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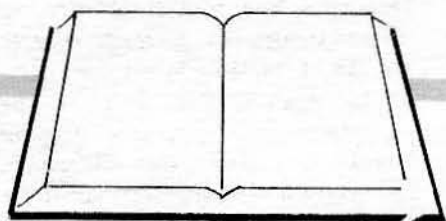
No. 5

LUTHERAN

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—RNS Photo



According to the Word

The Value Placed on Salvation

Read I Peter 1:10-12

In reading the above verses, one receives a new insight on the value of the salvation wrought by our Lord Jesus Christ. Peter speaks about the value placed on this salvation by the prophets, apostles and angels. How we need to remember today the tremendous implications reposed on us who have the privilege of hearing this Gospel to see that those who follow us also receive it for their children.

The prophets' message was simply, "Jesus is coming." In this message they themselves were interested and "sought and searched" the time and circumstances of His coming. The Gospel message is "Jesus has come." The message of the Epistles is "Jesus is coming again." When we think of the extent of the Holy Spirit's revelations through these prophets for our benefit, how concerned we should be, like Peter was for his people, that the message should continue in the future.

Peter mentions that this depth of interest of the prophets is also the subject of the apostolic testimony. He speaks of the message, "the gospel," then the messengers, "them that preached," the method used, "announced," and the power

through which it was given, "by the Holy Spirit." Thus the Gospel goes out today. Peter also emphasized that this Gospel was the subject of angelic inquiry, "which things the angels desire to look into."

In view of Peter's desire for these people to be totally for Christ, the Word thus poses the challenge to us today. It is the most important subject of the entire universe, occupying the attention of our Father in heaven, the prophets of old and apostles, angels and new believers today. Recently I came to fully realize the mastery of a surgeon in performing an operation. I marvelled at the mastery and skill displayed throughout the delicate performance, every detail a masterpiece of perfection. Should not we also, in presenting the Gospel, show the same intense skill and desire to exalt our Lord and His salvation that the physician shows in the perfection of an operation? I think so.

I am reminded of Wesley's words when he, in a period of discouragement, asked a friend if he (Wesley) should give up preaching. This friend answered, "By no means." Then Wesley asked, "But what can I preach?" Then the friend gave this answer which Wesley always remembered: "Preach faith till you have it, and then because you have it, you will preach faith." The words

of Jesus are still true and full of power: "As ye go, preach." You and I, as Christians, bear the owner's stamp of Jesus (Gal. 6:17) and so we must say with Paul, "I, too, believe and I do speak" (II Cor. 4:13).

The Gospel is a living organism, and if it was the subject for prophets, apostles and even angels, then what a heritage and responsibility for us as Christians to proclaim the whole truth of sin and grace to our own people. Esau sold his heritage for a mess of pottage. Many Christians are doing the same. What was the value of the heritage Esau sold to Jacob? It was a spiritual heritage of being a priest of family and clan—a heritage of being a depositor of divine secrets. It was a heritage of being a link in the descent of the Messiah—a heritage of having power with God and man. It was the right of heirship to the promises of the Covenant. It was the heritage of being a pilgrim of eternity. Similarly, also, the value of our salvation in Christ. The Christian's birthright of being born again in a world trodden by Christ; of having the joy of redemption purchased on the cross; of being saved to serve; of being delivered from sin's bondage; of becoming joint-heirs with Christ. Let us never forget the value placed by God on the salvation of Christ.

—A. L. Hokonson

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THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

Pastor Ernest J. Langness,
McVile, N. Dak.

PART I

The following article is part of a paper presented to the 1964 Pastors' Conference in Fargo and deals with a much-discussed subject. We present it now for your interest and enrichment.

I Corinthians 12 to 14

When we come to the Scriptures we must come for our beliefs and not with our pre-conceived notions.

The Use of Spiritual Gifts

"Most person will agree that the spiritual gifts of which Paul writes in his epistle were temporary, supernatural endowments granted to the early church. Such gifts may no longer exist. However, the principles which Paul sets forth in discussing these gifts apply to those natural and providential talents and abilities which are granted at the present time to equip men for the propagation of the Gospel and for the upbuilding of the church."*

There seems to have been a problem at Corinth of which Paul had been informed, so he is dealing with it. To the Corinthian Christian these supernatural endowments were being regarded as ends in themselves. They were being displayed for pride and gratification of their possessors. Here is a real danger which believers must avoid. Now the most surprising of these gifts and not the most useful were the most highly prized, and the exercise of these gifts was resulting in envy, vanity and division.

To correct these abuses Paul shows us in chapter 12 the purpose

* *The Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, by Erdman

of the gifts is for the edification of the church. Chapter 13 says that the spiritual gifts are to be exercised in love. In chapter 14 the relative value of spiritual gifts is to be tested by their usefulness to the church. The fulness of salvation is found in individuals, but the fulness of grace is found in the communion of saints.

I. *The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts—Chapter 12*

For the edification of the church:

The Apostle Paul is dealing with three problems of the Corinthian Church: the veiling of women, the right observance of the sacrament, and most important, the use of spiritual gifts relating to public worship. The gift of the Holy Spirit had to do with the supernatural, mysterious, personal experiences vitally related to life and growth of the church.

The Apostle Paul reminds his readers that before they had accepted Christ they were subject to spiritual forces by which they were impelled to worship of idols. Christian believers had been led by the Holy Spirit to the worship of the living and true God, who not only could speak and act, but who gave men by His Spirit mysterious power of utterance and gracious gifts for the service of His Son.

"However, the worshippers of those false gods, in common with Christians and Jews, held the belief that a man might become possessed by a spirit other than his own and be used as its instrument as it is operated through his faculties and controlled his activities. Corinth was filled with Greek soothsayers and priests who, no less than Christian apostles, claimed divine inspiration and supernatural powers."*

We recall from the book of Acts, chapter 8, how Simon the sorcerer offered money that he might receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Apostle Paul informs the Corinthians as well as the Christian Church how they could distinguish between these manifestations of the Spirit of God and the utterances and extravagances which were allied with pagan practices and beliefs.

These are the tests:

Loyalty to Christ:

This will characterize every utterance which is prompted by the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit will always bring honor to Christ. I Corinthians 12:3 suggests that during one of these meetings when the gift of prophecy was in operation that a voice was heard crying out, "Jesus is accursed." It is possible that some heathen soothsayer or temple devotee had attended their meeting and when the Christians were empowered, as they were at that particular period of church history, that these pagans yielded to demoniac control and opposed the confession "Jesus is Lord" with a diabolic denial, "Jesus is accursed!"

