

## *According to the Word*

### MASTER, WE WOULD SEE A SIGN

**Text: Matt. 12:38-41**

"Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But He answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah: . . . the men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here."

Jesus did not give signs, He made claims. True, if one listened to His claims, and followed Him for some time one would see signs that backed up His words, but Jesus was not anxious to be classified as a miracle-working medicine man.

In Brazil, we often saw large tents set up in various large cities, and almost one in every large city. The campaign of the persons responsible read: Healings, Miracles and Salvation. The last-mentioned seemed to be of least importance on their programs, and many of their converts

I found did not know the way of salvation at all.

Jesus denied signs to the Jewish leaders, and miracles, because they were not willing to face their great personal and eternal need, the salvation of their souls. Salvation is a universal need, for sin and total depravity are universal. Even of Abraham, the highly respected father of the people of Israel, and the spiritual example for every Christian, even of him it is written: "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. . . to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:2, 5). So in this passage even Abraham was classified as ungodly and was in need of saving faith in the promises of God.

Christ is waiting for repentance on the part of every soul. If we take seriously the person of Christ, we will see that we need such a person desperately. Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am." The Jewish leaders did not believe it, but they understood what Jesus meant, for it was written: "Then took they up stones to cast at Him. (Jn. 8:59). Stoning was the Jewish law's penalty for blasphemy. Jesus was claiming to be

God. This to the unbelieving Jew was blasphemy. In John 10:30, Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." And again we read that they took up stones to stone Him, vs. 31. Several times Jesus made such claims to being a divine Savior and each time they rejected the claim and attempted to kill Him.

The claims of Jesus still come to each one of you, and to me. We can do only one of two things in God's eyes. Refuse to believe the claims and the work of Jesus Christ, or repent, as we see how great and marvelous is His divine person and His redemptive work for ungodly people like "Everyman" in this world. The depraved, ungodly people of Nineveh repented before the person and preaching of one far inferior to Jesus. Shall we not rightly examine ourselves and repent and be forgiven by one so wonderful as Jesus? You may be saved today, for Jesus sees your every need and hears a repentant prayer. You may be helped right now because Jesus is here. May you never enter into judgment for failing to repent, but may you rejoice now with forgiven sinners in Heaven and on earth, through a true repentance.

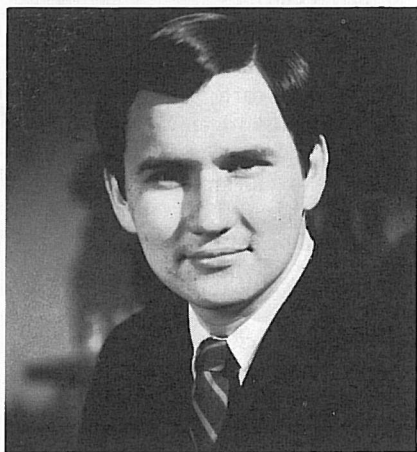
John H. Abel

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**SEMINARY STUDENT  
WAYNE PEDERSON NAMED  
PART-TIME AFLC YOUTH  
DIRECTOR**

Mr. Wayne Pederson, second-year student at Free Lutheran Seminary, has been named part-time youth director of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. He is the first youth director the Association has had. His selection was made by the executive committee of the Luther League Federation and the Youth Board, with the approval of the Coordinating Committee.



Mr. Wayne Pederson

Mr. Pederson has already assumed his duties and is available for consultation with the congregations of the church and may be reached at 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55427.

Wayne Pederson is from Fertile, Minn., and is a graduate of the University of Minnesota. He is active in Christian radio work through KTIS in Minneapolis. His wife is the former Norma Ness of Fertile. He has been serving congregations at Minnewaukan, Churchs Ferry and Leeds, N. Dak.

Mr. Pederson will be salaried by the Luther League Federation.

Rev. David C. Molstre, president of the LLF, states that those responsible for Association youth work are very happy that Mr. Pederson has accepted the call and pray that he will be a help and blessing to the congregations. Pastor Molstre also informs us that Mr. Pederson is anxious to be of assistance in weekend district or local youth rallies, for work-

## Association Pastors Met in Minneapolis Last Month

The annual pastoral conference for ministers and seminary students of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations was held at Free Lutheran Theological Seminary, Minneapolis, Minn., Jan. 12-14. A large number attended.

The conference opened on Tuesday evening with a holy communion service. Rev. A. L. Hokonson, pastor of Medicine Lake Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, led the service. The sermon was preached by Rev. Laurel Udden, a teacher in the Association Schools. A coffee hour followed the service.

Rev. Raynard Huglen, Roslyn, S. Dak., led the morning devotions on Wednesday, opening the day's activities.

The first guest speaker was Mr. Lyall A. Schwarzkopf, a Conservative member of the Minnesota House of Representatives, and a son-in-law of Dr. Iver Olson. He discussed "Drug Problems in the Future." Before looking into that future, he pointed out the definite increase in drug and marijuana violations over the past several years. And the future, Mr. Schwarzkopf said, is not hopeful. Young men who have developed the problem of drug usage in Viet Nam will be coming back and adding to our woes in this respect. The young legislator told the pastors that drug penalties will be re-structured and that it will be important to get addicts into rehabilitation. Young people, he said, must be given the facts about drugs, not by "scare tactics," but in a reasoned approach.

shops or in whatever areas he may be of help in league work.

The LLF will hold its biennial convention in Minneapolis, Minn., on July 20-25. All sessions will be at the Bible School and Seminary, Plymouth Village.

In the second morning session, Rev. Thomas McDill of Crystal Evangelical Free Church spoke on "A Program of Lay Evangelism in the Christian Congregation." He told how the program was started in his church, the result of a seminar he attended conducted by Rev. James Kennedy of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. The program, he said, is one in which lay people are actually trained to help people into assured Christian faith. Two men from Crystal Church told what the program of lay evangelism had done for them.

The Association Free Lutheran Bible School Choir, under the direction of Mr. Donald Rodvold, sang five songs at the morning chapel service. This is the choir which will tour Norway next summer. Rev. Robert Lee, Tioga, N. Dak., brought the meditation, based on Luke 2:44.

"Counselling the Emotionally Disturbed" was Dr. Douglas Dahlquist's theme for the 2 o'clock session that afternoon. He is a teacher at Bethel Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minn. Following a coffee break, Mr. Robert Dietsche, Sand Creek, Wis., and Rev. Wendell Johnson, Dalton, Minn., members of the Stewardship Board of the AFLC, made a presentation on "Stewardship Promotion in the AFLC."

The Swiss Chalet on Excelsior Boulevard was the scene of the dinner for the pastors, students and their wives on Wednesday evening. After the meal there was a time of singing. Pastor Huglen, editor of *The Lutheran Ambassador*, gave a report on the annual meeting of the National Lutheran Editors' and Managers' Association which he attended in Minneapolis in September. Rev. John Strand, president of the AFLC, led the group in a discussion of district boundaries in the church and what should be the church's response to current

changes in Lutheranism, such as early communion, ordination of women, etc.

The conference's final day opened with devotions by Rev. R. Snipstead, dean of AFLBS.

