether chicken or egg comes first, what is hatched is an omelet in which we can detect these ingredients and others:

The CLARITY AND SUFFICIENCY OF THE SCRIPTURES Reformed teaching denies, even while it claims to believe it. Thus Reformed teaching describes conversion as a felt experience of the Holy Spirit's power in the heart, without reference to the means through which He works; while the Bible itself characterizes conversion as a changeover from unbelief to faith in Jesus wrought by the Holy Spirit through His Word and Baptism (see John 3, James 1, Titus 3, etc.) Or, while the Reformed profess to take God's Word literally, and even quote it, e.g. John 6, in their stand on the Lord's Supper, they contradict the clear meaning of Christ's words, "This is My body," and so deny the essence of the Supper. The reason advanced for these departures from clear words in Scripture is that their literal sense does not conform to the sovereignty and the majesty of God, as seen by the Reformed apart from the Word to which God has bound us. Finitum non est capax infiniti!

On ELECTION, the Reformed teaching is double predestination -- some elected to heaven, others to hell. This, by inference from the single predestination which the Scripture does teach, election to salvation, but leaving off the grace which is its impetus, and drawing the converse conclusion, (which is not drawn in the Scripture), that some have been chosen before to damnation. This double-predestination doctrine is defended, again, by reference to the inscrutable majesty of God and His absolute sovereignty -- a plausible defense, but only if you close your eyes to the rest of God's Word which cries out to His earnest desire and will to save all men.

As a corollary of this, we would expect, and indeed, do find, that Reformed teaching, especially of the Calvinistic stripe, teaches a LIMITED ATONEMENT, wrought by Christ only for the elect, while those predestined to reprobation or "passed by" (depending on how it's said), are lost because their sins haven't been truly forgiven. (For this reason the dour old Scottish Calvinist was supposed to have prayed, "God, bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife; us four and no more.") This teaching comes, not from any ill will on the part of Reformed teachers against others, but again as an outgrowth of what they conceive to be the high majesty and sovereignty of God, conceived of apart from those many, many passages of the Scripture that make it clear that God desires all to be saved, and that Christ died for the sins of the whole world.

CONVERSION we have briefly mentioned before in another connection. The Reformed teaching describes it not as a change from unbelief to faith but a change in feeling, and ascribe it to the raw power of the Holy Spirit, without taking into account the means of grace which the Scripture itself clearly sets forth as His instruments in the conversion of a sinner to faith in Christ. Once more, this is in full accord with the teaching that God's majesty is limited neither by human will nor by divine decision. The emphasis in conversion is on the "experience" of which a person is supposed to be able to tell the day and hour, presumably because of some humanly memorable feeling that enveloped the individual, and after which, because of irresistible grace and the perseverance of the saints, he is not supposed to have times of doubt, distress, frustration of his will to keep God's commands, or other things non-Christians experience, (we Lutherans, too!).

The MEANS OF GRACE we have also touched on earlier. In Reformed thinking, the Word of God and the Sacraments have no particular power or efficacy. The Reformed emphasis on the Word is its infallibility and inerrancy--though in fact Reformed teaching often ignores or actually contradicts its own doctrine, as on the Lord's Supper. The Sacraments, Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are regarded as purely symbolic, with no real efficacy in conveying the grace of God. This is because in Reformed thinking the conveyance of God's grace through such earthy channels would be a contradiction of the sovereignty of God and His divine majesty. That God has chosen to channel His grace to us through these means, and has so said in His Word, is conveniently overlooked.

A further effect of the teachings concerning God's sovereignty and glory is seen in its conception of FAITH itself, which is viewed from an emotional standpoint, as a feeling of security and well-being on the part of the Christian, rather than as confidence that persists even though emotions and feelings may be quite the opposite. This is in consonance also with the derivation of the teaching concerning God's majesty out of human speculation rather than from the clear Word of God. On a similar basis the individual is expected to conjure up for himself feelings of security and well-being based on a "conversion experience" rather than on the promises of God given us through His Word and Sacraments.

We could range over the whole of Reformed doctrine and discern some of the same relationship to its teaching on the sovereignty and the majesty of God. But all we wanted to do here is to show the consistency of various teachings in the Reformed tradition with its conception or misconception of the sovereignty and the glory of God.

## II.

Here we can outline a couple of effects which the Reformed teaching on the sovereignty and the glory of God might have on the proclamation of Law and Gospel. I will name three.

First, the Reformed teaching on the sovereignty and glory of God can adversely affect the proclamation of the Law and Gospel in a rather indirect manner by its use of human reason over the Word of God, which, if followed, will not permit the Law of God to be proclaimed in its full severity nor the Gospel in its full and saving richness, but will move sinful human reason to find ways around the meaning of the commandments and the sternness of God's judgments, and to turn aside from the comfort the Gospel gives. This might be seen especially in a consistent application of the Reformed teaching of double predestination, limited atonement and irresistible grace. These, taken seriously and followed to their conclusion by rightful logic, would seriously vitiate the power of the Law to accuse and condemn the hardened sinner, leaving him the excuse that if God has elected some to damnation anyway and Christ did not die for all, then there's no need for him to be concerned about his sins, since nothing can change God's decretum horribile concerning him in any case. On the other hand, if God in His sovereignty holds forth to man a grace which is irresistible, then no matter what crimes he may commit or how obstinately he persists for the moment in his unbelief, in the end the grace of God will overcome and convert and save him. Either application, of course, destroys the intended effect of the preaching of the Law, hardening the sinner in his sin and unbelief rather than allowing it to be what God declares it, a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces.



And presumably a preacher who consistently holds to those Reformed teachings would preach in such a way that this effect would follow; though it might not necessarily be known or noticed until the judgment day.

Second, such teaching might rob the Gospel of its comfort and saving power, by directing the penitent sinner to the wrong source for the assurance of his salvation. This is perhaps an effect that we Lutheran preachers will notice most easily in Reformed preaching. Often such preaching bids the concerned sinner look within his own heart to find the Holy Spirit operating there and giving him the feeling of forgiveness, sometimes it even stresses that feeling, as if the feeling were the important thing, and the person's salvation depended on its being there. We can, perhaps, understand the reason for such a stress on personal feeling; after all, conversion and faith are personal matters, and unless a man is personally converted to faith in Christ, he is not saved. But the Reformed conception of God's glory and sovereignty bids a man look for that assurance apart from the objective Word and promise of God; and this, in the end, is tantamount to directing him either to himself or nowhere at all for assurance. The effect is to leave the sinner anxious and doubtful over whether he has been saved or forgiven, questioning whether he is a Christian.

Involved in that second point and closely connected with it, is a third, the essence of faith itself. Directing a person to the Holy Spirit's power without directing him to the Word through which that power is exercised, can lead only to a conception of faith which is at variance with the one the Scripture sets forth. This, in fact, is the conception often derived from Reformed exhortations to be converted and to believe: That faith is a personal feeling of well-being and security,

combined with a foolproof sanctification of life, an emotion that must be felt to be present, a sanctification of life that must be demonstrable before one can be sure he is justified. The question then arises, what does it mean when that feeling is not present and the evidence still shows that I am a sinner? The direct answer in fact given by some of the more extreme teachers is that in such cases the conversion experience supposedly once undergone must not have been a genuine one after all; so the individual is again exhorted to repent, to be converted, and to depend upon the Holy Spirit's power within him to bring him to faith. And he is left there knowing exactly what has to be done, but without the least idea how it's ever going to be done--in short, unsure of his salvation and, on such premises, with no real possibility of ever being sure. If faith is a feeling, then that's how most anyone will wind up. Obviously, it must be made clear that faith is simply trusting God's promise of forgiveness and salvation through Christ, regardless of what the human heart may say; as the Scripture itself puts it: "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things." (I John 3:21) The Reformed conception of faith puts this comforting assurance in jeopardy.

In summary of this section, then, the Reformed conception of the sovereignty and glory of God, as it manifests itself throughout the Reformed system of doctrine, poses the two classic dangers to the faith: Either to make the sinner secure in his sin, which leads him straight to the damning judgment of God; or to make the penitent sinner unsure of his salvation; which in the end leads to the same result. (Incidentally, Dr. Walther has said all this before, and much better, in his deservedly famous Law and Gospel -- Lectures 14, 16, 17, and others; and, I presume, also others in other places.)

### III.

Having said what we have said, the pitfalls, at least those we intend to bring up here, should be pretty obvious, particularly to Lutheran preachers; and so should the method of avoiding them.

Obviously we will not derive our doctrines from Calvin's Institutes, nor teach the false Reformed teachings as the truth. To do so would be an outright betrayal of the confidence placed in us by God's people as preachers of His Word; and we could not live with ourselves. I do not believe the dangers or pitfalls lie in this direction.

They lie rather in the subtler effects and influences that much of Reformed teaching and language can have in an indirect way on our own language and our own image of God's Word. And here we need to be particularly wary, because such subtleties by their very nature are not easy to spot. The blunt definitions of Reformed doctrine which I have set forth in this paper are not always set forth in that same blunt way in Reformed teaching or writing. For this reason they can sound at times very much like the teaching of God's Word, and we can be easily influenced by them, both in the language we use and especially in the manner of our proclamation of Law and Gospel.