The Test of Sanity:

I think it may be mentioned here that their failure to understand this test was one of the causes of trouble in the Corinthian Church. "The inspiration of the Greek soothsayers and diviners expressed itself in wild frenzy. They gloried in their absolute madness. They uttered their oracles 'like the Pythian prophetess with foaming lips and streaming hair.'"*

This had an affect on the Corinthian Church as they were inclined to believe that the more one was deprived of reason and self-consciousness, the more truly was he under the power and control of the Spirit of God. They were seeking and preferring the gifts that were more startling, and despised those which were more practical and useful. From Paul's writings we

can readily understand that the Holy Spirit operates through the illumined mind and quickened vision and the active reason of the believer, and that in case of true inspiration "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."

I personally feel these tests should be our guide, especially the first, "loyalty to Christ." The humblest Christian, however obscure his station in life and commonplace his gift, is a real instrument of the Holy Spirit if he could humbly but sincerely say, "Jesus is my Lord."

Matthew 7:21-23 makes reference to "not everyone that says, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." There may be many who will do great things as far as we can see, but yet if it is not of the will of God it will not be rewarded by God.

These teachings of Paul are words of wisdom, as well as a guide for us. There are many alleged spiritual experiences and gifts to which should be applied the test of Christian sanity. Undoubtedly the Holy Spirit does speak to the followers of Christ, and does impart to them gifts for service.

I believe that the Holy Spirit, in many instances, has imparted various gifts at different intervals as the need has come and many of us are guilty of failing to recognize this and giving thanks to God. Perhaps these gifts are hidden from us lest we should boast. Here, too, these supposed gifts and messages of the Spirit should always be tested and vindicated according to Scripture, according to the court of reason and common sense.

"The more truly one is under the power of the Holy Spirit, the more active and alert will be the faculties of the mind and reason." *

II. *The Diversity of Gifts*—I Cor. 12:4-11

The gifts granted to the Corinthian Church were many and varied,

yet they all came from one divine source and were all designed for the common good of believers. All, therefore, were to be regarded as sacred gifts of God, and all were to be used wisely, as intended for the well-being of men.

These spiritual gifts were not designed for the gratification of the possessor but for the advantage of the believers. Paul enumerates these gifts. Let us consider them in the order which Paul has given them to us.

The Word of Wisdom, the Word of Knowledge. The word of wisdom and the word of knowledge refer to divinely imparted faculties, first of discovering and second, of making practical applications of the truth. It is interesting that Paul mentions these first, as these gifts were exercised in connection with the exercise of the reason and the intellect. It seems the Corinthian Christians believed that when reason and consciousness were least active, they were truly under the power of the Spirit.

Other gifts which had to do with the will Paul mentions as *faith, a gift of the Spirit*. He has reference here not to "saving faith" in general, for this is not a special gift, but belongs to all Christians. It is the very root of the Christian life and not one of its fruits. The gift of faith is that "assurance in God" and that "heroic daring which removed mountains." For example, the work of "King's Garden" in Seattle is a product of the gift of faith.

Paul mentions the *gifts of healing* which refer to the miraculous ability to heal different sicknesses. *The working of miracles* Paul refers to here is perhaps the raising of the dead, expelling demons, and inflicting punishment upon adversaries, as Paul did.

Then there was *the gift of prophecy and the discerning of the spirits*. By prophecy Paul would indicate first of all a miracle in speech or the gift of interpreting the divine will. This gift was activated by the prophets of the Old Testament.

They prophesied. (We recall there were the false prophets as well as true at that time, so it seems like the enemy is always seeking to counterfeit the work of God.)

The gift of discerning of spirits enabled the possessor to determine whether a professed prophet was controlled by an evil spirit or was inspired by God.

The last gift which Paul enumerates is *the gift of tongues and the interpretation of tongues*. It seems that the gift of tongues at Corinth was different than the manifestation on the day of Pentecost. It probably did not consist in the ability to speak in known languages but rather was an over-powering influence of profound emotion which enabled one to pray and sing or give thanks in an ecstatic language unintelligible to everyone who did not share the same emotion. So this gift is peculiarly in the sphere of the feelings and has little affect upon the understanding or will, which at the time seems inactive.

Emotions which had been the immediate creation of the Spirit, and had been expressed in such mysterious speech, could be understood only by one whom the Spirit put in communion with the speaker. It would be necessary for one thus gifted to interpret what had been spoken. He must be enabled by the Spirit to explain in distinct words the rapturous expression of those who possessed the gift of tongues. If there is no interpretation I question if it is really of the Holy Spirit.

It is interesting that Paul places this gift which the Corinthians coveted most at the end of the list. These gifts might be most startling, but they were of far less edification for the church. The real true gift, whatever it may be to the individual believer, will remove from them personal pride, vanity and should make them realize their great responsibility for seeking the common good and advantage of their fellow men.

by Mr. Melvin Walla, Lay Assistant,
Tioga, N. Dak.

During the Lenten season we are reminded of the cross. We think of the suffering and death of Jesus for our sins and the sins of the world. We think of the cross and the price that was paid there. By His willingness to take our place, we can come to Him and be set free from all our sins and have the privilege to be the sons and daughters of the heavenly Father. This is wonderful and one would never think anyone could turn away from such love. It would seem that all men would flee to receive it. But it is strange that very few make use of this marvelous grace and we ask, why?

The Offense of the Cross

It is evident that the evil powers do all they can to destroy the Gospel of Christ and to make it sound as something very unpleasant and something not to be desired. Paul says, "For the preaching of the cross is foolishness to them that are perishing" (I Cor. 1:18). Paul also says in Galatians 5:11, "Then is the offense of the cross ceased." Paul intends here to declare that the offense of the cross has never ceased, and never can cease. To suppose such a thing would be foolishness. But we have many that believe that the Gospel of Christ is foolishness; it is not for our times and not for our enlightened age. But we must admit that the Word of Christ will stand when all the wisdom of man is gone. The Gospel of Christ is most powerful and

kind; it comes to men in a loving way and offers free salvation to all who will believe.

History has revealed the cross has been hated most bitterly. It is clear that the cross is offensive to the unregenerated mind. It is foolishness and will be foolishness to them that are perishing. We must not believe the Gospel is more acceptable today. Men are much the same as they were in Paul's day. The world and the Gospel are both unchanged.

Wherein lies the offensiveness of the Gospel? Its doctrine of atonement is an offense to man's pride. Men do not like to admit what they are. They will admit they are sinners but not *lost* sinners. That few will admit. They wish to be con-

sidered good people. They might not have been as good as they should have been but there is much good in them, just the same. God looks at the heart and what He sees there is not good as far as He is concerned. We are lost and condemned sinners and must be saved by grace alone. The simple teaching that man is lost and that Jesus saves lost sinners is hard to receive. Man by nature likes to have a part in his salvation. The Word says we are saved by grace and grace alone.