Dr. Sherwood E. Wirt, editor of **Decision**, addressed the assembly on the topic "What Is the Distinctive Role of the Church in Our Day?" He stated that clergy involvement in protests fostered law-breaking in America and emptied church pews. Now, however, Mr. Wirt said, law has triumphed in the land and he doesn't foresee any free-speech movements for the present. This leaves the church as it has always been—the messenger of the Gospel. The church needs only to be itself, Mr. Wirt declared. He went on to discuss Christian Truth as Judgment, Repentance, Love and Grace.

The final conference period, on Thursday morning, featured a message by Pastor Strand. It was based on Psalm 46. Mr. Strand pictured a world in deep trouble and said that society will not be changed until people are changed. God has placed our congregations in the world for just such a purpose, he said. The congregations are under great authority, the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, even though they are outwardly free. They have the message of the Gospel to proclaim.

Turning to the Association itself, the president reminded the clergy, present and prospective, that the organization called the AFLC lives for the sake of the congregations, not the congregations for the Association. Nevertheless, he maintained, the congregations need the mutual assistance each can offer. New staff for the church at large must be added only when the addition will better serve the churches. The corporate or joint work needs financial support. People will give, Mr. Strand said, if they have confidence in the work being done. It is a pity, the president declared, if people give only money as they contribute. They should be giving teaching, loving and caring.

Pastor Strand answered a number of questions about the Association work from the floor before the conference was concluded shortly before noon.

## MAY WE HAVE YOUR COOPERATION?

To Whom It May Concern:

We solicit information in the following three areas. If you can help to get that information to us, we will be grateful.

**Radio Log.** It is a long time since a radio log for programs sponsored by Association congregations, individuals or groups has been published. So long, in fact, that it is necessary to compile entirely new information to take into account changes which have occurred. It would be appreciated, therefore, if every pastor or layman in charge of sponsorship of a radio program would send a postcard to the Editor listing the pertinent facts concerning the program. Due date for this information: March 10.

**Bible Camp Schedule:** Another banner year for Bible camping in the Association is before us. Plans are being firmed up for the 1971 season. The **Ambassador** would like to publicize all of these camps in a special advertisement in a May issue. If you are the dean of your camp for this year, would you be so kind as to send the relevant information to us by April 24? Send along a picture or two of camp life, if possible.

**Annual Conference.** The Annual Conference of 1971 is less than four months away (June 9-13). This request is directed toward boards and committees in the AFLC, the groups which may ask conference delegates for specific items or may have new programs to propose. Could those ideas be advanced in preliminary form through the pages of our church paper so that delegates may be as informed as possible? We would like to be of service. May we have this information, in the way you wish to present it, by April 24.

And it could be that individuals may wish to express themselves about some matter which will be or ought to be presented to the conference. We welcome Letters to the Editor for the expression of these views. Please feel free to write and the sooner the better, so that there will be time for other readers to react prior to the conference. In order to assure the printing of a letter before the

annual meeting, it must arrive by May 8.

Send all correspondence on the above matters to  
Editor, **The Lutheran Ambassador**  
Box 38  
Roslyn, S.Dak. 57261

Thank you.

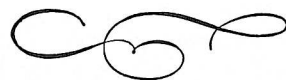
—The Editor

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### A SHOULDER TO CRY ON

I haven't much money; I'm not very smart;  
I haven't much strength to rely on.  
But this I can say (and I'm glad that I can),  
I have a strong shoulder to cry on.  
So bring me your troubles; I'll listen with care;  
With sympathy deep for your sorrow.  
I'll greet you with smiles and predict in the end,  
That all will be better tomorrow.  
I have very little that others may need;  
No psychiatrist's sofa to lie on.  
But one thing I have that everyone needs—  
A good strong shoulder to cry on.

Written in 1969 by Margaret Ullrich,  
age—79 years  
(Sent in by Mrs. Mabel Marshall,  
Tioga, N. Dak.)



### ACCEPT MY THANKS, FATHER

Father forgive my sins I pray,  
Guide me along the narrow way.  
Help me to be all Thou desirest,  
To be used for Thy very highest.  
None of Thy wondrous love do I merit,  
Yet through Thy Son eternal life I inherit.  
Only poor thanks can I offer Thee,  
Thou who hast done so much for me.  
Shirley Solheim '70

(An AFLBS student last year, Shirley is employed by the Prudential Insurance Company, Minneapolis.)



# Letters

## TO THE EDITOR

### OUR SYNODICAL DEBT

Convention time will be here again before we know it. We will gather from all areas of our Association to discuss the business at hand, and to seek God's will for us in the future.

We will come with certain burdens on our hearts which we would like to bring before the convention, with the hope and prayer that something can be done about them.

We also come realizing that many doors are open to us. Indeed, this is a day to do mission work, both at home and abroad. We also realize very realistically that the time is short. The doors that are open now may soon close, and if we do not enter these doors before they close, we will have missed our opportunity.

We believe that God has raised us up for a purpose and this belief gives us faith and courage to go on.

However, we also come as a people with a great weight around our neck. We are enslaved in a sense. We have that which hinders us from going forward as we would like. I am referring to our synodical debt, which exceeds the \$300,000.00 mark (including the assessments that have recently been put upon our property).

Because of this debt, individuals may feel hesitant and defeated in sharing that particular mission burden which they feel God has laid on their heart. We dare not advance our mission efforts in any big way with such a large debt hanging over us. If something new or different is proposed at the convention, the answer will invariably come back: **"There just are no funds for such at this time."**

We may tell ourselves that God is able and that He will go with us. Nevertheless, we must be realistic. And though we are to exercise faith,

we are not to exercise blind faith, and move out ahead of God, expecting Him to bless us no matter which way we travel or where we go.

The hard truth is that every debt made must be paid. And the longer a debt exists the more it costs us. We are already using much of the Lord's money to pay interest on debt that could be used (if we had no debt) to enter some of the open doors that lie before us.

Now God has certainly blessed us as an Association. We have by the grace of God stood on our convictions. We have grown in number. We can dare believe we have left a witness for Christ in the world in which we live. God has seen fit to use us. For this we truly thank God.

But where do we go from here? I sincerely believe with all my heart that our next forward move should be to liquidate our debt, and to liquidate all of it.

How can this be done? By putting our heart into it, and by uniting our efforts to accomplish the same, ever seeking God to help us.

I should like to suggest that we decide to do two things at our next annual convention.

**First**, let us vow not to go any deeper into debt, and to operate free of debt, after God has delivered us from our present debt. Personally, I do not believe it is pleasing to God that we be in debt. We have a rich Father, who loves us, and who supplies us with our every need. Then why should we go in debt? Will He not provide all we need to enter the doors He has opened for us in His own good time? If we are in the center of God's will, and doing that which is pleasing to Him; won't He provide us with whatever we need to enter whatever door He opens to us, in order that we might do a work therein? Hasn't

He promised to do the same? Hereafter, let us wait on God, rather than borrow money.

