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October 15, 1968

No. 21

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The Church Year—Reformation

A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

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1866

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## According to the Word

### WE MUST CONTEND FOR THE FAITH

"Beloved, while I am making every effort to write to you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3, New Am. St.)

On this Reformation Day we are challenged again from the Word of God to contend for the faith. We are living in a day when the trumpet is not giving forth a clear sound. A reason why the Reformation emphasis is faintly heard today is because there has been a departure from the Word of God such as the 16th century churches could never have imagined. Because of the departure from the Word we are reaping the harvest of lawlessness and immorality by trying to substitute a social gospel with all its newfangled trimmings.

The Reformation became necessary because the very foundation of faith was being ignored and rejected. This was the situation in the past, and history seems to repeat itself. We are reminded of the words of Paul in I Cor. 3:18, "Let no one deceive himself, if any among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of the world is folly with God." There have always been men and women who think they know better than God. Take Adam and Eve as an example. In His wisdom God knew that man's life and happiness could exist only under God's love and mercy. But Adam and Eve thought the serpent had a

point in suggesting that they step up their equality and become as gods. The one thing that God had forbidden was the one thing they lacked. What wisdom! They came out of this experience knowing more, all right—they knew evil by experience, but they lost something more precious—goodness. Now it was only a memory mixed with bitter regret. If any of us thinks he is wise in this age and has not taken seriously God's revelation that "no human being will be justified in His sight by the works of the law," we have not learned Law's lesson. Rom. 3:20: "Through the law comes the knowledge of sin." Become a fool that you may become wise. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Let the Word of God speak to us today. Jude says, "I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was delivered to the saints." Note the words "Contend earnestly for the faith," or, he also calls it our "common salvation," as Peter refers to it as "our like precious faith." Of all the blessings that God has given us faith is the greatest. Without faith life is empty, the true joys of living are gone and the future has nothing to offer but death and destruction. Martin Luther realized that because of faith we have daily fellowship with our Lord and receive strength for every trial and can face the future with anticipation and hope. Faith is not some mysterious thing that we accidentally stumble upon but faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of the Word of God.

Jesus recognized faith. He marvelled at the faith of the Roman centurion. He rebuked His disciples with these words, "Where is your faith?" He released the poor sinner at His feet with these words, "Thy faith hath saved thee." He also gave the formula for receiving blessing in these words in Matt. 9:29: "According to your faith be it unto thee." He referred to His return to earth with this question in Luke 18:8, "When the Son of Man cometh, will he find faith on the earth?" We do well to heed the warning in Heb. 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him."

Our faith is always in danger. The forces of evil never tire in their effort to rob us of this gift. The highway of life is strewn with human wrecks who have been stripped of their faith.

Faith is retained only through struggle. Jude urged his readers to contend for the faith. We need to ask ourselves a few questions on this Reformation Day. Do I value the gift of faith God has given me? Am I exercising it properly? Am I contending earnestly? Then as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, in II Cor. 13:5, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove yourselves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" So as Christians we need to take inventory frequently, to make our calling and election sure. May we dwell in the Word of God and let the Word speak with authority. May we act in obedience to the Word that our testimony will be the testimony of the Holy Scriptures: "The just shall live by faith."

—Ernest Langness

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## "According to the multitude of thy tender mercies..."

Greetings from the Association Free Lutheran Bible School at Medicine Lake in Minneapolis. We share the feelings of the Psalmist for we, too, have experienced a "multitude of tender mercies" from the Lord these days. We are surely conscious of the riches of His mercy and His loving kindness in blotting out our transgressions and cleansing us of every sin. It takes a multitude of the tender mercies of God to make and keep us clean,



Mr. and Mrs. L. Kvamme, dorm house-parents, in their new apartment in the dormitory.

We are so very conscious of the Lord's tender mercies in meeting so many of our physical needs. We marvel as we see the beautiful new dormitory-classroom building. Two years ago most of us would have considered that it would be utterly impossible to accomplish what has been done here this summer.

At the time of this writing we are well into our second week of classes here at the school. The building is not completed, but it is useable. The first floor was far enough along so that the boys could move in when school opened. They were without hot water and heat,

but weathered these inconveniences well. The thirty girls registered had to be taken care of in the main building and in homes. They made the move into the dorm at the beginning of this week. This building is one of which we in the Association can be justly proud. We thank God for the blessings that are going to come to our church as our young people are grounded in the Word and equipped for service in the Kingdom. We are thankful to God for everyone who has had a part in making our new building possible. Thanks also for those who are yet to have a share in this building project. There is still the opportunity for many of you to have a part in the building of this dormitory-classroom building.

We thank God that He has been placing His hand on young people and calling them aside for a year or two of Bible School. Forty-three young people have registered up to the present time. Several more are expected to come in. We also have several part-time students. We thank God for these young people and ask you to pray daily for them that the days they spend here may be the most profitable of their lives.

We thank God for the workers



Mr. Don Rodvold, choir director, giving a voice test to Lyle Hanson from Everett, Wash.

to help train and care for these young people. The Bible School faculty is comprised of the following men this year, Rev. F. B. Monseth, Rev. C. Heikkinen, Rev. A. Stone, Dr. I. Olson, Mr. D. Rodvold and Rev. R. Snipstead. Mr. and Mrs. Ludvig Kvamme are the house-parents in the dorm. Mrs. J. Jensen from Badger, Minn., has joined the staff as cook.