The Word addresses all as sinners and this offends the dignity of the self-righteous man. He feels that there must be something whereby he should merit salvation. The revelation of sin offends his thoughts, and the holiness of God offends

man's love for sin. It may seem strange that when faced with this reality man loves sin and the things of the world. Modern man wants to overlook sin and call it by another name.

How is the offense shown? Frequently by actual persecution of the believer. But more often by slandering and saying all manner of evil about them, such as "old-fashioned," "foolish," "weak-minded," and so on. By trying to preach Christ and omit the cross many have tried to avoid the offense of the cross.

Isn't it strange that men will be offended by what was given for our good? Man will try to work out his own salvation through his good works plus God's grace. Christ was willing to be one of us. He took upon himself the sin of man and became one of him, suffering what we should have suffered. This is humbling to admit. I have to come as a lost sinner and accept what someone else has done in my place. Because Jesus took my place I can be a sinner saved by His grace and robed in His righteousness.

We might be offended in our hearts and not let it be known so that our very lives are an offense to the cross. Our lives should give no offense to those around us, but they should tell the wonderful story of the Christ of the cross. Is there that in our lives which tells others the wonderful news of the cross? Is there a witness of Christ and His saving grace? If not, we are not the salt and the light He has commanded us to be to point men and women to Christ and the cross and the release it can bring to us. Here there can be a temptation for those who preach to so preach that others will not be offended, thereby bringing offense to the cross. Thus we can become sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

Let not the cross become an offense to anyone. Oh, that we might be willing to be living testimonies of what Christ really is and of what He has given us through His suffering and death on the cross.



NEWS

of the

Churches

HAMPDEN, N. DAK.

An area fellowship was held in Zoar Lutheran Church, Hampden, on the afternoon of Jan. 31, sponsored by the parish which includes also Zion, Alsen, and Bethany, Derick. There was a very good attendance, representing at least 7 churches in the area, and the messages in word and song were given by Marian Olson and Jim Roller of Grand Forks. Following the program the women of the parish served lunch.

The offering for the day, after expenses, was given to *The Lutheran Ambassador*.

DE KALB, ILL.

Mr. Rodney Stueland, evangelist for the Hauge Lutheran Inner Mission Federation, will be speaking at an evangelistic series in DeKalb, Illinois, at the Grace Lutheran Church. The series will begin March 30, at 7:30 p.m., at a rented church on 7th Street South and Prospect Street and will continue there through Saturday, April 3. The Sunday services will be at the Glidden School, First Street South and Garden Street, at 10:45 a.m. and 7:15 p.m.

Evangelist Stueland, presently editor of the *Morning Glory*, has served as pastor of the Hauge congregation in Minneapolis in the building that has been purchased by the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations for the church headquarters. Rev. Harold Schafer,

pastor of Grace Lutheran church, states that all interested people in the area are most welcome to attend these services.

NOGALES, ARIZ.

The first Lutheran church in this city of 7,000 came into being when Triumph Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized as a congregation affiliated with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. Nogales presents a setting both of much Roman Catholicism and much religious indifference. The pastor of the church is Rev. Lawrence Dynneson.

Incorporation was recorded on Jan. 6 at the Santa Cruz County courthouse. First council members are Henry Washington, Mrs. Carl Fisher, and Rudy Mitchke, trustees; Leonard Swanson, Mrs. Ted Kennedy, and Mrs. M. Valdez, deacon (esses); and Mrs. Henry Washington, secretary. Mr. Swanson also serves as treasurer for the congregation whose next big project will be building a chapel.

The congregation takes its name from II Corinthians 2:14: "Now thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place."

Leonard Swanson, missionary at Nogales for years, was married to May Rendahl on Feb. 20 at Moorhead, Minn. Miss Rendahl served under the World Mission Prayer League in Mazatlan, Sinaloa, Mexi-

co. They plan to make their home at Nogales.

Pastor and Mrs. L. C. Masted held meetings at Nogales, Jan. 31-Feb. 4. Then, accompanied by Mrs. Dynneson, they had five days of meetings in Cananea, Sonora, Mexico, upon invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Will Lindquist of the WMPL. Many requested prayer at these meetings.

ASTORIA, ORE.

This news article comes from the most western AFLC church in the United States—Bethany Lutheran Church in Astoria, Ore.

The fog has lifted, the breakers have subsided and we are going full sail ahead with Pastor and Mrs. Ray S. Persson as "skippers" at the helm and the Lord as "Pilot."

Bethany Lutheran Church was organized Oct. 6, 1890, with 19 family units as charter members. Needless to say, these are now beyond the golden sunset. Descendants of some of the charter members are still active in our congregation.

Two of the more recent pastors to serve Bethany are Lars Stalsbrotten and Hans J. Tollefson, both still active in the Lord's work.

During the recent drive for funds for the new seminary in Minneapolis our church "netted" \$457.00. Fifty new songbooks are being given to the Sunday school and two new front doors will be installed as memorial gifts. With some of our memorial funds we recently purchased a beautiful new electric Thomas organ which adds greatly to our services. A cross for the altar was also purchased.

In preparation for our 75th anniversary celebration this fall the sanctuary of the church is to be repainted and other improvements will be made.

Visitors are always welcome at Bethany and if ever any of you come this far out west, we hope that you will "come aboard" to visit.

There are many historical points of interest here—the Astor Column, Fort Clatsop National Memorial

[Continued on page 13]

Letters TO THE EDITOR

I am always glad to receive *The Lutheran Ambassador*. It is also good to have God's Word to read and we pray the Bible may always be in our country so our grandchildren and others will not be denied to have it.

We heard a sermon the pastor said was hard to preach. Just like the old-fashioned sermons we heard years ago which could stir up the people. It is just as necessary in these times because we know the devil works just as much now as before. It is good we know we are sinners. We need to kneel and ask Christ for forgiveness every day, that He will have mercy on us and look for His coming. What a day!

"When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and time shall be no more, and the morning breaks eternal bright and fair." May God bless all who read this.

Mrs. Agnes Jensen
Mentor, Minn.

I was favorably impressed by the article in the last *Lutheran Ambassador* (Jan. 26, 1965) which reported on the Second Annual Luther League Convention. I am happy that Bob Lee took the time out to solicit testimonies from some of the Leaguers present.

It was my privilege to attend only the last session of this convention. The Spirit of God was indeed at work in the hearts of those youth who verbally witnessed for Christ.

We must keep up this same fervor that God has begun among us. Let us encourage such meetings as this convention, not only on the national level, but on the district and town level that the Lord may lay hold of these youth for His purposes and His glory.

Dennis D. Gray
Minneapolis, Minn.

SECOND LUTHERAN FREE CONFERENCE SET FOR JULY

The second Lutheran Free Conference has been arranged for July 13-15, 1965, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Sessions will be held at the Town House Motor Hotel. A similar conference was held last summer in Waterloo, Iowa.

