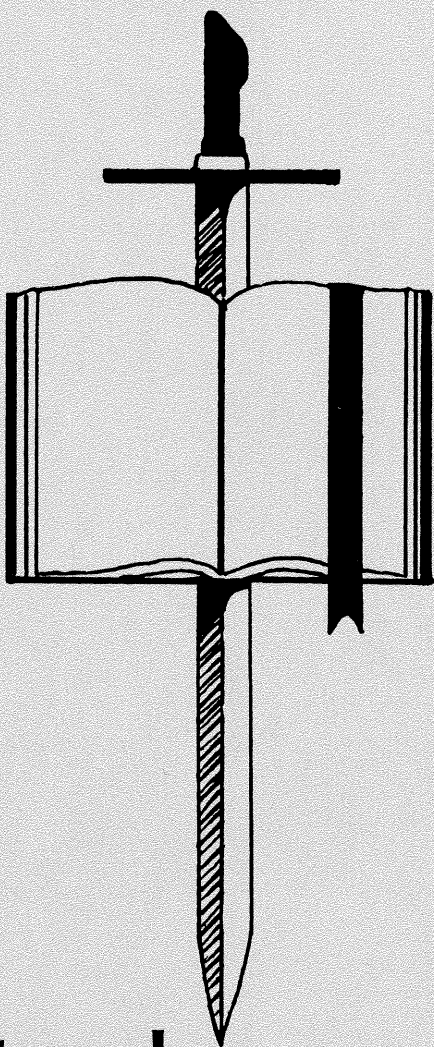


September 1992

Vol. XXXII No. 3

ISSN 0360-9685



Lutheran Synod Quarterly

LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY

Theological Journal of the
Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Edited by the faculty of
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary
Mankato, Minnesota

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Subscription Price: \$6.00 per year

Address all subscriptions and all correspondence to:

LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary
447 North Division Street
Mankato, MN 56001

FOREWORD

This issue contains a sermon delivered by Pastor Norman A. Madson, Jr., to the seminary graduates on Sunday, June 21st, at Trinity Chapel. Also included are remarks to the graduates by the president of the seminary.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the reorganization of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. It was in 1917 when three Norwegian Lutheran church bodies, namely the Norwegian Synod, the Norwegian United Church, and the Hauge Synod entered into a merger on the basis of a union document known as Opjør, or The Settlement. This was a unionistic document which contained both true and false doctrine and consequently did not settle the doctrinal differences between these church bodies. Because of this a minority of the old Norwegian Synod, one of the merging bodies, did not for conscience reasons enter this merger. The following year, 1918, this remnant reorganized at Lime Creek Lutheran Church, near Lake Mills, Iowa. The name of this new church body was The Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Synod. In 1957 it changed its name to Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS).

As we reflect upon our doctrinal heritage this anniversary year, we are pleased to share with our readers an article entitled What the Norwegian Synod Has Wanted and Still Wants, by Dr. U. V. Koren. Dr. Koren was president of the Norwegian Synod from 1894-1910. He spoke out against the approaching merger but died seven years before it was consummated. His article reflects the doctrinal position of the Norwegian Synod before the 1917 merger and this is part of our heritage. This article is taken from the book entitled Faith of our Fathers, written in commemoration of the centennial of the old Norwegian Synod and the 35th anniversary of its reorganization in 1918.

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BETHANY LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY GRADUATION

by: The Reverend Norman A. Madson, Jr.

PRAYER:

O faithful and everlasting God, You who have established Your Church here upon earth, and do continue to supply it with faithful workers, we thank You this day for the two young graduates whom you have directed and called into the holy ministry. Keep them, O God, always faithful to Your Word, and to the high calling which they will soon enter. May their future service in Your kingdom result in the salvation of many souls. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen!

TEXT - Lamentations 3:22-26

FELLOW REDEEMED IN CHRIST, and especially you two young graduates, grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen!

Picture in your mind a dark and damp dungeon cell in the city of Jerusalem. The date is approximately 588 B.C. Above the ground of that dungeon the walls of the beautiful city of Jerusalem will soon be broken down and destroyed by an invading army from Babylon. The temple, which was really the show-case of that proud city, will soon lie in charred ruins. Most of the citizenry will be taken captive, and marched unceremoniously back to the land of the ruthless invaders. In the dungeon itself resides an old man, destitute, broken down in health, starving, cold, half-naked, friendless. That old man was a called servant of the Lord named Jeremiah.

Now superimpose on that picture in your mind the picture of the event that is taking place here this afternoon. Trinity chapel on the campus of Bethany College and Seminary. The date is June 21, 1992. Sitting in the front row of this nicely appointed worship area are two young men, called servants of the Lord, waiting to be graduated from Bethany Theological Seminary and soon to take up the work of the holy ministry. These young men are at this service surrounded by friends, relatives and well-wishers.

The outward similarity between these two pictures is not very great. And yet, there is something that uniquely ties the two pictures closely together. It is the message that comforted that old servant of the Lord, Jeremiah, and was proclaimed by him to his people, and the message that ought to comfort you, dear graduates, and must ever be the focal point of your future ministries. And that is the message:

"GREAT IS GOD'S FAITHFULNESS!"

We note first of all,

I. THE GREATNESS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO YOU GRADUATES! When you on this special day look back over your brief life's history, and see how God has directed the affairs of your life up until now, must not both of you say, "Great is God's faithfulness!" Already as infants God made you to be a member of His precious family through the holy sacrament of baptism. He placed both of you in a Christian home with a Christian environment. He preserved and guided you during the difficult teenage years. That same faithful God led you to study for the holy ministry at our Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, a seminary

that is dedicated to the preservation of, and the dissemination of, a Bible-centered, confessional Lutheran theology. And today you stand ready to receive your graduation diploma. Yes, you can say, "Great is God's Faithfulness!"

The office of the ministry is by no means a "glamorous" occupation. You have chosen a life's calling in which you will undergo many trials and troubles and tribulation. Not only will you have to deal directly with the sins of those whom you are called to serve, but you will have the sins of your own weak flesh to contend with also. When you become ordained very shortly you will not on that day be mantled with some kind of an impeccable, indelible character. No, as an ordained servant of your Lord, you will remain a weak, sinful human being, who will need desperately every day of your life the mercy and grace of a forgiving God. But how assuring it will be for you to know that every morning of every day you can arise to undertake your responsible task in the ministry confident that you have a gracious and compassionate Lord. For as our text today says, "The Lord's mercies . . . are new to us every morning." vv 22 & 23

That was the one thing that sustained Jeremiah during his trial-filled ministry to a rebellious and back-sliding people of Judah - he knew that every day he could rely on the mercy and grace of an understanding God. Part of Jeremiah's misery was due to the fact that the people of Judah did not want to hear the message that God had sent Jeremiah to deliver to them. They did not want to repent of the wrongdoing of which they were guilty. And to silence this prophet of God his enemies threw him into prison. And at one point in his imprisonment they even lowered him into

an earthen dungeon, where this faithful prophet of the Lord led a miserable existence. His daily portion of food was a dry crust of bread and a little bit of water. But Jeremiah did not despair. He says in our text, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him!" v 24

You will find in your future ministries, dear graduates, that people whom you are called to serve won't always like to hear the pointed preaching of God's law, and a firm call to repentance. The Old Adam dies very hard within the human breast. But, like Jeremiah, you must speak the words that the Lord puts in your mouth. It will be your responsibility as pastors to bring the "whole counsel of God" to those to whom you are sent. And that "whole counsel of God" includes the law of God, which exposes sin, and condemns it. The law also threatens punishment. And because Jeremiah appeared fearful of what might happen to him if he "told it like it was," the Lord added these words to bolster him, "Be not afraid of their faces; for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord." Jeremiah 1:8

And so, dear graduates, if you are faithful in pointing out sin, and the consequences of sin, in your preaching and teaching ministry, and call people to repentance, then God will continue to show His faithfulness to you. Our text says that "the Lord is good to them that wait for Him, and to the soul that seeketh Him." v 25 For while the preaching of God's law will not in itself save any of your hearers, its proclamation and application are an important part of your ministry, for as C.F.W. Walther says, "Without the law the Gospel will not be understood." It is as the hymnwriter states it,

When sinners see their lost condition,
And feel the pressing load of sin;
Then Jesus cometh on His mission
To heal the sinsick heart within.

(Hymnary #173, 1)

And that brings us, then, to the second point that we would make on the basis of our text, and that is this, that the focal point of your future ministry must always be to show

II. THE GREATNESS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO THOSE WHOM YOU ARE CALLED TO SERVE! God's law is important in preparing human hearts for conversion and salvation. But only the Gospel, which is in essence the announcement of God's faithfulness to mankind, can convert and save the sinner. Always remember, dear graduates, that as ambassadors for Christ, your chief function is to be the bearer of "good news" to your people. Whether you are in the pulpit, or at the bedside, or in the classroom it is your privilege, and your duty, to proclaim to your people that "the Lord's mercies are new every morning," v 23 and that "great is God's faithfulness!" v 23b Our God is above all else a compassionate God, who is filled with pity, sympathetic love, and kindness. He is a God, who "will not always chide, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities; for as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust." Psalm 103:9-14

You will find in your ministry that some people

have a dread fear of God. And why is that? It is because they have a perverted picture of Him. Many people imagine God to be a harsh taskmaster, one who is all too anxious to carry out vengeance against sinners. But that, of course, is not a true picture of God at all. And it will be your task to set the record straight in that regard. There is not a prophet of the Old Testament, nor an Apostle and Evangelist of the New Testament, who does not show God to be anything other than a compassionate, forgiving, long-suffering God. The words of Ezekiel, for example, in this regard, have been stated excellently well by a certain hymnwriter in these lines:

Yea, as I live, Jehovah saith,
I would not have the sinner's death.
Far rather, 'tis my holy will,
That in his course he should stand still.
Repentant sinners I forgive,
Then let them hear, believe, and live.

Think of this word, O guilty soul;
Despair not; Christ can make thee whole.
In Him there's pardon, peace, and grace;
A sure and blessed hiding place.
The covenant confirmed by blood
Doth stand upon the oath of God.

(Hymnary #401, 1 & 2)

And so, dear graduates, as you embark on your chosen life's calling, do so with both joy and confidence. Be assured that you are serving One who is above all other things "great in faithfulness." He will continue to be with you in your work of ministry with His great faithfulness. And you in turn must declare His great faithfulness to the people. God bless your graduation on this day, as well as your future ministries. We ask this for the sake of Jesus!

Amen!

REMARKS TO THE 1992 SEMINARY GRADUATES

I know that this is a happy day for you, your wives, and families. Your graduation today marks the culmination of several years of study - including your vicarage - and you now stand ready and anxious to assume the office of the public ministry.

It is important that as you begin your ministry that you have a God-pleasing attitude toward your calling. Attitude is so important in everything we do and especially, then, in the work of the ministry. Certainly, a pastor should have a positive attitude towards his work, even though he knows that at times there will be difficulties, trials, and hardships. Yes, you will feel the "reproach of Christ" and the "offence of the Gospel" at times. Yet, you will ever be conscious of this that you have been called to the most important work in the world, namely to serve the spiritual needs of blood-bought souls through the life-creating and life-sustaining means of grace, and it goes without saying that you should have a real love for souls.

In this regard you have no greater example to follow than the Master SOUL SAVER Himself, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who not only loved us with an everlasting love and willingly laid down his life for the sins of the world, but during his earthly ministry he walked the length and breadth of Israel in search of the lost. He had no greater desire than to save souls. He stated the purpose of his ministry in these words:

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10) Follow him as he deals with Zacchaeus, the woman at the well, and the dying thief. Listen to his stirring parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son. Hear his plaintive cry, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Yes, he even loved those who did not realize the time of their visitation.

Another example to emulate is that of the apostle Paul. He could not forget the boundless grace of God which transformed him from a persecutor and a blasphemer to an ardent defender and dedicated proclaimer of the gospel. Motivated by a burning zeal for the Gospel and an unfeigned love for souls, he "spent and was spent" and became all things to all men that he might save some. He considered himself "a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and unwise." (Romans 1:14) Regarding his own people he said, "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved." I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Just think of it! Willing to be condemned - to go to hell - if only his people could be saved! Fortunate the congregation who has a pastor with even a small measure of that dedication and concern for souls.

Going back to our synodical roots in the old Norwegian Synod, we note that Herman Amberg Preus in his last address to the Synod in 1893 (which was also the 40th anniversary of the Synod) based his remarks on Proverbs 14:25 "A true witness delivereth souls," and said,

When our orthodox Lutheran congregations in this country joined together 40 years ago in a Synod, the chief purpose of this church organization was to "deliver souls" to the glory of God. By all its resolutions, measures, and institutions, it was to have the salvation of souls in mind and thus a true witness.

And Dr. C.F.W. Walther, a contemporary of President Preus, observed that "a pitiful object is the young minister who enters upon his office with the thought that his days of hard labor and toil are over, that he has entered a haven of rest and peace, which he decides to enjoy, since now he is his own boss and need not take orders from any person in the world....But blessed is the minister who starts his official work on the very first day with the determination to do everything that the grace of God will enable him to do in order that not a soul be lost by his fault."

Go forth, then, with that attitude. May your prayer be that of the hymnist,

Wisdom and zeal and faith impart,
Firmness and meekness from above;
To bear Thy people on their heart,
And love the souls whom Thou dost love.

(Hymnary 90, v 3)

Then your ministry will truly glorify God and be a blessing to many!

-- Wilhelm W. Petersen

WHAT THE NORWEGIAN SYNOD HAS WANTED AND STILL WANTS

By Dr. U. Vilhelm Koren, 1890

The secretary of the Luther College Building Committee recently directed a kind word "to our Synod's Fathers." After mentioning the College fire he says: "The great cause that you wanted to promote, the truth which you by your work wanted to have proclaimed and established among your contemporaries and your descendants, has broken through and gained the victory.... But your encouragement and instruction is still needed. Then teach the younger generation which will soon be taking your place what you have done, why you have done it, and what it is their sacred duty to do."

These undeserved words of recognition have up til now not received an answer. But the one who wrote those humble words is not a youth any more. He and those of his own age are men who have shown that they understood our Synod's task, and the few of us still remaining who worked in the service of the synod when it first founded Luther College can, with God's help, safely leave the continuation of the work to younger and strong hands.

Still, as long as we remain, we do not have the right to take it easy. For "the great cause which we wanted to promote," "the truth which we wanted to have proclaimed and established among our contemporaries and descendants" has, to be sure, "broken through and gained the victory," to the extent that it has again become the banner about which the pastors and congregations of the Synod

have rallied in unity. --But just for that reason it is necessary to be the more zealous to stand firm. For in the Kingdom of Christ there is never peace in the sense that its citizens can take it easy and comfort themselves that they *have* the truth. Scripture, in the first place, teaches us that God will not let us retain it unless we bear its fruits and "lead holy lives according to God's word." In the second place, we will not be able to preserve the truth without struggling against everything in us that opposes it. In the third place, we will not be able to retain it without interference by others, if we are in dead earnest about holding it in honor. We have been forcibly reminded of this last point just lately by the following words from the camp of the Norwegian-Danish Conference in its periodical, "Lutheraneren":

"It is now the intention to pursue with full vigor the reconstruction of the burned building (Luther College). In this connection, they try to fanaticize the people of the Norwegian Synod; and they now write again in the manner common twenty years ago: The Norwegian Synod has been sorely tried in recent times to see whether it would remain true to the Lord's word, namely, the word of the justification of the sinner by grace alone; and to God's praise let it be said: It has stood the test. They who were not of it have gone out from it; but the Synod has remained standing on the old foundation which shall stand eternally: God's word and Luther's doctrine pure. If they can manage to make the people puffed-up and fanaticized with such talk, they will get money enough to rebuild the burned-downed house."