We hope that we shall see many of you on the weekend of October





The Bible School boys assisted Mr. Bursheim and Mr. Tildahl in moving furniture for the girls' dorm.



The Bible School girls had to live under crowded conditions for a week.

25-27. Plans are being made for home-coming for those days, and for the laying of the cornerstone on the afternoon of Sunday, October 27.

Then a word on behalf of the Snipstead family. Words can hardly express how we feel about the beautiful home that has been pro-

vided for us here. We are most appreciative of the fact that we have the privilege of being the first occupants of such a fine home. We want to express a deep and sincere "thank you" to the Seminary Board, and to all the people of our Association.

We have touched on some of the

major things that have transpired for us here, but we could have gone on to share many other things with you that make us mindful of His tender mercies. We urge you to be much in prayer for us at the Bible School. Many victories need to be won for Christ.

Richard Snipstead



Eldon Hermueslie and Ronald Strand from Abercrombie, North Dakota, in their rooms in the dorms.



Dr. I. Olson teaches a class in the new classroom.

## Letters TO THE EDITOR

### EVERYONE CAN HELP

The September 17 issue of the *Ambassador* carries an article entitled: Where Is the Material for These Features? Can you help us? After scanning the paper it is not hard to realize why the editor

makes such an appeal.

How sad that a comparatively young church paper has to fill in with reading material from other religious papers, some of the articles more than six columns long. Some of it we have already read

[Continued on page 6]

# WOMEN for Christ

## FREE THROUGH CHRIST

Elvira Stephens  
Eben Junction, Michigan

When asked to write an article for *The Lutheran Ambassador*, my thoughts turned to that wonderful verse, John 8:36: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." May I share some of my thoughts on this with you?

For a person to be free, he must first know the truth (Jn. 8:32). Perhaps you wonder, "The truth about what?" The truth that an unregenerate person is in bondage. Such a person is completely under the dominion of sin (Jn. 8:34), a bond-slave to "divers lusts" (Titus 3:3), so that he "cannot cease from sin" (II Pet. 2:14). In fact, the condition of a natural person is described by Isaiah as one having no soundness from the sole of the foot to the head. From this slavery, nothing but the truth of God can set free. When a person is conscious of this bondage, he has taken the first step toward liberty. The reason Christ became incarnate was to "make" His people free. In beginning His ministry Jesus declared that He was anointed to preach "deliverance to the captives . . . to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18). Yet, people so truly love darkness rather than light, that they have to be "made" free.

Actually, there is a positive and a negative side to Christian free-

dom. On the negative side, we are delivered from the wrath of God (Rom. 8:1), the power of Satan (Heb. 2:14, 15), the bondage of sin (Rom. 6:14, 18), and from the authority of man (Col. 2:20-22). (Please read these verses carefully from the Bible; they are priceless.)

Now exactly what is the express purpose of a Christian being delivered from the things just mentioned? I Cor. 7:22 tells us that: "For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also, he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant." When a person is saved he is not free to follow the bent of his old nature, for the result would be lawlessness. Spiritual freedom is not license to do as you please, but it is the emancipation from the bondage of sin and Satan in order that you may do the things you "ought" to do. How eloquently Zacharias prophesied in Lk. 1:74, 75 regarding this: "That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life."

Romans 6:16-18 and 22 gives us a summary of the positive side. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered

you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

In the light of the fact that God paid such a great price to secure our freedom, are we really being active for Christ? Perhaps too often the work of the Kingdom is left to a few. Wouldn't it be wonderful if what was said of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego could be said of us? A heathen king recognized true worth and called them "servants of the most high God" (Dan 3:26).

In closing, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." And in all earnestness let us heed the wisdom of watching as recorded in Matt. 24:44, where we are advised to be ready, "for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh," for "blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing" (Matt. 24:46).



Mrs. Tilden Haugen, right, received her Honorary Membership pin as a member of the Women's Missionary Federation at the Hegland Lutheran Church, Strandquist, Minn., on June 20. Six members have their pins now and shown here are five of them; from the left, Mrs. Albert Bathum, Mrs. Jacob Gunderson, Mrs. Annie Rood, Mrs. Julia Torkelson, and Mrs. Haugen. Mrs. Grace Boen was absent. Appreciation was expressed to these ladies for their labors in God's vineyard.



## A REPORT ON SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS

There has been talk about the need for Association Sunday School materials almost since the beginning of the AFLC. From the start there was a Committee on Publications and Parish Education (now the Board of Publications and Parish Education). Our Board has long had the project in mind, but it hasn't been easy to actually put any wheels into motion. The loss of our Executive Secretary was a further impediment to the project.

But at our last meeting in Grand Forks some steps were taken which may make some of our own courses available to our Sunday Schools as early as September, 1969. The plan is to seek out various persons within the church who could prepare courses which would be doctrinally and pedagogically correct and geared to the grade level assigned them.