The conference is called "free" because it is a meeting of individuals who do not officially represent their church bodies as such. Last year participants came from the following Lutheran groups: the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Church of the Lutheran Confession, the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation, the Concordia Lutheran Conference and the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

General topic for 1965's meeting will be "Justification: God and Sinners Reconciled." Six essays on this subject will be presented and discussed. Anyone who finds himself in agreement with the basis and purpose of the conference is invited to take part.

The immediate purpose of the conference is, according to the advance brochure, "to provide a forum for mutual strengthening of all those who are concerned about an uncompromising confession of doctrines currently being jeopardized in the Lutheran Church. The ultimate objective is to obtain full unity in the understanding of the Lutheran Confessions and in their application in practical church life."

Advance registration as either a participant or an observer may be made by addressing the Arrangements Committee at 11844N Seminary Drive 65W, Mequon, Wis. The registration fee is \$5.00 (no extra charge for a wife). Visitors pay \$1.00 but receive none of the materials. Information concerning

lodging will be sent to all who register.

No joint worship sessions will be held at the conference because all the bodies represented are not in fellowship with one another. A moment of silence will provide the opportunity for all to ask the Lord's blessings upon the conference.

STRICKEN, SMITTEN, AND AFFLICTED

Stricken, smitten, and afflicted,
See Him dying on the tree!
'Tis the Christ by man rejected;
Yes, my soul, 'tis He, 'tis He!

Mark the sacrifice appointed!
See who bears the awful load;
'Tis the Word, the Lord's Anointed,
Son of man, and Son of God!

Here we have a firm foundation;
Here the refuge of the lost;
Christ, the Rock of our salvation:
His the name of which we boast.

Lamb of God for sinners wounded!
Sacrifice to cancel guilt!

None shall ever be confounded
Who on Thee their hope have built.

—Thomas Kelly
(from *The Concordia Hymnal*)

"He was despised and rejected by men;

a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;

and as one from whom men hide their faces

he was despised, and we esteemed him not" (Isa. 53:3).

"On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness" (Zech. 13:1).

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life" (John 3:14, 15).

WOMEN for Christ

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

If we should allow the Holy Spirit of God to search our hearts and try our thoughts, how devoid of love we would find ourselves! How completely selfish! What a small measure of consecration. How many things am I doing because of a burning love for souls? How many prayers am I *compelled* to pray because the love of Christ constraineth me? How many neighbors do I love as I love myself?

When I realize that God longs to use my heart as a reservoir for His perfect love, that it may overflow and be shed abroad—then in humble recognition of my coldness, indifference, and half-heartedness, I must bow before Him and thank and praise Him for His longsuffering, merciful, forgiving love to me! Herein is love—not that we love God, but that He loved us!

Jesus came to earth because of love, to live and die that you and I might live eternally with Him in glory. Yet no one, as far as the Word relates, thanked Him for what He was about to do. Instead they reviled Him; called Him a devil, a deceiver, a blasphemer. One of His own disciples betrayed Him; another denied Him. They all forsook Him and left Him alone with His enemies who beat and scourged Him, spit upon Him, mocked Him, crowned Him with thorns, and finally hanged Him on a cross. Herein is love! He did it all for me while I was His enemy—without my desire, or knowledge. He did it freely, cheerfully. Herein is love!

And God the Father, my Creator, who knows my frame and remembers that I am dust, tells me: "This is the love that I want to shine through you!" How miserably I have failed! Oh, the trash and trifles that I have put in the way of that love! How mottled and distorted have the rays come through my heart to my neighbor!

Yet my gracious heavenly Father, in love and mercy, continues to cleanse, forgive, and strengthen His earthen vessels that they might be used to His glory in bringing souls to the cross of Christ. For it is His holy and perfect will that the wondrous Gospel of salvation through faith in His Son should be proclaimed to lost sinners by you and me. And again—how miserably I have failed! How few and cold the prayers for our churches and pastors; how miserly the giving; how lightly the burden for lost souls has rested on my heart.

What is holding up the missions program in our church? Is it the lack of sinners in need of a Savior? Is it really that we are poor? Or can it be that we have choked up the channels of love with selfish and worldly desires, and the pure love of God is not shed abroad because we will not let it out?

God grant that we in the *Association* may soon, may *now*, catch a glimpse of the clock and be jarred awake to the urgency—the awful urgency—of bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to our neighbor today while it is called day. People ask, Do you think the world will be

reached for Christ in this generation? What utter foolishness! *The world must be reached for Christ in each generation or that generation will be lost eternally!* And every soul on earth is my neighbor. What am I doing to bring my neighbor to Christ?

—Mrs. Esther Farrier
Adapted from
The Greatest of These

MEN'S DAY HELD AT WILLMAR WMF MEETING

The Women's Missionary Society of the Free Lutheran Mission, Willmar, Minn., held a Christmas meet-



It was men's day at the women's monthly meeting at the Willmar Free Lutheran Mission in December.

ing on Dec. 10. The men of the congregation were invited to attend. They expressed their appreciation at being given the opportunity of learning the procedure of the women's group and of participating in the Bible study which was led by Mrs. Morris Eggen.

Our meeting opened with the singing of Christmas carols. Roll call was taken and each member responded with a Bible verse. Mr. Verle Dean led in devotions. Ardel Bratland sang "Tell Me His Name Again." A reading was given by Mrs. Leif Fostervold. Mrs. Eggen and Mrs. Albert Holcomb sang "Wonderful Peace."

Each woman drew a name for a "prayer pal" for the coming year. Each person remembers her pal in prayer and also remembers her on her birthday and anniversary with a card.

Special guests were Pastor and Mrs. Carl Ostby of Spicer, Minn. Refreshments were served by our hostesses for December, Mrs. Ardel Bratland and Mrs. Ada Engwall. Mrs. A. G. Gunderson, Chm.



COFFEE HOUSE EVANGELISM

Much in the news these days are the so-called "coffee houses" usually located near college campuses as places where the inclined can gather to discuss religion, death or taxes. Now found from coast to coast, they bear such names as "The Potter's House," "The Unmuzzled Ox," "Precarious Vision," and "The Exit."

They are largely a Protestant creation and, according to a report in *The Christian Century*, are frequented mostly by Protestants. But over half of the remainder of the participants are atheists and 3 percent of the workers are atheists, according to this same report.

The coffee houses are established as centers where particularly the artistic, the intellectual and the beatnik-type can gather and "shoot the breeze." The setting for and prelude to what many backers hope will be discussions about God and a meaningful faith is usually a combination of art, folk music, jazz, drama and poetry—that and lots of coffee. A coffee house is being established near Augsburg College in Minneapolis. Included among the originators of that house is a college Greek class student with your editor.

