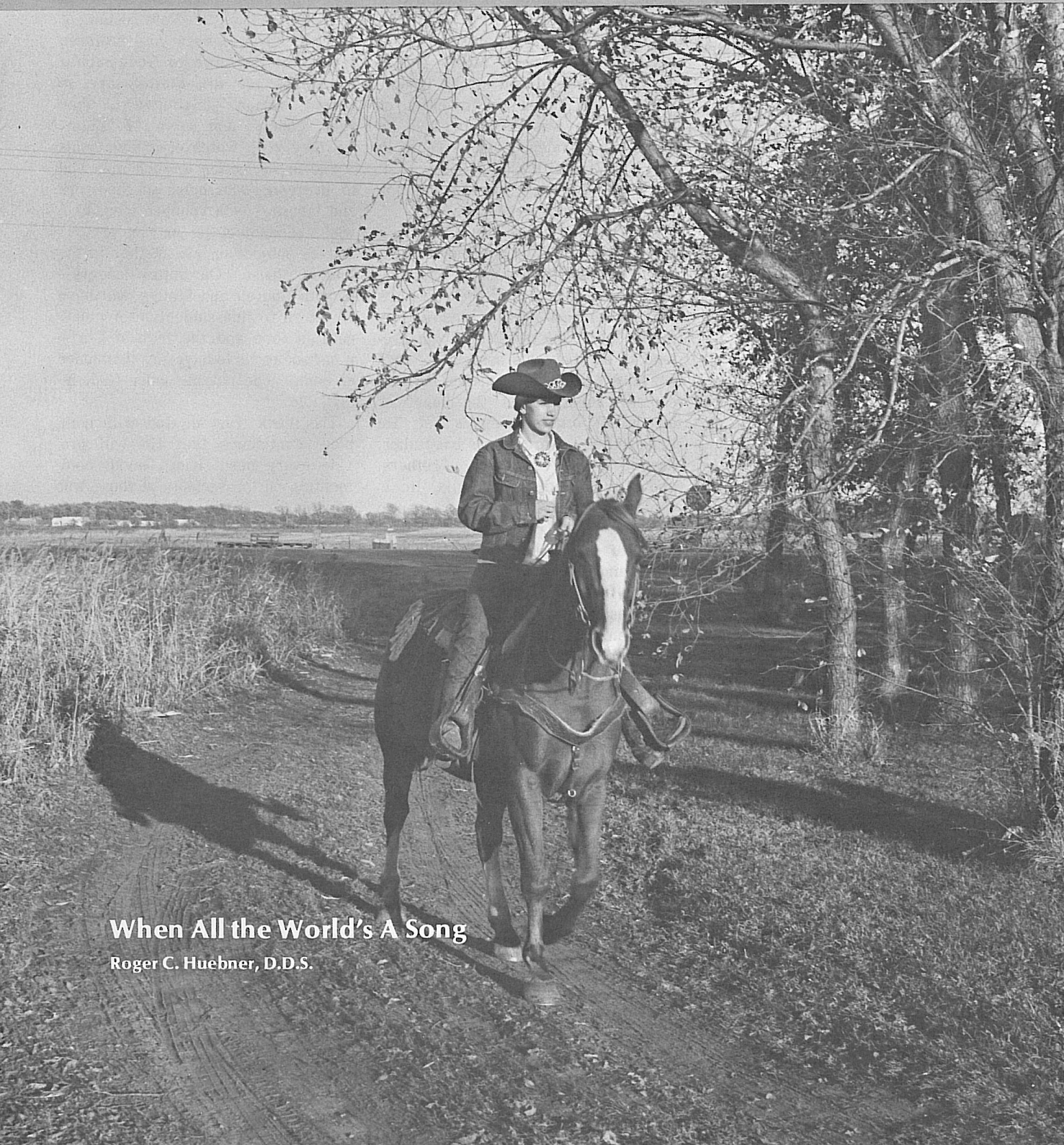


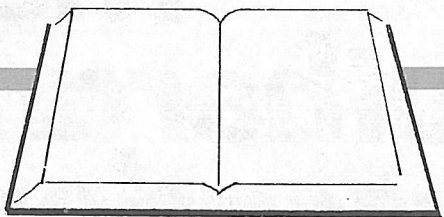
September 26, 1972

The Lutheran Ambassador



When All the World's A Song

Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.



According to the Word

A BETTER PROMISED LAND

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5).

In this beatitude members of God's kingdom are offered **temporal** blessings! God promised His people temporal blessings under the Old Covenant, too; a land flowing with milk and honey. When God made His promises to Israel, He always gave them a charge to keep; there was always an "if you will... then I will..."

Now Jesus comes to us and says, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." We may respond, "This promise must be for me because I, a Christian, belong to His kingdom." Yes, the promise is for every Christian, but there is a condition here also; this blessing is only for the meek.

Who are the meek?

I would define the meek upon whom Jesus pronounced this beatitude as those who are completely submissive to God and committed to the well-being of others. This broad definition shows meekness requires obedience to both tables of the moral law, the Ten Commandments. A more detailed definition bears this out.

Jesus is the King who is "meek and lowly in heart" (Matthew 11:29; 21:5), yet it is in this character that He invites men to Himself: "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me." Have you submitted yourself, spirit, soul and body, to Christ's yoke?