The materials may have to be mimeographed to begin with, but this may have advantages, too, in that changes could be made inexpensively after they have been used a while in the congregations. By

*[Continued from page 4]*

long before it appears in the *Ambassador*. We do not even have time to read such long articles.

Surely God must be working and great things happening in local congregations which readers of the *Ambassador* never get to hear about. If the leaders and pastors are too busy to communicate, then there must be talents in the congregation which could be challenged.

A church paper bubbling with vitality can be a real news media for the Lord—where each of us can bear witness "of the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:11).

If we would look again at the

features listed in the September issue, there should be an opportunity for each one of us to help.

The fellowship of believers is so important in this day when it is so easy to grow cold and indifferent.

It was with this in mind that I decided to write my letter to the editor.

Mrs. Esther Stalsbroten  
Eugene, Oregon

*(Not all articles reprinted from other magazines are used because we have a shortage of material and none is reprinted unless we feel that it has something of value to say. It is true that some may have*

the time it is economically feasible to put the courses in more durable form we could be quite sure that they are something that can be used for a long time in the church.

Among the new materials would be a new course for senior confirmation work.

It is hoped that a new Executive Secretary of Parish Education can be named within the next six months. Without such a director the work is handicapped although our Board Secretary, Mrs. Vernon R. Nelson, Grand Forks, N. Dak., and Miss Marion Hellekson in Minneapolis, Minn., can assist the local churches with many of their needs in parish education. Write to Miss Hellekson for filmstrips and to Mrs. Nelson for other assistance.

We continue to have a problem in getting parish education committees in all the districts. Some of them have and some don't. If your district does have such an organization but you aren't certain that we know it, please send a list of the officers to Mrs. Nelson. Until every district is organized and has someone whom we can contact district-wise, our Board cannot be as effective as it should be.

Here are the addresses of Mrs. Nelson and Miss Hellekson.

Mrs. Vernon R. Nelson  
Parish Education Department  
1909 11th Avenue North  
Grand Forks, N. Dak. 58201

Miss Marion Hellekson  
Parish Education Department  
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.  
Minneapolis, Minn. 55427

Thank you for your patience and your cooperation.  
Raynard Huglen, Chairman  
Board of Publications and  
Parish Education

*read the material before, but that is a chance we have to take.—Ed.)*

## WANTED

WANTED — YOUNG PEOPLE FOR FOREIGN LAND, not called on to die for your country, but called on to live or die for CHRIST in BRAZIL. The need is desperate, the door wide open, the work growing. Pray the Lord of the HARVEST for laborers for this harvest field. Write AFLC Foreign Mission Board, Robert Knutson, Chairman, McVille, N. Dak. 58254.

# MEET

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# Churches

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# FELLOWSHIP



**TODAY: THE STACY-WYOMING  
(MINN.) PARISH**

### Sunnyside Lutheran

A "community church" for most of her life, Sunnyside Church affiliated with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in January, 1967, under the leadership of student pastor Robert Rieth.

The church building is one which was moved from Stacy in December, 1954, to its present location five miles northwest of Wyoming

and one and one-half miles west, along County Highway 26. The address is Martin Lake, Stacy.

Sunnyside Congregation was organized on Nov. 2, 1953. Those who served it during the community church years include John Benham, 1955-58; Walter Swanson, 1958-1961; John Ingram, 1961; Evangelist Clifford Anderson, 1962-64; and Mr. Rieth. The latter served from 1964 and to the completion of his seminary work in the spring of 1967. The church is now served by Rev. Leslie Galland.

Arnes and Ruth Thompson of Sunnyside were missionaries for a time on the White Earth Indian Reservation in Minnesota. Randy Schneider, a graduate of California Lutheran Bible Institute, plans to be a foreign missionary.

### Hope Lutheran

Organized in the fall of 1965, Hope Lutheran is one of the Association's very youngest congregations. Student pastor Robert Rieth served Hope from her organization until June, 1967. Leslie Galland, ordained this year, has served it since 1967.

The congregation voted affilia-



Pastor Leslie Galland of the Stacy-Wyoming Parish is a graduate of Free Lutheran Theological Seminary in Minneapolis. A native of Mentor, Minn., and a former high school teacher, he and his wife, the former Janet Erickson, New York Mills, Minn., have a daughter, Janean Ann, 8, and a son, James Forrest, 3.

tion with the AFLC in 1966.

Hope also moved an existing church building, this one at 90th and Nicollet in Minneapolis, to serve as her place of worship. Hope is situated three miles east of Highway 65 on County Road 14. The church was dedicated on March 31, 1968.



Sunnyside Lutheran Church



Hope Lutheran Church



The Stacy-Wyoming Parsonage

### The Parish

Sunnyside and Hope Lutheran Churches formed a parish in 1966. The parsonage was built in 1955 and had served Sunnyside alone until the new parish arrangement was made.



## I HAVE A QUESTION

**Question:** Is it true that if we are once saved we are always saved?

**Answer:** There are three tenses to salvation. There is a salvation that is past. Jesus came, not to judge the world, but to save it. He died for the whole world. Every sinner was included—all people who have lived before and after the time of Christ. There is no one who can exclude himself from this salvation, and there is no one who can backslide from it. Once saved in this manner is to be saved all ways.