We share two concerns of Reformed Christians. One is that hardened impenitent sinners should not be given a false comfort out of the Gospel and thus grow still more secure in their sins and hardened in their unbelief. The other is that those ordained to eternal life should come to faith and be kept in faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior.

The very fact that we share those concerns with them, may constitute a pitfall for us, in that it will dispose us to hear their answers sympathetically and uncritically.

It might be possible to be misled into proclaiming God's Law as if it were Gospel, following the lead of some more extreme Arminian Reformed teaching, and leaving the impression that if a person conforms to certain principles, obeys certain rules, or follows the four "spiritual laws," he thereby wins a place secure in God's favor--though it is doubtful if even the Arminian-minded would always be that simplistic about it. But any such influence would, of course, tend to destroy the accusing, condemning force of the Law and make the sinner feel secure in his own attitudes and actions, instead of driving him to Christ.

On the other hand, it would be easy to proclaim God's Gospel as if it were a Law. This is perhaps the more dangerous of the pitfalls for Lutheran preachers. I suppose we all cringe a little when we hear evangelists exhort people with such expressions as "You've got to believe," or, "Make your decision for Christ"--in a context and a manner that make it seem as if conversion itself is a responsibility that rests on the shoulders of the unconverted, and a work that he could bring to completion by his own reason, will or emotional endeavor. But the very fact that we feel uncomfortable with such statements indicates that we are pretty well aware of such a pitfall.

There may well be other pitfalls and dangers which the discerning Lutheran pastor will be aware of too, and avoid.

The simple and obvious method of avoiding such pitfalls and dangers is to pay even closer

attention to what the Word of God itself says, than to what any Reformed theologian might say, whose work we might be reading or whose presentation we might be hearing at the time. It is and must always remain the Holy Scripture that determines our own doctrine and sets the pace for our proclamation of God's Law and Gospel. This, after all, is the sole source from which all true enlightenment comes, and it should be an axiom with Lutheran preachers that our chief textbook in all our preaching and teaching is the Bible. If we do a conscientious job of searching the Scriptures for ourselves--well, in the first place, we just might not feel a great need to spend time and energy reading Reformed theology; and in the second place, when we do, what is contrary to God's Word in that theology should become tolerably easy to spot.

I wonder if another word might not also be in order. While reading the works of Reformed theologians critically--as we should also read Luther, Walther, Koren or any others, by the way!--we ought not become so obsessed with the pitfalls in their theology, real enough as they are, that we have to condemn everything they may say as false and dangerous. We can rejoice in such truths as they speak, even while we remain wide awake to the aberrations we meet.

I hope this may have provided a thought or two for openers, and that it may have helped toward a fresher sense of our own obligation and privilege as preachers of God's Word, to proclaim His Law to the conviction, and His Gospel to the comfort, of the other sinners with whom we share this planet for a little while.

-- John A. Krueger

AN EXEGETICAL STUDY OF FIRST TIMOTHY, CHAPTER SIX

by

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Verse 1

As many as are under yoke as slaves, let them consider their own masters worthy of all honor that the name of God and the doctrine may not be blasphemed.

The word δοῦλοι here means slaves converted to the Christian faith; and the ζυγόν or yoke is the state of slavery; and by δεσπόται, masters, despots we are to understand the heathen masters of those Christianized slaves. Even these persons, in such circumstances, and under such domination, are commanded to treat their masters with all honor and respect, that the name of God, by which they are called, and the doctrine of God, Christianity, which they have professed, might not be blasphemed, that it might not be spoken evil of or ridiculed as a consequence of their improper conduct. It is interesting to see in this connection in what manner an ancient divine reflects upon this assessment: "Civil rights are never abolished by any communications from God's Spirit. The civil state in which a man was before his conversion is not altered by that conversion; nor does the grace of God absolve him from any claims which either the state or his neighbor may have upon him. All these outward things continue unaltered."

It is well to reflect just a bit more on the designation "The name" and "the doctrine." The name is more than this or that designation of the true God; it is His entire revelation of Himself, by which alone we are able to know Him. Thus also the doctrine may be combined with "the name" and mean the full body of Christian teaching. Although therefore of course the honor of the Gospel itself is here also at stake, we have no right to restrict the designation "the doctrine" to the Gospel alone in favor of the perversion of Gospel reductionism.

It is of further interest to observe the reflections of Lenski on this passage. He states: "If a Christian slave dishonored his master in any way by disobedience, by acting disrespectfully, by speaking shamefully of his master, the worst consequences would not be the beating he would receive but the curses he would cause his master to hurl at this miserable slave's God, his religion, and the teaching he had embraced . . . Instead of bringing honor to the true God and the gospel of His high and holy Name, as every Christian should be anxious to do, this slave would bring about the very opposite, to the devil's delight."

#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT, REFLECTION, AND DISCUSSION:

Consider the exegetical gymnastics which have been performed upon this passage and related biblical passages to adjust its import to the modern-day civil rights movement, which has its origin by and large in the crusade of Christ denying or ignoring humanists, and not in the Word of Scripture. How the civil rightists today scoff at the very idea of Stonewall Jackson conducting Bible classes among his slaves!

## Verse 2

And those having believers as masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but let them the rather slave (for them) because they are believers and beloved, they (too) taking hold of the well-doing.

Believing masters are obviously such as had been lately converted as well as the slaves themselves. Again I am going to bring you an observation on this declaration which comes through rather startling: "Supposing themselves to be their equals because they are their brethren in Christ; and grounding their opinions on this, that in Him there is neither male nor female, bond nor free; for although all are equal as to their spiritual privileges and state, yet there still continues in the order of God's providence a great disparity in their station; the master must ever be in this sense superior to the servant."

It is certain that the slaves are urged toward a more cheerful obedience toward Christian masters on the basis of the motivation engendered by the fact that these masters are faithful to God's grace, and beloved by Him as true followers. The expression τῆς εὐεργεσίας ἀντιλαμβανόμενοι, joint partakers of the benefit, is generally understood as referring to the master's participation in the services of his slaves. Or it may apply to the servants who are partakers of many benefits from their Christian masters. Others think that benefit here refers to the grace of the Gospel, the common salvation of believing masters and their slaves. None of these views fully satisfy the grammatical construction which simply indicates that the Christian masters were occupied with well-doing in general, the idea being that those under their hand enjoyed the benefits of such Christian



posture and its resultant treatment of the enslaved persons. Over and above this lies the idea of a mutual reciprocity: masters and slaves are both Christian, alike concerned in doing good, each to the other.

There is no doubt then that Paul urges upon Timothy the indoctrination of both slaves and masters as representative of the ethical doctrine concerning such relationships within the churches.

#### FOOD FOR REFLECTION:

We cannot escape the fact that Paul took for granted the status quo of slavery as an existing institution, nor the fact that he did not encourage rebellion on the part of the enslaved. What is our response to those who would simply invalidate the entire import of this injunction? (WE MUST BEAR IN MIND THAT IT IS NOT THE PURPOSE OF THIS PASSAGE TO TREAT OF THE MORAL RIGHT OR WRONG OF SLAVERY AS AN INSTITUTION.)

#### Verses 3-5

If anyone teaches different doctrine and does not come to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine in accord with godliness, he has been puffed up, understanding nothing, but being morbid regarding questionings and battles about words, out of which there keeps coming envy, strife, blasphemies, wicked suspicions, irritations, of men having been corrupted as to the mind and having been bereft of the truth, supposing their godliness to be a means of gain.

What a passage! There is enough here to reflect upon for the next hour and a half. I shall forbear.

The first question which arises is whether or not the passage has immediate or even sole reference to verses one and two. One commentator holds that it has no reference to the preceding verses. Since Timothy is urged to teach the precepts of verses one and two, this third of necessity also refers to that teaching as doctrine, but the reference is not exclusively to that point of doctrine. ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖ is a very expressive word. It refers not only to the subversion of the Gospel as such, but to any subversion -- you name it -- of any doctrine of the sacred Scriptures. Paul here refers to the many myths which had been dragged into the churches. Whether or not these myths then struck at the heart of the Gospel or sought to undermine any single scripture doctrine or, for that part, any single statement of Scripture, they were to be regarded alike as dangerous and destructive of the truth. The simple contrast here is between that which is the truth of Scripture wherever it is found, and that which is contrary to it. And we are not to forget the force of the statement that whoever perpetrates these subversions undermines the truth and is to be regarded as a false teacher.

The expression ὑγιαίνουσιν λόγους, healing doctrines, conveys the connotation of the salutary effect of sound doctrine as contrasted to the devastating effect of false doctrine. Healing doctrine brings health and nourishment to the soul. Everything which the Lord Christ said is held up as interpretive of and exemplifying sound doctrine, as well as His approval of every other statement of Scripture as sound doctrine, and His disapproval of that which is not in accord with Scripture. The German expresses this well in the sense of Reine Lehre, terminology so despised and scoffed at by the advocates of the new hermeneutic. Purity of doctrine is declared to be in accord

with godliness, because its intent is not only to seek and promote the honor and glory of the true God, but also because it in actuality does promote the honor and glory of the true God on the part of those who uphold such doctrine, and then reflect the grace of God in Christ by lives of willing service.