Meekness, in its Scriptural meaning, does **not** include the common

modern connotation of unspirited, spineless submissiveness to others out of fear and timidity. That is not meekness, it is weakness. Moses was a vigorous, forceful and strong leader, yet he was called the meekest of all men. He was meek because he found his confidence and strength in God. The meek trust and obey God. They are, therefore, the most powerful and influential people on earth.

Meekness cannot be separated from agape love, the God-given love which only Christians can possess. This love is demonstrated in the meek person's attitude toward himself and all his fellow men. The meek does not pretend to be above his associates, does not assert himself to further his own esteem, especially if the honor or esteem of others might suffer. He is not harsh toward others but rather, lenient in his evaluation of others, and patient with their faults. He is consistently mild of temper, gentle of nature and refined in manners. His life is marked by an absence of demonstrations of passion or wrath; and manifestations of innate compassion, mercy, and tenderness are manifold. The meek person does not react with resentment when injured by others, but is considerate and forgiving. Read Isaiah 53 for further insight into the nature of One who is meek. The Gospels, especially the accounts of the passion of our Lord, tell more.

The meek do not submit to others in fear, but the Bible tells us there are times and circumstances in which they submit to others in love. They

are submissive according to these admonitions from the New Testament epistles: "Now I urge you, brethren... Submit therefore to God. Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution:... obey your leaders, and submit to them; for they keep watch over your souls... be in subjection to such men and to everyone who helps in the work and labors... you younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders;... and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ." Our future leaders—in both Church and State—will have to return to this subjection of meekness in love and the fear of Christ if our society is to have any semblance of being "one nation, under God, indivisible."

The meek trust in God with complete confidence that He will provide every need. King David, commenting on the security of those who trust in the Lord, and the insecurity of the wicked, wrote Psalm 37. Read this Psalm, and pay particular attention to verses 1-6, 25-29. When you have read this Psalm, read Matthew 6:25-34 and Luke 12:22-34. David's words are an admonition to meekness.

If you will be meek—trust God and obey His holy will—you shall receive your inheritance: All your needs supplied in this life, then to reign forever with the Lord Jesus Christ in the renovated and transfigured creation He calls "a new heaven and a new earth."

Howard Kjos
(Scripture passages are from the New American Standard Bible.)

The **Lutheran Ambassador** is published biweekly (except the first issue of August) by the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441. Rev. Raynard Huglen is the editor. Subscription price is \$3.50 per year in advance. Subscriptions should be sent to **The Lutheran Ambassador**, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441. Second-class postage paid at Minneapolis, Minn. Volume 10, Number 19

Sunshine Harris Found the Place

The old man dragged up the dark stairway of the Skid Row rooming house. His grey hair hung down from his head like an unraveling skating cap; his beard was so much dirty string. His greasy trousers ruffled at the knees. At the top of the third flight, he paused, then burrowed down the windowless hallway, pushed open the door to his bedroom.

"Whew, hotter'n the fires of Hades. Summer of '99's gonna beat 'em all," Old Harris complained and fell over half a dozen empty whiskey bottles on the floor.

"Blamed dead soldiers," he said and sat down on a chair with a broken wicker back to rub his shin. Remotely, he eyed a cockroach scoot up a pile of boxes stacked in the corner halfway to the ceiling. He winked at his pictures of scantily-clad girls, nailed to the wall in a row.

Then he got up and crossed the room to his dresser. He yanked open a drawer and shoved aside a handful of poker chips, greasy playing cards, dice, old campaign buttons and wal-lets.

He sifted twenty or thirty wallets through his hands. He peered in one. It was stamped "genuine alligator," with initials in gold, but it was empty. So was the second.

"Might as well get rid of these some day," he said to himself. "After I've lifted the dough outa them, they ain't no use to me nor to their original owners." He dropped them all to the floor, kicked them under the dresser.

"It's too hot to stay put in this consarned room tonight. Maybe I'd oughta go to the mission and praise God. But gotta get some cash for a drink first." He stooped down, picked up an armful of empty bottles. "I'll just turn in some empties and get my drink on the way."

He jerked open the door and two cockroaches fell off the stained door

frame and scurried toward the un-made bed.

Old Harris found a market for his empties on the next block. "Give me two straight whiskeys quick," he demanded. "And half a pint for my back pocket."

The half-pint in his back pocket squished as he loped along Van Buren Street. "Yes, sir, it'll be the mission for Harris tonight," he said to nobody at all. "They's always good for a laugh at the Pacific Garden—"

Outside the mission, an eager-faced fellow of seventeen dealt out tracts to the men streaming by. An ugly knife wound slanted across one cheek.

Old Harris queued up with the men on their way into the mission. But when he stood in front of the young boy he ignored the tract. "Well, well," he said, squinting up at the scar-faced youngster. "If it ain't slick-fingers Sammy, me old pal."

Without speaking, the boy pushed the tract into Harris' hand.

"And what's this you're giving me to read, Slicker, my boy?"

The boy backed away two steps. "It's - it's - well, I'm supposed to pass them out, and you're supposed to read them."

"Bah! Whata' you doin' standin' out here in front this dump, and sober at that?" Harris said.

"Don't call it a dump," the boy defended.

"To me it's a dump."

The boy hesitated, then said, "I - gave my life to Jesus Christ last night. And you better get in and do the same thing. You been blasting and cussing God for years. God won't take it forever."

"He sure will, Sonny," Harris told him. "He has to."

"He does not," the boy said.

"Oh, yes, He does, because there ain't no God! No God an' no Jesus

Christ an' no Heaven an' no Hell!"