There is a future salvation, and this is the important one. It begins when we reach heaven. Then we are really saved. No one can backslide from it. Those who attain to it will be completely transformed. We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Here, too, it is true that once saved we are always saved.

There is a present salvation, and this is the most important one for us while we are here on earth. Those who believe in Jesus Christ are saved from their sin. They are not saved only once, but they are being saved every moment of their lives, just as they are being justified constantly as long as they remain in faith. It is a mistake to assume that we are already in heaven, for we have not been transformed yet as we shall one day be. We are justified and sinful at the same time; both Scripture and experience reveal as much. There are vestiges of sin in us yet. People who believe in eternal security are frequently the same ones who believe in sinless perfection. They confuse future salvation with present salvation. What do the Scriptures say? "Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). "Hold fast to

what you have that no one may seize your crown" (Rev. 3:11). Does anyone suppose that God threatens the loss of one's crown when that is impossible? It is straining the sense of Scripture to suppose that the crown refers to rewards we shall receive, and not to eternal life. Eternal life is itself the crown of life. It is possible to lose it here even if one has been a true believer for a while.

**Question:** Is it really true that all men are born sinful?

**Answer:** One Scripture passage settles the question. "Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned" (Rom. 5:12). To be a candidate for death is to be a sinner. Of all people born into this world according to the course of nature, only those are sinless who do not have to die. How old does a person have to be in order to be to die?

**Question:** Is it right to preach only about the love of God and heaven, and not about the wrath of God and hell?

**Answer:** To ask the question is to answer it. The love of God is so great that no one can exhaust the subject in a lifetime of preaching. So is the wrath of God, for it is only the other side of His love. The whole counsel of God should be preached. However, it may be expedient to preach only about the wrath of God in one sermon and the love of God in another. It is impossible to say everything about either one in one sermon, and still less both. But both are necessary.

If the governor wrote me a letter saying that he would pardon me, it would be meaningless unless I had already been sentenced.

**Question:** I Sam. 19:9 states that an evil spirit from God came upon Saul. What does this mean?

**Answer:** Certainly not that God is the source of the evil in the spirit whom He had created and now sent to punish Saul. God is not the source of evil, but He sometimes uses evil to punish sinners for their sin. A pestilence—itsself the result of sin—may be sent by God for punishment; but God is not the source of the evil in the pestilence. At times God may even use evil to test and prove His people. Such was the case with Job whom God permitted to be plagued by Satan himself. When He does so, He always has a good purpose in mind. Job profited through it all.

(Please address all questions which you wish answered directly to Dr. Iver Olson, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55427. Please sign your name, but names will not be used when questions and answers are printed in the *Ambassador*.)

### PREACHING MISSIONS

White Earth, N. Dak.

Nov. 3-5

Norman Lutheran Church

R. L. Lee and Reuben Wee, pastors

Speaker: Pastor Gene Sundby

Newfolds, Minn.

Ray, N. Dak.

Nov. 6-8

Beaver Creek Lutheran Church

R. L. Lee and Reuben Wee, pastors

Speaker: Pastor Gene Sundby,

Newfolds, Minn.

Stacy, Minn.

Nov. 17-21

Sunnyside Lutheran Church

Leslie Galland, pastor

Speaker: Rev. John DeBoer,

Villard, Minn.

Webster, S. Dak.

Nov. 17-21

Tabor Lutheran Church

Raynard Huglen, pastor

Speaker: Rev. Kenneth Ellingson,

LEM





## EDITORIALS

### JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

Reformation Day, October 31, reminds us again of the majestic truth that "the just shall live by faith" (*Iustus autem ex fide vivit*). It was the discovery of that truth by Martin Luther which led to the Protestant Reformation, of which we are heirs.

How easy it is for man to seek to justify himself, to rationalize his faults and misdeeds! How slow he is to throw himself on Christ's mercy, to cry "nothing in my hands I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling."

And yet, so it must be if one is to know peace with God. "Because by the works of the law shall no one be justified" (Gal. 2:16c). "Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1).

Faith in Jesus Christ, God's Son, and the atonement He wrought by His death on Calvary. "But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world" (Gal. 6:14).

### BOOKS ON BAPTISM

The two best-known books among us on the subject of baptism are *Baptism and Spiritual Life* by our own Dr. Iver Olson and *Infant Baptism and Adult Conversion* by Dr. O. Hallesby.

Dr. Olson's book is of such value because of its readability and because he tackles so forthrightly such subjects as the candidates for baptism and its forms or modes. His closing chapter deals with what happens after baptism in the life of the child. In addition he has a good discussion on the interpretation of Scripture in general and on the Means of Grace in general. Here is a book our churches can well use as a basis for discussion.

The Hallesby book is an old standard one among churches that have been influenced at all by Norwegian church life. Dr. Hallesby doesn't get into all of the technical but helpful aspects of what baptism is, as does Dr. Olson, but his purpose is to probe the relationship "between regeneration in infant baptism and awakening and conversion." His discussion of awakening is very helpful in understanding that very misunderstood experience.

Today we would mention a third book, much less known among us, but one we would do well in paying more attention to. It is written by Dr. Oscar A. Anderson, now president of Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minn. We have had our differences with

him but still like some of the things he has said and written.