Many of us are disturbed by the way our country is ever operating and spending money outside the allotted budget. To us it doesn't seem to be good stewardship or a wise policy. We have seen much waste in such a system. If we wait on God, and use only what He gives us, we are not so apt to waste. And we will then seek those ways in which to witness whereby our dollars will accomplish the most for Christ. Surely our witness as a Christian organization in the world and land in which we live will mean much more if we operate in the black and go only as God provides, yet believing He will provide.

Now, the debt we have is something we voted upon ourselves at annual conventions, when we voted to buy our headquarters building and to build our school. I also voted to build our school. It seems as if God so led at that time. It may be that our present debt was very necessary. Perhaps God willed to impress upon us how enslaving a debt can be. We certainly can learn from it. We can also claim Rom. 8:28 in this. But I do believe it would be far more pleasing to God, if hereafter (just as soon as we can), we operate debt-free.

**Second**, we need to resolve to pay our debt as soon as we can, putting our every effort toward paying it. Let us put the same kind of zeal into paying the debt that we did into the raising of money for our school several years ago.

If our convention should pass these two resolutions as here proposed, let us again make a thermometer at our convention, such as was made when we decided to build the dormitory. Let us see how much money can be raised by cash and pledges at the convention. Then after the convention let us carry this same spirit into our churches. Let every individual and every organization of our Association put their shoulder to the wheel in order to remove the debt. Let us even do our best in trying to erase the debt in one year. With God all things are possible. We may be limited, but God is not. Let our pledges be only for one year. Then if there should

be any debt left when we come to convention in 1972 (if the Lord tarries), we will face afresh what debt we have before us.

Let us make no forward move (which would involve finances) as an Association until the debt be paid in full. We will be able to move much faster and work much harder and accomplish much more for the Lord once the debt is liquidated.

I know that I do not stand alone in these convictions. There are others who also have this burden of the debt on their heart. God has already laid this cause on the hearts of many in the Association. I sincerely believe that if we become united in agreeing that this is what we should do, at the same time plugging the leak so we won't take on more debt, that we can liquidate our debt in a very short time—even one year. I also sincerely believe that such would be pleasing to God and that He would help us and bless us so that we could do what we have set out to do. With God's help and blessing we might well surprise ourselves at how quickly the debt is erased. God works miracles in our day also.

We need to go forward in doing mission work in our day, because the time is short. To get started sooner is not a valid reason for going into debt. But it is all the more reason to seek God's leading and guidance in all we do, to be good stewards of what has already been put on the altar, to not get ahead of God, to plan well before advancing, and to wait on God for every need.

—Pastor Gerald F. Mundfrom  
Grafton, N. Dak.

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### THE WRONG KEY?

There he lay in the snow, near the door. The keys were by his side. The door was locked. Perhaps he had tried the wrong key. Anyway, it was too late. He had frozen to death.

The night was very cold and very still. It was after midnight. Not many places are open in a small town on a cold winter night—only the bars. "Too bad," they said. But no one there had helped him. No one had shown him the way home, no one had used the right key nor opened the door to safety for him. "Too bad,"

they said.

We can belong to the silent majority and keep from getting involved. The tragedy of the times in which we live is our indifference and unconcern for our fellow men. If there is any imperative for people today, it is the imperative that we register concern for these unfortunates who have been misled in various ways.

We need to have the right Key if we are to get Home safely and help others do likewise. That Key is Christ.

Sinister forces are at work everywhere. Perhaps one of them is the smugness one might feel that we do not commit these "gross" sins. Then we'd better remember, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The hour is near midnight on the clock of Time. The world is very cold and very dark. By looking upward, only, do we see the Light.

—A Reader

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### BOOK REVIEWS

THE DAYUMA STORY \$4.95  
(Life Under Auca Spears),  
by Ethel Emily Wallis

A missionary story telling of the conversion of an Auca Indian woman after five missionaries have been killed by her tribesmen. It tells how this simple Indian woman won her family to the Lord Jesus Christ and then reached out to other tribes knowing that at any moment she might be killed because of ancient tribal customs. Her deep abiding faith in Jesus Christ led her through many a personal struggle and many attempts of Satan to destroy her desire to reach her people.

Reviewed by Mrs. Vernon R. Nelson  
Grand Forks, North Dakota

WHY DO CHRISTIANS SUFFER?  
.50 (paperback)  
by Theodore H. Epp

This book encourages us not to lose faith in suffering, as it is for our good that we suffer. God has promised glory after suffering. God knows what it is for. God is preparing us for Himself.

It is for glory that He is training and chastising us as a loving Father.

Reviewed by  
Mrs. Amanda Mundfrom  
Chester, Iowa

HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

.25 (paperback)

by John Rice

We cannot expect answers to prayer when we permit these seven sins to continue in our lives: 1. Wrong relationship to husband and husband's wrong relationship to God; 2. Wrongs not righted; 3. Spirit of unforgiveness; 4. Covetousness; 5. Rebellion; 6. Indifference to the Word; and 7. Unrepented sins.

Reviewed by Mrs. Vernon R. Nelson  
Grand Forks, North Dakota

These books may be purchased from Bible Book Nook, 809 McHugh Avenue, Grafton, N. Dak. 58237.

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The following Hymn was written by the late Arnold Narveson, Grafton, N. Dak., and sung at his funeral by Mr. Darrel Moe.

### HEED GOD'S CALL

When I was lost and out in sin,  
The Lord did stop to call me in.  
He asked me where I would dwell—  
With Him in heaven or out in hell.

Chorus:

All glory to our Saviour King,  
Who did to us salvation bring;  
To all who open their heart's door,  
There He will dwell forever more.

I answered, "Lord, save me this day,  
For I have lived a wanton way;  
I am so tired of sin and shame,  
I will today believe Thy name."

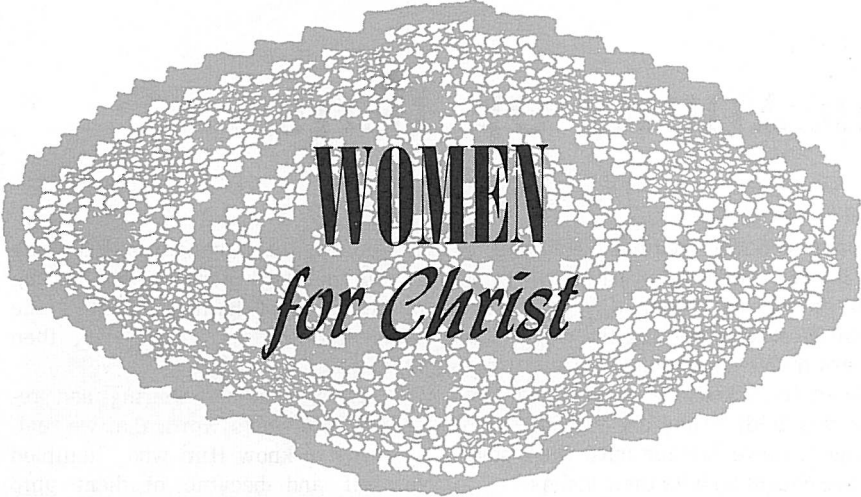
So I now live in Him this day  
And He in me is all the way.  
The Holy Spirit does instill  
The blessed desire to do His will.