Some coffee houses are very plain and may not have much more than the coffee and a place to sit and people to talk to.

What shall we say about these ventures? Our first inclination is to reject them as instruments of evangelism. Yet we recognize them as an attempt to reach a quite "untouchable" people. The idea of having a place where these folks will come is worth something. They need to talk with someone. On the other hand, we do not like the nightclub setting and see the jazz setting as a poor one for religious conversation. Are the workers able to lead the searching, and we concede they are searchers, to faith in God through Jesus Christ? What about the 3 percent atheist staff workers? Whom can they help?

No doubt the scriptural basis for coffee houses would be the fact that Jesus associated with all sorts

of people looked down upon by the "religious." And also that the Apostle Paul mingled with the philosophers at Mars' Hill in Athens. The comparison ends just about there. Jesus was known as a man who had one burning message, the kingdom of God, and one who promoted the law of God. There was no question as to His purpose. Paul also came to the philosophers with one message only, that Jesus Christ revealed God, was God, and was the only way to God. Again, the philosophers were left in no doubt as to his position.

The coffee houses, on the other hand, apparently dare not appear too religious lest they scare customers away. They hope to "convert" people but can't be too obvious about it. The workers, or listeners, dare not lead, but can only wait. Should word get around that there is a "missionary" in "the Exit," for instance, attendance would soon dwindle. So the zealot for souls would find himself in a waiting game which he might not be able to abide.

Then, too, we fear that some coffee house workers are clearer on their philosophy than on salvation by grace through faith. And what about the 3 percent atheist workers?

Is the offence of the cross of Christ minimized in any way through this effort? Surely the boy or girl gifted with a brilliant and creative mind must kneel at the same mourner's bench that the rest of us do and plead the same mercy of God.

To conclude, we readily confess our reservations about coffee house evangelism, but what are we doing to win this group of people? Have we written off the beatnik, the artist, the intellectual? We suppose our stock answer is "personal witnessing." And that really is a very fine answer, but are we *doing* anything?

WHY NO LEGISLATION?

It is over a year since the cigarette scare. Now life has settled back to normal. A few have quit the habit but the decline is not noticeable to the naked eye. Women seem more reluctant to give up the practice than men. We may as well be resigned to the fact that cigarette smoking, like the poor, we shall always have with us.

Not that we are not to try to do something about both of these. Which brings us to the point of this editorial: Why has there been no legislation to at least curb the advertising of cigarettes by this time? Is it possible that a government study commission can produce a report showing a health link to smoking and nothing be done after over a year? Yes, it is evidently possible. And when you recall what has been known for years about the physical effects of alcohol on the human body and that 30 to 35 million lives are blighted by alcoholism at one time, and yet no significant curbs are placed upon its advertising—then you really know it's possible.

WEATHER PLAYS HAVOC

Let us call for the drastic reduction of cigarette and beer advertising. First of all, it ought to be eliminated from radio and TV altogether. That should be our absolute minimum requirement. Common sense dictates that this is a reasonable request. But oddly enough, in this day of reason when many would make man's reason the judge over the very Scriptures of God, there is little cry for reason to prevail in regard to this matter.

Thet present delaying tactics sound too much like Bert Leston Taylor's poem "Reform in Our Town." A man named Jimson rose up against sin and graft in his town. A group of experts was called in to lead the fight against Gas and Traction (monopolies?), police corruption, saloons, and petty gambling. But here is how it went.

The men who came to Our Town
Expressed a mild surprise,
Then they too at each other
Looked "with a mild surmise."
Jimson had stock in Traction,
And Jones had stock in Gas,
And Smith and Brown in this and that,
So—nothing came to pass.

LONDON SNOW

For now doors open, and war is waged with the snow;
And trains of somber men, past tale of number,
Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil they go:
But even for them awhile no cares encumber
Their minds diverted; the daily word is unspoken,
The daily thoughts of labor and sorrow slumber
At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for the
charm they have broken.

Robert Bridges' poem "London Snow," from which these lines are taken, reminded us of our own experience while riding out of Minneapolis by bus following the heavy snowfall of early February.

Seldom have we seen a sight more beautiful. Everywhere lay the thick white covering under the noonday sun, unruffled by wind, not yet grayed by the soots of man's industry. Large open areas still escaped the scuffing and crisscrossing of romping and adventurous children.

How easy it was to be mindful of God's Word in Isaiah 1: "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." And what does that mean, but that they are covered by the blood of Jesus and the penitent soul stands before God as though he had never sinned?

O God, can this be—for me? Yes, for listen: "I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins" (Isa. 43:25). They *are* blotted out. The robe of Christ's righteousness replaces the filthy rags. The Bible says so.

What will be remembered most about the third annual winter Bible conference is the weather. The friends of Iowa left no stone unturned in showing hospitality and a good program had been planned and was presented, but the weather was the dominant factor. (We are writing without knowledge of Friday's events.)

To begin with, the conference start was postponed a day due to extreme iciness in Minnesota and Iowa. Nevertheless, some people did arrive on Tuesday. Others, delayed en route, came on Wednesday. Those who drove by auto, on ice, and in Thursday's storm, almost took their lives in their own hands to do so, but fortunately we know of no accidents. God be thanked.

A large audience participated in Wednesday night's service in the beautiful Salem Lutheran Church southwest of Radcliffe. A very fine spirit prevailed and Pastor Herbert Franz, Cloquet, Minn., evening speaker, called out the challenges of I Corinthians 16:13, 14—"watch, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men, be strong, do all things in love." Many musical selections were sung and played.

Then came Thursday and the storm. The attendance we did have that day was a tribute to people's hardiness and foolhardiness. The spiritual food was good from Pastor Clair Jennings, Pastor Julius Hermunslie, Dr. Uuras Saarnivaara, Pastor John Strand and again, Pastor Franz, but the weather put a damper on activities, that's for sure.

Some people had to leave on Thursday and others of us on Friday, thus depleting the outside representation for Friday.

The experience does raise some questions about the future of these mid-winter conferences. There is a risk in having them in rural areas, and we don't mean a country church necessarily, if the weather is bad. Should they be held in larger centers and over more days? Also consider this. Is it necessary or good to have our own mid-winter conference when two inter-Lutheran conferences are available to us each winter? Might there not be rich blessings waiting through greater participation in these? The time element for both pastors and laymen is a factor, too. We only raise these questions to stimulate some thinking and discussion.