The book's name is *Baptism and Its Relation to Lutheran Evangelism*. It is a small book, easily read in an hour or so. As its title suggests, the book strives to delineate what Scriptural evangelism should be among people who believe in and practice infant baptism.

With the permission of the publisher, Augsburg Publishing House, we print these two quotations from the book and they set forth the two poles between which the author works.

First this:

"We believe that this covenant relationship is intended by God to be kept intact and that by the proper nourishment of the divine life received in baptism through the Word of God, a person baptized in infancy can remain throughout life in his baptismal covenant. This is the normal Christian experience of those who are reared within the Christian Church. Conversion, as we speak of it in this discussion, is not necessary for those who remain in baptismal grace" (page 6).

Then this:

"Our responsibility to evangelize requires too that we face every baptized person with the question of his present relationship to his baptismal covenant. In this connection, let me say with all the emphasis I can muster, we must take nothing for granted in this matter of the individual's personal relationship to Christ. A pastor once said to me, 'I know that there are those who fall away after confirmation, but if a young person stays in Sunday School and Luther League after confirmation, I take it for granted he is a Christian.' This attitude we cannot but brand as pernicious. True, these outward things can and often are indications that the person in question is living in a true relationship with Christ, but they do not prove that he is. Remember, Jesus told of a man who came to church, made a long prayer, and recited all his religious activities, but who did not go down to his house justified. Once more we repeat, keeping the tension between the fact that we can remain in baptism and we can fall away eliminates this dangerous 'take it for granted' attitude that accepts a person as a Christian person only because of certain outward evidences. This does not mean we develop a suspicious attitude that considers it necessary to hold everyone's relationship to God in question until we have satisfied ourselves about it. It simply means we are determined to make a person's present relationship to Christ the only factor that determines whether or not he or she is truly Christian, and in love and humility, by the grace of God, making that fact known" (pages 30 and 31).

These two excerpts from the book should indicate that it, too, merits study by us. It may be obtained from the Evangelism Book Center, 904 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

### MULTIPLICATION

At the twenty-year mark the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association reports over one million public responses by people wishing to commit their lives to Jesus Christ through its ministry. The Association would be quick to point out that such a statistic is not a hard and fast one. Some were probably more a re-affirmation of faith than a conversion, some converts do not hold out, etc. But to the best of their ability, the Billy Graham people place the outward results of their work to date at over 1,000,000.

That figure set us at the old numbers game of starting with one and doubling it and then doubling the total until a figure of over 4 billion is reached. Without the benefit of training in new math, we found that on the 33rd round that figure was obtained.

The point is this, and you have heard it before, if there is one Christian to start with and during a whole year he is successful in leading one other person to faith in Christ, and those two during the next year are instrumental in adding two more to the kingdom of God, and so on, each believer winning one new person each year, why in 33 years the whole world would become Christian!

In actual life it doesn't work out at all like that. The world population is increasing so much more rapidly than it is being evangelized. Many American church bodies report increases in church membership at two and three percent at the end of the year and it isn't known whether these accessions represent life commitments to Christ or merely that someone has agreed to affiliate with an organization.

With all the Christians there are in the world, and only the Lord knows how many there are, the world could be evangelized in much less than 33 years if the "each one win one each year" plan worked. But without wanting to sound heretical at all that program isn't as easily followed as it may seem, for various reasons.

Aren't there responsibilities, though, and isn't there much that can be done? Of course.

Every Christian should pray for others. He should pray for greater awareness of spiritual needs around him. He should try to prepare himself to speak a word in due season to someone who needs it. Tied in with all of this is the necessity of living a life which will be attractive for Christ. This means with consistency and with love. Finally, by means of intercessory prayer and financial and material contributions he can strengthen the hands of those who have been called into specialized ministries, including his own pastor and church staff workers.

There is no question but what much more could be done, and there is no question but what much

more must be done, to win the world for Christ in our time, if every child of God truly said, "Here am I, Lord, use me."

### A TIME FOR HEALING

These are critical and crucial times in America and the next president of our country will face graver problems than any predecessor since Abraham Lincoln. Our country is involved in a war half a world away, the end of which is not yet in sight. Here at home, strides toward racial equality have been counteracted by new racial hatreds. Poverty and the decay of old inner cities cry for alleviation. Crime and lawlessness, both the organized, syndicated kind, and the coarse and brutal individual terrorisms are on the upswing. Dissent has often moved from peaceful, democratic means to violent, anarchistic methods. Thousands of the young, particularly, have rebelled against society by weird and tragic withdrawal. And the list is by no means ended.

Therefore, it stands to reason that the man who is sworn into office next January must be a man who can do two things: one, give evidence to the country that he is aware of the root causes of our problems and is willing to deal with them; and, second, be a healing influence among a divided and frustrated people.

In regard to the first, there are no easy answers. In regard to crime, for instance, it is easy enough to increase police forces, but how do you get at the causes of a person turning to a life of lawbreaking? The "hippies" can be driven out of Haight-Asbury or from the coffee-houses and street corners where they lounge, but how do you draw them back from their alienation? It is easy to say that all on welfare and other poor should just go to work, but how shall those without any specialized skills compete in today's society which has less need of unskilled labor than ever before in history?