On some great day God's trump shall  
sound;  
Where will you then, my friend, be  
found?

If you persist to live in sin,  
The Lord could never live within.

Arnold Narveson

(Ed. Note: Arnold Narveson, a familiar figure at Association conventions, was a member of the police department in Grafton. His fellow officers served as honorary pallbearers at his funeral service.)



# WOMEN for Christ

## THE WOMEN'S PART IN VISITATION IN THE CHURCH

by Minnie Lande, Everett, Wash.

Matt. 16:26: "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

I was about eight years old when I heard this verse quoted by a pastor who visited my home. I remember the visitation by that Living Word of God.

Our responsibility is to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."

We go as God-sent witnesses with the living Word. "It shall not return unto me void."

One of the motivating qualities in visitation is sharing the mercies and blessings of God through God's Son to us personally, to share our own joyous experiences with the Lord's Salvation. Such a happy attitude has a contagious effect upon our listeners. It can give hope where little or no hope is held.

### The Urgency of Visitation in the Church

It is the Lord's command and commission.

"Go-Do-Tell":

1. Of the great Savior, "Who is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Souls have been won through visitation.
2. To the sick and dying, that hope is for them if they accept and "abide" in Jesus. Jesus came to be their Savior and Great Physician.

3. To the lonely, weary, aged, and those in sorrow. Tell of the Friend who cares.

4. "Comfort the feeble-minded"—that Jesus loves them.

5. Reach out toward the visitor or new member who was yet a little strange in your church.

6. Warn, give to the unsaved, the way of salvation.

7. To the saved, "not to become weary in well doing."

8. God commands us to "Pray without ceasing."

"Whatsoever ye do to the least of these, ye do it unto me."

(Ed. Note: We apologize for the great delay in printing the following convention report. Somehow it got overlooked after being squeezed out of the issue in which we had originally planned to use it. An article by Mrs. Connely Dyrud suffered the same fate and is so dated now that we cannot use it at all. We hope to do better in the future.)

### WEST COAST WOMEN HELD RALLY AT EVERETT

The West Coast District Missionary Fall Rally was held at the Calvary Lutheran Church in Everett, Wash. on October 6, 1970. The theme of the rally was "The Lord is Able" (II Chronicles 25:9).

The meeting opened with greetings by the Calvary Ladies Aid president, Lillian Forsberg, and Barbara Braaten, district president, responded with thanks to the Everett ladies for all their work and preparation.

The audience then sang the hymn "Are Ye Able?" and Marion Lemke of Lake Stevens, Wash., gave the devotions from Ephesians 13:21 and led in prayer.

Doris Persson sang a beautiful song, "God Is Able to Deliver."

The Bible Study was given by Marion Reith on II Chronicles 25. She told the story of King Amaziah, who always did everything right in the Lord's sight, but not with a perfect heart. He was just like so many people today, who go to church and lead a good life, but do not have a complete faith and dependence on the Lord. Amaziah needed a large army, and felt that his own army was not adequate, and so hired 100,000 Ephraimites out of Israel for 100 talents of silver. But a prophet of God came before him and told him not to do this because these soldiers worshipped idols and God would be displeased. Amaziah wondered what to do about the 100 talents of silver, and the prophet answered, "The Lord is able to give you much more than this." So he dismissed the army and went on to win the battle because God was able to help him.

After the Bible study the audience sang the hymn "Beneath the Cross of Jesus."

There was a discussion on how to spend the Betty Berg Memorial money, and a motion was made and seconded to give the Bible School in Brazil the money, to be used for musical purposes.

The day's offering amounted to \$140.10 and was given to "My Missionary for a Day."

The Ferndale ladies extended an invitation for the Spring Rally.

Before the meeting adjourned, Petra Lee sang a song and Hattie Mohn led in the closing prayer.

The afternoon session opened with the audience singing "Take Time to be Holy." Jan Skramstad led in devotions, based on Matthew 9:37-38. After the devotions Marion Rieth led in a hymn sing.

Marion Lemke of Lake Stevens reported on Junior Missions and Ellen Monseth of Everett reported on the Cradle Roll.

The mission speaker was Reverend

[Continued on page 8]

# the meaning of lent

For some it means just one word... don't. Don't do this; don't do that.

For others it means a period of forty days...the forty days preceding Easter, not counting the Sundays.

In the early days of the church, some mortified their bodies and practiced total abstinence from food. In later times this has become a law at least in some sections of the church.

But really...Lent is none of these. Oh, they have something to do with Lent, but they aren't really Lent.

Have you ever watched a ship go through a canal, for instance, through the Panama Canal? You know that the ship comes into the canal at one level. Then a set of locks or gates close behind the ship and water is let in from the higher level. Gradually that section of the canal is filled, and at the same time **the ship is lifted to a higher level.** When the ship is at the same level as the water in the next segment of the canal, the gates in front of the ship are opened and **the ship sails on at the higher level.**

## LENT IS LIKE THAT.

We come to Lent at a certain spiritual level, and then at the end of those wonderful forty days we go on, but at a higher level. We have been at the Cross...we have followed our Savior, Jesus Christ, in His suffering and death for our sins, and **we have been lifted higher,** much higher; but not to sink back to the old level.

## WE NEED TIMES LIKE THAT.

This is a hurried world, and time seems to go by with greater rapidity every year. It is still true as Wordsworth once wrote:

"The world is too much with us;

Late and soon, getting and spending,  
We lay waste our powers."

Lent, for the Christian, is a time to withdraw from the tensions of life to prepare for the Gethsemanes that may lie ahead.

Perhaps you have read it before, but it's an excellent story. A gentleman was on an expedition into the

upper Amazon regions. He was in a hurry (aren't we always?) and had to go on, day after day, in forced marches. One morning the native carriers didn't appear at the usual time. When he asked the leader about it, he was told, "They are waiting. They cannot move farther until their souls have caught up with their bodies."

We boast of progress, material progress, but won't we have to stop pretty soon to let our souls catch up with our bodies? And don't we, each of us, have to do just that once in a while?

But times of withdrawal from the "business" of life are of little value to anyone unless they lead to something. Going into drydock doesn't lift the ship to a higher level. And so it is in Lent.

OF ALL THE SEASONS OF THE YEAR, Lent is perhaps the most challenging. "What do you think of Christ?"... "Follow Me!"... "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily..." "Far be it from me to glory, except in the cross..."

These are some of the challenges hurled at us from God's Word during Lent. They are real challenges. They test men.

"Jesus calls us o'er the tumult

Of our life's wild, restless sea.

Day by day His sweet voice  
soundeth,

Saying, 'Christian, follow me.'"

It takes men and women who are worthy of the name, to claim this life.

ALL OF THIS MEANS that Lent is a time for feeding our souls on that "bread of life," even the Word of God. Lent means little unless the times of withdrawal from daily activities give time for Bible reading, for private devotions, and for a concentrated study of the truths of God's Word in church. Luther once said, when hearing of a king who had proclaimed days of fasting, "I can appreciate that. I wish fastings in its entire-

ty would again be inaugurated. Fasting is the outward part of devaluating of self and of humility, and if the inner humility is present too, then all is well."