The objective of the passage is, of course, to concentrate upon the negative, that is, the damnable and damning results of such doctrine as is propagated and promulgated by the false teacher. How significant that the Apostle puts the finger on the source of false teachers' persuasion. It is simply human pride.  $\tau\epsilon\tau\acute{\upsilon}\phi\omega\tau\alpha\iota$  means blown up or inflated with a vain opinion of his own knowledge. Allow me to digress with this parenthetical observation: (One time I sat in on a dialogue given publicly where the teaching of evolution was in debate. The one person was a scientist who has devoted his life to defending the scriptural truth as presented in Genesis one, two, and elsewhere. The other was a proponent of theistic evolution, the kind I like to call the "give God a break and let him play along theory." At one point in the dialogue the theistic evolutionist really tipped his hand, when he declared: "If you could only see the results of my experiments with fruit flies." MY EXPERIMENTS. And that is where the whole trouble lay with this man walking in darkness. MY!)

To this Paul adds the further indictment of "understanding nothing," which conveys the concept of one who has been blinded by his blatant conceit. How true that conceitedness and silly ignorance often go hand in hand. And the fact that a man may exhibit a Ph.D. and other assorted titles which would invite human recognition, makes no impression upon the true God at all. Such persons as described even become weird in the very mechanics

of their defense of the falsehoods which they would defend and promote. Blindness is never recognized as such on the part of those whom the Apostle describes. Questionings and battles about words suggest plain nonsense.

The Apostle now proceeds to the effects of such false teaching. These miserable products of envy, strife, blasphemies, wicked suspicions, irritations, are first of all common among and to those who are blown up with their own importance. And of course they promulgate the same among those whom they are able to subvert. It is very likely that Paul originally had the Judaizing teachers in view, for they were indeed past masters at the art of what one commentator has called sublime nonsense. We on our part, however, have to be on our guard lest we suppose or, worse yet, endorse the idea that all theological controversy is a doting about questions and strife of words which is per se destructive and hence to be avoided. The indictment here is of those who work outside the framework of and contrary to Scriptural doctrine. In our modern day we are reminded of the blatant nonsense propounded by the exponents of situation ethics, and the vain attempt of many to conform their "doctrine" to every movement on the social and political scene.

We are told that it is on slender textual grounds that we have the concluding admonition of Paul: "From such withdraw yourself." Modern versions omit it. We might reflect that whether or not it is an interpolation is not that important. The thought is hardly contrary either to the context or the general thrust of the epistle. Verse two concluded with the admonition "these things keep teaching and urging." It would hardly seem unnatural to conclude here with "from such withdraw

yourself." That such would try to influence Timothy or such as us is quite apparent.

#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION:

The constant study of doctrine as a safeguard against perverting influences, and the active defense of the truth in response to the Apostle's admonition.

With your permission I just have to add the following addenda to this section. When we are so literally snowed by doctrinal defection on every hand, how refreshing to come across a posture which emphasizes the inerrancy of Scripture. In my general study I ran across the following classical defense of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. The immediate reference is to John 5:46. I quote: "'He wrote' - Moses! Let the critics who repudiate the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch face this authoritative declaration of Jesus. It is worth more than all the so-called 'research' that has ever been put forth and it stands over against these critics as Moses over against these Jews, as 'he that accuses them.' Nowhere did Moses not write of Jesus. Nor did Moses also write of Jesus; for the whole center and substance of what he wrote is Jesus. The entire twenty-five centuries with which he deals he views in relation to the Messiah. Ever and always faith in the Coming One decides the fate of man. Great things he touches on slightly, and little things, dry genealogies, small occurrences in the lives of the patriarchs, he describes at length, because these have a bearing on the Messiah. From the story of creation onward, through all the following history, ceremony, prophecy, and promise, He is ever in the mind of Moses. Moses in person and in office is even himself a type of the Mediator to come. All this the Jews of Jesus' day did not believe, nor do the Jews believe it today. And this

Jewish unbelief has been adopted by thousands of others who with the Jews count it the very height of Bible knowledge."

And the other portion of the addenda is in contrast to the idiocy of men who subvert the scriptural truth. Some time ago at the Lincoln High School at Thief River Falls, Minnesota, it was my privilege and pleasure to hear Dr. John Moore of Michigan State University, co-author of the anti-evolutionary textbook, "A Search for Order in Complexity." This former evolutionist and more recently converted man gave one of the most beautiful and effective testimonials to the reliability of Scripture in all things scientific which I have ever heard. Moreover, he with an electrifying rapidity fielded any questions thrust at him by skeptics in the audience without in any way renouncing the humility of a concerned and compassionate child of God. It was so refreshing to realize that here for once stood a recognized man of science, a profound scholar in his own right, speaking to people who for years have been hoodwinked and brainwashed into thinking that only such men as stand on the side of opposition to the sacred record have any call or authority to speak of things scientific. Our children ought to be taught that you cannot trust an unconverted man, no matter how great his background in earthly learning.

#### Verse 6

Now godliness together with contentment is a great means of gain.

A new paragraph is suggested at this point simply because Paul is discussing different groups. He has finished his discussion regarding those who are teaching differing doctrines; he still has two

further groups about whom he deems it necessary to say something. These are those who intend to be rich (vv. 6-16) and those who are rich (vv. 17-19).

The εὐσεβεῖα, godliness, of which Paul here speaks and in several other places in this epistle actually has a broader meaning than a sanctified response on the part of the believer. It embraces the total espousal of the Christian religion together with those responses which are worked by the Holy Spirit in every area of Christian living and responsibility. The word αὐτάρκεια which we rendered contentment, signifies the inward condition of competency and sufficiency felt by the believer in the possession of such amount of secular things as will support life, while the great work of regeneration carries on in the soul. That the apostle has this in mind becomes the more apparent in the succeeding verses. Therefore, the contentment has its basis not in what this or that person might suppose or prescribe as sufficiency, but in that which is actually necessary for the mere purposes of life in reference to another world. So, if a man have the life of God in his soul, and just a sufficiency of food and clothing to sustain and preserve and not burden life, he has what God calls great gain, an abundant portion. The gain is however actually derived from the inward peace and satisfaction of the soul. We also take note how this attitude and actual posture of the believer, and especially the believing pastor is in sharpest contrast to the mercenary posture of the false teachers alluded to in the previous verse.

#### Verse 7

For not a thing did we bring into the world,  
because neither are we able to bring a  
thing out.

It is interesting to note that Seneca, who was a contemporary of St. Paul, has some sayings which almost read verbatim with this of the Apostle. We are neither surprised nor shocked at this. For if the natural, unconverted man uses so much as the head God set on his shoulders, he can discover the truth of a pithy saying like this as well as the believer. But there is a vast difference. The unbeliever does not learn anything from this, and does not profit from the knowledge, and does not act upon it constructively. Now someone might protest and say: "But what about the stoic philosophers and their disciples, and what about the modern-day worldly goods "renounce-niks" who are content to live in a communal sty on the barest of necessities?" What about them? Big deal! All they demonstrate is that a man may nurse and develop his self-righteous ideas on how to make an impression on men and God to a remarkable degree. But God is totally unimpressed, even though the frustrated daughters of some wealthy people may be enchanted. The point is that the child of God makes a sanctified use of the apostle's observation. Therefore Paul enlarges upon the thought in the next verse.

### Verse 8

Now having nourishment and coverings, with these we will be content.

It is not out of line to reflect that the word σκεπάσματα, which we translate coverings, need not be restricted to clothing. It may also refer to what you and I call "roof over your head." For people of God, including ourselves, who our life-long have indeed been exposed to and in the possession of far more than that of which the apostle speaks, it may even seem as though we could never adjust to either a proper understanding or appreciation, or reaction to what the holy writer is



here trying to get across. For our comfort let us remember that the apostle himself was not speaking from the vantage point of having himself lived out all of his earthly days in a condition of having the bare necessities of bodily support, although of course there were times when he had far less than that. What he is trying to do is get across what kind of Spirit provoked attitude the believer seeks after, no matter what amount of earthly goods God may see fit to bestow.

### Verse 9

But they who intend to be rich keep falling into temptation and a snare and many thoughtless and hurtful lusts such as sink men in destruction and perdition.

οἱ δε βουλόμενοι πλουτεῖν. The words are emphatic and refer to persons who are determined to get riches; who make their object and aim in life to become rich; who live to get money; who get all they can, save all they can, and keep all they get; and yet apprehensive of no danger because they seek to be rich by honest means; for it is likely that the apostle does not refer to those who wish to get riches by robbery, plunder, extortion, etc. Significantly some manuscripts add to the word temptation, τοῦ διαβόλου, of the devil. It is of course in consequence of the temptation of the devil that such persons have determined to be rich; this temptation once received, others quickly succeed; and when they have been taken in by the temptation of the thing, then they drink in a thousand temptations to the means; and all these lead them into εἰς πᾶγίδα, an unforeseen trap. πᾶγίς signifies a net, trap, gin, snare, or pit dug in the ground - you name it - filled with sharp stakes and spikes, and slightly covered over; so that when a man or animal steps upon it, he tumbles

in, and is taken or destroyed. Such a snare is that into which those who will be rich must necessarily fall. But who will believe this?