In regard to the second, the new president, whoever he is, must be a healing influence in the country. He must shun like the plague any move that would unjustly put one group against another or it may well turn out like the old saying, "You ain't seen nothin' yet." Law there must be, justice there must be, and in it all a great sense of compassion, a conviction that the country, all working together, will face squarely the problems of the time. No one will be coddled, but no one will be badgered. No one will be favored, but no one will be discriminated against. This is the spirit the new president must have.

What part can the Christians have? They can encourage more prayer for the president (I Tim. 2:1-4). And this admonition shouldn't be held back until inauguration day. The churches are to work for changed lives within the congregations and are to promote evangelism among the unchurched. This is the only way to remake society.

*[Continued on page 13]*

at this time, but because of the lies told about them their work was hindered for a while, but later they were again allowed to continue their work.

How very wise the Jews were in not allowing these people to help. If they had been allowed into the camp, their selfish and sinful motives would have spoiled everything. It is much better to have the enemy outside of camp than in the camp.

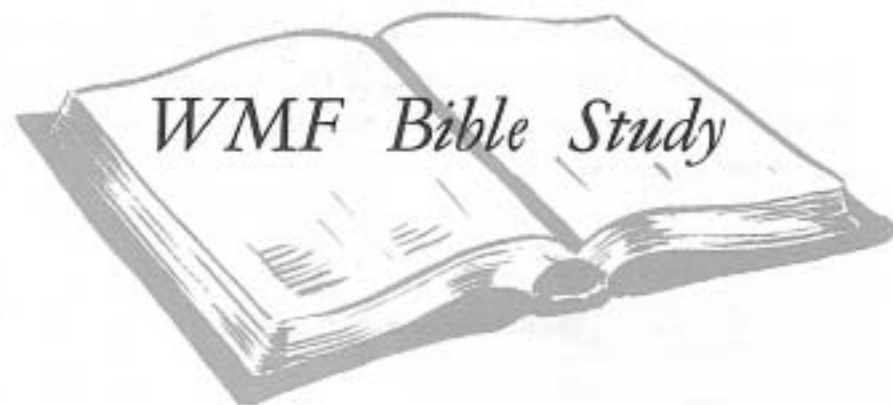
The devil, too, may offer to help in a Christian work. He likes to come into the church. When allowed in, he only causes trouble.

There is a period of about 400 years called the silent years between the close of the Old Testament and the coming of Jesus. The Bible does not record this period although history does.

The Jewish people were subject to several foreign powers during this time. For a number of years they did gain their independence under the Maccabees, but this was only for a limited time.

They were subject to the Roman rule at the time Christ was born.

As we follow history through the Old Testament (as well as the New), we become keenly aware of one thing: when the individual or nation followed God and were obedient to Him, the final outcome was great blessings. There might be valleys and trials on the way, but the end result was always a blessing—even an eternal blessing. Those who followed the world in a selfish way often did enjoy the things of the world for a limited season, but only for a season. To forget God always meant doom in the end.



## OLD TESTAMENT BIBLE HISTORY QUESTIONS

Lesson Eleven

November, 1968

### Introduction

After seventy years in Babylon, God's people were again allowed to return to Jerusalem in about the year 530 B.C. It is a miracle in itself that they were allowed to return. The Babylonians had been defeated in war. The Persians were now the world power. The Jews in exile now became the slaves of the Persians.

However, the Persians, also a heathen people, were kind and merciful to the Jews, as the Babylonians had been. Surely God arranged that, too. The Jews were allowed to own property, land, and a business of their own as they lived in exile in far-off Babylon. Many of them prospered and liked their state in life so well that they did not want to return to Jerusalem when given a chance. However, they gave support so others could go back. God was with this group and preserved them for a special purpose. In due time Christ would be born from among them.

However, as these people went back they were not allowed to go back as an independent people, as they once had been. They would be subject to the Persian government. Nevertheless, they were allowed a great deal of freedom.

### **The Rebuilding of the Temple**

(Ezra 1 to 4)

1. Who was now king of the people who were taken captive? (1:1)
2. Of what country was he king?
3. Who made Cyrus king over such a large territory? (1:2)
4. What did God command Cyrus to do?
5. Where was he to do it?
6. How did this affect the Jews who had been taken captive to Babylon?
7. Can you recall a similar incident in the history of these people?
8. How did those who didn't go back assist? (1:6)
9. What did King Cyrus allow them to take back with them? (1:7)
10. How many Jews returned to Jerusalem? (2:64)
  - (a) How many servants?
  - (b) How many singers?
11. Who led the people in the work of rebuilding the temple? (3:2-3)\*
12. What was the first thing they built? (3:2-3)
13. In what way was it used daily?
14. Why did the people shout for joy, but many of the priests, Levites, and old men weep as stated in 3:12?

15. What did the enemies of these people ask to be permitted to do? Were they given this permission (4:3)
16. Do you think the Jews were wise in refusing this request? Why?
17. What did the enemy do? Name two things. (4:4-6)
18. What danger did the enemies say would come if these returned Jews were allowed to continue to build? (4:11-16)
19. Who was king at the time the enemy brought this report to the king? (4:11)
20. How did the king react to the letter sent by the enemy? (4:21-22)
21. Did this stop the work? For how long? (4:23-24)
22. What prophets came to encourage the Jews to continue building? (5:1)

\* Ezra was the leader of a second group of Jews who returned to Jerusalem. With Ezra came a new charter form of government.