The Iowa trip was eventful for all of us who attended. The warm hospitality of Pastor Jay Erickson and his people and the spiritual enrichment of the meetings will long be remembered. Remembered, too, will be our own experiences on the trip—missing two buses and one train (not entirely due to the weather), necessitating two unexpected overnight stops in Minneapolis and doing our first hitch-hiking in some years.

to the fact that she was an undeserving, totally helpless individual, dependent on the Lord's mercy. She brought nothing but a helpless cry for help. What does Scripture tell us about our needs today? I Pet. 5: 5, 6; James 4: 10 What does it mean to humble ourselves? Luke 18: 13; Ps. 57: 1 What confidence is ours when we do this? John 6: 37 Isa. 65: 24 Isa. 66: 2b

Discussion: Why did Jesus appear to be indifferent to the woman's plea? How was her spiritual life strengthened because of it? Appropriate this to our life today.

SHE CAME—For the Right Purpose

A sense of desperation and need led the Canaanite to Jesus. What was her immediate concern? Matt. 15: 22 However, she had not been in Jesus' presence long before she realized another need must first be met. What was it? Matt. 15: 25 She had come to Him for an answer; now she realized she must first seek the Lord who gives the answer. "The meaning of prayer is that we get hold of God, not of the answer."—O. Chambers. As the Lord was permitted to meet her spiritual needs, she opened the door for further blessings. What were they? John 17: 3 Eph. 2: 8-10 Isa. 57: 15 Matt. 21: 21, 22 John 15: 11 Matt. 15: 28

She of whom it was said, "Great is your faith," knew whom to go to in her need. She had the faith to claim and challenge His loving-kindness even in her rejection. She dared to pray, "Help me," and found life abundant and eternal.

Prayer: O Lord our God, grant us grace to desire Thee with our whole heart, that so desiring, we may seek and find Thee; and so finding Thee may love Thee; and loving Thee we may hate those sins from which Thou hast redeemed us—for the sake of Jesus Christ, Amen.

—Selected

WMF Bible Study

PROFILES OF FAITH



The Canaanite Woman

"O woman, great is your faith!" Can you imagine a greater commendation coming from Jesus? Strange, isn't it, that this praise could be merited by a woman from a heathen land during her first meeting with Jesus? A study of Bible personalities would be incomplete without considering the woman from Canaan whom Jesus himself so graciously commended. This distressed mother living in Phoenicia was a descendant of the Canaanites whom the Israelites, under Joshua, had been commanded to destroy. However, the Israelite nation was lax in fulfilling the command. Hundreds of years later heathen Canaanites lived on a narrow strip of land along the Mediterranean Sea adjacent to Israel.

Study Matthew 15: 21-28 and Mark 7: 24-30. Note how this woman in her great need grew to a great faith as she came (1) to the right person (2) with the right attitude (3) for the right purpose.

SHE CAME—To the Right Person

Who did she acknowledge Jesus to be? Matt. 15:22
 What did her way of addressing Jesus imply?
 How do you suppose a Gentile could have this knowledge?
 As she came to the Lord Jesus she recognized Him for what He was,
 the promised Messiah, the Emmanuel. Many came to Jesus for help
 during His earthly ministry. Crowds and individuals constantly sought
 His attention. They all received something, but not always did they want
 His best gift of eternal value. Notice:

MOTIVES IN SEEKING JESUS	and	RESULTS OF THEIR MEETING JESUS
(Who did they think He was?)		(What needs were met?)

Matt. 14: 13, 14	Matt. 14: 14
Matt. 15: 33	Matt. 15: 37
Matt. 17: 14, 15	Matt. 17: 18
Matt. 19: 16	Matt. 19: 22
Mark 1: 40	Mark 1: 42-45
Mark 12: 13	Mark 12: 17
Mark 5: 27, 28	Mark 5: 29-34
Mark 10: 46-49	Mark 10: 52

(What additional blessing did the latter two receive?)

Some people still look to Jesus only as a physician, a teacher and example, or as a resource for material or physical need. He is this, but much more. Only those who call upon Him as their Lord and Savior from sin will receive His best gift of eternal life.

Discussion: Does our personal conception of *who* Jesus is in any way determine what Jesus can do for us? How?

SHE CAME—With the Right Attitude

What did she do? Matt. 15: 25 What did she say?
 Matt. 15: 22, 25 What compensation did she offer
 for her request? In his book *Prayer*, O.
 Hallesby speaks of prayer as an attitude of our hearts. He suggests
 that the two characteristics of an attitude which God recognizes as
 prayer are (1) helplessness, and (2) faith. This destitute mother could
 offer nothing for His help. Did she make any promises? Why
 not? Did she have references or recom-
 mendations to her credit? On what basis, then,
 did she dare to approach Jesus? How did the
 Psalmist express himself in this situation? Psalm 16: 2
 What did he do? Psalm 18: 6 What did he find?
 Psalm 18: 6 In her helplessness the Canaan-
 ite turned to Jesus. But what did Jesus do? Matt. 15: 23
 What did He tell the disciples within her hearing? Matt. 15: 24
 Why had He come to save the people of Israel? Matt.
 15: 24a

Try to imagine yourself in her position. She had begged for help,
 but apparently had been ignored; she had been definitely classed as
 one outside of Israel's sheepfold. How much less it often takes to dis-
 hearten us! How does she appear to possess the faith that makes our
 attitude to God acceptable? Matt. 15:25
 How does Jesus respond to her second plea? Matt. 15: 26
 Notice the ray of hope in Mark 7: 27. Who were the
 children? Who were the little dogs?
 (The expression "dogs" was not an uncommon term for the Gentiles
 among the Jews.) Notice her response in Matthew 15: 27. How much
 was she asking for? What did she believe
 a "crumb" of His grace could do? How was her
 persevering faith rewarded? Matt. 15: 28 Try to imagine
 her reactions to Jesus' commendation and promise. Before her exaltation
 and promise there was the valley of humiliation. She had to assent

THE SON OF GOD

In wonder and in awe, by faith the truth I see.
It was the Son of God who gave himself for me!
It was the love of God that planned it so He came!
I know He is the Christ—I have life in His name.

He came in lowly form, from realms of heavenly light,
To this dark world below steeped in sin's awful night.
In meek humility, earth's thorny path He trod—
He who was Life and Truth, the only way to God.

He healed, restored to life, and gave new hope again;
His pure heart grieved—at sin and unbelief—of man.
Though He was God's own Son, the Holy God most high,
He took abuse and scorn, was nailed on Cross to die.

It was the Son of God—Almighty God above—
Who could have saved himself, but gave himself in love.
It was the Son of God who broke the devil's power,
Who conquered sin and death in His triumphant hour.

He rose up from the grave in glorious victory,
And He, the Son of God, has power to set us free.
No human power can save, none else for sin atone,
But He, the Son of God, 'tis He and He alone.

With trumpet sound and shout He'll come to earth once more,
To gather all His own through heaven's open door.
And then His blood-bought Bride with undimmed eye shall see,
And praise the Lord of lords, who reigns eternally.

Mrs. I. M. Norum
Shevlin, Minn.