#### AS A PRACTICAL REFLECTION:

How true it is that Diabolos works this tactic on everybody without exception. He even had the stupidity to try it on our Lord. Have you ever watched one of the give-away shows on the tube? Have you ever watched some of the silly women go into an almost ecstatic frenzy at the sight of all the goodies which might be had? Have you seen how they hang on the long-suffering MC and smother him with kisses, if they win something? Have you also noticed how the MC lusts after the more attractive ones, but patiently bears up under the hanging-on of the rest, though he fain would make a hasty escape? Have you also noticed how Diabolos likes to place you vicariously into the position of the receiver, and how attractive the idea of the new car or vacation in Hawaii becomes? I am told that some of these people leave rather crestfallen after the IRS man has confronted them at the studio exit! And how true it is that although some in the mad pursuit of riches make the grade, but others beat their brains out, forfeit their souls, and never even get to first base.

Now comes that verse. This is that verse in Scripture which more often has been misquoted, and which has been more misunderstood than many another, or perhaps any other in the entire Bible!

#### Verse 10

For root of all evils is the love of money which some aspiring to were made to wander away from the faith and did pierce themselves with many pains.

How many times have you not heard this quoted: "Yes, money is the root of all evil." This is sheer nonsense. Money per se is not the root of anything, which may readily be demonstrated. Let us say that on an island you have a pile of solid gold bars. This pile is thirty feet square and forty feet high. And now let us also say that no human being ever sets foot on that island, or ever knows that the pile of gold sits there. Dependent upon how long God lets this wicked world stand, the pile of gold may indeed remain at its location till Judgment Day without significantly deteriorating. BUT, just give some human being even an inkling that the gold is there, and the mad chase is on. And give several human beings an inkling that it is there, and they will beat their poor bodies until old age in the mad quest for the gold, and they will murder each other if they get in each other's way. If there are animals on the island, they will not even touch the gold, for it is quite inedible, and rather unsatisfactory for nesting materials and whatever, but to sinful humans it is something else. Now we are ready to concentrate upon that which Paul spells out.

One Bible scholar has suggested - and I am inclined to go along with him - that the proper reading of this passage is, "For the root of all these evils is the love of money." Then the Apostle is saying that the love of money is the root of the evils of which he has been speaking. This does make sense; for although the love of money might be associated with the temptation to adultery, it might also have no connection with such sin whatsoever, just as an example. But the coveting after money, as Paul so pertinently points out, this ὀρεγόμενος insatiably desiring, has caused many to totally err and make a most fatal and ruinous departure from the religion of Christ. And of course at the

same time they περιέπειραν, that is, transfix themselves in every part with the cursed pains of their fatal fall. This is an allusion to the pagida, the snares, of verse 9, where a hole is dug in the earth, filled full of sharp stakes, and being slightly covered over with turf, is not perceived; and whatever steps on it falls in, and is pierced through and through with these sharp stakes, the ὀδύνας πολλὰς, the many torments mentioned by Paul.

#### AGAIN BY WAY OF PRACTICAL REFLECTION:

How true it is that the downfall of many an erstwhile follower of Jesus Christ may be marked from that time when he first began to get ahead in this world, or from that time when he first began to "strike it rich." For then it was that Diabolos shifted his attacks into over-drive, promising ever more wealth, ever more prestige with it, ever more success, ever more independence, ever more of everything. And pretty soon he has exchanged the true God of salvation for the false god of this world.

And further. You do not have to be a success in the love of money and the pursuit of money in order to successfully attain to eternal damnation. As referred to earlier, most of those engaged in the mad pursuit of creature comforts which wealth produces, never make the grade, but they do make the grade which causes them to lose their souls. This temptation comes to all. How often have you heard a man say: "I really would not want to be rich; I just would want enough to get along comfortably. Besides look how much more I could give to the church." And the answer is: "Maybe you then could give more, but the likelihood is that you would give less than you give now, because it would then take more to keep you comfortable according to your new standard of living."

## Verses 11-12

But you, O man of God, flee these things!  
And pursue righteousness, godliness, faith,  
love, patience, meekness! Be a contestant  
in the noble contest for the faith! Lay  
hold of the eternal life, into which you  
were called and did confess in the presence  
of many witnesses!

Timothy and, of course by inference all those engaged in the pastoral office, is called "Man of God" in the distinctive sense that he has chosen God for his portion in life, and seeks a city which has foundations, lasting foundations, whose builder is the living God.

He is admonished to flee the love of money (these things) in the sense of escaping with his life. It may shock our sensitivity somewhat to learn that pastors may also be addicted to the love of money; and we may even wonder how this can be possible, seeing that they do not find themselves in the possession of great amounts of goods. With them however it is not necessarily different than it is with others, for addiction to the love of money is neither dependent upon the amount of it which one possesses, nor the prospect of coming into possession of it. Where such addiction prevails on the part of a pastor, it is obvious that both he and his flock will suffer as a consequence of it.

Rather he is urged to follow after righteousness. The righteousness here designated is not the righteousness imputed by the grace of God through Christ, but it is that which we define in theological terminology as the justitia acquisita, namely the pursuit of uprightness and justice in our dealings with men. The former righteousness, the justitia imputata is not progressive. It is complete. The latter righteousness is progressive, including progress in all the Christian virtues and good works.

Godliness is practically identifiable as the same quality, but with emphasis upon a thorough conformity to the image of God and the mind of Christ.

We would presume that faith should have been mentioned first, namely since it is productive of righteousness and godliness. It is my own persuasion that it here bears the connotation of that fidelity to the gifts which one has received and the office which has been placed in ones trust. That fidelity of course is produced by faith in Christ Jesus and all that He has spoken.

Love is, in short, love to God, and love toward all mankind.

Patience is not that which has been described in the "Devil's Dictionary" thus: "A minor form of despair disguised as a virtue." Patience is the taking of trials and afflictions in stride as a result of the deepest inward persuasion that God knows what He is doing.

Meekness is a bearing-up with an even mind under all adversities and contradictions. The Scripture speaks of Moses as having been the meekest of all men. And yet Moses could never compare with the Savior Himself in His sacred example. I would however like to emphasize that meekness is not to be confused with irresolution or weakness. This is the concept which the worldly have of meekness. The world at once gets the picture of the milque-toast man. And it at the same time despises this image. Moses for sure was not that kind of man. Nor was our Lord in His ministry that kind of man. Witness how meekly He dealt with His opponents in trying to lead them to the knowledge of the truth, as may be noted in the significant chapters of Saint John (seven, eight, etc.), where He tried with such patience to get into their heads and

and hearts that He was not seeking His own glory, but only doing what His Father had told Him to do. But witness the contrast when He sent the low coffe-table-type desks of the money changers on the Temple ground flying with a good swift kick. Meekness, true meekness then, rather than being a sign of weakness, is a sign of inward strength, prominent for its lack of pride and self-assertiveness.

It is interesting to note the true sense of "fight the good fight." It really means "agonize the good agony." This fight which takes a man apart inwardly as well as outwardly is meant. The man of God is engaged in a contest in which not only his life and soul are at stake, but in which more importantly the Name, honor, truthfulness, and Gospel of life of His God are at stake. Therefore he must live the Gospel and defend the cause of God. Will he be meek in this? Yes, properly understood. Will he at the same time be strong? Yes, again, properly understood. And indeed this does include the unmasking of hypocrites, the expulsion of the profligates, the purging and building of the Church of God, all exemplified by a private life and public life in conformity with the spirit of true religion, and the giving of himself wholly to this work. It may make us shudder to look at ourselves in this respect, but we shall come out the better by way of repentance and trust as a result of having taken a good look!

Lay hold upon eternal life. All of this we note is an allusion to the exercises or contests in the public Grecian games: Fight, conquer, and seize upon the prize; carry off the crown of eternal life. The Apostle Paul too was a meek man, but decidedly an aggressive scrapper as well.

Whereunto you have been called. You know the Apostle must have had an intense familiarity with the ancient athletic contests. We make nothing of this outside the fact that he drew from them some important spiritual allusions. The picture is this: The contestant has been called into the palaestra; he has been accepted as one suitable to enter and engage as a contestant against which-ever antagonist might be selected; in the presence of many witnesses he has fulfilled all of the requirements for eligibility of participation according to the rules of the management of the stadium. The eyes of the packed house are upon him to see whether or not he will give a good account of himself not only according to the designated rules of the contest, but also according to the true potential of his previous billing. Really quite a startling picture, isn't it, when applied to the office of the holy ministry? Under these figures you can even think of your ordination, your installation at a particular parish, etc. The only thing we have to watch out for is that we do not look upon our flock as the antagonist, or even some rebellious sheep, but that we recognize the true foe of the flock whom we must battle and overcome with Word and Sacrament. One commentator infers that Timothy must have undergone quite a bit of persecution. In Hebrews 13:23 it says: "Do you know that our brother Timothy has been set at liberty?" He for sure did not get himself into trouble by ducking his warrior responsibility. And it may well be that this good confession here mentioned refers directly to his conduct under fire more than to the profession which he made at his ordination. If he was not a martyr, for sure he was a bold confessor. We are ready then to proceed.