It is by reading, hearing and responding to God's Word, that we really come to know Him who "humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross." Knowing Him better and loving Him more, we find ourselves on a higher level of Christian devotion and service. This is the meaning of a true Lent!

—M. A. Egge

(Courtesy, Tract Mission)

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## Women for Christ

[Continued from page 7]

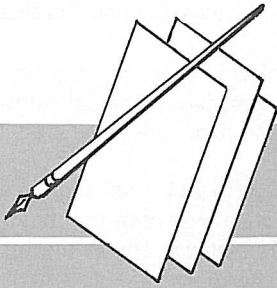
P. J. Titus, from India, who had pioneered several churches there, and who was now working on a graduate program at Seattle Pacific University. He described missions as "God In Action," and explained that missionaries abroad are just one part of the mission work; that the need for the Gospel is all around us, including our families, our towns, in the ghettos, on the campuses, and so on. He stressed that our missionary work should begin first with our own families, and referred to his own mother, who had prayed daily and fasted every Friday, hoping that her children would turn to the Lord. He said that four of her 11 children were in the Lord's service.

Marion Dixon led in the prayer service. The Ferndale Ladies sang the song, "Beautiful Savior." Mrs. Willard spoke on her visit to Jerusalem and prayed the closing prayer. The meeting closed with the audience singing "Blest Be the Tie That Binds."

Virginia Johnson, Secretary







## EDITORIALS

### THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD

"We accept and believe in the Holy Bible as the complete written Word of God given and preserved to us by the Holy Spirit for our salvation and instruction."

Declaration of Faith, I:1

There is something about this Book, the Bible, that defies description or analysis. The world is "filled" with books, but this one bearing the title "Holy Bible" outdistances all the rest.

A. Z. Conrad, pastor of Boston's Park Street Church long ago, summed up the Christian's attitude toward the Bible in such a remarkable way that it is herewith reproduced.

Century follows century—There it stands.

Empires rise and fall and are forgotten—There it stands.

Dynasty succeeds dynasty—There it stands.

Kings are crowned and uncrowned—There it stands.

Despised and torn to pieces—There it stands.

Storms of hate swirl about it—There it stands.

Atheists rail against it—There it stands.

Agnostics smile cynically—There it stands.

Profane punsters caricature it—There it stands.

Unbelief abandons it—There it stands.

Higher critics deny its inspiration—There it stands.

Thunderbolts of wrath smite it—There it stands.

An anvil that has broken a million hammers—There it stands.

The flames are kindled about it—There it stands.

The arrows of hate are discharged against it—There it stands.

Radicalism routs and raves against it—There it stands.

Fogs of sophistry conceal it temporarily—There it stands.

The tooth of time gnaws but makes no dent in it—There it stands.

Infidels predict its abandonment—There it stands.

Modernism tries to explain it away—There it stands.

(from *Is the Bible a Human Book?*,  
Broadman Press, 1970)

We believe that the Bible as we have it is complete. That is, no new writings have been discovered or will be uncovered which are on a level with the 66 canonical books of the Bible. Ancient writings may be found (witness the Dead Sea Scrolls), including earlier manuscripts of Bible

portions than we have now, but none will change the body or make-up of the Scriptures as we know it.

God's purpose in giving us this book is that we might come to salvation. In early catechetical training we learned that "the Bible alone contains full information of the will of God concerning our salvation." Furthermore, our Catechism points out that the substance of all the books of the Bible is "the great truth that Jesus is the way to salvation for all who believe." In these two concise statements great fundamental truth is declared. The Bible is our basic book. The Bible has one message, that there is salvation through Jesus Christ. All other books pertaining to spiritual values and goals have validity only as they agree with the Bible's message.

When we speak of the Bible as the source of instruction, we mean that it not only points the way to salvation but also gives instruction to the one who walks in the ways of the Lord. "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:16, 17).

Finally, we believe that the Bible is given and preserved to us by the Holy Spirit. The story of the Bible's transmission is a fascinating one and too long to be told here. Suffice it to say that we hold to the inspiration of the Scriptures. To go to the Catechism again—"The Spirit of God revealed to them (the holy prophets, apostles and evangelists) what to speak and write." "Men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (II Pet. 1:21). Dr. William Oesch of Germany, in a lecture at a free Lutheran conference in Minneapolis in 1963, spoke of inspiration in the sense that the writers were in the hands of the Holy Spirit. That has satisfied us.

There is considerable discussion about "verbal inspiration." Unfortunately, the discussion is sometimes sidetracked by the contention that inspiration is the property of one particular Bible version or other. The reason this is unfortunate is that no original manuscripts of the Bible are available to us. The best we can do is to have copies of copies of copies, all produced laboriously by hand and subject to minor differences in the process. Furthermore, most of us must be content to handle the Bible in a language other than that in which it was written. It is impossible to translate from one language to another and in every instance convey exactly the same nuances and feeling of the original. More than once we have heard someone who was well versed in two languages, Norwegian and English, for example, say that a particular word did not carry quite the same depth of meaning in translation.

But does this mean that the Bible, whose original words were protected by the Holy Spirit (for truth is not conveyed by incorrect or false words), is not reliable and true in the form in which we have it? Not at all. Its truth has been protected by the Holy Spirit also through the long history of its transmission to us. And let us not think only of the major language systems of the world. In some of the new, hitherto unwritten languages, into which translators are even today putting the Bible, thought patterns and speech structure may be so different from that of Hebrew—Greek—English that literal translation is not justified. Then

enough change must be made so that the truth God intends can be communicated. The amazing thing is that through it all God's message of deliverance through Jesus comes. The Holy Spirit has done His work.

This first thesis of the Declaration of Faith is so important. If we don't believe this and live by it nothing that is to follow in the other theses will come out right.

### JERRY'S OTHER FACE

Go back to October, 1969. October 16, to be exact. It was on that day that a modern-day miracle happened. The New York Mets astounded the baseball world by winning the World Series from the supposedly invincible Baltimore Orioles. The team that only a few short years before had stumbled onto more ways to lose ball games than any other team since the old Flatbush "Bums" of Wilbert (Uncle Robbie) Robinson, had done the incredible.

One of the heroes of that five-game series was Jerry Koosman, winning pitcher in two games, including the all-important last one. The Minnesota boy, claimed at one and the same time by Appleton, Holloway and Morris, set down the Orioles with five hits in that deciding contest, struck out five and walked but one batter. It had been a stellar performance indeed.

Some of you will recall the jubilation when it was discovered that Jerry Koosman was a practising church member and Lutheran vests popped a few buttons when that church happened to be their own. Before the clamor had abated, in a non-denominational gesture, Jerry was awarded the 17-millionth copy of "Good News for Modern

Man," the New Testament in Today's English Version, by the American Bible Society.

This was the one face of Jerry Koosman—superb athlete, diamond hero, All-American boy from the midwest, Lutheran churchman, possessor of a milestone New Testament.