[Continued from page 6]

where Lewis and Clark wintered over, Fort Stevens State Park, Lewis and Clark Salt Kern, Columbia River Maritime Museum, Clatsop County Historical Museum, and others.

Astoria is at the south end of a new bridge under construction between Oregon and Washington, due to be completed next year.

Mrs. G. F. Peeke, Corr.

AUSTIN, MINN.

Faith Free Lutheran Church held its first annual meeting in the congregation's temporary place of meeting, the parsonage, on 22nd Ave. S.W. Mr. Gayler Jensen was chosen as president of the congregation and Mr. Charles Wolfe, Jr., as secretary-treasurer.

Council members at Faith do not carry the usual designation of dea-

cons and trustees, but serve as chairmen of committees, namely, Christian Education, Evangelism and Youth, Buildings and Grounds, and Stewardship and Missions.

The constitution was considered at length and then tabled for further prayer and study until the semi-annual meetings. Plans were set in motion for purchase of lots for the future church building. God willing, a full church basement will be made this spring as a place of meeting, as the parsonage quarters are already too small.

The youth Bible fellowship of the congregation has met with great success. Many youth meet on Monday evenings at the J. C. Hoialmen home for Bible study and discussion. Mr. David Olson, a Hormel biologist, is the able and dedicated leader.

Pastor of the congregation is Rev. Hubert F. DeBoer.

MRS. P. O. LAURHAMMER

Mrs. P. O. Laurhammer, widow of Pastor P. O. Laurhammer of the Lutheran Free Church, passed away on Jan. 21 in Rockford, Ill. She was 90.

She was united in marriage to Peder Laurhammer in 1902. They served parishes in St. Paul, Minn., Hampden, N. Dak., Rockford, Ill., Edinburg, N. Dak. He taught speech at Bethania College in Everett, Wash., and served briefly as president of the same. Mr. Laurhammer served interim pastorates at Medicine Lake, Mont., and Bagley, Minn., after his retirement. He passed away in 1954.

(The Laurhammers were my predecessors at Medicine Lake. In making my first visit to that parish I had a pleasant visit with them. Mrs. Laurhammer was a reader of the AMBASSADOR.—Ed.)

NOTICE

We would like to compile an index of the contents of the first two volumes of *The Lutheran Ambassador*.

A volunteer who does typewriting is needed. The work may be done at home. A complete file of the papers will be supplied to the one who can do this work. A modest remuneration will be made for the work, and we emphasize the word "modest."

Address inquiries to Rev. Raymond Huglen, Roslyn, S. Dak.

The Editor

"For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this charge I have received from my Father" (John 10: 17, 18).

"You were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body" (I Cor. 6: 20).



Luther League Activities

INTRODUCING...

Faith Free Lutheran Young Adults Minneapolis, Minnesota

(A very serious problem in our day is the church's attempt to reach young people after they fly from their parents' nests. Many mothers and fathers can tell of the heartache they felt when one of their children fell into a life of sin while working or attending school away from home. Many of the young people reading this are deciding right now where to go when they graduate from high school. Here is the story of how one of our congregations is ministering to the college and working-age young adult.)

In the fall of 1964, a group of about a dozen young people met in the basement of Faith Free Lutheran Church, 3019 17th Avenue South, Minneapolis. After a Bible study led by Pastor Clair Jennings, they decided to meet together every other Friday night for study and fellowship. The unusual thing about this group was that most of them were not even members of the church but were students and career people from all over the city. And thus began Faith Young Adults.

The year has been one of rich fellowship and growing together in Christ for these young people. God's Word has been the center of every meeting. Bible studies on many dif-

ferent topics have been presented by members of the group, seminary students, and Pastor Jennings. A light lunch follows the studies, and it is usually quite late by the time all the discussions break up and everyone gets away from the piano and goes home. Some of the church members have opened their homes for fellowship meetings on the Fridays when they don't meet in the church, since many of the young people hate to let a week go by without meeting together. Two of the special programs during the year have been an ice-skating party at the home of a career girl from Edina and a Valentine party at the apartment of two working girls from Hampden, N. Dak.

It's interesting to notice who attends the meetings. Usually there are about two dozen who attend on Friday night. Taking an active part are students from the University of Minnesota, Augsburg College, Northwestern College, Deaconess Hospital, Swedish Hospital and St. Barnabas Hospital. Employment ranges from hospital and clerical work to working for the Billy Graham Association. The different states that have been represented include Minnesota, Montana, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Young adults from other churches in the area also take part in the fellowship. The mixture of members is reflected by the newly elec-

ted officers: president—Steve Borwick, Radcliffe, Ia. (Northwestern College); vice president—Pat Carpenter, Houston, Minn. (working girl soon starting at the U of M); secretary—Kris Volden, Viroqua, Wis. (Augsburg College); and treasurer—Carolyn Hove, Minneapolis, Minn. (employed by the Hove Company). Senior high youth from Faith are also a part in the fellowship. A number of the young adults have become members of the congregation since the beginning of the year.

Certainly one of the most thrilling experiences of the Faith Young Adults has been their travels as a Gospel caravan. During November about 25 young people drove down to Austin, Minn., where they worshipped, presented the Gospel, and ate with the members of the new Faith Free Lutheran congregation. Then they drove down to Salem Lutheran Church, Radcliffe, Iowa, where they conducted an evening youth rally around the theme "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus." A second caravan of about the same size went down to Faith Lutheran Free Church of Running Valley, Colfax, Wis., on the last Sunday in January. After an afternoon toboggan party and supper, the group presented a program with the theme "There's a New Day Dawning." There was a "home game" at Faith on February 21, and a program in Morgan Avenue Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, on the first Sunday in March. God has greatly blessed the hearers and those taking part, too.

Faith Free Lutheran Young Adults asks for the prayers of Christian people everywhere that the Lord might continue to bless their fellowship and be glorified through it, and that God might give them a greater and broader ministry to other young people.

"So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (Heb. 9: 28).

CHURCH-WORLD NEWS

GLEANINGS FROM AN EDITOR'S READING

For it is right there, on the local level, that Christ comes to men "where they meet on the street and confronts them face to face and not from afar off." Day by day and week by week the persistent and consistent preaching of the Word from the pulpit, in the Sunday school classroom, in the youth groups and in other ways is the very reason for our existence as groups of believers and as the larger fellowship. We have our district and national setups for their definite and needed purposes, but when such conferences are over it is back to the local area once again to press the battle for Christ, encouraged by the inspiration and help which comes from the larger group.—Editor in *Evangelical Beacon*, Feb. 16, 1965.