We do not believe that we have sought to get our people "puffed-up and fanaticized" by saying that our Synod has preserved the truth. We have again

and again impressed upon ourselves, our pastors and our congregations, the fact that the punishment of God, under which we have labored for a long time, can be rightly understood only when we acknowledge it as well-deserved chastisement, because we have not used the truth to better advantage and have not borne better fruits of it. Neither do we dare to hope to retain the truth if we do not seriously strive to be more faithful in its use. Nor have we ascribed to ourselves the glory for the fact that, in spite of all the attacks against it, the truth has still been preserved for our Synod. There is nothing for which we have been upbraided so strongly as just this that we are constantly admonishing one another to acknowledge our own impotence for anything good, including also "preservation of the truth."

We have not sought to "fanaticize" the people either. Fanaticism is an enthusiastic, blind zeal for this or that pet opinion, either false or at least misunderstood. False doctrine can fanaticize people. Party passion likewise. So can excitement due to false accusations. Thus the Jews were fanaticized against the Saviour and against the Apostles. Ringing phrases, big words, and glittering promises and prospects can also fanaticize people, and that has often been done both within and outside the church.

The truth does not fanaticize. Its shell, or disconnected parts of it, can be used in the hands of demagogues to that end, but not the truth itself. It does not appeal to natural man; to him it is foolishness or a stumbling block, because it leaves him neither honor nor power. It can enthuse, and that we would like to have it do. In other words: We want our people to be filled with a holy, burning zeal for the old Lutheran, i.e., Biblical truth,

to acknowledge it as God's supreme gift, to be willing to sacrifice even life and blood for it, to say nothing of money and goods. We know that it is the work of the Holy Spirit, not ours, to call forth such love and zeal for the truth; but we know, too, that it is through the labors and testimony of His Christians that the Holy Spirit calls it forth, in that we learn to know "the things that are freely given to us of God," and "knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." (I Cor. 2, 12: II Cor. 5, 11).

But we know, too, that we cannot in this way expect general approval. We know that just as the Jews said to Paul (Acts 28, 22); "For as concerning this sect" (the Apostolic Church), "we know that everywhere it is spoken against"--so it is still with those who strictly adhere to the old Gospel.

THE TWO MAIN PILLARS OF TRUTH

But just because we would like very much to do what we can to call forth that burning zeal for the truth, we also very much want to do what we can to remind our people of what God has bestowed upon us. This is nothing new. It is the same as that which those who continually attack us are forever talking about, but which we have not found that they have taken seriously, namely, the catechism teachings, and the two fundamental principles on which these teachings are based. The first principle is the truth that "Holy Scripture is the only sure and perfect rule of our faith and life." The second is "the great truth that Jesus Christ is the way to salvation for all believing souls," in other words, that a man is justified and saved for Christ's sake by faith alone without the works of the law.

It is our conviction that these two main pillars of Lutheran, i.e., Biblical, truth are the only powerful weapons against the enemies of God's Kingdom both without and within us. All other weapons "he laughs at, the sly old dragon." But if we are to reap any benefit of them, we must grasp them and make use of them against our own flesh and blood as well as against others. It is of no use to put them down on paper as a heading and still act, write, and confess contrary to them. It is of no use to pretend that these two fundamental principles are so well-known and so self-evident that we do not need to dwell on them any further. The one who does this shows thereby that he has not even begun to understand and appreciate them.

These were the truths which founded the Lutheran Reformation; and where the Lutheran Church has remained true to its mission, it was by faithful adherence to these principles. For it is these principles which keep us from becoming as reeds swayed hither and thither by the many changing winds of doctrine. These alone lay the true and firm foundation for a right conversion and a sincere repentance. These alone preserve us from every temptation to labor for the Kingdom of God by new inventions, self-chosen worship and ecclesiastico-political schemes. These truths alone establish the heart and make the conscience clear and at the same time teach a man to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling and to have the assurance of faith regarding eternal salvation. These were the truths which were our light in the days when zeal and activity were most marked in the Norwegian Synod, and it was these truths for which we contended in the days to which the publication of the Conference so mockingly refers in the words: "Now they are writing again in the

manner common twenty years ago." It is true, we have discovered nothing new. We continue to contend for those things for which we contended then:--the two above-mentioned principles. The writer can prove that he, in all general conferences where he was present, as well as in all our own synodical conventions, sought according to his ability to have these two principles recognized and established. And after one discussion, particularly concerning the first of these principles, the doctrine regarding Holy Scriptures, he heard the following declaration made by one of the best-known men of the Conference: "Now I understand, finally, what it is that the Norwegian Synod has wanted;" while another who also has been in the service of the same body declared that he well recognized that what we had presented was the sound and original Lutheran principle regarding the Scriptures, but added humbly that he himself had not quite grasped it.

When we, then, the oldest servants in the Synod, are asked (as is now the case) to strengthen our people by our encouragement for the work and for the necessary sacrifices--I, for my part, do not know of anything better of which to remind them than the wonderful grace of God that we, despite all the attacks we have been exposed to and the apostasy which has so sorely grieved us, have nevertheless been able to adhere firmly to these two fundamental principles; and then, to remind them of the responsibility which this divine grace entails and to ask our pastors and our people earnestly and prayerfully again and again to study and be established in these truths.

II

One of those who together with us contended for those truths was the long-since deceased Pastor A. C. Preus, who after his return to Norway was pastor in Holt. He once wrote in Prof. Johnson's "Kirketidende" about the benefit of doctrinal discussions in pastoral conferences for the purpose of arriving at unity in doctrine, in part, as follows:

"But, says Mr. S., it is so difficult to 'show forth the necessary humility and self-denial' (viz., to let one's self be convinced)... It here depends chiefly on one thing..., namely, that one has a firm conviction that Scripture is the only source and rule of all doctrine, that it has only one sense, that there consequently is only one true doctrine; furthermore, that the preacher is an ambassador for Christ, whose sacred duty, therefore, it is to proclaim his Lord's and Master's message pure and unadulterated. If this has become thoroughly clear to the teacher of the Word, then he will have a sensitive conscience with respect to what he teaches others; then he will be prompted to search earnestly for the truth, and he will gladly accept every guidance to find it. And personally I have not a little 'experience in life' on that score; I know that humility and self-denial because of love of the truth will then put in an appearance as of itself; one will not at all know that he 'shows forth' anything like that. If one, on the contrary, imagines that the Christian system of doctrine is nothing else than a bundle of 'opinions,' 'views,' 'sentiments,' 'tendencies,' or what else it may be called, of which one is just as legitimate as the other, in other words, if one considers truth to be only relative, and that there is no absolute truth,

then it becomes a different matter. Then he will be easily contented; for then it may be all the same what one preaches, just so one preaches according to one or the other tendency, even if it is only as 'sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.' Then it is quite reasonable that a person does not want to waste his time or take the trouble to examine and to exchange one view for another, of which one may be just as good as the other... Mr. S. is very much apposed to '*rabies theologorum*' (the fury of the theologians), and I shall admit that it is not agreeable when it really is a 'rabies.' I shall admit that, especially in the beginning after we in the Norwegian Synod had become straight on the doctrine, there may have been something which, viewed superficially, appeared to be such a 'rabies.' But still I believe I can confidently assure him that it after all has been an innocent and well-intentioned thing. Everyone knows how it is when a person has found a great and important truth; he is fired with zeal to convince others of this truth; it is as when St. Paul exclaims: 'I would to God that all that hear me this day were altogether such as I am except these bonds.' I have no doubt that something has often been called 'rabies' which in reality was nothing else than the zeal of a faithful theologian for the pure doctrine of God's word, but which may have been displayed in a somewhat ill-timed and annoying way. And finally, I prefer, especially in teachers of the church, even this glowing 'rabies' to the ice-cold '*indifferentia theologorum*,' which considers one thing as good as another and like Cain, asks: 'Am I my brother's keeper?'

WHAT REV. P. A. RASMUSSEN ONCE WROTE

Thus did this man, who for many years served as

president of the Norwegian Synod, look upon the significance of the Lutheran Scriptural principle. Another of our co-workers at that time, Rev. P. A. Rasmussen, who has now become one of the most zealous opponents of the Norwegian Synod, wrote at about the same time as follows: "Prof. Weenaas says that in place of the Norwegian Synod's former Grundtvigianism has now come 'the well-known Missourian regorism.' which requires complete agreement even in the most peripheral questions and thus degenerates into complete spiritual tyranny. We welcome help. Also from Prof. Weenaas. But the professor does not want to help us. He does not want to have any conference with us. Our Synod is too much of a 'publican' Synod for that... For many years the Missouri Synod carried on a controversy with the high-churchly Buffalo Synod in defense of the Lutheran Biblical doctrine of the Church and Ministry... It has for many years engaged in controversy with the Iowa Synod, which is so highly praised by Prof. Weenaas... Through a period of twenty years the writer has attentively followed the controversies of the Missouri Synod, and has read the church periodicals which they have published, but he has not yet discovered that they have demanded any other agreement than that which God's Word demands, unity in all articles of faith which are clearly affirmed in Scripture. To demand such agreement is no spiritual tryanny for those who are of the truth, who from the heart acknowledge Scripture as the only sure and perfect rule of our faith and life; but it is indeed spiritual tyranny for all those who want to set 'their own spirit' above Scripture and make it an open field for their exercises in spiritual gymnastics... Prof. Weenaas believes that our Synod faces dangerous crises. We, too, believe this. Ought we not believe it, when we are convinced that we have the truth and that the Lord Christ is on board

the ship with us? When the disciples with the Lord Jesus aboard were to sail across the Sea of Gennesaret, they also faced a dangerous crisis; yet they did not perish. When Christ made his last journey to Jerusalem, He, too, faced a dangerous crisis; He knew this beforehand; yet He went. When He sent out His disciples as sheep in the midst of wolves, He foretold that they were going to face dangerous crises; they would weep and lament while the world rejoiced; they would suffer tribulation and anguish in the world; they would be hated by all men for His name's sake; they would be scourged and put out of the synagogues; yes, they would be killed because they confessed His name. And yet they did not let themselves be frightened. Luther, too, knew that he faced a dangerous crisis when he set out on the way to Worms; yet he went. Our Synod also has realized that, because of its cheerful confession of the truth as it is revealed in God's word and set forth in the Confessions of our Lutheran Church, it will face dangerous crises; but that has not deterred it from 'confessing and not denying.'"

Thus far that former co-worker.

This is what the Norwegian Synod has contended for, and still contends for:--Unwavering obedience to that "which is written," and a frank confession in accordance with it. We have therefore placed this word in the official seal of our Synod: "GEGRAPTAI," i.e., "It is written," and we have, therefore, chosen as a motto for our "Kirke-tidende" these words of our Saviour in John 8, 31, 32: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

BY THE WORD ALONE

He who really believes, i.e., has the firm conviction, that the Bible is God's word, that God consequently has given to the holy men what they should write and the very words which they should use, also believes that God has referred us to this word and not to anything else, in all the things which belong to the salvation of our souls, to our spiritual life and the Kingdom of God on earth. He also believes that God in this word has given us the eternal, unchangeable truth; for with God there "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." His will does not change with the times. His will is not another now than it was at the time of Luther, and it was not another at the time of Luther than when Paul and Peter lived. Men change, the "spirit of the times" varies, but God's will is eternally the same. He who really believes that the Bible is God's word also believes that it is according to this word that we are going to be judged on the Last Day. He therefore also believes that this word is plain and clear and sufficient. For how could the merciful and righteous God want to judge us according to this word if it were not clear and sufficient for us sinful men who are ignorant in spiritual things? Jesus says: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin" (John 15, 22). He could not have said this if His word had been unclear and insufficient, so that they could not comprehend the meaning of the words. This applies also to the words of the Evangelists and Apostles; for when Jesus sent out the seventy disciples, He said to them: "He that heareth you, heareth me." (Luke 10, 16)

He who really believes, i.e., is convinced that the Bible is God's word, according to which

we are to be judged, cannot want to take issue with God and presume to pass judgment on His word, to accept some and to reject some of it. He will not allow his own thought or reason, or "considered knowledge" of other men to sit in judgment on God's word and accept some and reject some of it. He will perceive that it is necessary for us to "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10, 5), and to "learn not to think of men above that which is written." (I Cor. 4, 6)

He who really believes that the Bible is God's word, that which "God has spoken," cannot want to deny any part of this word. He will realize that if he sits in judgment upon a part of God's word, he has rejected all of it; for he has then made himself lord over the word. If he has a right to judge and reject one part of that "which God has spoken," why should he not have a right to reject another part?

Luther says, "He that believes, does not judge, but lets himself be judged and surrenders to another's judgment, and says in fact: 'In this I am a fool and do not understand it; for I have not seen or heard nor experienced any of it. But since God says so, I will believe it, and follow the word and let my own thoughts and reason count for nothing'... He who does not do this, has nothing of faith or of God and what belongs to God, but proceeds like a blind person who wants to judge the color or the light of the sun, of which he has never seen or perceived anything." (W.W.X, 13, 14) And just as one who believes God's word does not himself dare to reject any truth or doctrine of God's word, so he cannot make common cause with those who reject any doctrine or truth of God's word. Nor does he dare to say:

It is all the same; I do indeed believe, i.e., I am indeed convinced that God has said it, but it is all the same; it is not so dangerous; it does not depend so precisely on this, just so we are spiritual and pious.

THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE

He who believes that the Bible is God's word has thereby a reliable touchstone by which to judge the various discoveries of the modern spirit, which are now being offered in pulpit and press; for example, that it is a spiritless, out-moded, and reprehensible notion which men formerly harbored:--That the Spirit of God inspired in the minds of the holy men not only "what" they should write, but also "the very words" which they should use. This we know very well, that if we should maintain that the Holy Ghost used His servants, the evangelists and apostles, as automatons who wrote without themselves knowing or feeling any responsibility for what they wrote, or without being conscious of the purpose of their writing, etc.,--then we would come into conflict with Scripture itself. For it shows us that the "holy men of God" were not such unconscious instruments. If anyone, therefore, shows us that one theologian or another has presented the doctrine of Inspiration in such a "mechanical" way, and consequently has passed by what rightly may be called the "human side" of Scripture, then we reject such a presentation as incorrect, because it is not Scriptural. For we see from Scripture itself that the holy men wrote what they themselves wanted to write, and they wrote both when and to whom and about the things and with the words which they themselves knew that they ought and wanted to write. But at the same time we insist upon it as infallible truth that the Spirit of God put into their minds also

"the very words" they should write, so that we do not regard only the thoughts, but also the expressions and words as being God's words,-- i.e., just those words which God wanted spoken to us, and whose divine truths we therefore can trust, because we can say: "God has spoken it." If we should separate the thoughts from the expressions, then we would no longer have any "Holy Scriptures," and we would be altogether at the mercy of arbitrariness. In regard to *the manner* in which Inspiration has taken place, nothing has been revealed to us. Nor do others know anything about it, so that it is idle and useless to discuss that.