Harris' thin cackle blew into the mission with the summer breeze. A man with a serious face came out and stood beside the young boy. "That's enough, Harris," he said quietly. "Sammy here gave his life to Jesus last night."

Harris bowed. "Oh, good evenin', to you. Gave his life to Jesus Christ, did he? Amen and amen. Wow!" He laughed, with a cackling noise that began down in his chest and oozed up through his nose.

"Excuse me a minute, please. I'd like to take just a touch of my cough medicine here." He pulled out the half-pint of whiskey, held it up to his mouth, rolled the liquor from one cheek to another, then gulped it down.

He opened his mouth wide, leaned over to the young boy. "Ah," he exhaled into his face. He stood back. "Excuse me, I didn't offer you a drink, Son."

The scar on the young boy's face twitched. "I don't want one."

All rightee, all rightee. All the more for me," Harris gloated. He drained the half-pint. "And what about you, my friend. Aincha gonna invite me into the meeting?"

The man nodded. "Harris, you're always welcome. You have been for the last twenty years. One thing sure, nobody ever gets on the nerves of Jesus Christ. Come on in. Mrs. Clark is about to start the song service."

Harris tramped past him. The song service hadn't begun, but he was singing already.

Hallelujah, I'm a bum

Hallelujah, bum again.

Hallelujah, give us a handout,

To revive us again!

He jigged down the aisle into a front seat. "Yippee!" he shouted. "Amen and amen! Wow!"

That summer of '99, Harris strayed

into the mission often. "My room's too blasted hot," he told the bartender in the corner bar. "Funny smell up there when it gets hot," he confided.

"Ever try changing your bed?" the bartender asked.

"Sure," Harris told him. He threw back his head and cackled. "Twice a year, summer and winter. Summers, I throw off the blankets. Winters, I pull 'em on."

At the mission, night after night, Harris slouched in a chair, but gave no more attention than he gave the cockroaches that played on his walls.

"Amen and amen. Wow!" He would call out in his thin voice.

Mission men showed no impatience. "We're glad you're here tonight, my friend. We hope you'll let off some of that steam by singing with us."

"Sure, I'll sing," Harris would shout.

Oh! Buffalo girls, won't cha' come
out t'night,

Come out t'night, come out
t'night;

Oh! Buffalo girls, won't cha
come out t'night

An' dance by the light of the
moon!

But one night he sat in his chair after the other men had filed out. Mother Clarke tidied up the hymn-books in the racks, then sat down next to him.

For five minutes, Harris talked sensibly, respectfully. He even mentioned God. Then he pushed his hands into the torn pockets of his suit.

"I don' wanta' keep ya', ma'am," he said.

"You're not keeping me, Mr. Harris," Mother Clarke assured him. "You know by now that nothing could make my Saviour and me happier than to know you wanted to talk about receiving Jesus."

"Who said anything about that?"

"We've been talking just now about your making peace with God. That has to be done through belief in His Son, Jesus Christ."

The old man pulled back. "You're a funny bunch of people here," he said.

"We care about you," Mother Clarke answered.

"Ffft." The old man sprayed a dribble of tobacco juice down his chin.

"We do."

"Oh, yeah, sure you'd like to save my soul. So's you could mark up another tally in your score-book."

"No, Mr. Harris, you're wrong," Mother Clarke insisted. "We care about the eternal salvation of your soul. We love you."

"Me?" Harris scratched his head.

"You."

"No refined lady like you don't care none about a smelly old goat like me." He tried to laugh.

A mission friend came and sat down beside him. "You're wrong, Harris. Mrs. Clarke's not judging a man by human standards. She's seeing him through the eyes of Jesus Christ."

Harris stood up and pushed past the man and woman who sat looking up at him. "Bah! That's a lot of rot. You make me sick. The both of ya! I'm not scared of you, nor God nor Jesus Christ, nor of burnin' in Hell fire. There ain't no Hell. And there ain't no God!"

He half ran, half staggered down the aisle of the mission. Out on the street, he went straight into the nearest saloon. Two hours later, he staggered out. He found Skid Row open-all-night spots and had a drink in each. Around nine the next morning, he stumbled into a bookstore and bought a New Testament.

Then he went home. He struggled up the three flights of stairs into the bedroom, kicked open the door, and fell on the mound of crumpled sheets on his bed.

He opened the New Testament. His head sagged forward as he focused his eyes on the page and read aloud in a thick voice: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee."

"Bah rot!" he scoffed. The book slid to the floor. "Never heard of such rot in my life. Makes me mad."

He sat up, swung at two empty bottles with his feet and kicked them across the room. "Burns me up!" He crashed across the room after them, threw over a chair. "I'll tear this place apart, it makes me so mad." He stamped on the heap of blankets lying in the corner of the room, ground a pile of cigar butts into shreds on the floor.

Then he lay down again, breathing hard. "Thou fool-uh-this night. What was it? What was it, anyway? Lotta bunk but I want to know what it said

again. I gotta know," he mumbled up at the cracked ceiling.

He groped over the side of the bed for the book, came up with three old cigar butts instead. "Now, where'd I throw that Book? Oh - here - under the bed."

He lay back, opened the Book again. "Where in thunder was that verse?

I'll have to start at the beginning, I s'pose, but I'll find. Yes, I will, if it takes me all week and I just lie right here readin'."

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham; Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; and Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram—"

He finished the genealogy, but he kept on reading. Through the account of Jesus' birth and baptism through the account of the calling of His first disciples, through the Sermon on the Mount, into the ministry of Jesus. On and on he read, then—a parable.