### **Conclusion**

There were those who wanted to help the Jews in rebuilding the temple and the city of Jerusalem, but were not of the same spirit as those returned Jews. The returned Jews did not permit them to help. They then became enemies of the Jews and became jealous of them. They told lies about the Jews to the Persian king, stating that these Jews had rebellious motives, and that if allowed too much freedom they would again seek their independence. The Jews had no such motives

## LUTHER BURNS THE PAPAL BULL, 1520



In this dramatic act on December 10, 1520, Martin Luther removed himself from obedience to the Pope. The papal bull had threatened Luther with excommunication from the Church unless he recanted. This the Reformer refused to do.

### PLEASE NOTE

There was an inadvertent omission in the numbering of *The Lutheran Ambassadors* recently so that there is no No. 17. If you are keeping a file of the papers and find none with this number, this is the reason.

Please remember that there is no No. 17. This means also that

the final number of the year will be No. 26 instead of the usual No. 25.

### BIBLE VERSES

"So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."

II Cor. 5:20

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Phil. 1:21

"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control."

II Tim. 1:7

[Continued from page 10]

Individual Christians ought to examine themselves as to whether the influence they are exerting is Christian influence. Is their presence in society a leaven for Christ and His principles? Are their choices and decisions always motivated by love for others? Do they knowingly or unwittingly perpetuate injustice and unfairness in situations where they have influence because they do not wish to upset the applecart? Do they cry out only if their own ox is being gored,

but never when their neighbor's is? Are they able to judge a man by what he is personally without being overcome by all too often unworthy stereotypes?

America is in a critical stage of her history. Much now will depend on how the new president, whoever he is, can look at his office and administer it and on how well the Christian people of the land can do more than they have to be salt and light and "Christ's hands" in our beloved country.

# NEWS of the Churches

## NEW CHURCH IN MCVILLE DEDICATED

The New Luther Valley Lutheran Congregation, McVillage, N. Dak., held dedication services for their new church on April 28, 1968. Cornerstone ceremonies were held outdoors at 2:30 p.m., after which the congregation, visitors and guests entered the church for the dedication service. Rev. John P. Strand, Minneapolis, Minn., president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, conducted the cornerstone and dedication services and preached the dedication sermon. Rev. Hans Tollefson, Hatton, N. Dak., district president, and several other pastors of the Eastern North Dakota District also took part.

Following the service, lunch was served in the fellowship room and the building was open for inspection.

After 86 years of history, it was

with gratitude to God that we dedicated this new building to His glory. The words of the Psalmist are ours, "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good, because his mercy endureth forever" (Ps. 118: 1).

As we look back to the year 1882, to the Sheyenne Valley, we note a permanent settlement of God-fearing people who on Feb. 5 met to organize a congregation. At that time the name "New Luther Valley" was chosen. A constitution was adopted the next year. In 1884 a log church was started but the site had to be abandoned before completion because of the flood waters of the Sheyenne River. A new site was chosen, the one where the New Luther Valley cemetery is located.

In 1943 the church there was destroyed by a windstorm, at which time the Presbyterian Church in McVillage was purchased. Considerable remodeling on that church was



Pastor Trygve Dahle was present when Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Brevik observed their 65th wedding anniversary at their home in Karlstad, Minn., on April 28. Pastor Dahle once served the Oslo Lutheran Church where the Breviks were members before joining Hegland Lutheran Church, Strandquist.

done and a sizable addition was also built.

In the fall of 1966 the congregation deemed it necessary to erect a new building. In June, 1967, construction began. The first service in the new church was the Sunday School Christmas program on Dec. 23. The members and friends are thankful to God for His many blessings through the years. The words of the hymn writer, "Faith of our fathers living still," were fitting for the dedication occasion. We bow humbly and say with reverence, "To God be the glory."

Zion Lutheran Congregation organized in 1898, joined with New Luther Valley in 1958, thus strengthening the fellowship.

The congregation has had her struggles in material and doctrinal ways. Her history reads, "The congregation joined the Conference in 1886, but during the nineties was caught up in a controversy which raged over certain questions of policy and management, especially pertaining to Augsburg Seminary. It is a matter of history that their differences were irreconcilable and New Luther Valley joined the minority which formed the Lutheran Free Church.

Again, in 1962-63, the congregation chose to remain out of the large Lutheran merger of 1963 and to instead affiliate with the AFLC.

Rev. E. J. Langness has served New Luther Valley since 1963.

—Mrs. Gehart Solberg  
Aneta, N. Dak.



# CHURCH-WORLD NEWS

## BAPTIST SEMINARIANS ENTER NORWEGIAN TRAINING PROGRAM

Oslo—(LWF) Arrangements have been made here for participation by students of the Norwegian Baptist Theological Seminary in a clinical pastoral training program led by a Lutheran chaplain.