He who believes that the Bible is God's word knows also what attitude to take toward the contention of the modern spirit, that over against "Science" it will never do to believe that everything in the Bible is true. If he believes, indeed, that the Bible is God's word, then he also believes that where "Science" comes to any conclusion which proves to be in real conflict with the words of Scripture, then those scientific conclusions are thereby branded as false,--something which will not be surprising to those who know a little about the history of Science.

He who believes that the Bible is God's word, also believes that the Holy Scripture, and that alone, shall be the judge of all doctrine and in all doctrinal controversies. He is not affected by the objection which is so often raised: How can you know that just your interpretation of Scripture is the correct one? Do you claim to be infallible, and that your interpretation is infallible?

SCRIPTURE INTERPRETS ITSELF

This objection is raised because they do not acknowledge the clearness and sufficiency of Scripture, and because they, therefore, have lost confidence in it, as if it required the human science of interpretation in order to be understood. Those who bring this objection do not realize that they themselves show they have no firm faith and conviction regarding what Scripture says. If they did, they would themselves have to make the same claim which they criticize in us. They show that in place of faith, i.e., a firm conviction, they have only an "opinion," a "view," and in that case it cannot be of much consequence whether they are right or wrong. It is the old contention of doubt and indifference that "God's word can be explained in so many ways." We do not believe this. We believe what Scripture itself in many ways requires us to acknowledge, namely, that in all articles of faith Scripture in itself is clear and plain and that it often is obscured and misinterpreted in many ways by those who do not use it rightly. We believe that the right use of God's word, as we teach our children, is to "pray God for the enlightenment of His Spirit, read and hear it devoutly and diligently, and earnestly purpose to live according to the word." He who does this, uses the word as a rule and guide to satisfy the hunger of his soul and not his carnal curiosity and he will not "prejudge the meaning of the words in accordance with his own desires, but he will without bias seek in it the truth which is unto godliness and try his heart according to it."

Nor does he who really believes that the Holy Scripture is God's word let himself be confused when he is accused of pride because he is convinced

he has the truth and the true doctrine of God's word in all points. It was not pride in Luther and our Lutheran fathers when they confessed this concerning themselves, and neither is it pride when we make this claim, since we teach the very same doctrines as they taught, namely, those which are presented in the Confessional writings in the Book of Concord. As they said, so we also say: If it is shown us from God's word that we err in any point, we will readily let ourselves be convinced; and we hope that God also will help us to acknowledge our errors. But then, of course, another procedure must be followed than this that they first falsely impute to us a doctrine which we have never held, and then show from God's word that this doctrine is false,--a procedure to which the Norwegian Synod has been subjected in every single controversy hitherto.

We have Luther as our predecessor also in this respect. He says against Carlstadt: "You miserable spirit, why do you not attack the proper matter? Why do you not attack our doctrine? You attack us for a strange doctrine which you load on to us and falsely impute to us, but which is not our doctrine. What is easier to do than to fabricate a lie and impute it to someone and then to contend against it and become a champion?" (W.W.XX, 362)

MAY WE BE CERTAIN OF THE TRUTH?

We do not want to be "puffed up" because we have pure doctrine. If we were, then we would not have the pure doctrine; for we know from God's word that if things had gone as we deserved, we would have erred in all points. Nor do we want to make our hearers puffed up. But we would like very much for them to be happy because of this

great and glorious grace of God that they have certainty of faith, since they know that what they believe is what God Himself has said. If we can lead them to cling with sincerity of heart to that "which is written," so that they judge themselves according to it in doctrine and life, then our testimony has borne its fruit. Therefore we wish very much to impress upon our hearts and ourselves both the great joy and the grave responsibility which are ours through having the solid and unfailling truth clearly revealed to us in Holy Scripture, so that when we adhere to it, we can be certain that we will not go astray. God did not taunt us when He gave us His word and said: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed."

We know very well that a believer also may err in doctrine in one point or another, but if he does that, it is precisely because, instead of following God's clear word, he has followed "his reason, his considered opinion, his heart, his prejudice, or the prestige of other men." In the things in which he stands firmly on God's word he does not err.

If we could not be firmly convinced that we have the truth when we, without beating about the bush, adhere to "that which is written," then no certainty in spiritual things could be found on this earth. Then nothing would remain but the question of Pilate: "What is truth?" Doubt concerning what God had said was the source of the first sin and of the fall of mankind. It is this doubt which in our day more strongly than ever before is being sown and fostered and defended throughout the world. The word of Scripture without abridgment and without compromise is our only, but also our invincible weapon against these attacks upon the truth. We, therefore, hold strictly fast to the Old-Lutheran Scripture-principle.

When once the confidence in the clearness of the Bible and the certainty of faith which is built on God's clear word is shaken, and when men for that reason begin to think that after all it is a matter of little consequence whether they are united in faith or not, and that one thing can be just about as good as another (just so it does not come from the Norwegian Synod!)--then it will certainly not be long before one fundamental Christian truth after another will be despised and rejected and our people will in a little while be filling the churches of the Unitarians and the Universalists, until they end up by joining in with the croakings of an Ingersoll.

III

In the preceding, I have spoken about our Synod's position with regard to the Lutheran Scripture principle, viz, "That the Holy Scripture is to be the sole source, rule, and guide of our faith and our life." From this it follows that we do not recognize "reason" as source, rule or judge in matters of faith, neither "the Church," nor any individual teacher in the church, nor any pastoral conference, nor any congregation, nor any synod, nor any majority, but only "that which is written." The fact is, we have the confident conviction that "in all things necessary to know in order to be saved the Holy Scriptures are plain enough to him who uses them aright," whether he is lay or learned. For our faith "should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

I now want to call to mind the position of our Synod with regard to the second fundamental principle of the Lutheran Church, namely,

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE

From Scripture we have learned to see, as the Lutheran Church has always confessed, that this truth is the chief point in all true preaching, all Christian faith, and everything that belongs to Christianity has a double purpose, viz., that God may be glorified, and that we may be saved, so certain is it that the doctrine of Scripture which teaches how we may become righteous before God is the chief point around which all else centers. For this doctrine alone gives to God the honor which belongs to Him, wholly and unabridged, and only he who is righteous before God is saved. Important as all of God's word is, there is nothing in Scripture which governs, determines, and explains everything else in such a way as does this truth. It is in the most eminent sense the *Gospel*, the true word from which God's incomprehensible wisdom and love shine forth, the "glad tidings" concerning Jesus Christ, that which alone can bring us true comfort when we are afflicted and assailed by our sins and give us victory and peace in the hour of death.

It, therefore, follows of itself that every church body which lays claim to the name "Lutheran" must confess that it wants to adhere to the doctrine of justification by faith. Even the different Protestant denominations outside of the Lutheran Church make this claim for themselves.

WHAT THE SCRIPTURES SAY

Among the manifold passages in Scripture in which this truth is taught us directly and indirectly, I want to mention the following, which I would ask the kind reader not to pass over lightly

because he knows them so well, but to read them slowly, again and again, even if he possibly may know them by heart: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1, 29). "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead of sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (I Peter 2, 24). "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Is. 53, 5). "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures," (I Cor. 15, 3). "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. 4, 25). "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." (I Peter 3, 18). "That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2, 9). "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts 10, 43). "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4, 12). "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20, 31). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts 6, 31). "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3, 16). "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3, 18). "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth

to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." (Rom. 3, 23-25). "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6, 23). "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. 1, 7). "And if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace." (Rom. 11,6). "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." (Rom. 3, 20-22). "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Rom. 3, 27-28). "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." (Rom. 3, 31). "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned by grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (Rom. 4, 4-8). "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (II Cor. 5, 21). "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law

shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. 2, 16). "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Gal. 2, 21). "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all the things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. 3, 9-10). "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." (Gal. 3, 21-22).

On these and similar passages of Scripture the Lutheran Church has based its confession regarding justification. An attentive reader of the Lutheran confessional writings will soon see that the doctrine of justification by faith without the deeds of the law runs like a red thread through them all. For, as Luther, and the Lutheran Church with him, says in the Smalcald Articles: "The first and chief article is this... Of this article nothing can be yielded (nor can anything be granted or permitted contrary to the same) even though heaven and earth, and whatever will not abide should sink to ruin.... And upon this article all things depend which we teach and practice in opposition to the pope, the devil, and the world." Trig. p 461, 63. And since it is required for an honest confession that everything which runs contrary to the confessions be rejected, we also find that in our confessional writings, when required, express declarations are added concerning various teachings and opinions which we must reject in accordance with God's word, if we want to keep the doctrine of justification pure.

The fact is that if this doctrine is to be preserved, and if anxious sinners are to retain the blessed comfort which our heavenly Father has prepared for them, then it is not sufficient that we retain the three words, "Justification by Faith," and superficially confess it in a general way. One cannot keep this, the most precious treasure and greatest comfort of God's word, unless he in sincere obedience clings to the chief truths of Scripture which are inseparably connected with said doctrine.

THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF SIN

Thus one cannot keep the doctrine of justification pure, if he does not hold fast to the Scripture doctrine of sin. Scripture does not depict sin merely as a weakness, a deficiency, an infirmity. It teaches us that sin is utter corruption, a complete falling away from God; that in spiritual things, therefore, our understanding is darkened and our will is incapable of that which is good and inclined to all evil; and that in our hearts we are God's enemies and subject to His righteous judgment. We cannot, therefore, enter the Kingdom of God unless a complete change has taken place. It is this which the Savior explains to Nicodemus when He shows him: "that which is born of flesh, is flesh;" and "except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." This new birth takes place when we by God's word come to faith in the Savior and learn to see in Him the revelation of God's love. But we cannot come to this faith unless we first learn to know our own sinful wretchedness. And this again cannot come to pass unless we learn to realize what God's just law demands of us.

For God's just law demands something far different of us than that we shall merely "strive after that which is good," and "do our best," and the like. It demands neither more nor less than that we shall be entirely without sin, perfectly pure and holy, and if we be not such, it condemns us, without appeal. It admits of no alibis. Now since we all are unholy, and since there is nothing good in our natural condition, the proper effect of the law will therefore be that "every mouth is stopped, and all the world becomes guilty before God." On the other hand, where the doctrine of Scripture concerning man's sinful corruption is weakened, and where the preaching of the law is thus confused or changed, there man will continue to excuse himself, or to boast of his sincerity and good intentions, or to seek false supports in himself, e.g., in his outward use of the Word and the Sacraments, or in his good intentions or disciplined morality, or in other phases of his conduct; in this way the poor man does not learn to know fully his own sinfulness and damnable condition, and consequently does not learn to know the Savior, or, which is the same thing, to place all his confidence and find all his comfort in Him alone.

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD'S GRACE

Neither can the doctrine of justification be preserved pure, if we weaken or change the doctrine of God's grace. It belongs to the essence of grace that it is free, that it originates in, and is founded solely and alone on, God's love and mercy; consequently it is not founded on, nor conditioned by, anything which *we* first have presented or shall present. God says by Isaiah: "For my name's sake will I defer mine anger... For mine own sake, even

for my own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another." (Is. 48, 9-11). St. Paul, Rom. 9, 15, calls to mind God's words to Moses: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." From these words he then concludes: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that showeth mercy." (v. 16).

The fact is that the concept "grace" excludes every thought of God having been moved by any good which He found in us, or which was our own.¹ St. Paul teaches us this when he says: "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace." (Rom. 11, 6); and in Eph. 2: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." Of ourselves we have nothing that is good. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" Every holy thought, every good resolve, every motion of good-will in us is of God." But even these good effects of God's grace in us are, because of the sin inherent in us, imperfect and more or less contaminated in such a way that we by them cannot stand before God, but must continually implore Him for mercy. "Woe unto the life of man, however much it may be worthy of praise, if it be judged with mercy removed." (Ap. of Augsburg Conf.) Trigl. p. 209. Luther asks: "Why do they all persecute this doctrine of God's grace, and call it heresy? It is because they do not want to have their own doctrine and work despised or rejected. That God's grace gives us so much, this they might tolerate. But that what is their own should be so entirely worthless, and that mere grace alone should avail before God, that must be

heresy! For they would also have their own hand in the matter and of their free will accomplish so much that they can earn and buy God's grace and all the above-mentioned blessings. Thus not God's grace, then, but our merits must first acquire the grace, so that we become the fellows who lay the first foundation stone, on which God later can build His grace and mercy." (W.W. 1679).

Now if God's grace is made dependent on something which we ourselves provide, then justification by faith is destroyed and all true comfort gone. For then we would not trust in God's grace until we were certain that we have provided that which is necessary to obtain it. If we found that we had done this, and from that concluded that God now would be gracious to us, then we would be building on ourselves and our own works and not on God's grace. For that which we then called "grace," we had ourselves effected. It would then be conferred on us because of our own conduct by which God was governed. But this is not grace. It is merit, even if one does not want to call it that. Scripture calls it "debt," (Rom. 4, 4), which is the same as merit. But God's glory is thereby violated and Christ's merits are shoved aside. Nor do we then become justified by faith. For faith abides by, and builds upon, what God has said, and not upon what we ourselves have done. "Faith is the evidence of things not seen." Our own work and our own conduct is something which we can both see and know. To believe and to trust in that is, therefore, not the Christian faith. This pertains as well to the works of God which we confess in the third article as to those which we confess in the second and first articles; otherwise it would not be an article of faith.

THE UNIVERSALITY OF GRACE

Furthermore, the doctrine of justification by faith will not be preserved pure, if God's word concerning the universality of grace is violated and limited. If we are to become just before God by believing in Christ, then we must first of all know from God's word that Christ died and rose *for all*, and not only for a few. In the next place we must know from God's word that God in truth has intended that all men should partake of the salvation which Christ at such great cost has won. And since we see from God's word that it is only by faith that we can partake of this salvation, and that no one by his own strength can come to faith, then we must also by God's word learn to see that He wants to help all to come to this faith, and that consequently the works of grace which belong to the third article of the creed are just as surely intended for all men as those which belong to the first two articles. If this were not told us explicitly and clearly in God's word, we should not have a firm foundation on which to stand. The more humble a person was and the more sincere his consciousness of his sins, the more difficult it would be for him to come to faith and thus be justified. Yes, it would be impossible for him. He would think, and would have to think, that he could not expect any grace, if he did not have God's explicit word that grace was also just for him. God's word has therefore powerfully and clearly taught us that grace and salvation are procured for *all* men, that the Gospel promise applies to all men without exception, and that Christ therefore calls all sinners to Himself and promises them rest for their souls. There every anxious soul can find comfort; for he knows that he is a human being and that he is a sinner.

In the Norwegian Synod, the doctrine of the Universality of God's grace has always been strongly insisted upon, and it has been carefully set forth from the beginning of the late controversies. As an example of this I shall take the liberty to reprint what I, (in the very first contribution in these controversies in 1881), wrote in my little essay entitled: "Can and ought a Christian to be certain of his salvation?" There we read: "To this truth, that the promises of the Gospel apply to all men, 'we must in every way hold resolutely and firmly.' Furthermore, we must hold strictly to the truth that the call of God is not jugglery, as if He called only some with an effectual call, while the others only appear to be called. No, according to Scripture, God's call is a serious and holy call, and in those whom He thus calls He will work through the word, that they may be enlightened, converted, and saved. For the word, whereby we are called, is a ministration of the Spirit which gives the Spirit, or whereby the Spirit is given, II Cor. 3, 8, and is a power of God unto salvation, Rom 1, 16. And since the Holy Ghost wishes to work through the word, and to strengthen and give power and ability, it is God's will that we should receive the word, believe, and obey it!" Trig. pp. 1071, 1073.