## Verses 13-14

I am ordering you in the sight of God, the One generating life in everything, and Christ Jesus, the One who witnessed before Pontious Pilate the noble confession, that you guard the commandment spotless, irreproachable, until the epiphany of our Lord Jesus.

This expression, "I am ordering you," has the same meaning as in Chapter 5:21. The Apostle would have Timothy consider that all he did should be done as in the sight of God, the Father of the spirits of all flesh; in the sight of Christ; the Savior of sinners, who purchased the Church with His own blood; and in the sight of men both of the flock which he served, as well as the outside world.

God is called the one who generates life in everything. I like the application which one scholar here makes. He thinks especially of the resurrection, putting it this way: "God, who is the fountain of life and who is the resurrection; and who will raise you up at the last day to a life of ineffable glory, will keep you safe, if you are faithful unto death. And should your life fall a sacrifice to the performance of your duty, you will still be safe; for your life is hid with Christ in God, and when He who is your life shall appear, you shall also appear with him in glory. Your kingdom is not of this world; remember that his good confession was made by your Master before Pilate. Keep disentagled from all earthly things, live to and for God, and all will be well."

Special reference is made to the good confession of Jesus before Pilate. That confession was that He was the Messiah King; but that His kingdom was not of this world, according to John 18, 36, 37.

What is meant by the commandment that Timothy should guard? This is not a reference to any commandment in the decalogue. The commandment here is specifically the ENTIRE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST. His life should also be agreeable to that doctrine in every respect. HE SHOULD ADD NOTHING TO THAT DOCTRINE OR TAKE ANYTHING AWAY FROM THAT DOCTRINE, AND HE SHOULD CHANGE NOTHING IN IT. HE SHOULD DELIVER TO HIS SUCCESSORS THE TRUTH AS HE HIMSELF HAD RECEIVED IT FROM GOD. I have printed this in capitals for emphasis. Historically I believe that every falling away from the truth through the centuries since Paul gave this stern command has been brought about by pastors who left their private stand on sound doctrine, and then made propaganda for their false doctrine among God's people. False teaching of course may also arise among the laity, but inevitably they get the first idea for it from some pastor who either ignores or challenges the Word of Truth. That a sinful life scandalizes sound doctrine is just as obvious, but the emphasis is still on sound preaching and teaching.

Significantly Paul emphasizes that the will of God is that sound doctrine be promulgated unabated till the Lord's return, that great and final epiphany, glorious to His saints, terrorizing to the lost. Would to God that every faithful minister of the Word read this sacred injunction and read it often throughout his ministry! There is nothing, but nothing, which so upsets and hinders the designs of Satan as adherence to sound doctrine. Wherever and whenever Satan is given half a chance to promulgate any false doctrine, he is not satisfied until he has made his victory complete through the destruction of the heart of the Scripture, JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST ALONE. In the defense of sound doctrine, meekness and strength work hand in hand.

Here Paul gets ecstatically carried away in the words of a lofty Eulogy... It is well worth our while to look at this more closely: This brings us to

### Verses 15-16

Which at His own season He will show, the blessed God and only Potentate, the King of those reigning as kings and Lord of those ruling as lords, the only One having immortality, inhabiting the light inapproachable, whom not a single man has seen nor is able to see, He to whom honor and strength eternal! Amen.

"Which at His own season He will show." Jesus will come again at the most proper time. In our theology of eschatology we emphasize that this is a time known to Him, and to God alone, and determined by Him and God alone, and that it is not the subject matter of human speculation.

How thrilling these superlative titles for the glorified Christ. Potentate is a title applied to secular governors, but the whole lot of them of all time fade into insignificance in the presence of this one and only Potentate.

He is immortal. All beings that are not eternal are mutable. Even the angels, as the Psalm says, do not fall into this category, for they are not eternal.

Dwelling in the unapproachable light. Such is the excessive glory of Jesus Christ that neither angel or man can approach it in the fulness of its radiance.

Whom not a single man has seen nor is able to see. Moses himself could see only the symbol of the divine presence; but the face of God no man could see.

To whom be honor and strength eternal. As the author of being, and the dispenser of all good, to Him is ascribed sole authority, all-pervading, all-superintending, all-preserving, and everlasting might.

These words of St. Paul are inimitably sublime. It is doubtful whether human language can be carried much higher, even under the influence of inspiration, in the description of the glorified Christ. And we should remember that all this is said not to intimidate us, but to excite in us and from us such kindred praises of our marvelous Redeemer as our sanctified talents might allow. How wonderful to know that when He does come, some day our capacity for praise will be elevated to a stature which now our little intellects cannot even comprehend. Nothing compares in value or durability to that which has humbly and sincerely been dedicated to the honor and praise of our Savior Jesus Christ. How true this is of music, for example, or any other of the arts. Allow me to show you a contrast. Due to the fact that former members operated a large dinner theatre, and due to the kindness of these same people, my tortured ear drums were thrice assailed by the overcoming decibels of the so-called rock opera, "Jesus Christ Superstar." Several years ago this non-biblical epic, concocted by Rice and Weber, a pair of professed non-Christians with an eye toward and facility for turning a bright idea into capital gain, was the rage all over our land. By some liberals it was hailed as that approach which would cater to the youth, make Jesus Christ also understandable

to them and bring them by droves into the church. Personally I know of no one ever attracted to our Lord by the performance of this epic. It is no longer the rage! And two hundred years from now? Forget it! But Georg Friedrich Haendel's Messiah is as fresh and new to lovers of Scripture today, if not more so, than it was 200 years ago! Rice and Weber got Christ killed in their epic. Haendel did not skip the resurrection and triumph of the exalted Christ.

Paul then returns to the theme initiated in the middle verses of the Chapter. Our attention is turned to

### Verses 17-19

To those rich in the present eon continue to give orders not to be high-minded nor to put their hope on uncertain riches but on God, the One who furnishes to us all things richly for enjoyment; to be working good, to be rich in excellent (noble) works, to be sharing well, fellowshiping, laying up for themselves as treasure and excellent (noble) stock for the future in order that they may take hold of genuine life.

"To those rich." Significantly the possession of wealth as such, when God is pleased to bestow it, is not equated with sin. There is example a plenty in the Scriptures with reference to such children of God who are blessed with a wealth of earthly goods; witness such persons as the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; later in life Joseph, Job, David; and in the New Testament, Joseph of Arimathea. But as the injunction bears out the proper and God-pleasing stewardship of riches is quite something else. This stewardship

is treated both as to its negative and positive aspects. The rich believer is warned against being "high-minded," because wealth per se adds absolutely nothing to intellectual or moral worth. And of course the Apostle would not warn against such attitude, unless it were obvious that high-mindedness is so common on the part of those who have wealth. Although they are made of the same dust and return to the same dust, they often fancy themselves to be above the ordinary herd of men. For the Christian there is even the danger of falling prey to the delusion that God has blessed him with wealth on account of some superior character traits which God has seen in him, even if such character traits are of such nature as thrift, hard work, and the like.

Therefore Paul also emphasizes that the transitory nature of the possession of riches should cause the wealthy believer to use his head and heart. Wealth never belongs to one man for long. A man has to let go of it sooner or later; and he must even consider the prospect that whereas he has so carefully accumulated it, his heirs may blow the whole works, unless he bestow it in behalf of godly endeavors, and where he can count on it being used for the good after his demise. And of course, as Paul declares, trust in wealth is utter folly. It cannot buy time here upon this earth, and for the life beyond this earth it is even more useless.

Trust in the living God is however something else. In Him through His Christ there is promise both for the life which now is as well as for the life which is to come. Paul expands upon this thought. God not only has all good, but He dispenses it liberally for the supply of the wants of all His creatures; and He does not only give merely what is necessary, but He gives what tends to render life comfortable. The comforts of life come from

God, as well as the necessaries. He not only gives us a bare subsistence, but he gives us enjoyments. Were it not actually for the oppressions and deprivations brought about by wicked men, every situation and state in life would be comparatively comfortable. God gives liberally; man divides badly. Even this is recognizable on the part of unbelievers, but the methods which they concoct to bring about adjustment do not stem from the recognition of God's grace and of Him as the bountiful supplier. And then when the erstwhile have-nots become those who have, they promptly initiate a new round of oppression.

### Verses 20-21

O Timothy, guard the deposit. Turn away from profane babblings and oppositions of knowledge falsely so named, which some pretending to have have erred as regards the faith.

The profane "babblings" from which Timothy was to steer clear has particular reference to the silly legends of which we are told that no people ever exhibited a greater stock than the Jews. The church of Rome runs them a close second! The word knowledge here seems to indicate the concept of divine inspiration. This was claimed by false teachers, and by way of this claim they sought to gain a footing for their anti-scriptural teachings. Such falsehood because it sought to establish the efficacy of Levitical atonements, subverted the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ and His availing sacrifice. It is hardly surprising that false religion in any age cannot differ basically from this thrust. And there is a reason for this. Man in the establishment of his own religion can never progress beyond what is in him. The details of man-made religion may differ, but the mold is readily recognized.