It is so human to want our young to have things "better" than we have had them—but by better do we mean finer, or more lavish? It is only human, too, for the youngsters to desire all the luxuries—but is it fair to feed the greed of our young people if at the same time we are robbing them of the life-saving strength of struggle for survival together? It is in the troubled and lean times that a marriage is strengthened. It is then it becomes a marriage and not just the exchange of words before a minister.—Gwendolyn Bennett Pappas in *Christian Herald*, February, 1965.

Through the many years of its history God has given to our church a number of great men. Dr. Carl B. Ylvisaker (Concordia College, Moorhead, Minn.) was among the greatest. No other man I've ever known has left such an indelible impact upon my life. Thousands of others would, if asked, offer the

same testimony. Perhaps some in our day would quickly label him a "pietist" and ignore his contribution. If what he was and represented be labeled "piety," may God give more of this to the church of today! Devotion, dedication, love, commitment, compassion, zeal were combined in this great man of God! His evangelism fervor manifest in his compelling witness has left its imprint upon the Lutheran church for all time. God grant that we may not lose our heritage! *And Carl B. Ylvisaker walked with God and he was not, for God took him! May his spirit live on.*—Dr. E. O. Gilbertson in *Good News of Zion*, March, 1965.

Capital punishment is imposed chiefly upon the poor, the borderline mental cases, the minority groups. In 1962 some 600 homicides were committed in California, 129 cases were completed and classified as worthy of the death penalty, but only 12 executions took place at San Quentin (Calif.). Every last one so condemned fits the above-mentioned description. It takes money—plenty of it—to hire legal assistance to defend the criminal.—Rev. Sig G. Sandrock in *The National Lutheran*, February, 1965.

Communism will fall—or evolve into something else. It is too contrary to the laws of human nature to long endure. But when this happens, what will take its place in these ravaged countries of Eastern Europe?

Today doors stand open before the evangelical cause which for centuries were closed. Communism has said to the Roman Catholic Church, "If we grant you a measure of freedom, the same must be enjoyed by Protestants." Thus as paradoxical as it may seem to many Americans who have misconceptions about the situation in the Satellites, Communism, although

officially atheistic and at war with any religious faith, has given to the Protestant movement opportunities unparalleled before.

—Must they be lost by our apathy? —David Benson in *Eternity*, February, 1965.

A second reason (for not joining the ecumenical movement) is that Southern Baptists generally are strong *denominationalists*. We do not accept the ecumenical premise that denominationalism is the scandal of Christianity, wasteful, selfish, or sinful. The variety of churches produced by the Protestant Reformation has brought great vitality and strength to Christianity. Division has multiplied the Christian witness. Struggle, tension, and doctrinal debate have purified truth and have been beneficial rather than harmful. To abolish denominationalism would be to reverse the Reformation and turn the clock back to a medieval Catholicism.—Wayne Dehoney in *Christianity Today*, Jan. 29, 1965.

PASTORAL SHORTAGES AROUSE CONCERN IN SWEDEN, DENMARK

Copenhagen—(LWF)—Prospects of severe shortages of pastors in coming years are beginning to arouse concern in the national Lutheran Churches of Sweden and Denmark.

In Stockholm new official statistics have been published which forecast that 58 percent of the present clergy of the Church of Sweden will reach retirement age in the next 15 years. In the rapidly growing capital, Bishop Helge Ljungberg said his diocese already needed at least 50 more ministers.

Ways to remedy a similar problem in the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church are now being studied by its Conference of Bishops.

In this country, too, the need is felt most acutely in the urban areas, where large population increases make urgent the expansion of parish work.

At the Danish bishops' January meeting, the problem was a major agenda item. The Bishop of Copenhagen, Dr. Willy Westergaard Madsen, said it was primarily a matter of encouraging young people to enter the service of the Church.

The bishops discussed ways to facilitate the recruitment of ministerial candidates, including the possible shortening of the theological curriculum. They also analyzed the consequences until now of a 1962 law that—as an emergency measure—permits laymen without theological training to apply for pastoral posts.

In Sweden, to judge by the new statistics, the need is already more alarming. The Swedish Church at present has 2,714 clergymen in active service but it also has about 300 pastoral vacancies. And 1,587 of the 2,714 are due to retire by 1980.

On the basis of these figures, it is calculated that the Church will require 126 new ministers a year for the next 15 years. Meanwhile, enrollments at the two university theological faculties have declined in recent years.

The five-year decrease at Upsala has been from 91 to 85, and at Lund from 89 to 74.

CONSERVATIVES ISSUE MANIFESTO ON DANISH LUTHERANISM TODAY

Copenhagen—(LWF)—When people discuss this country's religious affairs these days, their number-one topic is a pamphlet in which a group of conservative clergymen offers a manifesto against the "confusion, obscurity and disintegration" in present-day Danish Lutheranism.

Titled "The Church's Yes and No" and signed by 11 pastors, the manifesto has been circulated in 25,000 copies.

In six chapters, it contains a

series of positive and negative statements—introduced by "We support" or "We reject"—reflecting a concern for preservation of the authority of Scripture and the Lutheran confessions in the Church's life over against an excessive "democratization" and "popularization."

It has won the endorsement of such prominent church figures as Bishop Christian Baun of Viborg and Prof. Regin Prenter of Aarhus, a former member of the Lutheran World Federation's Commission on Theology.

On the other hand, the head of the national Lutheran Church, Bishop Willy Westergaard-Madsen of Copenhagen, has publicly criticized the authors' view of the Church as too narrow, reserved and static. The comment aroused in the press and radio has been abundant as well as varied.

At the annual meeting of the Danish Conference of Bishops here in January, opinions were exchanged concerning the pamphlet and the resulting reactions in the Church but no conclusions were defined.

Here are key ideas from the manifesto:

On "The Authority in the Church"—The Word of God is the only authority in the Church and it is so clear that it is possible to distinguish between right and wrong.

On "the Holy Means of Grace"—Rejected is the concept of the Gospel as a general theory that God is always merciful and forgives every man, whether he asks for forgiveness or not.

On "The Service of the Word"—The office of the ministry was ordained by God and cannot be treated as merely a practical affair subject to majority decision or general legislation.

On "God's Commandments and the Christians' Life"—Christianity and morality must not be confused but neither should the idea prevail that the two have nothing to do with each other.

On "The Common Priesthood of Believers"—The priesthood of the laity is upheld but it should not be

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identified with a church democracy which feels self-sufficient and not bound to Christ.

On "The Church, the People and the State"—The system of an established Church is good and respectable as long as it does not result in state interference in the Church's life in a way that prevents it from being guided by God's Word.

PERSONALITIES

Rev. Trygve F. Dahle is serving the Calvary Lutheran Church in Everett, Wash., as of March 1. His address there is 1711 26th Street.

The new address for Missionary John Abel has now come. Please make note of it: Rev. John H. Abel, Caixa Postal 44, Campo Mourao, Parana, Brazil. All communications should be sent air mail.