Three senior seminary students were spending a month this fall in hospitals and social welfare institutions in Baerum, an Oslo suburb, under the guidance of Chaplain Knut Enger, a theologian who for several years has directed courses in clinical pastoral training for Lutheran candidates for the ministry.

The current program was described as the first of its kind for ministerial students from a free church in Norway, where the national church is Lutheran.

## LUTHERAN PASTORS BACK PRIESTS OPPOSING BIRTH CONTROL EDICT

Washington, D.C.—(LC) Thirty-three Lutheran pastors of Metropolitan Washington signed a declaration here supporting 52 Roman Catholic priests in the nation's capital who oppose Pope Paul's recent encyclical banning artificial means of birth control.

The Catholic clergymen, members of the Washington Association of Priests, had taken issue publicly with the Pope's pronouncements. Their opposition was solidified when Patrick Cardinal O'Boyle, Archbishop of Washington, suspended and later relieved the Rev. T. Joseph O'Donoghue from his post as assistant pastor at St. Francis de Sales church here for preaching a sermon in which he quoted dissenting opinions by Catholic clergy on birth control.

On Sept. 3, Cardinal O'Boyle warned that as a bishop he was duty-bound to take disciplinary action against any priest who does not totally accept the pronounce-

ments on birth control as contained in the Pope's encyclical (On Human Life).

In their statement of concern for the dissident priests, the Lutheran pastors resolved to:

: Give support to those priests who oppose the banning of artificial birth controls as set forth in Pope Paul's encyclical.

: Uphold the priests' right to dissent.

: Urge Cardinal O'Boyle to practice love and restraint by not exercising discipline or sanctions against the dissenting clergy.

: Express their concern to Cardinal O'Boyle in writing, and communicate their support to the dissenting clergy.

## NORWEGIAN THEOLOGIAN SEES ECUMENICAL 'MANIPULATION'

Geneva—(LWF) A well-known Norwegian theologian declared here in an evaluation of the World Council of Churches' Uppsala Assembly that while "in some ways the ecumenical dialogue has been remarkably widened...in other ways it has been seriously narrowed."

Dr. Per Lonning, dean of the Bergen Cathedral, declared in an address to the Executive Committee of the Lutheran World Federation:

"The main obstacle to dialogue in today's ecumenism, as in today's world as a whole, is manipulation—a few run the machinery and the majority are run by the machinery."

Dr. Lonning gave strong praise to the Uppsala gathering for its impetus to the ecumenical movement and for its emphasis on Christian responsibility in the world.

At the same time, he balanced the praise with sharp questioning of the direction being given to the movement by those he termed as "ecumenical managers" and "secularizers."

A main question as to the future of the World Council, the theologian maintained, involves a shift from emphasis in past years on churches "staying together" to a present stress on "marching together...to give a joint testimony and to prepare joint service for the world."

"This is a development to be greeted with joy," he said, but added: "There is, however, a substantial problem involved in it: to which extent should a World Council of Churches give guidance to the internal development in the member bodies?"

Dr. Lonning contended that though member churches are not bound by the pronouncements and documents of the WCC they, nevertheless, are influenced and guided by them "whether they like to admit it or not."

And while agreeing that "basically there is nothing wrong about ecumenical guidance," he was specifically critical of what he saw as a tendency toward a "shallow...theological secularism."

He said that while "to some extent the people heading theological work in academic institutions and those doing the job in the (ecumenical) study groups and commissions are the same people, this does not eliminate the fact that theological development to a higher and higher degree is becoming a question of management."

"The future of theology seems to be less in the hands of theological students than of ecumenical managers. This is a fact which needs careful examination. And, if my observation is right, the churches should be conscious not to institutionalize a theological network which can too easily be controlled by theological cliques."

Concerning political statements, Dr. Lonning cited the difficulties placed on ecumenical groups by their own varied constituency from

different countries and said the practice has been "sometimes to speak prophetically, sometimes diplomatically, sometimes to keep silence."

"The prophetic voice," he said, "is directed to countries with a sufficient amount of political culture to stand such criticism without seeking revenge on the churches, to speak abstractly on principles or diplomatically on concrete issues is done where a word is needed but a too plain word would create undesired difficulties, and to keep silent is the line when the very raising of a topic would cause trouble."

Agreeing that "there is no easy solution to the dilemma we are facing here," the theologian at the same time insisted that "the present semi-prophetic game cannot continue... One measure and one standard has to be applied; we should not go on speaking with a double tongue."

## FIVE CANDIDATES NAMED FOR NEW NORWAY DIOCESE

Oslo—(LWF) Five names have been put forth as candidates for bishop in a new diocese being created in the Church of Norway.

To be called the Diocese of Borg with its seat at Fredrikstad, the area is in the southeastern section of the present, large Oslo diocese. Bishop Fridtjov Birkeli, named earlier this year as head of the national Lutheran church, presides over the Oslo diocese.

Nominated for the new Borg bishopric are: Dr. Per Lonning, 40, dean of the Bergen Cathedral; Prof. Andreas Aarflot, 40, of Oslo; Dr. Tor Aukrust of Hamar, 46; Rector Bjarne Odd Weider, 55, of Oslo, and the Rev. Reidar Kobro, 56, of Oslo.

Selection of the bishop is expected early in November.

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