"Which some pretending to have." Men who once had the purity of scriptural doctrine have fallen prey to this category ever since the Apostle sounded this warning, and for that part before it was ever sounded. And where the Gospel is held in its truth and purity as central to every other Scripture teaching, the devil will of course work overtime to uproot it. How well we should know Satan's oldest trick; "Did God really say it?"

For Timothy to keep the deposit had to mean the strictest adherence to every Word of Scripture. This defense was at one and the same time the best offense. And so it remains for us as the possessors of the truth to the present day. Security can only be maintained by total reliance on the Word.

And how is that accomplished? By anything in man? Never! As Paul says to Timothy: "The grace with you." The mercy of God alone can preserve in the faith by the power of the Holy Spirit. This grace we shall need every moment of our lives!

-- Howard T. Behrens



A CRITIQUE AND EVALUATION OF  
WILLIAM BECK'S TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS

by

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The topic assigned to me was: "Critique and Evaluation of Beck's Bible Translation." That title would imply a critique and evaluation of the entire Bible, Old Testament as well as New Testament. However, for two reasons that assignment would be impractical, and even impossible: 1. There was not sufficient time for this writer to undertake such a study unless he were to pick a little here and a little there, and thus offer a superficial sampling of some of the books of the Bible. 2. There is not sufficient time at this conference to present such a critique and evaluation even if there had been time to prepare it. Under those circumstances, this reviewer decided to limit this presentation to one book of the Old Testament. After having considered various books, we decided to concentrate on that book which probably affords the greatest variety in both subject matter and style, the Book of Psalms. We hope that our choice will serve the purpose of gaining a better understanding of Dr. Beck's basic philosophy, approach and method in translating.

As was mentioned in our article in the Winter-Spring issue of THE LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY (Vol. XVI, Nos. 2 and 3, 1976, pp. 66-76), Dr. Beck advocated a translation that is not literal in the sense that the words fall in line in the same manner and order as in the original. Rather he emphasized the importance of transferring precisely the meaning of the original text into the idiom of the language into which the subject matter is to be translated. That involves a re-casting of the subject matter, often in a different word order and even in different parts of speech. Of that we can find abundant evidence in Beck's translation. At times it may seem that he goes to extremes in his idiomatic translation; more often, however, it appears that his rendering is a happy one, and one that speaks more directly and clearly to the Twentieth Century American reader.

The careful reader will come to the conclusion that Dr. Beck made a very thorough study of the text, that he communicated the meaning in remarkably clear and understandable language, and that, whatever the shortcomings (and there are some), the good qualities of his translation far outweigh them.

In this presentation we shall attempt to list a few of the passages that we feel are exceptionally well translated, and give some evidence for our opinion. These passages will be only a select few of what we feel are a considerable number. In some cases we shall mention entire Psalms; in others, only selected verses or even words. We shall then turn to passages or words with which we feel, to a greater or lesser extent, some dissatisfaction or disagreement with the translation by Dr. Beck. Since we feel this to be of greater importance than our agreement or approval, it will proportionately outweigh the section that precedes

it. To avoid the distraction of footnotes or notes at the end of this paper, the references, all to passages in the Book of Psalms, will be incorporated into the body of this paper. Occasional references will be made to the Hebrew words, but they will be kept to a minimum.

#### PASSAGES THAT WE FEEL ARE EXCEPTIONALLY WELL TRANSLATED

Under this category we could include a few Psalms in their entirety. Of those, only a verse here and there will be quoted in this presentation. One of these Psalms is a Psalm that has come under closer scrutiny these past few years because of its bearing on the abortion issue: Psalm 139. Beck communicates the message of the inspired Psalmist very clearly in Psalm 139, we feel. As evidence, we offer the following examples: "Lord, you have searched me and You know me: You know when I sit down and when I get up; You understand from far away what I think. You watch me when I travel and when I lie down and know intimately all my ways. Before there's a word on my tongue, LORD, You know all about it." (Ps. 139:1-4.) "You created my inner being and wove me together in my mother's womb. I thank You for how marvelously and wonderfully I am made. What You do is wonderful, and I am fully aware of it. My limbs weren't hidden from You when I was made in secret and skillfully woven as in depths of the earth. Your eyes saw me before I was formed; before a single one of my days took shape they were all prepared and written in Your scroll." (Ps. 139:13-16.)

Among other Psalms that we feel were very well translated in Beck's AMERICAN TRANSLATION are the following: 2, 25, 37, 40, 54, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 78, 79, 86, 95, 96, 100, 118, 127 and 145. No doubt

many others could also be included. Among the specific words or verses that we shall point out for some reason or other, most will come from some of the above-mentioned Psalms.

Dr. Beck was strongly committed to the Messianic interpretation of Psalms that contain such a message. While we feel that his grammatical structure is rather free, we agree with the meaning of his rendition of Ps. 2:7b: "You are My Son, today I am Your Father." In the closing verse of that Psalm, Beck resists the temptation to resort to textual emendation, and directly translates the first words: "Kiss the Son."

We are happy with a passage in another of the Messianic Psalms, the Fortieth. Of the three-verse passage that follows, the first is one of the most difficult and variously translated passages in the Book of Psalms. The last two are quoted in Hebrews 10:5-7, along with the verse that follows. "You have done many wonderful things for us, O LORD my God. You have made many wonderful plans; no one can be compared with you. I want to announce them and tell about them, but they are more than I can tell. You were not pleased with sacrifice and offering -- You bored my ears; You didn't want burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin; then I said, "I have come!" (Ps. 40:5-7a.)

Psalm 37 affords us the opportunity to see how Beck translates a statement that recurs a number of times. In the Hebrew it is given as  $yir^e\hat{s}u\ 'are\check{s}$  four times (vv. 9, 11, 22 and 29) and as  $l\bar{a}re\check{s}et\ 'are\check{s}$  once (v. 34). While we might fondly treasure the familiar wording of the King James Version ("inherit the earth"), the context strongly leads us to translate it "possess the land" or "take possession of the land" as Beck expresses it. That applies also to the well-known beatitude, "Blessed

are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." (Matt. 5:5 in the KJV), which Beck translates: "Happy are those who are gentle -- they will own the land." Our Savior no doubt referred to Ps. 37:11 in that statement. The context of those five references in Ps. 37 hardly warrants the translation of the word 'ereš in the cosmic sense of "earth," but rather the more restricted and localized sense of "land."

Beck's policy of determining the exact English equivalent of a Hebrew word that may be rendered by various English words can be seen from his various ways of translating two words which we shall use as examples. One is the word *nepeš*, which he renders as "soul" (Ps. 103:1), "heart" (Ps. 86:4b), "life" (Ps. 31:13), "neck" (Ps. 105:18), "the way he wanted" (Ps. 105:22), along with the verb "seek" in the Hebrew he renders it "kill" (Ps. 35:4) or "destroy" (Ps. 40:14), in the familiar phrase "my soul" in the K.J.V. he usually renders it in the first person, "I" (Ps. 34:2) or "me" (Ps. 16:10). In some instances he does not translate the word at all, e.g., in Ps. 86:4a. While in certain instances we might differ with Dr. Beck on his translation of this word, we do marvel at his grasp of the rich range of meanings that the word *nepeš* has. We have not exhausted the long list of English equivalents that he uses in his translation of the Psalms.

The other word that Dr. Beck translates into English with good evidence of insight and skill is the word *bôš*, commonly rendered in the K.J.V. and also several other versions by the English word "be ashamed." That there are times when that meaning appears to be the best one must be admitted. However, it is often inadequate in expressing the rich meaning of the Hebrew word, which generally has the connotation of disappointment, frustration, and failure to achieve one's goal, as a study of passages containing the word will indicate. Among

the meanings used in Beck's translation are the following: "feel miserable (Ps. 6:10), "let down" (Ps. 25:2), "be disappointed" (Ps. 25:3), "be ashamed" (Ps. 35:26), "come to a shameful end" (Ps. 71:13).

We shall conclude this first part of our presentation by suggesting that you compare two verses in the King James Version and Beck's American Translation. These verses are familiar to us in a table prayer known to us in the K.J.V. See how clearly Beck communicates the meaning in contemporary American English: "The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food at the right time, You open Your hand to satisfy everything that lives with what it wants." (Ps. 145:14-15.) It is obvious that when we use this version it is unnecessary to explain that "meat" in this passage, as in most passages in the K.J.V., does not mean "meat," but "food." Beck shares with other contemporary versions the obvious advantage of being in the language that we use in our everyday speech, and thus obviating the need of explaining archaic or obsolete words and consequently in a measure re-translating. In addition it has in a high measure the advantages of careful scholarship and fidelity to the sacred text. However, with its many fine qualities, we do find a number of instances of renditions with which we are not particularly happy and, in a few cases, with which we cannot agree. It will be the burden of the last part of this paper to point out some of those words or passages.

#### PASSAGES WITH WHICH WE ARE NOT SATISFIED, OR DISAGREE

These passages do not involve any of the doctrines of the Bible, to our knowledge. They rather concern the meanings of certain words, forms of

verbs, syntax, or a given translation. They also involve the reading of the consonantal text of the Hebrew Bible, and the witness of ancient versions such as the Septuagint or the Syriac Peshitta. It is not our concern to stress the literary quality of Dr. Beck's translation. That, we feel, is of secondary importance. Of primary importance is the content of the translation.