"Thy soul is required of thee." He bounded off the bed, circled the room once, twice, three times. He stopped in front of one of the scantily-clad women on the wall and shuddered. "Thou fool," he said. "Hey, I believe this stuff. I do."

He crouched on the edge of his bed. "I don't know why, but I believe it. I'm going into that mission tonight and I'm not gonna go there for laughs, either. I'll put my hand up in the air, and You, God, You gotta be there to help me."

That night, Harris edged down the Pacific Garden Mission aisle as cold sober as a visiting Sunday school superintendent. Not once during the message did he shout out "Amen and Amen." At the invitation, both gnarled, dirty hands went high in the air.

"I want to pray," he told Mother Clarke. "Where can we kneel? Right here? Good."

"I'm fixing to pray. I'm fixing to ask God to clean me up. Lord? You hear me, can You? Here I am, like I promised. I ain't got no good in me to give You. It's all black and sinful and dirty. I'm sorry about all the times I cussed You, God. I'm sorry for it all. Come on, Lord, and

(Continued on page 11)

Invest God's Money for God

Rev. Stephen E. Odegaard
Hatton, N. Dak.

"Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the things which are good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28).

"If any would not work, neither should he eat" is the Scriptural judgment not only on the bums, the pan-handlers, and the no-goods, but also for the idle rich. This world in which we live, this world that our God has made and preserves is a world in which people work for a living. His first human creature was enjoined to "replenish the earth and subdue it."

Our Lord and Savior himself had to work for a living. He was a carpenter; some of His disciples were fishermen; Paul was a tentmaker. By example and precept the Church has always and will always be against all forms of idleness. It is the will of our God that all people work for a living. Just as it is important that all people are to work for a living, it is also important what kind of work they do, and why they work.

In our text today we see two reasons for working; one is a selfish reason and the other is for an unselfish reason. All of the problems in the field of labor and management relationships are basically between these two. Each and every time you read about, or hear on the radio or television, of a labor strike, you can be sure that the strike came about because of one of the two reasons, either for selfish reasons or unselfish reasons. The same is true of some of the laws that are passed in our government, especially those that are concerned with money matters. In our personal lives, the choice of a profession, the changing of a job, the budgeting of our funds and the giving of our money, time and talent to church or some



Rev. Stephen E. Odegaard

other charitable purposes are all governed by the considerations of selfish or unselfish benefits. Since so much of our lives are governed by one of these reasons, I think it would be good if we understood just what is really involved in the making of decisions.

First of all the **selfish** reason. Our verse begins with, "Let him that stole steal no more." What do you think of when you read those words? A crook, a thief, a burglar, embezzler, racketeer, or someone along these same lines? But, my dear friends, there is much more involved in the Seventh Commandment: "Thou shalt not steal"!

Stealing is any selfish use of anything that God has given to you. To misuse time, talent, or money, along with everything else that we have, is stealing from God. It has been said that time is like precious jewels, with sixty jewels to the hour. We all know how carefully protected and cared for jewels are and yet the jewels of time are thrown away like there are plenty of them. When those sixty minutes in the hour are gone we cannot bring them back. But what have you done with them?

The Bible tells us that there is such a thing as stealing from God. "Will a man rob God?" the prophet Malachi asked, and the Lord answered, "Yet ye have robbed me." Dishonesty may be an unlawful acquisition, but it can also be an unlawful using of what has been acquired honestly. A man may work hard and long hours for his pay check, but if he then spends it foolishly, he has stolen from God. All of us are stewards of God and we will have to answer to Him for what we have done with the means He has given to us. It is our duty to do our very best with what God has given to us.

There are some subtle ways of stealing from God. The person who buys an expensive automobile, television, or fine house and in doing so cuts his contributions to the church and charity is certainly guilty of being selfish. The same is true with children who have not learned to share. These selfish attitudes towards money and property are very general. And we should not think that they are limited to the rich, because they are found in every walk of life. The only difference is that the rich have more money to misuse and therefore have a greater responsibility; but the sin is the same.

There will be some who will disagree with what has been said and say, "Now wait a minute, Pastor. What I have, I've worked for and it is mine to do with as I please." But the whole point of Christian stewardship is that we are not our own; we are bought with a price, the precious blood of the Son of God, and we should acknowledge Him who paid for it all.

When you receive a gift you write a "thank-you" note to the person for the gift. We have received all that we have as a gift from God and we, too, should be thankful for it and use

it in the right way. To use it in the right way, we should be obedient to the will of God; we should earnestly pray that He would lead us in the use of all our gifts.

Someone has said that instead of all these advertising campaigns to persuade us to buy this soap and this car, consider this story about how much you can get for very little. Some of this money should be used to advertise the need for human welfare, pictures of a teacher in the classroom, a physician in his office, a nurse at a bedside, a pastor in his pulpit, an artist in his studio, a policeman on the street, a laborer at his machines. If you think that this is ridiculous, it shows how tragically your sense of values has been perverted. Just remember that nobody has been remembered by a grateful posterity for his success in buying and selling. The great men of God have done something to enrich human life in art, science, religion or in everyday life, and by doing their best at whatever they did. Greatness does not consist in doing something which is remembered, but is remembered in a life that is approved by God.