If the promises were not universal; if we did not from God's own mouth know that He will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth; if we did not know, then, that God's call is a serious, efficacious and faithful call--we should have no ground whatsoever on which to stand, and there could be no question of having by faith any certainty of our salvation. The thought of there being an election of grace, and that many are called but few are chosen, would

then be a horrible doctrine which would lead either to arrogance or to despair; for what assurance would I then have that all those promises applied to me? None at all.

Now, however, since we see that God's word teaches so clearly and indisputably that God does not desire the death of any sinner, but that He invites all to Himself, that Christ wants to gather us all under His wings, yes, that God is angered when we do not want to come (Luke 14, 21), while there is joy in heaven over every sinner that repents--now we have a foundation which cannot be moved.

We, least of all men, can endure to have anyone deny the universality of grace,--we who have learned to know that we can do absolutely nothing, to obtain salvation, so that the only reason we can hope to be saved is because salvation from the very first to the very last is an entirely free and unmerited gift merely and solely by grace alone. He who believes that he himself can help, even ever so little, by his acceptance of grace or by his non-resistance, etc.;--that he consequently in some way or other is not quite as great a sinner as others,--he may yet think that he has hope--for he has still a little in himself on which to base his hope; but he who with Paul has acknowledged (not only said) that he is the greatest of all sinners would have to despair if the radiant glory of the Gospel,--this, that it is for all, for all sinners,--did not disperse the darkness and draw and beckon him along on the way to God.

There is therefore no greater injustice than to assert that we violate the universality of grace. That would be to shut the door against ourselves, for to us there is no other door to life emboldening

us to count ourselves among the children of God. But God be praised and glorified! We now have a foundation, and a foundation which cannot be moved. What proof do we have that it cannot be moved? This, that we are altogether helpless, and that we therefore look to God alone for salvation, and that we have his unfailing word and promise concerning our salvation. This foundation cannot be moved; its name is: "Christ for us and in us and with us and over us, our Alpha and Omega, our beginning and end."

And again: If we could help along a little, choose the good, go to meet God, etc., and if we, consequently, in so far would see to it that we did our part and built our hope on this that we had done our part (while God did His,)--yes, then our hope would be, in accordance with the foundation on which it was built, unstable, uncertain, tottering. No wonder, therefore, that he who has not renounced self completely and fully, wavers between hope and fear concerning his salvation, yes, that he even insists that it is right thus to waver.

He, on the other hand, who sees that he has no prospect whatever to help even in the least (alas, how slowly and with what difficulty we learn this lesson!)--he who finds all avenues closed and sees no way out--he asks: What will God do with me? And then God answers him by the Gospel.

THE DOCTRINE OF CONVERSION

Furthermore, the doctrine of justification cannot be kept pure, if the true doctrine of conversion is not preserved. This applies as well to the *necessity* of conversion, as to its *source* and the *means* by which it is effected.

The purpose of the doctrine of God's word concerning justification by faith is not that we should be able to explain this doctrine, but that we should make use of it, so that we actually come to faith and thus become righteous before God. But this cannot be accomplished without conversion. If we, therefore, should either set aside the doctrine of conversion or distort it, then we would surely not preserve the doctrine of justification pure, and there would be neither faith nor righteousness. Christ says that we in His name should preach repentance and forgiveness of sin. If we preached only concerning forgiveness of sin (righteousness) but not concerning repentance, then that doctrine would neither be understood, nor would it bear fruit. For without repentance there is no faith and consequently no justification by faith. If one neglects or minimizes the necessity of repentance and at the same time constantly emphasizes justification by faith, then many are tempted to imagine that they believe in Christ simply because they give their assent outwardly to the Gospel. Thereby they only become strengthened in their carnal security. One of the main truths on which conversion is founded has been expressed by the Lord Himself in these words: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." On the basis of this passage, we teach our children that "the faith which shall apprehend Christ must be awakened by the feeling of the misery of our sins." The knowledge and feeling of the misery of sin is consequently necessary, otherwise there will be no faith. It is for this purpose that God has given us the law: to terrify secure sinners, humble the proud, break the hard hearts, and to bring men to a knowledge of their misery and of the dangers threatening their souls. Now if the law is not used, or if it is not used rightly, if it is weakened or mixed

with the gospel, then it will not accomplish the object for which God has given it. It will not bring about true godly sorrow and will not become a "school-master to bring us unto Christ." Then in the hearts that have been dealt with in this way, there will not be brought about any true knowledge of the Saviour, nor any consciousness of the need of Him, nor any true faith and trust in Him; and to such souls "justification by faith" will be only an empty phrase or a soft pillow,--oftenest both.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEANS OF GRACE

Moreover, the doctrine of justification cannot be preserved pure if the doctrine of the Means of Grace, the Word and the Sacraments, is distorted.

We, as Lutherans, confess in Article V of the Augsburg Confession as follows:

"That we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith, where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel, to wit, that God, not for our own merits, but for Christ's sake, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake. They condemn the Anabaptists and others who think that the Holy Ghost comes to men without the external word, through their own preparations and works."

This article does not treat of "Ecclesiastical Order," which is spoken of later on in the Confession (Art. 14), but of the means and instruments by which God works the justifying faith in our

hearts, which we therefore call the Means of Grace. For what would it profit us that our Lord Jesus Christ had accomplished His great work of redemption, that He had suffered so heavily for us, that He had died for us, that He is risen again for us, that He had gained forgiveness of sin, life and salvation for us--what would all this profit us, if these blessings of salvation were not brought to us, so that we could make them our own? We would then still be without comfort and hope; for, Paul asks, "How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard?" God has, therefore, ordained these means through which He proclaims and sends us these spiritual and eternal blessings which the Saviour has procured for us and by which He also works faith, i.e., the acceptance and appropriation of these blessings, in our hearts.

For since it is God's thoughts which are contained in the word, it cannot be vain and without effect, as is often the case with human thoughts and words. As the word of truth, in which the thoughts and will of God dwell, it is powerful and efficacious and able to accomplish that for which God has sent it, namely, both to enlighten our understanding and to change and renew our mind and heart. The Holy Ghost who proceeds from the Father and the Son speaks and works through the same. We, therefore, call it a Means of Grace, and an instrument of the Spirit. But the word or the sacrament does not become such a means only when we use it and use it rightly. "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. 23, 29). "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4, 12).

"Whether we hear or forbear," whether we believe or blaspheme, the word has in itself the divine power and ability to work upon our hearts, because the thoughts and will of God dwell in it. It is true of every tool, that it does not require its effectiveness only after it has been used, or by being used. The hammer has the power to crush and the balsam the ability to heal, even if it is not used, although, to be sure, this power and ability does not become *apparent* until it is used. Since with God His word and will are one, so the blessing which God promises us in the word is present in the word and is offered and held forth and given in and with the word. "For the promises of God in Him are yea, and in him Amen" (II Cor. 1, 20). The word bears in itself the gift and the heavenly blessing, and thereby works the faith which says: "Be it unto me according to Thy word," and which thus appropriates and possesses the gift. Thus, God be praised, all His rich grace and gifts are in the word and sacraments. In the word (both in the Gospel for all and in absolution for each individual) and in Baptism and in the Lord's Supper these blessings are deposited, contained and presented to us. The word and the sacraments are the hands of God (as has been said of old) by which He brings and offers to us the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. In these He reveals to us His divine thoughts and will, His wonderful counsel of salvation, which otherwise would be hidden from us. God's thoughts and will are the eternal truth,--eternal, mighty and unchangeable as God Himself. His thoughts are not our thoughts, even as our ways are not His ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than our ways and His thoughts than our thoughts. His word is spirit and life and brings with it spirit and life; for God's word is a creative word, and "it shall not return unto Him void."

Over against us sinners the word is full of incomprehensible, compassionate grace and love. It can be resisted and despised--but then the sentence is passed too. Nothing is so dreadful as to reject God's love. Then no salvation is possible. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?" "He that believeth not shall be damned," but "blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it," said Christ. And in another place He says: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." For grace and truth have entered into his heart, and he is "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever."

God communicates with us through the word and sacraments and in no other way. He has bound up salvation with the Means of Grace. True, the almighty God is not bound so that He could not also without means accomplish His object; but He has Himself instituted these means, and in His wisdom and love He has bound us to them. He has thereby bestowed on us an unspeakable blessing, inasmuch as we now may know for certain where He can be found and do not need to go wrong when we seek Him. It is this blessing in which Moses and Paul rejoice, which they praise, and to which they refer us when they tell us that we do not now need to seek, or ask, or cross the ocean, or ask about how we may find the way to heaven in order to bring Christ down from above, or descend into the deep in order to bring Him up again from the dead. "The word is nigh thee," they say; there you find him.

God directs us to the word and sacraments also through the Apostle John, when he says: "There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three

agree in one." All three bear the same witness. He therefore continues: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He has testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." (I John 5, 8-11). The Lutheran Church accordingly subscribes to these three witnesses, as we read in the Apology (Trig. p. 309), where it says about Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Absolution that they "have God's command and the promise of grace, which is peculiar to the New Testament. For when we are baptized, when we eat the Lord's body, when we are absolved, our hearts should be firmly assured that God truly forgives us for Christ's sake. And God at the same time, both by the word and by the rite, moves hearts to believe and conceive faith, just as St. Paul says, Rom. 10, 17; 'Faith cometh by hearing.' But just as the Word enters the ear in order to strike our heart, so the rite itself strikes the eye, in order to move the heart. The effect of the word and of the rite is the same, as it has been well said by Augustine that a sacrament is a *visible word*, because the rite is received by the eyes, and is, as it were, a picture of the word, signifying the same thing as the word. Therefore the effect of both is the same."

In the same way the Smalcald Articles speak, where we read: (Trig. pp. 456, 497): "And in those things which concern the spoken word, we must firmly hold that God grants His Spirit or grace to no one, except through or with the preceding outward word, in order that we may be protected against the enthusiasm, i.e., spirits who

boast that they have the Spirit without and before the word, and accordingly judge Scripture or the spoken word and explain and stretch it at their pleasure.... All this is the old devil and the old serpent, who also converted Adam and Eve into enthusiasts and led them from the outward word of God to spiritualizing and self-conceit.... Therefore we ought and must constantly maintain this point, that God does not wish to deal with us otherwise than through the spoken word and the sacraments. It is the devil himself, whatsoever is extolled as Spirit without the word and sacraments."

GOD'S WORD IS A POWER

God's word is not like one of the mileposts or road signs which we often see at the cross-roads for the information of travelers. It does not merely show men a way which they must seek to follow as best they can. Nor does it have only the persuasive power which every eloquent word may have to move us. But there is in this word a supernatural power which is inseparably connected with it, since the Holy Ghost speaks through it, so that the power and work of the Spirit and of the word are identical, and it brings light and strength into the heart in which the word is given room. It affects us as it did those two disciples when they said to each other: "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" For the word does not only give us direction and information about a spiritual blessing, a salvation, which we must try to find elsewhere, but it has within itself this blessing, this salvation. It brings it to us. The Gospel in word and sacrament is a letter and a certificate, a document from God's own mouth and hand.

The content of this document is Christ and, together with Him, forgiveness of sin, salvation and eternal bliss, which are given us freely as a pure, undeserved gift. It is a testament, ratified and sealed, valid after the death of Him who made the testament, by which we are made heirs, as surely as we are poor, helpless sinners and have been "called" that we "might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." (Heb. 9, 15). As surely as it is stated in the word, so certainly does he that believes possess it. To anyone who doubts, the believer will say: See for yourself! There it is written. God does not lie. His name be praised! How shall I be able to thank and glorify and praise Him aright!

He who does not believe has nothing and fails to obtain the inheritance, but this does not affect the essence or contents of the Gospel or the Means of Grace. The condition of men, their use or neglect or misuse of the Means of Grace, does not alter the essence, contents of power of those Means. The fact that we are penitent and believing does not bring it about that there is forgiveness of sin in the word and sacraments. Neither does any one's impenitence and unbelief bring it about that there is no forgiveness of sin in the word and sacraments. If forgiveness of sin were not there, then unbelief would indeed be legitimate. Our penitence and faith do not make the Means of Grace more powerful than they are in themselves, but they achieve that we partake of the blessings which the word and sacraments bring. God's compassionate grace and forgiveness of all our sins, then, is in the word, in Baptism and in the Lord's Supper. "Faith does not bring forgiveness of sin into these things, but it draws it from them." Unbelief, on the contrary, doubts or denies that forgiveness of sin in the Means of

Grace, and that it is bestowed on us through them, and in that way it makes God a liar.

Here we see how closely the doctrine of the Means of Grace is connected with justification by faith alone. Faith comes by hearing. What I am to believe, then, must first have been told me. Or: What I am to appropriate by faith must first be offered to me in words. If I, then, want to have anything else as the basis for my righteousness before God than the mere word of God alone, then I cannot be justified by faith alone.

Consequently: Forgiveness of sin, and with it deliverance and salvation, is brought to us in the audible word (the Gospel) and in the visible word (the sacrament). This Gospel is the only healing power for sinners given by God. Therefore they are to receive it in their hearts and put their trust in it. It is true that no sinner of himself believes the Gospel, but its power is so great that it works and awakens faith in the contrite and humble sinner who does not obstinately and persistently resist the word.

Now if a person does not believe God's message of peace, but still has a fervent desire to be saved, he will seek elsewhere all sorts of other means to obtain peace, such as his own spiritual exercises, his good resolutions, his efforts and his conduct. By these things the poor, impotent sinner who has incurred the judgment of the Law thinks that he can be delivered from the danger threatening his soul and obtain God's grace. When salvation is sought in this way, the name of Christ is indeed very frequently used, but Christ is not sought in the word alone. Then we hear it said, Behold, here is Christ, and again, Behold,

He is there. The unstable heart puts its trust now in one thing and then in something else. It goes as with the woman with an issue of blood, who had tried all sorts of things and "had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse." She came to Jesus only after she had given up everything else.

As long as a person thinks that something else, something of his own, is required which he must bring to God in order to be saved, besides that which God gives in and through the word, so long will salvation not be by faith alone, and so long will he not in truth come to Christ. He may, indeed, speak of Christ and know much *about* Him, but he really does not know Him. It is not the true Christ to whom he clings; for He wants to be the only Saviour. As long as we ourselves want to furnish something, then salvation is not a gift pure and simple, won for us by Christ, brought to us in the Gospel and accepted by faith. For besides that which is given in the Gospel (Christ's merits), there is something else which the sinner thinks is necessary before he dares to believe that he is saved. It is unavoidable, then, that he either thinks that he has provided that which is to give him the right to believe, and hence he builds on this--therefore builds on something which is not Christ, consequently on a false foundation--or he thinks that he himself has not yet provided it and, therefore, has neither true comfort nor abiding peace. In both instances justification by faith is rejected.

It is, perhaps, necessary here to call attention to the difference between daring to believe and being able to believe. Since Christ has redeemed all men, and since God wants to have the

Gospel preached to all men and, consequently, also desires that all shall believe, then there is not a person in all the wide world who has any reason or right to say or think that he does not dare to believe. There are surely many honest souls who, because they have not heard or comprehended the Gospel aright, are filled with anxiety and think that, wretched as they are, they dare not apply to themselves God's glorious promises in the Gospel. Such persons have to be told again and again that there is nothing whereby they can honor and please God more than just by believing and making God's message of peace their own: that they are saved, that God is reconciled to them, and that all their sins are blotted out.