The other face came clearly to light last month when Jerry was revealed as one of nine buyers of the municipal bar in Morris, Minnesota. His involvement in the matter might never have become general knowledge had it not been for a lawsuit against the buyers challenging the purchase. The suit contends that the selling price was dramatically in favor of the defendants, thus at the expense of the taxpayers.

Our contention, of course, is that bar ownership or operation is not a worthy contribution to life or one's fellowmen. The Scriptures, including Jerry's New Testament, teach that we have an obligation to build up life, not tear it down, to put something good into life, not rob from it.

So many times we have seen publicists in the Lutheran church or some other denomination get all excited because some famous person has been found to be a church member or has said something favorable about the Bible or the church or even Jesus Christ. A great deal is made of this as though any one of these will rise or fall on the basis of favorable comments by well-known and influential people. The real proof of sincerity will be shown by the life lived, by the dedication to Jesus Christ demonstrated at all times and in every situation.

Jerry, you've disappointed us.

## In Memoriam

Key: The name of the town is the address of the deceased. Following that is listed the name of the deceased, age, date of death and the church in which he or she held membership.

### NORTH DAKOTA

#### Grafton

Arnold Narveson, 52, Jan. 16, Bethel  
(see poem "Heed God's Call"  
on page 6)

#### McVille

Mrs. Clarence Gudium, 68  
Jan. 27, New Luther Valley  
(Mrs. Gudium was the mother of  
Rev. Milo Gudim, former missionary  
to Madagascar, and now an ALC  
pastor at Rollag, Minn.,  
Hawley P.O.)

### MINNESOTA

Newfolden (Greenbush, Badger)

Cambell Thompson, 64  
Jan. 23, Westaker

#### Shevlin

Lawrence K. Prescott, 73  
Jan. 13, Sell Lake

### AFLC BUDGET FOR 1970-71 EXCEEDED BY \$13,000

Word has been received from the Treasurer's Office that the receipts for 1970-71 for Association work, from congregations, individuals and friends, totaled over \$188,000. The budget for the year had been \$175,000.

Individual goals for World Missions, Home Missions and the Praise Program were exceeded, the other endeavors falling somewhat short of their goals.

Further information concerning the receipts for the past fiscal year will be given in the next issue of the *Ambassador*.

For the present, let the church fellowship lift up praise to God for His provision.



### HIS TASK AND MINE

When Jesus looked upon the earth  
And saw man's lost condition,  
He said, "I must go, though it costs  
My life, to purchase their  
redemption."

He came, He died, and opened wide  
The door for us to heaven.

Now He bids us so with His Word  
to go

That others may know salvation.

Rev. Edwin Kjos  
Faith, S. Dak.

when God accepted Elijah's sacrifice on Mount Carmel, He sent down fire from heaven to consume not only the animal sacrifice but the fire even licked up the water around the altar!

13. What does Jesus think of people who honor Him with only lip service? (Mark 7:6)

14. What does "Zion" refer to in verse 18? (Micah 4:2)

15. When are we able to do good unto Zion? (Acts 13:22)

16. Of what was the destruction of the walls of Jerusalem a reminder, in verse 18? (Luke 19:41-44)

17. What do we need in the church today so there will be "right sacrifices" in which God will delight? (Ephesians 5:14)

May we pray from our hearts, "Lord, send a revival and let it begin in me."

Out of my shameful failure and loss,

Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;

Into the glorious gain of Thy cross,

Jesus, I come to Thee;

Out of earth's sorrows into Thy balm,

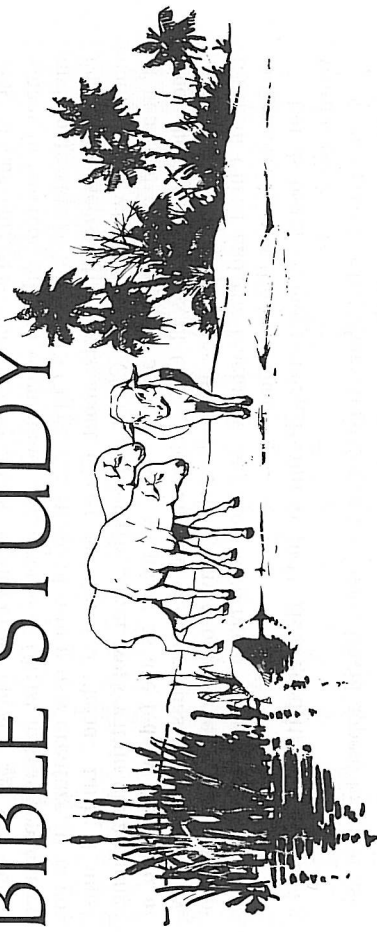
Out of life's storms and into Thy calm,

Out of distress to jubilant psalm,

Jesus, I come to Thee.

—W. T. Sleeper

# WMF BIBLE STUDY



Psalm 51

March, 1971

## A BROKEN AND CONTRITE HEART

It was believed that David's experiences as recorded in II Samuel 11 and 12 provide the background for this Psalm. David had been shielding unconfessed sin for some time when God sent the prophet Nathan to point out his dreadful condition. It is difficult to believe that David, a man after God's own heart, could have fallen so deeply. Yet, in David do we not see some of the treachery of our own hearts and the strong power of sin at work in ourselves? Think of how terrible it must have been for David to fling away his close fellowship with the Lord and live in darkness of soul. However, David did repent when faced with the startling truth and God's love again extracted sweet penitence and praise from a restored sinner.

Let us also remember the deeper implications of murder in Scripture. I John 3:15 reads, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." God places **hated** on an equal basis with **murder**, and we must plead the blood of Jesus to heal us of this sin also.

David knew God would not tolerate unconfessed sin. Thus he approached God on the only possible basis—mercy (undeserved favor). A noted evangelist once said, "When I stand before the judgment seat, I shall not ask for God's justice but for His **mercy!**" It is only as we trust in God's mercy that we dare look at our sins. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross opened the way for a sinner to be cleansed. But each sinner must come to Christ in true repentance and confession of sin before Christ can make of him a new creature. It is not enough to accept the facts about Christ and have a "head" faith: I must commit my whole being to Christ and let His power work within me a change of heart, of attitudes, and actions. "For as many as are **led by the Spirit of God**, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). As one pastor said recently, "The curse of our churches is dead faith—many people have a mental acceptance of Christ and His teachings, but they have never repented of their sins and received a new life from God."

Let us begin by memorizing Psalm 51:10-11. How good it is to hide God's Word in our hearts.

1. In verse 1, what characteristics of God does David appeal to when asking for mercy? (Joel 2:12-13)

a) What does David know about himself?

Not only was David a sinner, but he was sinful. Note these terms: transgression—the violation of the law; iniquity—inner moral corruption; sin—missing the mark of God's standard.

2. Before God can forgive a sinner, what must the sinner do? (verse 3 and Proverbs 28:13)

3. What do we need to see before there will be a deep conviction of sin? (verse 4)

God loves the penitent soul and desires to forgive him, but He dares not pardon one until confession has been made. Until then, sin lies as an unburied corpse before the eye of the soul.