As Christians we should have the motto "YOU CAN CHANGE THE WORLD." Of all the people on the face of the earth, we as Christians are in a position to make the greatest contribution to human life. I don't mean that we are to preach a sermon to everyone on the street, or to be obnoxious in presenting Christ. But we are to remember that each and every day we witness either for or against Christ. There are many opportunities for your personal witness and you should take advantage of all of them. We can help contribute to mankind by the kind of work that we do, the spirit in which we do it and the purpose for which we do it. It is a terrible life to simply have a job, go through the motions day after day, with the same drudgery, with one eye on the clock and the other on the boss. It doesn't matter so much what kind of work that we do as long as it is pleasing to God and that we do well at it.

As we think about the Seventh Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," we usually think about those who steal openly as being the "bad guys" and

seem to forget about those who steal on the sly and in public live a life of honor and respectability. They may cheat at their jobs, waste time, cheat on their taxes, sell defective merchandise, and the like. But in the eyes of God it is all the same. Stealing is stealing.

As we think about stealing, our minds go to money. There are some who feel that money is a subject that we are to stay away from. A seminary teacher often said, "Don't be afraid to ask people for money for the Lord's work. It gives them a chance to be blessed." A Christian's idea of labor and the use of his money go hand in hand. There are many places where God's money could be used for His work. Don't tell me about your expenses. When you go to God for help, does He pour out all His problems to you or does He help you regardless? All of us have expenses and they are not getting any less these days. And our needs are not getting less. These will be with us all the time. The question is, what about good Christian schools? OUR children need them. How about hospitals? The sick need them. How about retirement homes for our elderly? The true Christian colleges and seminaries, the opportunities in the foreign mission fields—the list could go on and on. There is no limit of the possibilities for the many who want to invest their money in some worthy Christian cause. Christians, we have seen too much of God's money invested in the things of the world. It's time to invest God's money for God.

The old question of the stewardship of money presents its challenge to us, and in the time to come we shall be made sharply aware of the needs that exist. As you think about the Kingdom of God and what needs to be done, set your sights high. Pray about your work, your talent and your money and let the Lord lead you in what to do with them. I leave you with this question, "Are you robbing from God, even in a small portion? So small that you hardly notice it? God sees it! Remember, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God... and all these things shall be added unto you." Give to God first and all of your other needs will be taken care of.

FORGIVE US AS WE FORGIVE

How do you expect to live
In your eternal home if you can't
forgive
The ones you say have done you
wrong?
How do you think you'll get along?

Do you think the Lord will rearrange
All the rooms in His house
Because you couldn't change?
How did you ever get into this state
That fills your whole life with regrets
and hate;

It only takes two to start a fight,
Why must you always insist that
you're right?
Remember the next time the Lord's
Prayer you pray,
Be sure you understand these words
that you say.

"Forgive us our sins, as we forgive"
Are easy to say, but so hard to live.
Let's forgive each other before it's
too late;
We won't have to forgive, if left out-
side the gate.

Ellen Nielsen
Sisseton, S. Dak.



PREACHING MISSIONS

PREACHING MISSIONS

Blue Grass, Minn.

Bethany Lutheran Church
Rev. Fred H. Carlson, pastor
October 15-17

Rev. Herbert Franz, Cloquet, Minn.
speaker

Minneapolis, Minn.

Medicine Lake Lutheran Church
Rev. Amos O. Dyrud, Co-ordinating
pastor

October 15-19

Lay Pastor Gene Sundby, Greenbush,
Minn., speaker

WOMEN *for Christ*

MY GOD, HOW GREAT THOU ART

Mrs. Toivo Keranen
Ontonagon, Michigan

These were the only words my heart and mind could utter at times, when I was in the midst of the worst rheumatoid arthritis attack I've experienced in the ten years I've had the disease.

Being allergic to so many of the drugs used in the treatment of arthritis, even aspirin, the disease becomes difficult to control at times and the pain gets very severe.

Since a year ago I had been feeling the symptoms more and more and finally, in June, it got to the point where I was dragging my right leg. At this time, when I entered the hospital, I didn't know where I hurt the worst. A month on cortisone had not helped, nor did the week in the hospital.

Many friends of all faiths began praying for me, and how I thank God for so many faithful praying friends. I prayed myself to be made well, **IF** it was God's will.

On Sunday, July 9th, I awakened in pain again, and oh so weary. My husband, myself and our two children decided to go to Bessemer, some 55 miles away, to visit our sister congregation. During the closing part of the service, during which they have a free prayer period, a visiting pastor, Tauno Jarvinen, prayed that the Lord would touch, in a special way, anyone who had a physical need. That was meant just for me, I thought.

After the service, I went up to him and thanked him for praying that petition, as I felt it was meant just for

me. He quoted James 5:14-15, "Is any sick among you? Let him call the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil, in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

I had wanted to do just this so many times, but always the thought came, your illness isn't that serious, it's just arthritis. The Holy Spirit working in me banished this thought, my heart had been prepared, and I asked him for this.

Several people came to pray, among them Seminarian Kenneth Pentti, Al Jarvinen, the trio from the California Lutheran Bible School and my husband. We began by praising the Lord, thanking Him for all that He has done for each one of us, and then as Pastor Jarvinen began to pray for my healing, they laid their hands on my head. I believed and in that moment, Jesus began my healing. Praise His wonderful name! Surely He had led us to this moment.

Since that day, I have not dragged my leg, nor have I had to take much medication. The Lord has seen me through many illnesses and healed me after many operations, but never have I experienced His healing in such a way as this.