Whatever one may think of the finished product in this translation, no one can deny that Dr. Beck took the matter of translating very seriously. He devoted much time and painstaking research to his project. In general, it must be said that he faithfully followed the best readings of the Hebrew text. It must also be admitted that he followed the Masoretic text in general. There are, however, some instances in which such was not the case, and in a number of those we would hesitate to agree with him. One such instance is Ps. 22:26, in which the M. T. has "Let your heart(s) live forever." Beck renders it: "Let their hearts live forever." There are a few other similar instances. One might also question his policy of following the Septuagint in reading "my God" instead of "God" in Ps. 44:4.

There are a few instances of Dr. Beck's re-writing the consonantal text of the Hebrew, a practice to which the well-known Ugaritic and Hebrew scholar, Mitchell Dahood, is particularly addicted. One of those instances is Ps. 22:25, where Beck vocalizes the first word (in the M.T. given as  $m\bar{e}-itt^{e}k\bar{a}$ , "of you") as  $m\bar{i}-\bar{e}t\bar{i}k\bar{a}$ , making it the denominative piel of a questionable verb form based on the numeral "hundred," and translates it "I praise you a hundred times." There is no support for this reading in the Septuagint, which follows the Masoretic Text by rendering it *para sou ho epainos mou*. One other instance of Dr. Beck's revocalizing the consonantal text occurs in Ps. 110:7. In the King

James Version that verse reads: "He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head." With that translation we would essentially agree. Beck, whose translation of verse 3 is also somewhat questionable in that Psalm, re-vocalizes the first part of the last (7th) verse and comes up with this translation, which is at best questionable: "The Giver of inheritance will set Him on His throne, and that is why He will hold His head high." While we can arrive at that translation by changing the vowels under the consonants of the first half of the verse, we feel it is an unwarranted procedure, and lacks the support of any of the ancient versions. Whether or not Beck was influenced by Dahood's translation we cannot tell, but it seems more than coincidental that Dahood has translated it as follows: "The Bestower of Succession set him on his throne, the Most High Legitimate One lifted high his head." (THE ANCHOR BIBLE, PSALMS III, p. 112.)

As an example of a questionable meaning of a word, Beck frequently translates the Hebrew word *māgēn*, "shield," as "king." He does so in Ps. 84:11, in spite of the fact that in the same verse he renders the word *šemeš* literally as "sun." That policy seems inconsistent. Earlier in the same Psalm he translates *mēḥayil ʿel ḥayil* ("from strength to strength") as "from city to city." It is difficult to understand his rationale for that. His policy of repeatedly translating the expression *bēnē ʿādām* ("sons of man") as "mortal man" in Ps. 107 is also open to question, particularly since the word for man which most strongly connotes frailty and mortality is not *ʿādām* but *ʿenôš*. One more example of a questionable translation is his word "secretly" for *ḥinnām* in Ps. 35:7. The word rather means "in vain." This we state while being fully aware of, and in agreement with, his policy of translating idiomatically,



with the words getting their meaning from the context, and not only their etymological root.

There are a few instances of what we feel is an inadequate, and even faulty, translation due to failure to observe the proper tense or mood of a verb. While in general Dr. Beck reveals a good grasp of the fact that tenses are not tied down to time, such as past, present, or future, there are some cases of questionable renderings of tenses. There are three instances of such mistranslation in Ps. 61:4,6. One occurs in verse 4, where he translates the perfect tense (*hāyîṭā*) which is in the indicative mood, stating a fact, as though it were imperative. He renders it: "Be my shelter." It should be rendered either "You have been my shelter," or preferably, "You are my shelter." His translation weakens it from a statement of assurance to a plea for help. Similarly, twice in verse 6, he translates the perfect tense, indicative mood, as though it were something else. The word *šāma'tā* is best translated "You have heard." Beck makes it a desiderative subjunctive, "O that You would hear." Only when there is a particle such as *lû* ("if") or *lûlê* ("unless") is one justified in translating a perfect as a subjunctive, and then it is generally found in a contrary-to-fact condition. (Cf. J. Wash Watts: A SURVEY OF SYNTAX IN THE HEBREW OLD TESTAMENT, p. 75.) In the same verse (6), another verb in the perfect tense, *nāṭattā*, is likewise translated by Beck as a subjunctive ("give"). We feel that this procedure robs these three verbs of the unquestionable certainty that the perfect tense provides.

We could mention a few more instances of translations of words or phrases with which we differ, as we could also quote many more passages with which we are in hearty agreement, but this will

have to suffice for now. In conclusion, it can be stated that Dr. William Beck's American Translation is a very fine one that we would hope to find on the book shelf of all of our pastors and professors as well as many of the other people in our church. It is a very good translation, and one that every serious student of the Bible ought to own.

-- Rudolph E. Honsey

(Editor's Note: The above article was taken from a presentation to a Pastoral Conference, and so does not appear in precise form for the Quarterly.)

## THE THEOLOGY OF CAMPUS CRUSADE

by

The Rev. Wilhelm W. Petersen  
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### I. First of all, a little information about Campus Crusade.

Campus Crusade and the name Bill Bright are synonymous. Dr. Bill Bright, a layman, is the founder and president of Campus Crusade for Christ International. He did graduate study at Princeton and Fuller Theological Seminaries. He received an honorary Doctor of Law degree from the National University of Korea "for the meritorious contribution to the development of human culture and the advancement of world peace through the establishment of Campus Crusade for Christ International." He also received an honorary doctorate from John Brown University.

"Campus Crusade began as an international student Christian movement, designed to present the claims of Christ to that major segment of the collegiate world which has no active, vital contact with the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church." The ministry began on the campus of the University of California at Los Angeles in the fall of 1951 under the direction of Dr. and Mrs. Bright. Approximately 250 students, including a number of leaders in different phases of campus life, "committed their lives to Christ" during that first school year. This ministry has grown so that Campus Crusade now has a staff of nearly 4000 and expects to have 10,000 by the end of 1976.

"Campus Crusade is an aggressively evangelistic movement, which places a strong emphasis on the living Christ, the authority of the Scriptures, the importance of the church, personal and group evangelism, the necessity of the Holy Spirit and the adventure of Christian discipleship. Campus Crusade is an evangelistic arm of the church, which, because of the interdenominational nature of its emphasis, is able to reach large segments of the non-churched student and lay world which normally would not be receptive to similar approaches from denominational groups."

"Through a multiplication program of WINNING men to Christ, BUILDING men in the faith, and SENDING them to the world with the good news of God's love and forgiveness, tens of thousands have been introduced to Christ thru the ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ."

Campus Crusade places a strong emphasis on the importance of the church. Each staff member is required to be actively involved in an established church. Converts are advised to join a church "where Christ is honored and His Word is preached."

Campus Crusade plans to evangelize the U.S. by 1976 and the World by 1980. EXPLOR '72 provided a key stepping stone toward achieving these goals as more than 80,000 students and laymen around the world gathered to learn how to effectively share their faith in Christ with others. Dr. Bright believes that it is possible that the Great Commission will be fulfilled in this generation. "I believe that we are about to see the greatest spiritual awakening since Pentecost and the fulfillment of the Great Commission in this generation."

## SO MUCH FOR THE STRUCTURE, PURPOSE, AND GOALS OF CAMPUS CRUSADE.

### II. The Theology of Campus Crusade

Campus Crusade does have a Statement of Faith which its adherents are asked to sign. In the preface it states belief in the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures. Of the Bible it says, "It is the supreme and final authority in all matters on which it speaks." Then it goes on to say, "We accept those large areas of doctrinal teaching on which, historically, there has been general agreement among all true Christian. Because of the specialized calling of our movement, we desire to allow for freedom of conviction on other doctrinal matters, provided that any interpretation is based upon the Bible alone, and that no such interpretation shall become an issue which hinders the ministry to which God has called us."

The Statement has 17 points of teaching which their adherents must subscribe to. They are as follows:

1. There is one true God, eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - each of whom possesses equally all the attributes of Deity and the characteristics of personality.
2. Jesus Christ is God, the living Word, who became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. Hence, He is perfect Deity and true humanity united in one person forever.
3. He lived a sinless life and voluntarily atoned for the sins of men by dying on the cross as their substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all who trust in Him alone.

4. He rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He lived and died.
5. He ascended bodily into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God the Father, where He, the only mediator between God and man, continually makes intercession for His own.
6. Man was originally created in the image of God. He sinned by disobeying God; thus, he was alienated from His creator. That historic fall brought all mankind under divine condemnation.
7. Man's nature is corrupted and he is thus totally unable to please God. Every man is in need of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit.
8. The salvation of man is wholly a work of God's free grace and is not the work, in whole or in part, of human works or goodness or religious ceremony. God imputes His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, and thereby justifies them in His sight.
9. It is the privilege of all who are born again of the Spirit to be assured of their salvation from the very moment in which they trust Christ as their Savior. This assurance is not based upon any kind of human merit, but is produced by the witness of the Holy Spirit, who confirms in the believer the testimony of God in His written Word.