It is quite another matter that there are only too many who *cannot* believe, their condition being what it is, although they perhaps maintain that they believe and really imagine they do. For it is certain that an impenitent soul that feels secure in its sins cannot believe in Christ. One who does not seek salvation from sin has no use for the Saviour, and neither can he believe in Him so long as he is in this condition.

THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH

Furthermore the doctrine of justification cannot be kept pure if the doctrine of faith is corrupted. It is no wonder that the Biblical Lutheran doctrine of the essence of faith and its significance in justification always has been attacked. For the offence which always accompanies the Saviour and the Gospel is never so great as when it is proclaimed that we are justified and saved by faith alone without the deeds of the Law. Our fathers' declaration in the Augsburg Confession concerning faith was therefore

immediately attacked in the Catholic Confutation which was written against it. It here appeared, however, that the Papists did not understand, or would not understand, what Scriptures means by the faith which justifies. By "faith" they understand, in part, only the historic faith, a knowledge of God and His will and of Christ. In part, they satisfy themselves by claiming that when Scripture says: Faith justifies; then it is because it includes love (the fulfilling of the Law) within it. Since the keeping of the Law is never perfect and therefore cannot satisfy an alert conscience, there can never be any true comfort for the anxious sinner, something which the papal doctrine does not want him to have, since they teach that a sinner must be in doubt of having obtained grace.

The Lutheran Church has, therefore, firmly established what God's word teaches us concerning the essence and significance of faith, and it would be well if Lutherans, especially when they are drawn into doctrinal controversies, would strive to become thoroughly familiar with what is the true Lutheran doctrine concerning this chief article. Aside from the Augsburg Confession, they will find it carefully treated especially in the Apology, Art. II; in the Smalcald Articles, 2nd part, Article I, 3rd part Article III and in the Formula of Concord, Article III. As said before, it is found also throughout all our confessional writings.

In the Holy Scriptures, Heb 11, 1, the right definition of the essence of faith is given in these words: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." By the many examples set forth in the same

chapter, we are shown how this faith works and what divine power there is in it.

A better description of the essence of faith, written by men, could hardly be found than Luther's famous words about faith in his preface to the Epistle to the Romans: "Faith is not the human fancy and dream which some people mistake for faith.... When they hear the Gospel, they fall to work and frame for themselves by their own powers a notion in their hearts which says, I believe. This they then consider true faith. But as it is a human invention and notion, which never reaches to the bottom of the heart, it accomplishes nothing and works no improvement. But faith is a divine work in us, which transforms us and makes us to be born again of God (John 1, 13), and crucifies the old Adam, makes us in heart, temper, disposition, and in all our powers entirely different men, and brings with it the Holy Spirit.... Faith is a living, well-founded confidence in the grace of God, so perfectly certain that a man who has it would die a thousand times rather than surrender it. Such confidence and personal knowledge of divine grace makes its possessor joyful, bold, and full of warm affection toward God and all created things--all of which the Holy Spirit works in faith."

Faith, then, is not something which is merely a matter of the head and of the intellect, and which we can learn in the same way as we learn other things by human diligence from human teachers. Faith is not only knowledge of, and insight into, certain doctrinal theses, even if those theses are ever so correct and true. It would be possible for a person to have an excellent insight into the whole "system of doctrine;"

he might even be able to preach about it admirably, write about it, convince others of it; his exposition might be exact and to the last jot and tittle "orthodox;" yes, he might, according to his understanding of it mean what he says, and not be playing the hypocrite in contending for it,--and yet he might not have what Scripture calls faith. With all his insight, he might be an unbeliever and not righteous before God. For the chief point in faith is the "living appropriation," the fact that "the sinner is convinced that God's promises apply to him, that they are intended for him and are valid, since he from God's word hears, sees, and is convinced that he is included in the testament which by Christ's death is now become valid, that he by God Himself has been made an heir according to the promise." No impenitent and secure sinner can have this faith. He is unconcerned about the promise as well as the salvation which he neither seeks nor asks for. Just as Esau, when he reached for the tempting mess of pottage, spoke scornfully of his birthright, and just as the king who said: "Let God keep His heavenly Kingdom, if only I may keep my *Sans-Souci*,"² so the secure soul says: "Give me what I desire, money, honor, happy days; this I can appreciate. I have no use for the other things, at least not for the time being." Quite different is the case of the troubled sinner whose conscience is awakened, and who when reminded of death looks forward to the judgment (Heb. 2, 15). To him the Gospel becomes truly a savour of life unto life. And then when he has become convinced by the Gospel that he is saved, that all his sins have been fully forgiven, that God loves him, that He in whose mouth there is no guile has promised him a place in His Kingdom of glory, and that He will not fail him or forsake him in the tribulations and dangers of the world,

and when he may speak to God as his dear reconciled Father whose heart and arms are opened unto him,--and when all this and much more is gathered in the one, Jesus Christ, his dear Saviour--then it becomes apparent that the essence of faith is not only knowledge, but acceptance, appropriation, conviction, confidence, trust; and since faith, on account of the resistance of the old Adam, is not yet perfect, it appears as striving for, seeking, yearning, pursuing after that which God brings us in the word. Faith reaches out after it. Faith is the hand of the heart which apprehends that which God by His hands, the Means of Grace, lovingly presents to us. And thereby it possesses it. This benefit, Christ and His merits, is that which justifies the one who has it. And since we can possess it only by faith, we are justified by faith. The Lutheran Church, therefore, says in its Confessions: "Therefore it is considered and understood to be the same thing when Paul says that 'we are justified by faith,' Rom. 3, 28, or that 'faith is counted to us for righteousness,' Rom. 4, 5, and when he says that we are 'made righteous by the obedience of one.'"... "For faith justifies and saves not on the ground that it is in itself worthy, but only because it receives the promised mercy." (Trig. pp. 919 and 137).

WHY FAITH IS NECESSARY

Why, then, is faith necessary unto salvation? Is it because Christ has not done all that is necessary for our salvation, but that we at least must do something--namely believe? Far from it. The believer trusts simply in this that Christ has done all, and that he receives the righteousness of Christ in the word undeservedly, as a gift.

It is, therefore, not because God's grace is not sufficient, for God says expressly: "My grace is sufficient for thee." So, not because we bring God something which pleases Him, a good work which gains His favor,--not on this account are we justified by faith; but because faith is the only means whereby we can accept the grace which Christ already has won for us. It is not, then, because God sets up a new condition, a new work which we now must fulfill, but because faith is the only way, the only means, whereby we can come into possession of the promised blessing. In this sense, faith is a condition for our salvation. Justification is gained by Christ wholly and completely; it is brought, offered, and given to us in God's word and sacraments. Faith merely accepts. Faith does not give anything, but it receives. If faith were to be regarded as a good work of ours, then St. Paul could not again and again have placed it in direct opposition to works. As a work, faith would be classified under the first commandment and would always be imperfect. The Lutheran Church in its Confessions, therefore, calls to mind Paul's words in Rom. 4, 16: "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace," that is: The fact that we can be justified alone by believing and without performing any works shows just this that the inheritance is by grace, undeserved, a wholly unmerited gift.

It is, therefore, in the nature of the case that, just as a spiritual blessing as a rule cannot be brought to us except through the means by which one spirit communicates with another, namely by words (or signs, equivalent to words), so the spiritual blessing which comes by words cannot be received except by faith. Since, then, grace, Christ's righteousness, is offered and given to us in the word, therefore it cannot be received

except by faith. The Lutheran Church confesses this in the Apology when it, in several places, calls attention to the fact that "The promise cannot be received except by faith," and it bases this on the passage of Romans quoted above. (Trig. pp. 147, 148, 153, 155). In the meantime, it is not even in our power to accept God's promises. Scripture so exclusively gives to God the honor for our justification that it teaches us: "We cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ our Lord or come to Him, but it is the work of the Holy Ghost." The Lutheran Church has accordingly recognized this truth which is so clearly taught in God's word and has emphasized it most earnestly in her confessional writings. It is absolutely necessary to insist on this truth, if the doctrine of justification by faith is to be preserved, and if true comfort is to be given us in time of need and temptation. The fact is that if we ourselves could attain to faith or bring it forth, or even only cooperate in obtaining it, then there would be two who would have the honor for our justification, God and ourselves. In spite of all talk concerning grace, we should nevertheless not be saved by grace alone. We should then again have found a ground for our salvation other than Christ alone, and we would in part have to build on ourselves, the most wretched ground on which a sinner can build his hope.³

When faith has been created in a person he has thereby become a new creature, and this will then reveal itself through a new and holy life. This has, however, also caused many to think and to teach that we are justified before God by faith for this reason that faith is the mother of good works. If this were the case, then forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God would not be

merely and solely a gift of grace, but a reward for the works which are not yet performed, but which God foresaw, and on the basis of which God was pleased with us and received us. Scripture has, however, guarded against this error by constantly repeating the words that we are justified by grace, freely, without works, not by works, etc. Yes, Paul expresses himself so strongly about this matter that he says to the Galatians (5, 4): "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." The Lutheran Church has, therefore, also with such great care guarded the truths which come into consideration, in order to preserve this chief point of the Gospel, this heavenly comfort for the broken-hearted sinner, that justification is merely and solely by faith, "faith" in its proper sense, as the Apology terms it, as the hand which grasps the promise (Trig. 163, 165).

THE DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION

Finally, the doctrine of justification cannot be preserved pure, if the doctrine of sanctification is not given its proper place. We here speak of "sanctification" in the narrower sense, namely, as the daily renewal.

There are here especially two principal errors to be avoided. One is to pass sanctification by and minimize its significance and importance. The other error is to assign to sanctification an improper place, before justification or mixed into it.

If the necessity of sanctification is disregarded, one becomes guilty of misinterpreting the essence and significance of faith. The "life" of

justification is destroyed,--if I may use such an expression,--and there will be nothing left of it except the form. For why is it that our Lord Christ suffered and died for us? Why does God offer and give us the merits of Christ in the Means of Grace? Why does He work faith in our hearts through the same Means? And why does He testify in His word that He for Christ's sake accounts and judges the believer righteous if not to free us from sin and separate us from it? God bestows on us the righteousness of Christ in order that we may become like Christ. Christ has redeemed us in order that we might be His own, belong as a possession to Him, and serve Him. If a person, therefore, in his heart is convinced that he has become a child of God, then the dominion of sin is at once ended. If this is not the case, then it will in due time become evident that what he called faith was but a loose and unfounded thought and imagination. Renouncing the devil and all that belongs to him cannot be separated from faith in God's grace. A faith which does not change a person's nature, mind, thoughts, and aims is no real faith: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (II Cor. 5, 17). We ask our children: "What does a person receive in regeneration which he did not have before?" And we teach them to answer: "He receives the true living faith which apprehends Christ." He receives faith then by being "born again," shows indeed that a new life is here spoken of. Where there is life, it will be active and show itself. If it is a life from God, it will strive against sin and overcome it. St. John says (I John, 5, 4): "F. whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." When this has been said, it might seem superfluous to use many words to

encourage and exhort a believer to sanctification; for it is true, as Luther says in the passage on faith mentioned above, that "it is a living, busy, active, powerful thing. It is impossible that it should not be ceaselessly doing that which is good. It does not even ask whether good works should be done; but before the question can be asked it has done them, and it is constantly engaged in doing them"; and "it is impossible to separate works from faith, yes, just as impossible as to separate burning and shining from fire."

And yet we find that a greater part of the epistles of the Apostles to the Christian congregation is devoted to teachings and directions with regard to the fruits of faith, to exhortations and encouragements to sanctification, and in part even to reproofs for shortcomings and for negligence in sanctification. The reason for this is that a believer is not only spirit. The flesh, the Old Adam, also is still present. At first, faith is still weak; the new life may so easily be lost, and the believer may fall back into the state of natural corruption, and this will come to pass particularly by sins against conscience. Just as the physical life of a tiny newborn baby cannot stand much neglect if it is to be preserved, so neither can the new life of faith in the regenerate. If, then, the weak believer is not constantly and diligently reminded of God's holy will, His hatred of sin, the great misery from which God has delivered him, how great God's love is, how dearly Christ has bought us, and how we, therefore, in accordance with God's word ought to judge and deal with our sins and the faults which still cling to us,--if we instead of doing this, continue only to speak of grace and Christ's merit, without showing their purpose,--then the

doctrine of justification easily becomes only a spiritual sleeping potion, under the influence of which the faith which may have been kindled goes to sleep, and instead of the true faith, a counterfeit imitation-faith is produced. It is very difficult for the person concerned to see the difference between such false faith and the true faith, but in this false faith many souls finally sleep away into eternal death. For, says Luther in the place already referred to, "he who does not do such works, is a man without faith. He gropes and casts about him to find faith and good works, not knowing what either of them is, and yet prattles and idly multiplies words about faith and good works."

If it is the case that you "believe in Christ and that Christ dwells in you through faith," says an old teacher, "then show Him to us." It was the image which is born again in us through the raising again in Christ. If we believe that Christ has died for us, that He, accordingly, has died in our stead, then we believe, indeed, that God regards and accounts it as if we ourselves have died and have by our death paid the penalty for our sins. Therefore He has granted us remission of sins. If we seriously desire this forgiveness and peace with God, then we surely do not want to defy God by disobedience. If we continue in sin while we comfort ourselves with forgiveness, then we make Christ a servant of sin, i. e., instead of rejoicing in His deliverance and salvation from sin, we would be using His great sacrifice and bitter suffering as an excuse to sin the more securely. He, therefore, who continues in sin has fallen away from faith, if indeed he ever had any. In short: The faith which does not transform us into new creatures is not the true faith. It is the grace of

santification which we pray for, when we sing:

Grant me grace, O blessed Saviour,
And Thy Holy Spirit send,
That my walk and my behaviour
May be pleasing to the end;
That I may not fall again
Into death's grim pit and pain
Whence by grace Thou didst retrieve me,
And from which Thou has relieved me.

It is here, viz., as a fruit of faith, that man's "good conduct" has its place, but not preceding faith and justification or even as a cause of these.

WHAT THE NORWEGIAN SYNOD TEACHES ABOUT WORKS

Since the Norwegian Synod has often been accused of teaching falsely concerning man's conduct and of considering it an indifferent matter, yes, even of teaching that men may conduct themselves as they please, and that the elect will be saved no matter how they conduct themselves, it is perhaps not amiss to point out more explicitly what the Synod really teaches; I am certain that my brethren do not hold a different doctrine on this point than the one which is here presented.

After St. Paul has carefully set forth that "God who is rich in mercy, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," and that we thus are saved by grace through faith, not of works, he shows us God's purpose in bestowing on us this grace, when he says: "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The Lutheran Church,

therefore, confesses "that it is God's will, order, and command that the believers should walk in good works." And then it adds: "Truly good works are not those which everyone contrives himself from a good intention, or which are done according to traditions of men, but those which God Himself has prescribed and commanded in His word." (Trig. p. 939).

FRUITS OF FAITH ARE NECESSARY

These good fruits of faith are "necessary."³ Every branch in me that beareth not fruit," says Jesus, "He (the Father) taketh away." John 15, 2. If the branch is unfruitful, then, it shows that it does not have a living fellowship with the Vine which is the Saviour. For Jesus says: "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit," and "every branch that beareth fruit, He (the Father) purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." St. Paul, therefore, prays for his dear disciples in Philippi, whom he calls "my joy and crown," that they "may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." Phil. 1, 10, 11.