We must learn to ask Jesus specifically for what we want, just as we asked our fathers for things when we were children, and then we must believe. In our prayer groups we should not hesitate to ask for prayer for ourselves, for whatever the problem might be. And, too, how marvelous it is when we can call up our

Christian friends and say, "Pray for me." Through this will come much strengthening.

In the weeks that followed, the Lord has led me to witness to many people, many of whom I expected to scoff. But they didn't, for they could see the change in me.

God has a purpose in suffering, it is not always for punishment, for if it were, then we should all be suffering greatly all of the time, but He can work His purposes in us. Should God see fit to grant me such suffering again, He will give me the grace to bear it, knowing that Jesus knows what He is doing with me, for me and through me. Isn't Jesus MY LORD wonderful! Praise Him!

—Mrs. Toivo Keranen
Ontonagon, Michigan

ASSOCIATION BOARDS, COMMITTEES TO MEET

A workshop for members of all regular boards and committees in the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations will be held on Friday, October 13, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

A joint session will be held in the morning, with reports from the various areas of work. In the afternoon there will be opportunity for the individual boards to meet.

CHURCH AT THIEF RIVER REMODELED

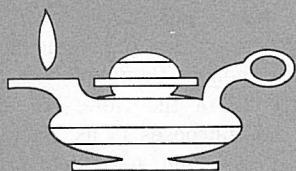
Our Savior's Lutheran Congregation of Thief River Falls worshipped in their newly enlarged and remodeled church Sunday, Sept. 17th.

Over the last four months the church has been completely redone with eight new Sunday school rooms added, a new kitchen, and a study for the pastor, as well as a church office.

The sanctuary and narthex were enlarged and a balcony was also added. The church will now comfortably seat 390.

A new pulpit, altar and lectern have been built and the church will now have sixteen rooms for their education program.

A dedication service is planned for the late fall with Rev. John Strand officiating.



SCHOOL NEWS

NEW SCHOOL YEAR OPENS AT AFLBS

An opening service marking the beginning of the seventh year for Association Free Lutheran Bible School was held on Sunday afternoon, Sept. 10. Pastor Laurel Udden, a teacher at the school, gave the sermon. Miss Linda Moan, a graduate, was the soloist.

A number of parents and friends of the incoming students were in attendance and remained for supper in the dining hall.

That evening the students had a get-acquainted singspiration in one of the classrooms. Orientation and registration were held on Monday morning with classes commencing on Tuesday.

Mr. Donald Rodvold, director of music, conducted try-outs for the choir and choral club on Monday and Tuesday evenings and Thursday morning.

The first joint chapel service, in conjunction with Free Lutheran Seminary, which began classwork on Wednesday, was held on Wednesday morning. Rev. Amos Dyrud, dean of the Seminary, presided. The message was delivered by Rev. John P. Strand, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. He used Luke 11:27, 28 as his text and stressed the importance of the fellowship of the Word. It is blessed to study the Word, he said, for what it can do for one: bring salvation, lead to Christian growth, produce fruit-bearing and power, and impart wisdom. These goals, Pastor Strand declared, are

what he hopes each student will set.

New furniture for the student lounge was intalled on Wednesday afternoon. It is in a modern style.

There are 93 students registered for the first quarter, which will end Thanksgiving week. Forty-one are second-year students and 52 are first-year scholars. The total is below that of last year. Applications are being accepted for the second quarter which will start on November 27.

DRIVE FOR DORMITORY FUNDS TO GET UNDERWAY

An organized effort to encourage pledges and cash gifts for the proposed boys' dormitory at Association Free Lutheran Bible School in Minneapolis is getting underway at this time.

The Annual Conference of the AFLC in June authorized construction of a dormitory, which would also provide more classroom space, but stipulated that one-half of the anticipated cost of building, about \$125,000, be raised in cash or pledges before work can begin. The present effort is in response to that conference decision.

The amount which has been raised to date, with no direct promotion, is \$26,020.84. Of that total, \$15,564.75 is in pledges and \$10,456.05 in cash. Pledges are accepted on terms of from one to five years.

Representatives from the districts, most of them laymen, met in Minneapolis last week to plan how they can carry the message of the need back to their home areas. They met

with the Board of Trustees and other church leaders.

It is hoped that the local churches will respond favorably to the suggestions these men make for launching a concerted effort to make the ingathering of cash and pledges a success.

The proposed dormitory would house approximately 65 boys, contain a lounge and some faculty offices and provide on a temporary basis two classrooms and a library. The structure will be two-thirds the size of the girls' dormitory, possibly, then, two stories high rather than three, with the length of the two buildings the same.

AFLBS is in its seventh year of operation. Rev. R. Snipstead is the dean of the school.

LORINE CHRISTOPHERSON MEMORIALIZED

Miss Lorine Christopherson, a former member of Bethany Lutheran Church, Abercrombie, North Dakota, has been memorialized by a gift of \$2,000 for the men's dormitory. Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Christopherson, members of the Rosedale Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, were the givers of the memorial. Mr. Oscar Christopherson is a brother of Miss Lorine Christopherson who passed away December 30, 1971.