4. How does verse 5 show us the total depravity of man from birth?

Because children are **not** born innocent, we as Lutherans baptize our children soon after birth. There is a necessary transition from subconscious to

conscious faith in Christ, however. As one of our own Association Bible School teachers recently said, "Every baptized child needs a crisis experience in which he accepts the Christ of his baptism into his own heart and life when he reaches the age of discretion. For some children it will mean coming to assurance of salvation; for others, a real conversion experience."

5. Can a person cleanse himself and be saved by reforming? Why? (II Corinthians 5:17)

In Leviticus 14:4-9, we read that a sprig of hyssop was used to cleanse a leper. The leprosy of sin is even more serious than leprosy in the body.

6. When does a soul experience real joy and salvation? (John 1:12 and I John 1:9)

7. What is it to be cast away from God's presence? (verse 11 and Genesis 6:3)

a) David and Saul both sinned greatly, but how did their lives differ? (Psalm 32:5 and Proverbs 16:18)

8. What kind of a spirit do we need to guard against future outbreaks of open sinning? (Matt. 26:41)

Early each morning it is good to feed your soul on the living Word for a daily renewal. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and control your thoughts, words and deeds.

9. When is a person ready to witness for the Lord? (verses 12 and 13)

God will give release from guilt to the sinner who trusts in I John 1:9. The best witness is one who has been newly forgiven. The forgiven Peter was the appointed preacher at Pentecost. (From F. B. Meyer, **On the Psalms.**)

10. Why are our lips often closed for praise unto God? (II Tim. 1:7)

11. According to Isaiah 57:15, where does God say He dwells?

12. What kind of sacrifices does God accept? (verse 17 and Hebrews 9:9-16)

Remember the day of dedication of Solomon's temple. God showed his approval of the sacrifice by sending fire from heaven to consume it. Also,

# JOHN MARK,

## THE MAN WHO CAME BACK

The Bible deals with realities. It comes out of history and is continually making history. It is the glory of the Book of books that it does not gloss over the failures of its heroes. They are shown in their painful reality, sometimes hideously dark on the background of the sublime ideal of human life.

Any one might fail. But failures may become stepping stones to success if God has His way.

The life of John-Mark is the story of a young man who failed in the hour of testing, but, who, by the grace of God, came back.

In the twelfth chapter of Acts we are told of a prayer meeting held in the home of Mark's mother. They are praying for Peter who was imprisoned by king Herod. God answered their prayers by delivering Peter. In this home the followers of Christ were welcome. It is presumable that Mark had met the Apostles and Paul at this time, and was himself a believer in Christ. He was the cousin of Barnabas, one of the leading and one of the most liberal minded men in the Apostolic Church. Both Paul and Barnabas were in Jerusalem at the time of this prayer meeting. Shortly afterwards they went back to Antioch, taking Mark with them.

Friendship of great men is a privilege. Nothing ennobles character like the association with persons of spiritual nobility. The influence of personality upon personality is of greater significance than the reading of many books. How fortunate Mark was in being in the company of Paul and Barnabas.

When Paul and Barnabas were chosen by the Spirit of God to be the first two official ambassadors of the Church of Christ to the Gentile world, they chose Mark as their helper. We see the influence of Barnabas here. He seemed to have been gifted with a fine intuition that enabled him to

see and appreciate the finer qualities in others. When Paul came to Jerusalem after his conversion, the Apostles and the rest of the Church did not fully trust him. Barnabas befriended him. And this Barnabas, more than any other, was the sustaining influence in the life of John Mark.

The three missionaries set out on their journey. Their first destination was the island of Cyprus. This part of the journey was an exciting and successful adventure. From Cyprus they passed over to the mainland of Asia Minor. They intended to carry the gospel inland to the highlands of Galatia. They knew that there awaited them hardships and perils. Faith, courage, and endurance must they possess who shall venture on the mission of Christ into these parts. To the disappointment of Paul and Barnabas, Mark refused to travel with them any further. He showed a yellow streak, left them, and went back to the comforts and ease of his home in Jerusalem. He failed to play the man. Paul was irritated. But it seems to me that I can see the strong hand of Barnabas stretched forth to Mark as he bids him farewell, saying, "I am sorry, son, that you are leaving us here. Remember, this is the cause of Christ."

Paul and Barnabas went on their way. But these words of Jesus must have rung in the ears of Mark as he journeyed back to Jerusalem, "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." He had proven unworthy of the friendship of the two great men, and unfaithful to his Lord and Savior. The shame of it all cut him to the quick. He knew, too, that he would have to meet the silent, if not the outspoken criticism of the Church, both in Jerusalem and in Antioch.

What should he do? Excuse himself? Show a brazen front? Give up

the whole thing? Face it all and try to make good? It was a crucial moment in the young man's life. He chose the latter alternative. A better Mark was emerging.

When Paul and Barnabas came back to Antioch to give their glowing report of the wonderful things God had worked through them, Mark was there. Keener than ever he felt the shame of his own cowardice. But he had made a great resolution. He was going to prove himself worthy of the friendship of the eminent Paul.

Sometime later Paul and Barnabas decided to set out on a second journey. Barnabas has seen the suffering of Mark, and he has also sensed that something new has come into his life. He believes that, given a second chance, Mark will make good. This he suggests to Paul. "But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work," Acts 15:38. Paul had only contempt for weakness. Strong men are sometimes hard. When Paul wrote I Cor. 13, he had learned more of the love of Christ. At this point the character of Barnabas shines forth in its Christ-like nobility. He would rather deny himself the inspiring and invigorating association of Paul for a season, that Mark might be given another chance. Yes, he would rather suffer to be misunderstood by his friend, that he might help Mark to come back. "Love hopeth all things," wrote Paul years after. I wonder if he did not think of Barnabas when he wrote the Love chapter.

There would be fewer human derelicts if there were more persons of the type of Barnabas. Such truly help to rebuild men.

Barnabas was not disappointed. Mark did make good. And the thrill

[Continued on page 16]



Not long ago Missionary George Knapp enclosed a personal testimony letter from a young man in Campo Mourao, Brazil. This letter was sent to our St. Paul's Lutheran Congregation (Fargo, N. Dak.) in request for such an item of interest from our field. We feel, however, that this letter is too thrilling to keep to just one congregation, so through the pages of our **AMBASSADOR** we want to share it with many of you as a testimony of what God is doing through our national Christians in Brazil as they work alongside the missionary to get the saving Gospel out to their fellow Brazilians. Here, then, is the story of Clemente dos Santos Pinto.

Rev. John H. Abel

#### MY LIFE

At four years of age my father died and left four children in the care of my mother. She sacrificed and worked hard in the face of many difficult situations to keep us in food and clothing.

Because of these difficulties, I didn't have the opportunity for schooling as many do. As the situation in the city grew worse, we moved to the country and worked in the fields, and many years passed when I didn't even see a book,

It was very rare to have a Christian neighbor and because of this I learned only to respect people older than myself. I learned nothing that served to edify or feed me spiritually.