The good works, to which we shall and must apply ourselves, then, we are to learn to know from God's Law. They concern our whole life, not only our outward works, but also our speech and our thoughts. The motive power which is to set all these activities in motion is love, the grateful, childlike love to God, which therefore is the "first and great commandment," will become apparent in the first place in joy and longing for God, in a desire to please Him, and in a

holy fear and heart-felt trust and confidence. In the next place, it will become apparent in the fear of profaning God's name and in the desire and effort to glorify and hallow it, to call upon God's name, pray, praise and give thanks; furthermore, in highly honoring God's word, not neglecting it, letting it lie on the shelf, or despising it, but gladly hearing, reading, and learning it. But he who loves God cannot but love his neighbor, for God wants him to do that, and Jesus has said: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13, 35. St. John calls to mind these words of Jesus when he says: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I John 3, 14. But how does this love become apparent? The apostle says: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." I John 3, 18. Now, how this is done the Holy Spirit has explained to us especially through St. Paul in the 13th chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. The chief point in the chapter is that love "seeketh not her own." For sinful selfishness is the direct opposite of love to the neighbor and hinders it. Self-interest, self-glorification, wilfulness, obstinacy, self-conceit, self-sufficiency, etc.,--all these are contrary to love. When God wants us to love our neighbor as ourselves, He has thereby given us both our goal and the description of what we owe our neighbor. How do we love ourselves? However imprudent and sinful our love of ourselves may be, it is nevertheless certain that we love ourselves sincerely, unfeignedly, painstakingly, spontaneously, devotedly, constantly, indulgently, untiringly, and as a matter of course. Consequently, God wants us to love our neighbor in the same way: just as sincerely, just as painstakingly, just as

spontaneously, as devotedly, as constantly, as indulgently, as untiringly and just as much as a matter of course. We do not regard it as meritorious when we love ourselves. Neither should we count it as meritorious when we love our neighbor. As with all other things, it is to be done to the glory of God.

When such a great and general demand is made upon us all at once, the fact that it is so great and general is apt to be a hindrance to the understanding of what God demands in individual points. Just as the Law would hardly produce knowledge of sin if it merely said: "Thou shalt not do any evil, but all which thou doest shall be good," so we would not make much progress in sanctification, if the admonition were limited to a general demand that we should show forth the fruits of faith, love to God and love to our neighbor. God has prevented this superficiality by giving us the Ten Commandments and, furthermore, by carefully explaining them in Scripture and illustrating them by examples. He has moreover warded off misunderstanding of what we owe Him by warning us against thinking that we can serve or honor God by such works as we ourselves or other men, even with the best of intentions, have invented or chosen particularly for ourselves instead of the things which God has commanded. Such self-appointed works may, perhaps, glitter before men and give those who perform them reputation and honor, but if they are done without God's command and, as most often is the case, by setting aside what God has commanded, then they have no place in sanctification.

THE DAILY RENEWAL

Sanctification, or the daily renewal, embraces

our whole life. In sanctification everything is of importance, and one can tell most readily from the minor things whether it is genuine or not; for Jesus says: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Luke 16, 10. It will appear in the home, in the daily association, in conversation, in judging others, in writing, in countless small, seemingly insignificant things, but which nevertheless are determined and governed either by love or by wilfulness, selfishness, self-love, and vanity. Between parents and children it will appear in their endeavor to promote each other's true welfare, gladden each other, and make the home dear and full of blessing; between man and woman, in chastity and modesty; between old and young, superiors and subordinates, in mutual considerateness; between neighbors, in helpfulness and forbearance; toward the poor and the sick and those otherwise afflicted, who more than others are in need of the service of love; in church-life, in the congregation, in charitable contributions for the heathen and for suffering Christians, in civilian life, in trade and business, in the use of money, in uprightness and good faith, in kindness, placability, readiness to help,--yes, who can enumerate everything! "And whatsoever ye do," says Paul, "in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." (Col. 3, 17. It will appear everywhere that he, to whom many sins are forgiven, will love much." (Luke 7, 47).

But it is not only through admonition that God's word seeks to promote our sanctification. It also comes to us with encouragement, calling our attention to God's delight in our works of love and to their reward of grace. Although

even our best works are imperfect and cannot stand in the judgment of God's Law, God will nevertheless reward every work of love which the believer does to the praise and glory of God. For the believer who performs the work is pleasing to God for Christ's sake, who dwells in him by faith and whose holy power is manifest also in his imperfect work. He will not let the smallest good work go unrewarded,--not a cup of cold water given to the fainting in Jesus' name, not a kind word will He forget. Scripture therefore so often tells us that we are to be judged according to our words and deeds; for before God who knows their true worth and nature they are infallible marks and evidences of faith or unbelief.

It is the endeavor of the believers, then, to glorify God and to please Him. He is always taken into account. They, therefore, do their work as before God and not as before men. Just as the Book of Revelation says of the four beasts before the throne of God that they rest not day and night but are continually praising God, so the believers also desire to glorify God in all things and to praise Him who according to His abundant mercy has made them His children and has begotten them again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

"The life of the Christians is to be like a hymn of praise to the glory of the Lord." But God cannot be glorified by words alone. Jesus asks: "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Luke 6, 46. He, then, who does not earnestly seek to be sanctified does not have a right to call Christ Lord, for he does not believe on Him.

THE OLD ADAM AND THE NEW MAN

It follows of itself that such striving in sanctification cannot take place without a struggle, when we bear in mind that the Old Adam still lives and is active also in the believers. The Saviour, therefore, so often points out to us the necessity of self-denial and renunciation, and He says that without it we can neither become nor remain His disciples. Therefore we are told that we cannot serve two masters, and that faith in the Saviour inevitably entails a break with the world. It is also the result of our two-fold nature that we must give up all that would entice and draw us away from God, and that much tribulation, trouble, and anxiety is brought upon us thereby. We, therefore, need daily repentance, daily forgiveness of sin, daily humiliation, daily raising up by faith, and constant turning to God in prayer. Throughout this struggle the believer will constantly grow in knowledge of his own weakness and unworthiness. He will "grow downward," that is, in humility, and Christ will ever more clearly shine before him as the only indispensable Saviour, and he will learn to long for the glorious day when he shall be completely freed from sin and sorrow, where he shall be no more a sinner, but shall stand before God and the Saviour and all the saints as a perfectly holy, blessed person, an eternal, marvelous testimony to the fact that "God is love." He will look upon his own work as nothing, not even worth mentioning. The believer knows that what God in grace calls good works, he could not by his own strength have produced, but that this also is a work of God in him. At the end of a holy life he will have to give himself the same title with which he already as a child learned to characterize himself when the question was asked: Whom has Christ redeemed? and he

answered: Me, a poor, lost and condemned creature. But he knows his Saviour and trusts in Him alone. At the same time as he glorifies the Saviour by obedience and following after holiness, his heart echoes with the words:

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
By beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.
Alone what Christ has done for me
Will save my soul eternally,
My efforts, whether small or great,
Will naught avail at heaven's gate.

Now if this demand of God's word, that we be sanctified, is set aside or weakened, while only grace and faith are spoken of, then the nature of both grace and faith will be easily misunderstood. Faith will become a mere matter of the intellect or of empty words, and so there will be no justification; no improvement will follow, and God's grace is taken in vain. The Gospel will then be blasphemed by the world, yes, many honest souls will be offended at it and go astray from the truth, and finally this judgment will be passed: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matt. 21, 43.

THE PROPER PLACE OF SANCTIFICATION

But just as the doctrine of justification is destroyed if the doctrine of sanctification is not recognized, so it will also be violated if sanctification is given an improper place before justification or mixed into it.

The sanctification spoken of above is necessary

not because God would not be gracious to us without our first having become better or more pious or having conducted ourselves as we ought. If God's grace were not bestowed on us till then, we should never be justified, nor sanctified either. It is, indeed, impossible to do a single work which is good in the sight of God unless it is done out of love. But we cannot have love to God, if we have not first learned from the Gospel that God is reconciled to us and loves us and has forgiven us all our sins, and that we thus are reconciled to God. We must believe, then, that God for Christ's sake has received us altogether out of pure mercy, before we can perform a single good work, or even make a beginning in sanctification. It is therefore in vain to admonish and encourage the unconverted and unbelieving to do good works. The tree does not become good by our trying to get it to bear good fruit. Only when the tree becomes good will it bear good fruit; but we become good in the sight of God only by faith. If faith is present the fruits will be produced.

To place sanctification before justification, i.e., not to want to find comfort in Christ before we have brought forth fruits meet for repentance, the fruits of faith, is an inverted procedure to which we all are inclined by nature. It is no wonder, therefore, that the teachers who preach in this way easily gain a following; for they preach in a way which the natural man deems reasonable and to which he, therefore, is attracted. But the fruits that are produced by such doctrine are worthless, however beautiful and spiritual they may appear in the sight of men.

No better is this confused business which is still more common of mixing sanctification with

justification, so that the poor people are led to believe that God is not gracious to us wholly and alone for Christ's sake, but also for the sake of our conduct which He takes into consideration, and by which He is governed. The one who thinks he can appeal to his own good conduct alongside of the merits of Christ cannot be justified by faith. He who mixes his own works into justification knows neither God's grace, nor Christ, nor himself.

Now, when we want to sum up the second chief principle of Lutheran Doctrine treated above in such a way that the main points are included, it can hardly be expressed better and more clearly than in these words of the Formula of Concord, in which the Lutheran Church confesses: "Poor, sinful man is justified before God, that is, absolved and declared free and exempt from all his sins, and from the sentence of well-deserved condemnation, and adopted into sonship and heirship of eternal life, without any merit and worth of his own, also without any preceding, present, or any subsequent works, out of pure grace, because of the sole merit, complete obedience, bitter suffering, death, and resurrection of our Lord Christ alone, whose obedience is reckoned to us for righteousness. These treasures are offered us by the Holy Ghost in the promise of the holy Gospel; and faith alone is the only means by which we lay hold upon, accept, and apply, and appropriate them to ourselves. This is a gift of God, by which we truly learn to know Christ, our Redeemer, in the word of the Gospel and trust in Him, that for the sake of His obedience alone we have the forgiveness of sins by grace, are regarded as godly and righteous by God the Father, and are eternally saved."
(Trig. p. 919).

THE OFFENCE OF THE GOSPEL

This is the great truth which is "the substance of the whole Bible." And this is the Gospel about which all controversy in the Church after all has revolved and still revolves, where it has not come so far that there is controversy also concerning that other first principle, that the Bible is the inspired word of God and, therefore, our only sure and perfect rule and guide. This, then, is what the Norwegian Synod has contended for and still contends for. There will be no peace for one who seriously insists on this doctrine. It is no wonder that the doctrine of justification is scoffed at and attacked. For this is the Gospel proper, and this Gospel has at all times been, and is still today, unto the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness. It is attacked by the Jews because it does not seem holy enough for them. It is attacked by the Greeks because it does not seem reasonable enough to them. Since we all have both the Jewish and the Greek mind in our nature, the Gospel meets with opposition first of all in ourselves. As long as we do not seriously ask how we can be saved, we can forget about it, unless we from party spirit or for other reasons rise up against it. But when we learn to see our sins and become concerned about our salvation, then we want to have other supports for our justification than grace alone, and then nothing in the world is so difficult to believe as this that we are saved without any merit whatsoever, yes, directly contrary to our merit. "If nature or reason should establish an order of salvation, it would arrange it in such a way that we would purchase salvation by our works. Christ does not want anything at all, but the soul wants absolutely to force something of its own upon Him." Scripture says that Christ

"of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." I Cor. 1, 30. But our natural mind does not want to be satisfied with this. We must needs include some of our own wisdom and sensible calculation and some of our own righteousness and holiness, so that we, as we think, may have something more stable on which to rely and build our redemption than what another has done. But then those words about what Christ means to us would no longer be the full truth. "Nothing in the world is harder than to accept Christ alone as our righteousness, that is, to know Him as Christ and our Saviour. Place even the least of your own beside Him, and He will no longer be Christ for you." Now, if we are checked in our attempts at self-justification and acknowledge that the works of the Law cannot help us, we so easily begin to seek a way out by making the Gospel a new law and begin to build on our penitence and our conversion and our faith--and thus make these things the ground for our justification and obtaining favor with God, while the fact is that these things are partly a prerequisite and partly a means for accepting the righteousness which is already prepared and is tendered to us in the Gospel. So deep is this desire to have a secret merit on which to build, that even the justification of the publican has been explained as effected not only and purely by grace bestowed on the anxious and contrite sinner, but as a reward because he had a good work to which he could appeal, namely, that he humbled himself. Consequently the publican would then have a right to say: "I thank Thee, God, that I am not as other men are, as for example this Pharisee; I humble myself before Thee, and am therefore better than he." But why should not this publican have a right to say this, seeing it was indeed

true that he was humble. Because if he wanted God to consider and be guided by his attitude, he would not have been humble, but would himself have been a Pharisee. For those who have this view, it will not be true that Christ has done everything and that we are justified by faith alone.

"Christ says, Luke 13, 24: 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.' Why not? Aye, because they do not know what the strait gate is. For this gate is faith, which makes man small, yes, a mere nothing, so that he must give up hope of help from all his works and, stripped of all his own, cling to the grace of God alone, and abandon all things but this. Those who are holy of their own creation, on the contrary, think that the strait gate is good works; they therefore do not become small, do not give up hope in works, yes, they gather them in large bags, hang them about themselves and want thus to pass through the gate. Yes indeed, they will pass through -- in the same way as a camel with its large humps will pass through the eye of a needle."

In short, man wants to build upon his own.⁴ That is why the Gospel is despised and attacked. Thus it has been from the time when Paul saw that his work among the Galatians was threatened with destruction by the teachers of the Law until the time of the controversy concerning Election of Grace in America. The Jewish mind is still present. Therefore they want to point to a "difference," "a merit" in some, on the basis of which they can stand the test before God. They want to see and not believe, and they take offence at the idea that salvation is to be merely and purely by

free grace. The Greek mind is also still present; they do not want to acknowledge any "mystery" of grace, but they want a reasonable explanation, so that it can be said: "It is, indeed, reasonable that these found favor with God; for they conducted themselves as they ought. This we can understand."

MISUSE OF THE GOSPEL

In addition to this natural offence at the Gospel, there is, sad to say, also another, namely, that which is occasioned by the misuse of the Gospel. Of this misuse and the offence which is caused by it, we have many evidences in the New Testament, and it has recurred wherever the Gospel has sounded forth pure and free. How Luther complains about it can be seen in many places in his sermons, especially those in the House Postil. "It is true," he says, "that the preaching of faith is a very lovely, sweet sermon; but it is a subtle, lofty and dangerous preaching, especially for carnal hearts; for when faith is preached, it is a preaching of nothing but grace. Now when this mercy and grace of God is proclaimed, then coarse and carnal hearts rush in and turn the grace of God into lasciviousness (Jude, v. 4). If, on the other hand, faith and grace are not preached, then people resort to their own works and must finally despair. Therefore, however it is done, it is not right in this wicked and perverse world. Thus it happened to St. Augustine: When he preached the article of forgiveness of sin and praised the grace of God greatly and taught that a man is made righteous and blessed simply by God's grace and mercy, which is earned and promised by Christ without any of our own merit and worthiness, then he

experienced that the Pelagians accused him of being a pernicious teacher and preacher who could do no more than to make people lazy and sluggish and hindered them from doing good works and attaining to perfection. He therefore had to defend himself against these scoffers in his writings and show that he did not prevent perfection, even if he preached the forgiveness of sin, even if he preached the forgiveness of sin, yes, that just the preaching of forgiveness of sins and grace helps people to attain to true perfection.