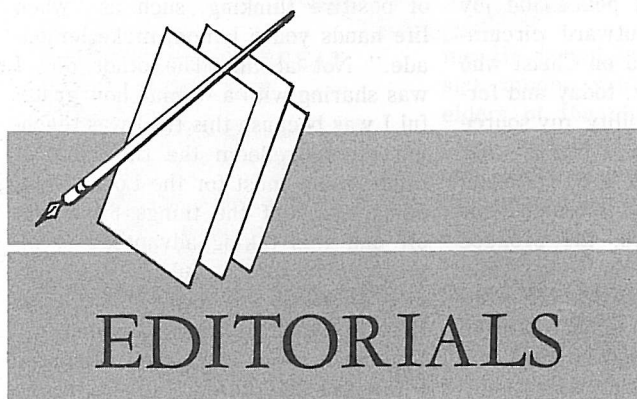
May the memories many have of Miss Christopherson continue to bless and comfort.

DONNELLY COUPLE OBSERVES 65TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Mr. and Mrs. George Jergenson, rural Donnelly, Minnesota, observed their 65th wedding anniversary in July. They are members of Kongsvinger Lutheran Church. Friends of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, they sent in a gift of money to the AFLC on the occasion of their anniversary.

The Jergensons have two pastor sons, Rev. Arnold, Poulso, Wash., and Rev. Conrad, St. James, Minn.

Congratulations and God's blessings on this fine couple who still maintain their own farm home together with an unmarried son, Reuben.



A FREE PULPIT

In one of his summer columns in the **National Catholic Register**, Msgr. R. G. Peters expressed his support of the Roman Catholic custom of having parish priests appointed by the diocese through the bishop rather than by a local parish council. This procedure, he said, helps to assure the freedom of the pulpit, keeping it free and true to the teachings of the church.

Msgr. Peters avowed that the Protestant clergy, hired directly by local parishes are apt to be under pressure to preach and teach and pronounce according to the wishes of those whom they serve, even though this be contrary to their own confessional belief.

Our first reaction was that Msgr. Peters had a poor understanding of the Protestant situation, and it surely is incomplete. But on second thought, there is no doubt some truth to the charge that Protestant ministers may not speak out as they should on an issue or mute their prophetic preaching in order not to offend local parishioners especially if they are influential and/or people of means. Wherever this is true it is unfortunate and it is not right.

Now where it is an issue of politics or economics, the laity may well object to their pastor pretending to speak as an authority and as an official voice of his people. His parishioners can ask that he refrain from speaking as their representative on debatable issues. But where it is a matter of proclaiming God's revealed truth, of preaching Law and Gospel, there must be freedom and no subservience to men, whether they be influential

or not. A pastor declares on his ordination day that he will preach the Word of God in its purity and when he is installed he is asked by the congregation to promise to "publicly and privately declare the Word of God in its truth and purity." Thus committed, he is not to fear men but God.

We believe that the pastors of the Association take this responsibility seriously. They are engaged by the local churches, but in our tradition there is almost complete freedom from outside influence as to the message that is to be preached. Local churches want the whole counsel of God to be preached and expect it. The pastors are committed to the same. Wherever there may have been hedging on this, let there be careful self-examination.

There may be times when a pastor will not say something in a sermon because he knows it involves only one person in the congregation and his responsibility is to speak to the individual privately first, but that is a different matter. Otherwise he is not to be a respecter of persons.

The engaging of a pastor for a parish ought to be done by local members. This is our practice and we believe it is the Biblical way. Where all seek to be under the leadership of the Spirit of God, people and pastors, the system will work out well and it has for us.

BOYS' DORM PROJECT

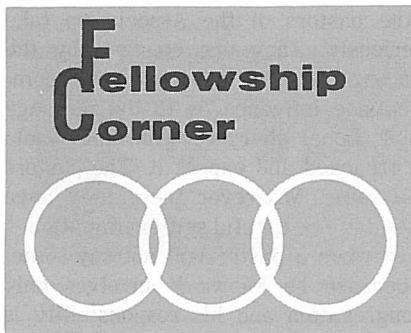
The drive for cash and pledges so that the Boys' Dormitory at our Bible School can be started next spring has made steady if unspectacular progress. Information is carried elsewhere in this issue about the current status of the project.

It will be necessary now to tackle the goal of \$125,000 (approximately half of the total cost of building) in earnest. The fall of the year is traditionally the best time to work on financial drives and that season is here. District representatives have been chosen and they will spearhead the efforts in their areas. Nevertheless, much responsibility for the success of this project will fall on the parish pastors and leadership of the local congregations. Let everyone be faithful in doing his part.

While attendance at the Bible School is down from last year, this stems in part from the fact that we haven't been able to openly promote Bible School attendance because of limited dormitory and classroom facilities. And, under those circumstances, if capacity is reached and some back out at the last minute, it is difficult to replace them when young people have made other plans for the fall, not feeling that they had much chance of getting into Bible School.

And the desirability of having a separate dormitory for boys remains. This would be the best thing and would then release more space for girls in the present building and there will always be more girls than boys attending Bible School.

To paraphrase a well-known appeal, we hope you will give and pledge generously to the drive which will make it possible to begin construction of the boys' dorm next spring.



THOUGHTS OUT OF A CRISIS EXPERIENCE

"Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (I Thess. 5:18). About a year ago I was meditating on these verses, wondering why these things should be the will of God for me. Whenever God gives a commandment, He gives it for a good reason. He tells us in Deuteronomy, "Fear me and keep all my commandments, that it might go well with you and with your children forever." I found in Proverbs 17:22, that "a cheerful heart is a good medicine, but a downcast spirit dries up the bones." Perhaps God wants us to rejoice, pray and give thanks not only because "it is good to sing praises to our God for he is gracious and a song of praise is seemly," but also for what it does for us in our entire well-being.