10. The Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to men. He convicts and draws sinners to Christ, imparts new life to them, continually indwells them from the moment of spiritual birth and seals them until the day of redemption. His fullness, power, and control are appropriated in the believer's life by faith.
11. Every believer is called to live so in the power of the indwelling Spirit that he will not fulfill the lust of the flesh but will bear fruit to the glory of God.
12. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, His Body, which is composed of all men, living and dead, who have been joined to Him through saving faith.
13. God admonished His people to assemble together regularly for worship, for participation in ordinances, for edification through the Scriptures and for mutual encouragement.
14. At physical death the believer enters immediately into eternal, conscious fellowship with the Lord and awaits the resurrection of his body to everlasting glory and blessing.
15. At physical death the unbeliever enters immediately into eternal, conscious separation from the Lord and awaits the resurrection of his body to everlasting judgment and condemnation.

16. Jesus Christ will come again to the earth -- personally, visibly, and bodily -- to consummate history and the eternal plan of God.
  
17. The Lord Jesus Christ commanded all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to disciple men of every nation. The fulfillment of that Great Commission requires that all worldly and personal ambitions be subordinated to a total commitment to "Him who loved us and gave Himself for us."

In the concluding paragraph the adherent is asked to pledge himself to help fulfill the Great Commission in our generation, depending upon the Holy Spirit to guide and empower him.

Campus Crusade has published and uses a booklet entitled "FOUR SPIRITUAL LAWS" as an aid in presenting the Gospel to others. LAW 1 states: "God Loves You, And Has A Wonderful PLAN For Your Life." LAW 2: "Man Is SINFUL And SEPARATED From God, Thus He Cannot Know And Experience God's Love and Plan For This Life." LAW 3: "Jesus Christ Is God's ONLY Provision For Man's Sin. Through HIM You Can Know and Experience God's Love and Plan For Your Life." LAW 4: "We Must Individually RECEIVE Jesus Christ As Savior And Lord; Then We Can Know And Experience God's Love And Plan For Our Lives."

After a person has invited Christ into his life through prayer and made his decision for Christ, then he is invited to participate in a spiritual growth program through a study of the Word. He is also expected to take an active part in personal evangelism.



## SO MUCH FOR THE THEOLOGY OF CAMPUS CRUSADE

### III. Our Evaluation of Theology of Campus Crusade

Campus Crusade does teach correctly on some of the basic scriptural doctrines such as the Trinity, the Virgin Birth, and the Deity of Christ. However, when we examine their theology in the light of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions we find it lacking in many areas. In brief, it is an heterodox organization, allowing false doctrine to be taught alongside true doctrine.

First of all, it is unionistic in character. Campus Crusade does not insist on full doctrinal unity. While it does call for agreement on "those large areas of doctrinal teaching on which, historically, there has been general agreement among Christians," it does not require unanimity on the Sacraments, eschatology, church fellowship, etc. This is characteristic of Reformed theology. We believe that the Scriptures require complete unity in doctrine before there can be outward fellowship. While preparing this paper, I received a letter inviting all Christians in the Madison area to come together to a liberal Lutheran church for "an exciting day of prayer and fellowship." The theme of the day is "To Know Christ and Make Him Known." This is sponsored by several groups, including Campus Crusade. This is definitely a unionistic gathering. We believe that the Scriptures are very clear when they insist on full doctrinal agreement before there can be joint worship and work. Passages such as Romans 16:17, I Cor. 1:10, Matt. 7:15 clearly forbid such unionism.

Paragraph 3 in "Statement of Faith" says Christ's redemptive work has "accomplished salvation for

all who trust in Him alone." The Bible teaches that salvation has been accomplished for all. "Christ died for all." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." When Jesus cried on the cross "It is finished," He thereby declared that He had completed the work of redeeming the world. Because of this redemptive work God has declared the whole world forgiven. It is an objective act which has been accomplished and is not dependent on man's faith. It is true that this forgiveness does not benefit a person unless he accepts it, but he has been declared forgiven whether he believes it or not. The tragedy of hell will be that many will be there not because they were not forgiven, but because they refused to believe it.

The theology of Compus Crusade is synergistic. It presents faith as something that man is capable of in part by his own powers. "By a deliberate act of your will, invite Christ to come into your life to be your Lord and Savior." In the Van Duesen letter, the question is asked: "Will you not sincerely invite the Lord Jesus into your heart, and surrender your will completely to Him, right now? We can talk with God through prayer. Why not find a quiet place where you can kneel or bow reverently in God's presence and ask Christ to come into your heart. In your prayer, you can say something like this: 'Lord Jesus, I invite you to come into my life, forgive my sins, and become my Lord and Master' . . . Inviting Christ into your life is absolutely the most important decision that you will ever make."\* A song which sums up this theology is: "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus."

\*This letter was written to a prominent business acquaintance who had requested information on how to become a Christian. The name, Dr. Van Duesen, is fictitious. In the last few years several million copies of this letter have been distributed around the world in most major languages.

The Bible teaches that man is spiritually dead and unable and unwilling to believe. It is only through the power of the Holy Spirit working through the Word that a person is brought faith. In our Catechism we have this question and answer: "HOW DO ALL THE BENEFITS OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTION BECOME YOURS?" Answer: "The benefits of Christ's redemption become mine only when the Holy Ghost creates in my heart a living faith in Christ as my Savior." As our salvation in Christ is a free gift so also is our faith, which appropriates this salvation, a gift of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, man's inability to believe by himself is brought out in passages like: "No man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost." "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." In the explanation of the Third Article, Luther writes: "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith." We sing in one of our hymns:

"All our knowledge, sense, and sight  
Lie in deepest darkness shrouded  
Till Thy Spirit breaks our night  
With the beams of truth unclouded.  
Thou alone to God canst win us;  
Thou must work all good within us."

Our Lutheran Confessions are very explicit on this score too: "As little as a corpse can quicken itself to bodily, earthly life, so little can man who through sin is spiritually dead raise himself to spiritual life" (Epitome, p. 470). "In conversion God makes willing people out of unwilling people" (Epitome, Art. II, p. 471). "Apart from Christ we cannot know the grace of God the Father, but apart from the Holy Spirit we cannot come to Christ." "A saving knowledge of the Son comes to

no one except by the Holy Spirit." "The entire Christian life is the result of His work." I would advise you to read Article II of the Solid Declaration on Free Will. In brief, the theology of Campus Crusade on conversion is a far cry from the Lutheran doctrine of the means of grace.

Campus Crusade theology makes prayer a means of grace. After presenting the Four Spiritual Laws, the presenter is told, "Be sure to explain how one can receive Christ through prayer." He is to read a prayer aloud and then ask, "Does this prayer express the desire of your heart?" "If it does, you may wish to pray this prayer right now, and Christ will come into your life, as He promised." Much emphasis is made on receiving Christ through prayer.

Prayer is not a means of grace; rather it is an activity of faith. Prior to conversion a person cannot pray. Prayer is something a Christian does after he becomes a believer. Just as a person cannot talk before he receives physical life, so also a spiritually dead person cannot pray until the Holy Spirit brings him to faith. Then he will talk to His heavenly Father in prayer, thanking Him for His many blessings, chief of which are his spiritual blessings, and will ask Him for a stronger faith and for grace and strength to grow. Daily he will approach the throne of grace in prayer.

Not much is said in their literature about the Sacraments. Converts are told to seek out a church where Christ is honored and His Word proclaimed. They are also told to participate in the "ordinances" of that church. Apparently, it doesn't make any difference what that church teaches in regard to Baptism and the Lord's Supper. "If you have not already been baptized, plan to be baptized as an outward expression of your identification

with Christ." From this it is evident that Campus Crusade theology does not consider Baptism to be a means of grace but rather "an outward expression of identification with Christ." That is in line with Reformed theology on the Sacraments.

Finally, Campus Crusade theology leaves room for just about any kind of doctrine on eschatology. "Jesus Christ will come again to the earth -- personally, visibly, and bodily -- to consummate history and the eternal plan of God." In the Apostle's Creed we confess that He will come again to judge the quick and the dead. Our Lutheran Confessions rule out any kind of millenium. The statement by Campus Crusade allows for almost any kind of interpretation regarding the return of Christ. Since most of their members come from Reformed churches which allow for some sort of millenium or rapture, it is only natural that there is only a vague statement about Christ's return.

In conclusion, Campus Crusade theology leaves much to be desired, to say the least. We do not question their sincerity or motives, but their doctrinal trumpet does not give a clear and definite sound. Much of their theology is Reformed theology. In the final analysis, man's certainty of salvation is based on subjectivism and feelings of the heart rather than objective promises of God. We must admire them, though, for their zeal in evangelism. Here is an area where there is much room for improvement in our circles. We, who by the grace of God have the pure doctrine, should be more active in spreading it through personal evangelism. Every conservative Lutheran church should have not only a Bible class but also an evangelism course designed to train our people how

to share the Gospel with others. We all need to take seriously the message of the hymn which says it all:

"God's Word is our great heritage,  
And shall be ours forever;  
To spread its light from age to age  
Shall be our chief endeavor;  
Through life it guides our way,  
In death it is our stay;  
Lord, grant, while worlds endure,  
We keep its teachings pure  
Throughout all generations.

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-- W. W. Petersen