"Thus it happens also now-a-days. Because we preach faith in Christ, the Papists rush in, scoff at us and say that we forbid good works, we preach altogether too kindly, by such preaching people become sluggish and lazy. And that is true: There are many among us who understand the preaching of the Gospel in such a way that they think they do not now need to do anything good, nor suffer anything, nor give anything, but say freely and publicly: Why do we need to do good works? Grace and forgiveness of sins, no doubt, will help us. Just as I myself have known one, who is now deceased, who said: 'Even if I wallow in sins over my head and ears, yet grace is so great that my sins will not do me any harm.' There are very many such people who think that they now can do as they please. Such people become impudent and presumptuous. And it appears as if the Gospel were at fault, namely, that the preaching of the Gospel permitted people to do as they please. Thus the right thing is not accomplished on either side, neither to the right nor to the left... If we preach faith, then people become careless, do not want to do anything good, do not want to serve or help anyone; but if we do not preach faith, the hearts become terrified and

despondent and resort to one kind of idolatry after another. Do what we will, it will not help.

"Yet we shall and must preach faith, let come what may. I would rather have it said about me that I preach too sweetly, and that my sermons hinder people from doing good works (although my sermons do not do this), than that I do not preach Christ, for then there would be no help or remedy for the fearful consciences. For this I see and experience, that when a person is negligent and lazy, falsely boasting of his faith, and says that he trusts in the grace and mercy of God that it will indeed help him, even though he continues in sins,--when death overtakes him, it will become apparent that he has never yet rightly comprehended or believed in God's grace and mercy, so that it will give us trouble enough to raise him up and comfort him, even if he has not been addicted to any particular idolatry. But when the preaching of faith is suppressed, and the heart is wholly and utterly overfilled with sorrow, then there is neither help nor remedy. Even though you speak something about grace, such a heart will answer: You preach to me much about grace and mercy; but should you feel what I feel, then you would speak differently. So the terrified and dejected heart departs--just as I myself have heard some speak in this way when one comforted them... Therefore I wish very much that the preaching of faith in Christ may prevail and not be forgotten. It is a sweet sermon in which there is sheer joy, comfort, mercy and grace; but I must confess concerning myself that I have not sufficiently understood or apprehended it. We must let it pass that some of ours let themselves be led by it into utter security and presumption; but the

others, the work-righteous, scoff at us because of it and contend that we make people sluggish, so that they do not attain to perfection. Christ Himself has had to hear that He was a friend of publicans and sinners, that He desecrated the Sabbath, etc. We shall not fare any better." (Walch Ed. 13, 1324).

Thus Luther preached on Ascension Day, 1534, in his church in Wittenberg, and the same words apply in 1890 here in the Lutheran Church in America.

It is these fundamental truths reviewed above that the Norwegian Synod has contended throughout its history. By these truths, eagerness and zeal was called forth among us in the past, which manifested itself in joyful self-sacrifice in the service of the Church of God. We brought this unadulterated Gospel with us from our mother church in Norway, but we had not acquired a truly clear insight into its glory, in opposition to all errors, until we came here, where both the free-church conditions and the controversies which we have had to carry on have, under divine guidance, confirmed us in the old truths. We should be ungrateful, indeed, if we were to remain silent about the manner in which the testimony of our German brethren in faith, and especially of that faithful disciple of Luther, our dear sainted Dr. Walther, mightily strengthened us. No one can rightfully accuse us, however, of being parroters of him or of others.⁵

It has been the fate of the Norwegian Synod from its very beginning to be made a target of bitter attacks. We have been looked upon and treated as "the great mass of spiritually dead people," a gathering of unconverted and indifferent

souls, and our ministers as persons without spirituality. Why? I think that it is chiefly because we wanted to hold strictly to the above-stated chief principles and, therefore, would not have anything to do with something new or any self-chosen spirituality. We would fain serve the Lord and gladly let ourselves be chastened for not being pious enough, in order that we might become better; but we did not want to let ourselves be directed to any other way than the one we as Lutherans have acknowledged as the right one. Neither did we see signs of a greater true piety in those who always found fault with us. The various doctrinal controversies in which the Synod has been involved have nearly all of them been occasioned by the attacks of others upon it, and they have all been concerned partly with the first, partly with the second chief principal of the Bible, sometimes with both.

When the Synod was first organized, the men who were gathered for that purpose recognized the need of establishing firmly the first principle that Scripture is the only true source and rule of faith and life. They, therefore, found it necessary to dissolve the organization which had been formed the previous year, since it had embodied in its constitution a "Grundtvigian" sentence which placed the Baptismal confession on a par with Scripture. Hence, even at its first organization, the Synod placed itself decidedly in opposition to the Grundtvigian error. Nevertheless the charge of Grundtvigian tendencies has constantly been used as a weapon against the Synod. Yes, our opponents have continued to do this even until recently. A certain minister publicly stated that he found "Grundtvigianism" even in our "Redegjorelse (Accounting).⁶ It seems that they use this word merely as a term of denunciation

with which no thought whatever or no definite concept is connected.

THE SUNDAY QUESTION

Since the early days, we have always been attacked, now because of one doctrine, now another; but it has always concerned one or the other of those chief principles or both. Thus it was in the controversy concerning Sunday, where we as Lutherans held fast to the confession of our church on the matter in the Augsburg Confession. I shall not here stop to recall all the accusations we had to put up with,—that we had abolished the Third Commandment, done away with Sunday, etc. We pointed out that we, with such passages of God's word as Rom. 14, 5f., Gal. 4, 10f. before us, were conscience-bound, so long as we recognized the Holy Scriptures as our sole rule and guide. Besides we had experienced the legalism and the confusion of conscience which were called forth by the Jewish and unevangelical conception of the third commandment on the part of those who opposed us. As Lutherans, we recognized the correctness of the confession of our Church in the Augsburg Confession and in Luther's Catechism, and we continued to abide by these Confessions.

THE CONTROVERSY OF ABSOLUTION

More important and protracted was the controversy which was brought upon us concerning the Gospel and Absolution. Here we got right into the middle of the chief question by which the doctrine of justification stands or falls. It became clear here that our opponents did not want to admit

that the contents of the Gospel and the essence of absolution are always the same, independent of the condition of the person to whom they come. We taught that the forgiveness of sin in absolution did not come into existence first when a person believed, but that absolution is always forgiveness of sin by God, even though the one who does not believe refuses God's gift and thus does not become partaker of it. We pointed out that the Gospel and absolution, indeed, brings to us that which Christ has won for us, namely, forgiveness of sins and salvation; and we proved it clearly by God's word, but all in vain. There were, indeed, some individuals in the Norwegian-Danish conference who let the truth prevail; but by far the greatest number of them opposed it strongly. They continued to insist that "when absolution is pronounced upon an unbeliever, then there is no act of forgiveness of sin connected with it. The minister indeed absolves, but not God;" consequently that absolution is one thing when it comes to the believer, and another when it comes to the unbeliever. We have always taught that the effect of absolution is different for the believer and the unbeliever; but here it was a question of the essence of absolution.

One of the pastors of the Synod at that time (who is now eager to unite with the Conference) wrote in this connection in a letter to our "Kirketidende:" "You are appalled by this doctrine. So am I. If it were true, then I could not continue one hour longer as pastor, you act in God's name when you absolve the communicants, consequently by the authority of God and in His stead... Where you, then, despite the greatest caution on your part, should happen to absolve a hypocrite, you would thereby lie in the name of the Holy Trinity. God in heaven would then

say to you: You lie in My name. You absolve this sinner indeed and presume to do it in My name; but I say No to it. Since it is impossible for us humans to look into the hearts of others and know for certain who is a believer, how should we then presume to absolve a single person? Neither could we then say with certainty to anyone: God has absolved you... To speak in the name of the blessed Trinity with uncertainty, with the idea that perhaps I lie, and perhaps I speak the truth, must always be a sin. Hence you can well imagine that this false, and in its consequences completely appalling doctrine, was most earnestly contradicted and refuted on our side. For who could listen to anything like that and not raise his voice against it? But it was of little avail. Our opponents wanted to gain their point and therefore they would not listen to any convincing testimony from our side." (Kirketid 1873, p. 3)

They furthermore taught that absolution is not only a promise of what God for Christ's sake gives us, but that it is a judicial declaration that the communicant is a believer, that he is a repentant and believing person, that he is a child of God. (Fifth Report of the Conference, pp. 33, 36, 39, and Sixth Annual Report, p. 36)

To my knowledge no thorough-going settlement of this matter has ever been reached. I believe that not a few of the ministers of the Conference have now, indeed, come closer to us; but I have not heard a single one of those who at that time zealously opposed us admit openly that he was in error. This controversial question is rather among those which they have wanted to bury twenty furlongs under the ground, as if it were but folly and love of strife to demand that the

word of God be recognized in this matter which is so important for our soul's welfare. Those who now so easily have come to an apparent agreement, have done so on the basis of a declaration concerning absolution in two theses which were considered at the joint meeting in Gol in 1886. Shortly after this meeting, the then President of the Augustana Synod wrote in the Augustana Synod's periodical concerning this matter as follows: "Concerning absolution, I am sure, no one held any other doctrine than they formerly had taught, and just before the end of the meeting Pastor Torgerson read the Norwegian Synod's doctrinal theses in this matter. Neither were they contradicted by anyone.⁷ Those on the other side who had previously expressed themselves had not changed their stand either, and thus it can be seen that each voted for the theses according to his own interpretation, and in such acceptance there always lies new seed for schism." In our opinion, it is indeed deplorable that in such an important matter they do not teach a doctrine which is in agreement with Scripture and our Confessions; but it is much more deplorable that they say that it is a matter of no consequence, and that each one may teach as he chooses; and that they say they are in agreement with the Lutheran Confessions when they know they are not. We are not surprised at this cold indifference to true and thorough agreement in doctrine on the part of men who stand as do the professors at Augsburg Seminary. If anyone forsakes the Lutheran Scripture-principle so manifestly as these have done, then such indifference follows logically. The Lutheran Church confesses concerning itself that it has the whole truth and that it teaches correctly in all points. (See Triglotta, pp. 53, 59, 95) This it does confidently, because it believes that God's word in

the Holy Scriptures is clear. Those teachers, on the contrary, have condemned it as an "over-estimation of its task, a one-sidedness and perversion, when a church body believes that it has come to a knowledge of the whole truth." They claim that each of the various church bodies has its particular mission; one sees one side, and the other another side. And thus the correct and full truth will little by little emerge through conflict and strife. (See Professor Sverdrup's essay on The Church in "Kvartalskrift" and my examination of it in "Kirketidende," (No. 25, 1875). Such a claim cannot be made by one who believes, i.e., is convinced that the Lutheran Church teaches correctly in all points; but if they do not believe that, it is their duty to say so. The Saviour has promised His disciples: "The Spirit will guide you into all truth." Therefore we believe that what St. Paul said to the elders in Ephesus was true, that he "had not shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God,"--also what he said concerning the church in Corinth, that they were "enriched in all utterance and in all knowledge." But while it is natural that those who hold such views consider it superfluous to reach a sincere settlement regarding doctrine, it is much more deplorable to see men who at one time recognized the importance of pure doctrine now taking the same course. The result cannot be other than, first, indifference to the teaching of God's Word; next, doubt with regard to it; and then apostasy both from God's Word and from the Confessions of our fathers.

THE SLAVERY QUESTION

Another of the controversies which the Synod

has had to carry on was concerning slavery. To us it has been a heavy cross to be treated so unjustly and unscrupulously as we were treated in this matter. As far as I know we were all anti-slavery men, and still they called us friends of slavery, yes, defenders of slavery as it existed here in America. If I am to judge by my own case, I can safely say that none of our opponents were more resolute enemies of slavery nor more happy about its abolition than were we. There were, however, two things which forced us to make sure a confession in this matter as we did. The first was the clear words of the New Testament, which we dared not deny, no matter what the consequences. The fact is, as we see from the New Testament, that there were Christians who had slaves, and that the apostles did not demand that they should be freed, but that they should treat them as brethren. The second thing was that our opponents wanted to make outward liberty an absolutely necessary blessing, thereby debasing that liberty with which Christ has made us free. We thank God because our country is freed from the curse of slavery and from the sins crying to heaven which resulted from it, and we regard it as a worthy object for Christians to strive with all their might to exterminate it wherever it is still found in the world. It is our task as Christians to lighten the burdens of the oppressed, to inculcate the essential equality of all before God, to prevent the oppression of the weak and of the poor wherever we can; in short, to strive to carry out the law of love. In our effort to accomplish these ends we would fain vie with others wherever an opportunity is afforded, but we do not regard one as having made great progress in this respect just because he speaks boastingly about it; this we must rather regard with suspicion.

THE ELECTION CONTROVERSY

More deplorable than all the conflicts which we have had to carry on with other church bodies, however, has been the one which we for a long time had to wage with those who now have left the Norwegian Synod. It began with charges that we who now belong to the Synod taught a new doctrine. After a few years it became clear, (and it was also in part admitted⁸) that it was really our assailants who had changed their doctrine; but then that first false accusation had already borne its fruits. People had become frightened by it, and the controversy flared up, and it did not take long before partisan passions were kindled. These passions were nourished by the most unjustifiable accusations:--that we taught that even as some men are chosen unto salvation, so some are chosen to damnation; that when a person was elected, he might live and conduct himself just as he pleased, and he would nevertheless be saved; that we taught a conversion by coercion; and that since God does everything for us, one might sit idly by and wait until God converted him, etc. Now since people had neither heard nor learned anything like that from us, it was said that we did not, indeed, teach this openly, but that this was what we meant, and that this was the necessary result of our teaching. In its first stage, the strife concerned itself about a believer's certainty of salvation, and, besides this, about Election. The warning which Luther gives in his preface to the 9th Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans (see the Altenburg Testament) against concerning oneself with this difficult question before one has become a well-tried and experienced Christian, was not taken into account. The question was discussed on streets and in lanes, in stores and in

saloons, and articles of an incendiary nature were incessantly sent out. It soon appeared, however, that they could not get anywhere with this question until they examined the basis on which it rests. It had to be determined first whether the source of man's salvation is to be sought in God alone, or also in man. This again led to the question, who is the cause of man's conversion;-- Is it a work of God's grace alone, or does man himself cooperate in it?