So in my youth I learned to choose only the worst company for friends. I was often in the middle of a fight, and often went along on their drinking and gambling parties. I never came to the point of using drugs, but knew plenty of people who did. Whenever I went to a dance, it was only to drink

and become intoxicated, and fight with my brothers and sister, and even my mother, on arriving home,

My work served only for me to earn enough money to spend with my friends. If it hadn't been for divine intervention, I would today very likely be an addict to drugs, a thief of perhaps other things of this nature.

On a certain occasion, a friend and I went to an evangelical church on a Saturday night with the purpose of encountering the pastor, who was an American, to arrange for English classes. We wanted to emigrate to the U.S. to work and live.

Upon our arrival, the pastor's sons were there and greeted us. They invited us to a home where the young people were having an evangelistic meeting that evening. We accepted the invitation with the notion we were thus being polite.

Yet, that night had a great significance for me. After listening to a message telling of the second coming of Christ, I was very impressed and thoughtful, as it seemed the words were directed especially to me.

However, I didn't make a decision that night but continued to frequent the services held in the church and at the Luther League of this Free Lutheran Church. After some time had passed, the parish worker, accompanied by a few other youth, visited me in my home. That day my family was at home and also the friend who had accompanied me on that unforgettable Saturday night.

After a few brief words by the parish worker, I felt the weight which was bearing me down. It seemed as though there was a trial being held and I was the culprit without defense. I sensed the need to be freed from this weight and heavy sentence.

I prayed silently that Christ would manifest Himself there in our midst, and He did! From that moment on my life was changed profoundly and entirely.

Now each day that passes has such joy and happiness and I am growing in the faith and the Word of God. I hesitate to miss any of the services of the church.

At my place of occupation (city hall), I am an ambassador for Christ. All my old friends know me as a Christian now. There are those that make fun of me for having been born again. It hurts me to know that they aren't saved and are walking in darkness.

Today I feel the liberty that Christ can bring and the freedom from the old sins and weights that were annihilating me. When temptations come I remember the verse in I Cor. 10:13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man, . . ." Thus I see the great power of Christ and how He helps me.

In my family, Christ is manifesting His power also, as my mother and a sister have accepted Him as Savior, and also two nieces.

This year, In Dec., 1970, I graduate from high school and in the future I am dedicating my life to the work of evangelization. I want to help in any way possible in the church and especially with young people. My prayers are that many young people who are as I was, may receive the pardon of Christ for their sins, as I have received it.

I am so glad I can give my youth and remaining years of my life to the glory and honor of God.

Clemente dos Santos Pinto

(On January 3, 1971 this young man and his friend were received into our Central Lutheran Church in Campo Mourao, Brazil. This testimony relates again why it is so important for us to send out the saving Gospel to the foreign fields. These boys have now made their profession of faith in Christ and with joy tell of His saving power. We as a family look forward to getting back to Brazil that we might encourage such people and press on to new areas to reach many more such needy souls for Christ. Will you pray much for foreign missions and your missionaries in 1971?)

# CHURCH-WORLD NEWS

## NORWEGIAN BISHOPS UNDERSCORE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (LWF) — A statement underscoring the demand of international pressures for international cooperation among Christian bodies—despite the difficulties involved—from the Bishops' Conference of the Church of Norway was distributed here to the members of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches.

The document did not call for specific action but was a matter of record, expressing both solidarity with and criticism of the WCC and Lutheran World Federation, the two main world organizations with which the Norwegian church is affiliated.

"To our own constituency we wish to make it clear that, though we understand and to some extent share the criticism directed against the world bodies, we dare not today take upon ourselves the responsibility of breaking with the international fellowship of churches to which we are committed," it stated.

"As Christians we have a responsibility for brethren all over the world," the statement added. "Together with them we have the call to bring the love of Christ in word and deed to all mankind."

While underscoring the importance of joint action—cooperative programs in Biafra, the Middle East and similar situations—the statement was not uncritical of ecumenical involvement.

Churches' cooperative actions, it was stated, sometimes "have suffered from onesidedness and negligence of other basic concerns of the churches."

"This is, however, not due to the constitutions of these organizations or their structures," it contended. "It is through onesided emphasis on the part of representatives of member-churches that this problem has arisen and may become acute."

The statement also was critical of

secular news bureaus and ecumenical information services for presenting information "sometimes . . . too abridged to convey the nuances in the decisions made" and with a "sensationalism out of proportion to the realities."

Criticism also was raised against "the evident fact that oppression in communist countries and in the younger nations in the third world have not been reproved with the same consistency and thoroughness as the corresponding sins in the West."

Concluding that various elements may have made ecumenical organizations "less fitted as platforms for an international critical ministry," the statement calls on these organizations to "draw definite conclusions as to their mode of operation."

"However," it was stated, "with the shocking injustice prevailing in the world today, in regard to the distribution of vital resources—an injustice from which our own country also profits—we do not believe it would be advisable to prevent the WCC and the LWF from acting as spokesmen for the Christian world conscience on these questions."

"Only let them speak with the same courage to all sides," it concluded.

## PIONEER S. DAK. ACADEMY TO CLOSE

Augustana Academy, 110-year-old Lutheran high school at Canton, S. Dak., will close its doors May 31, the end of the present school year, the academy's regents have decided.

Its experimental program may be continued in a non-institutional setting at another location, according to President Robert M. Nervig.

The academy is in the fourth year of an experiment that has brought minority-group students from large city ghettos to the prairie campus and has introduced modular scheduling, a no-fail system, team teaching and an open-campus system.

More than 165 minority youths—blacks from large cities and Indians from seven tribes—have attended the school during the past four years. These and other disadvantaged youths have received more than \$200,000 in aid from the academy since 1967.

Last fall, Augustana began a satellite school program in a former convent in north Minneapolis designed to give its students an urban exposure.

The experiment involves small groups of students who live together and become involved in urban learning experiences in a "school without walls" approach.

Augustana's future may involve the operations of a number of such satellites.

Mr. Nervig said a committee of the Augustana Board of Regents will meet with official boards of the American Lutheran Church to explore maintaining the experimental program. Several foundations and government groups will be included in the planning, he said.

Financial considerations prompted the regents to decide to close the school. Mr. Nervig said, however, that the academy last year received \$212,000—a record high in gifts and grants.

Augustana, Mr. Nervig said, has shared the common national predicament of private education: inflation, rising costs, high maintenance costs of old facilities, too high a dependence on gift income, outdated facilities which don't lend themselves to an experimental program, the reluctances of the old school constituency and the church to support the innovative program, and the national mood of polarization.

With 43 employees and a payroll of \$225,000, Augustana was one of the largest business operations in Canton, a community of about 2,600 persons. Campus buildings, a farm and other land, as well as school-owned houses, will be put up for sale.

—Minneapolis Star

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of his life must have come, when Paul, writing to Timothy from his second imprisonment in Rome, says, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry," II Tim. 4:11.

That Paul, in the last days of his earthly life, should desire the comradeship of Mark is evidence that he had proven himself worthy both of the respect and friendship of God's greatest hero.

If any one who reads this should have had past failures cast their dark shadows across his life, remember there is yet a second chance with God.

The past can be forgiven. The present is yours. The future is rich with new possibilities.

—The Lutheran Messenger

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