During this long controversy, it was sufficiently proven and documented that it was not we, the Norwegian Synod, the so-called "Missourians," who had changed our doctrine, but that it was definitely our assailants who, in order to be able to combat us, abandoned step by step that which they formerly confessed together with us. In the course of the controversy there developed such an obvious falling away from the Lutheran principles set forth above, particularly from the doctrine of justification, that we have never found anything like it in our former controversies with other groups among our countrymen. Synergism, i.e., the doctrine of man's own cooperation and participation in the work of his salvation, has always been considered a subtle error which easily could be covered up by circumlocution and subterfuges. And for that reason it was difficult to detect, however dangerous it was in its effects. But in the form in which it made its appearance among our Anti-Missourian opponents, it was so far from appearing in a subtle way, that one seemed to outbid the other in the most flagrant contradiction of what is taught about these things, in accordance with God's Word, both in our Confessional writings and by our Lutheran Fathers, and by the Anti-Missourians themselves before they left the old paths. This has so often

and repeatedly been pointed out that no more proof is needed. But for the sake of those who have not followed the course of the controversy, but may happen to read this, proof shall again be adduced.⁹

The first one who dared to show openly what is implied in these attacks on the old Lutheran doctrine was a minister who at a Synod Convention declared: "It will not help us any to cling to the expression, 'intuitu fidei,' unless we go all out and say what we must mean, that man's conduct is the deciding factor as to whether we are saved or not, and consequently whether we are chosen or not. Man can remove the obstinate resistance which God cannot remove, otherwise man could not be saved, could he? It may well be that those who are of the same opinion with me will not be especially thankful to me for thus expressing my opinion, since our opponents thereby will indeed gain a hold upon us, but it is just this that I want. I have expressed what in simplicity is my opinion, and if the opponents can prove that I am mistaken, I will stand corrected." (Report, Minn. Dist. 1883, p. 45).

This, to be sure, is as definitely contrary to the Lutheran Confession as it can be, for in the Confession it is rejected as an error that not God's mercy and Christ's most holy merits alone are the cause of our election, but that there also in us is a cause, on account of which God has chosen us unto eternal life. No wonder, therefore, that the speaker realized that he thereby furnished proof that his doctrine was not Lutheran, and that those of similar opinion, therefore, would not be especially thankful for his words.

Since that time, however, they have not

hesitated to go the whole length. One after the other has expressed himself in the same way, yes, in some instances, still more decidedly contrary to the Lutheran Confessions. So far as I know, such gross synergistic doctrines have not been heard either in the Augustana Synod or in the "Conference" or in the Hauge Synod.

As examples of what is taught unchallenged among them may be cited: That the omission of the obstinate resistance, so far as the act of conversion is concerned, is not of grace (A.u.N., 1882, pp. 184, 189f; 1884, p. 343). That everyone who hears the Word becomes enlightened, and at that with divine enlightenment, is an exercise of the will (Conf. in Decorah, 1884, p. 92). That when a heathen hears the word, then something new has entered his heart, which is not of the flesh (Ch. Coun. Min. p. 29). That the natural man receives some powers from God with which he can cooperate in his conversion (Ibid. p. 29). That there is a middle-state between spiritual death and spiritual life (Ibid.). That it is possible for one spiritually dead to perform an act of life (Bjoern to the congregation in Manitowoc, p. 19). That an unregenerate person under the influence of the Spirit of God can pray in a manner acceptable to God (in many places and in public meetings). That when God by His Word and His Spirit works in a person in order to convert him, then the person's conversion will be dependent upon his own choice, upon the attitude which he takes toward the operation of God's grace (Ch. Coun. Min., p. 31). That salvation in a certain sense does not depend upon God alone (Meeting in Red Wing). That when God works in a man, his eventual salvation does not depend upon God, but upon himself ("L.V.," 1884, p. 2, 453). That man's conversion is dependent upon whether

the regenerate uses that strength for conversion which he receives in the Gospel ("Norden," April 22, 1885). That God in election saw and was governed by how those persons would conduct themselves over against the Means of Grace ("L.V.," 1883, p. 251). That it would be right for a believer to build his hope of salvation on this, that he had permitted himself to be led into the order of salvation, and that his conduct in this respect had been as it ought to be ("L.V.," 1886, p. 117). That if anyone wants us to believe that it is unfailingly certain that we eventually shall be saved, then we also know that we do not want to have anything to do with such faith (Report, Minn. Dist. 1880, p. 14). That Scripture in many places expresses itself thus, that a man's attitude, words and deeds or conduct is a cause of his conversion and salvation. From this follows that men's conduct must at least in some way or other be a cause of their conversion and salvation (Conf. at Zumbrota).

When such a doctrine is taught as here, by way of example, is cited, and at the same time the claim is made that they subscribe to the Lutheran Confessional writings, they do not speak the truth. In this way the Church of Christ cannot be built, but parties certainly will be founded. For a grosser and more dangerous apostasy from the chief doctrine of the Lutheran Church has not occurred among those of our countrymen who lay claim to the Lutheran name, and we shall not deserve to be called by this name unless we with heart-felt sorrow and immovable determination turn away from such false doctrine. While St. Paul says: "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves" (Eph. 2,8), these answer, Yes, it does depend on ourselves. The power is indeed of God, but the use of the

power (choice) is our own. While St. Paul says: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2, 13), these say: When God calls us, then the will and the choice are in our own hands. When St. Paul says that it "is not of him that willeth or of him that runneth" (Rom. 9, 16), these say: Yes, it is of man himself. While the Saviour says: "He that is not with me is against me," then these say: Still there is a middle state.

In the Apology (German text, Muller, p. 102) the Lutheran Church confesses in accordance with Rom. 4, 13, that if our salvation and justification were dependent on our merits, then all would be uncertain, and it also adds: "Pious hearts and Christian consciences understand this very well and would not for a thousand worlds want our salvation to be dependent on us (auf uns stuede)." These teachers want just this, that our salvation shall be dependent on ourselves.

The Lutheran Confession says in plain words: "Therefore, there is no cooperation of our will in man's conversion," these teachers say with just as plain words: Yes, there is cooperation.

While the Lutheran Confession says that (because salvation can be wrested from our hands by the flesh, the world, and the devil) God has "placed it in the almighty hand of our Lord and Saviour in order that it may be preserved;" these teachers, on the other hand, want to have it in their own hands, since they reserve the decision for themselves.

It is not difficult to see that the foundation of our faith, justification by faith alone, is undermined by this doctrine. "For whether

the cooperation of man in his conversion is placed high or low, whether much or little is ascribed to man himself, it really amounts to the same thing. The certainty of salvation, the unshaken trust in the forgiveness of sins is irretrievably lost when we no longer can trust in God alone. But it is impossible to trust in God alone if salvation does not depend on Him alone. It is true as Professor F. W. Bugge says: The moment that a part of the condition for the realization of salvation is ascribed to men, in that same moment the realization becomes doubtful or impossible; only where God is the one acting power can men arrive at a real salvation (Apostle Paul's Epistles, I, p. 488)!" (Quotation from Prof. Ylvisaker in his "Comparison and Examination," p. 12).

Exceedingly beautiful are the words of Luther: "What is to become of my soul is something which He must look after and attend to, who has so faithfully cared for it that He has given His own life to redeem my soul. Eternal praise be to Him who is the true and faithful Shepherd and Bishop of all souls who believe in Him! And surely--He will not in *my* case, for the first time, begin to learn to guard and protect the blessed who hear His word from the power of the devil and the wickedness and tyranny of the world. He says: "They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John 10, 28). I let it go at that. I therefore do not desire any more to care for my soul myself or to have it in my own might and power, where it would in truth be poorly cared for. For the devil could soon, yes, any moment, wrest it from me and devour it. Many thousand times dearer it is to me that He has it in His hands; there it shall indeed be and remain safely and well preserved."

(IX, 1492). Therefore he says in another place: "A person must despair of himself, let go both with hands and feet and complain of being an incompetent person in the sight of God, and then invoke His divine grace, on which he may firmly rely. He who teaches or seeks another way than this on which to begin goes astray and deceives both himself and others. Just as they do who say: Behold, you have a free will; if you do what lies in your power, God will do His part; and who think that they shall not teach people to despair. Now it is true that we should not teach people to despair, but this despair must first be explained correctly. No one shall despair of God's grace, but despite the whole world and all sin, he shall firmly trust in God's help; but of ourselves we shall despair altogether and in no wise trust in our own free will to do even the tiniest little work... It is not possible that God will deny His grace to a person who in this way whole heartedly acknowledges his inability and completely despairs of himself... This despair and seeking for grace should not last only an hour or for a while and then cease, but all our works, words, and thoughts, so long as we live, shall be directed to this, that we always despair of ourselves and continue in God's grace and in desire and longing for Him." (XI, 3077).

Once in a public meeting I heard an especially enlightening expression by a layman who is very prominent among the Anti-Missourians. He deplored that I had called their doctrine a heathen doctrine. The doctrine which I had called heathen was this, that "when one does what is up to him, then God surely gives him His grace." This then he acknowledged as his doctrine. In this way had he then (and thousands of others) understood the Anti-Missourian doctrine, and this is what I had

condemned. He believed, indeed, that the words of which he complained were mine. He did not know that it is the Lutheran Church itself which, in the "Smalcald Articles," has passed judgment on just this doctrine with this severe word. (See Trig. p. 479).

The one who comprehends the significance of the work of the Saviour and the essence of faith, and who abides by what God's word says about it, will easily see that the new doctrine destroys the chief doctrine of our Church, justification by grace through faith alone. On just that account we of the Norwegian Synod have so earnestly opposed those who defended doctrines which hitherto have been unheard of in the Lutheran Church, such as:--that our salvation does not rest in God's hands alone; that not only God's mercy and the merits of Christ are the cause of our salvation, but that also in us (in our conduct) a cause is to be found; that there is a middle-state between spiritual death and spiritual life; that man cooperates toward his conversion; that also the unregenerate can pray in a God-pleasing manner, etc.

To maintain that they adhere to their childhood instruction and to the Confessions and the old fathers of the Church, when they teach such doctrines, is either gross ignorance,¹⁰ or it is bungling. In the course of the years a superabundance of proofs has been adduced, many of them sent in by laymen, which establish that Luther, Arndt, Scriver and other authors of our devotional literature present a wholly different doctrine.

Our heart's desire is to preserve the old doctrine in which our fathers found their peace, for

we have learned to see that this doctrine and this alone is founded on God's word. We therefore wish very much to awaken in our people zeal to preserve their glorious heritage. We do not want to make them fanatical, but we do very much want to help them to become "grounded and settled," so that they do not let themselves be "moved away from the hope of the Gospel" (Col. 1, 23), but will be "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (I Cor. 15, 58). From all directions, also from our dear fatherland, come reports of falling away from the old faith and of bitter attacks upon the Biblical truths. If we are to be enabled to retain them, we must in the first place let it become a matter of holy earnestness to preserve God's word pure and unadulterated as the only clear light in this world's darkness, and we must be willing to endure being scoffed at and mocked because of this firm adherence to the word.

Furthermore, we must let it become a matter of just as great concern to lead holy lives according to God's word. If we fail to do this, then God Himself has said: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21, 43). This we will try to remember every time we pray the Lord's Prayer.

FOOTNOTES

1. We are often shown in Scripture that God crowns and rewards that in us for which we after all are indebted to His grace alone. Thus it is said: "Unto everyone that hath, shall be given." "Thou has been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things," etc. Here it is to be noted that those who are rewarded and praised in this way must be believers already and justified before they can do anything which pleases God--for without faith it is impossible to please Him--and furthermore, like St. Paul, they will and must give honor to God alone for what they have performed. If they wanted to ascribe any credit to themselves and to suppose that God had been governed by their attitude--then they would be met by that word: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? and by the words of the Lord to the envious and self-sufficient laborers in the vineyard.
2. A famous palace built by the atheistic Frederick the Great of Prussia.
3. The objection is sometimes made against this, that men would thereby be tempted to become secure and say: If such is the case, then we can sit idly by and wait until God gives us faith. This objection carries no weight. St. Paul himself refers to this and similar objections, but he nevertheless teaches that faith is not our work but is a gift of God. This objection is without foundation because God does not begin His work in the hearts of men with the Gospel, but with the Law, the voice of which we also hear in our own conscience. The Law is not given to comfort but to frighten and terrify us. When we are awakened from our sleep of sin, not knowing where to turn,

and when with sorrow we seek salvation, then we will not sit idly by waiting, and say mockingly that if God wants to help us, He can do it. No, then we will listen to the Gospel and give heed to it, and then it will show itself as that word which has power to create faith in us and thus save our souls. The preaching of the Law is what is needed for those scoffers.

4. Those who want to know the doctrine of the Lutheran Church about how one is to understand this that good works are necessary, although we are justified and saved by faith alone without the deeds of the Law, will find this matter clearly presented in the Formula of Concord, Art. IV. Trig. pp. 797f. and pp. 939f.

5. "Whether 'Adam' makes his appearance as a Pietist or a Rationalist, as a Quaker or as a Pantheist, as a Pharisee, or as a Sadducee, in all forms, in dancing clothes or in penitential raiment, he is and continues to be Mr. Ego, and his faith is egotism: 'Shall not my piety, then, my knowledge, my virtue, my missionary labors and periods of prayer, my fasting and alms, be accounted as something? Is all this, all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, to be absolutely nothing, and Christ alone all in all? That will never do.' This is the beginning and the end of his philosophy, and him who does not agree with him you may call--a Lutheran." (Lic. Stroebel in Rud, and Guer. Zeitchr. 1855, 1 Quar.)

6. In his essay entitled: "Why is there no Church Unity among Norwegian Lutherans?" written in 1905, Dr. Koren has more to say about the Missouri Synod and the relations of the Norwegian Synod with it. We quote a few excerpts

here, since it still is a common charge against the "Norwegian Missourians" that they have been influenced to their detriment by their close fellowship with that large body, now known as "The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod." Dr. Koren writes:

Much has been said about the influence which our connection with the Missourians exerted on the Norwegian Synod. It is true, this influence has been of inestimable importance--although not in the way which a great many people who know neither the Missourians nor us imagine. We have not learned anything new from them, that is, any new doctrine or any other doctrine than that which we brought with us from the university of Kristiania (Oslo). --Some have accused the Synod of learning from the Missourians to lay all the stress on doctrine and to neglect the life. In other words, they have accused the Missourians and the Norwegian Synod of orthodoxism. They themselves have repudiated this accusation. These two synods have always recognized and confessed, however, that the danger of falling into "orthodoxism" is ever present. "Orthodoxy" means "pure doctrine." "Orthodoxism" may be translated "doctrinal purism." This consists in making pure doctrine the goal, though it should be only the means to attaining the right goal. The goal should be a true, real, living faith. For this is the life in God. As a man believes, so does he live.--When people who do not strive to live according to the word of God still boast of "having the pure doctrine" the danger and offense is so much the greater. The leaders of the Synod have been aware of this and have earnestly sought to enable those who had "God's word pure, and unadulterated" also to let it become manifest in their life. They have steadily, again and again

called to mind the fact that he who lives an ungodly life, and who lives for the world alone, has no true faith, even if he considers himself ever so orthodox.--

7. See "Grace for Grace," p. 173ff.
8. Pastor Torgerson's and Professor Larsen's presentation was, however, according to the latter's statement in "Kirketidende," strongly assailed by Professors Sverdrup and Oftedal. (Kirketidende, 1886, p. 363).
9. Note: As far as I know there is only one of the Anti-Missourian pastors who has frankly and publicly declared "that he did not believe that the Synod had turned to something new, but that he himself had taken a new course." This has been admitted by others at various meetings; for the proofs are beyond dispute.
10. Note: According to my conviction, the real cause of these errors is the offence which human reason takes at the fact that it cannot harmonize the teachings of Scripture with our own thoughts. They want to avoid *Scylla* -- the Calvinistic absolute predestination,--and thus they fall into *Charybdis*--the synergistic explanation of why one is saved and another lost. The Lutheran Confession has declared this to be a mystery, for God has not revealed any more to us than that our salvation is in God, but our destruction is of ourselves. But this shall also be sufficient unto us.