Ephesians 1:12 tells us that "we have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of his glory." Revelation describes the praise which is found in heaven. There are many phrases such as "Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen." If this is what I'm going to be doing in heaven, I decided I'd better learn about it now. So, I thanked God for spiritual blessings first: a wonderful Savior, the assurance of eternal life, the Word, the privilege of prayer, for all the people who have ever prayed for me, and the blessings I've

enjoyed because of them. Then I thanked him for the obvious material blessings such as home, food, clothes, a wonderful husband, three healthy children, friends, the ability to hear and see, the sunshine and rain.

Isaiah 43 reveals the fact that we are made for God's glory that we might declare His praise. I found that it felt so good to thank God...much like a round peg in a round hole, it fit well...this is what I was made for. Yes, I could give thanks in all circumstances, because I had experienced first hand that peace and joy do not depend on outward circumstances, but are based on Christ who is the same yesterday, today and forever. Christ is my stability, my source of constant joy. Perhaps this is what it means in Habakkuk 3:17, "Though the fig tree does not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

Soon I came across Ephesians 5:20. "Always and for everything give thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father." Did that mean that I was not only to give thanks IN all circumstances but also FOR everything as well? How about one of those days when everything goes wrong; was I supposed to give thanks for that? Psalm 103 says, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits...so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's." I was amazed how thanking and praising God after a bad day washed away the fatigue and revived my spirit. James tells us to count it all joy when we meet various trials, for the testing of our faith produces steadfastness. Every trial is a new opportunity to grow in steadfastness. With this in mind I thanked God for the small annoying things that come up from time to time, asking Him to make me willing to learn patience.

I found it interesting that Paul described a large trial as a "slight momentary affliction." His joy is evident when he says, in II Corinthians 4:16, "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed

every day." He saw this situation clearly in the light of eternity. Jesus had this view when He told His followers that some of them would even be put to death, then added, "But not a hair of your head will perish" (Luke 21:18). Recently a trial came into my life that was truly a test. These verses encouraged me to give thanks for it and to ask the Lord to glorify Himself through it.

Thanking and praising God in a hard situation is not to be confused with the secular idea of the power of positive thinking, such as "when life hands you a lemon, make lemonade." Not at all! The other day I was sharing with a woman how grateful I was because this trial was teaching me to redeem the time that it might count most for the Lord. I was doing many of the things I had put off and was taking advantage of all the opportunities I could to be of service to others and grow in the Lord. He was teaching me to number my days in a most loving way. Because I thanked the Lord, I wasn't bound up with bitterness or self-pity. Gratitude and hardness of heart don't mix. I was free to experience peace and the assurance that I had a wonderful and all sufficient Lord. The woman's misunderstanding of my testimony was clear when she commented, "You certainly do have a brave attitude about all this."

No, dear lady, it involves no bravery on my part at all. My life is based on a sure thing. Jesus Christ is my rock and the promises of His Word are sure! "We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

If all of life is a grand and glorious outworking of the plan of God, and if He uses affliction to bring about His own purposes which are always for our ultimate blessing, surely we should thank and praise Him for the difficult things in life. How about you? The Holy Spirit will enable you to thank God by faith for those trials in your life. Then God's peace will guard your heart and mind because we know that whatever happens to us has first been permitted by our loving Heavenly Father, who plans

(Continued on page 12)

MARION HELLEKSON

"If anyone serves me, let him follow me" (John 12:26a).

Jesus was trying to clarify to His disciples that He had to die. This was offensive to them. Jesus then said that if anyone was to serve Him, he, too, would have to die. He was not then speaking primarily of physical death but of the death of self, of following one's flesh, one's pride and desires.

All true Christians want to serve Jesus. There are many ideas as to service, however. Suffice to say that many are seeking glamorous and prominent deeds to do, but Jesus says that true service involves first, last, and always a death of self. Some try to serve Jesus in ways that point to themselves, but such service is in vain, of the flesh, and fruitless, no matter what people may think. At the last day, many of these will hear, "I never knew you," from the lips of Jesus. The Christian's greatest need, if he would truly serve, is not more gifts, opportunities, or experiences, but to die to self. We hear little of this these days. Few seek this experience.

There are many fine people in the Association. The finest are those who "die to self" daily. We are convicted, and yet rejoice, as we meet them. They are the "salt" of the earth, although they are often "unsung" and unnoticed. They are the human strength of the Association.

As we at this time think of those who die to self, we think particularly of one who this summer went to be with the Lord. We are thinking of Miss Marion Hellekson.

We first learned to know Marion when we went to our first parish. She was the very efficient and faithful organist, Sunday school teacher, prayer warrior, and servant. No task was too small, but she shrank from positions and tasks that might draw attention to herself. While she was an excellent organist, teacher, etc., she was not jealous of her positions but always encouraged others to replace her. Not all workers in the Kingdom have this grace. This appears to be especially rare amongst those who think they are musicians. What was best for the congregation and



Marion Hellekson, seated, and Mrs. Aini Myking.

for others was uppermost for Marion.

There was great joy when Marion Hellekson consented to come to Minneapolis to work in the Association offices. She had served for 27 years as the Assistant County Superintendent of Schools in Walsh County, North Dakota, and came to Minneapolis at not a small sacrifice to herself. She served the Association unselfishly in many capacities. She did not seek position but, after persuasion, was willing to serve when and where requested. She was at times secretary, bookkeeper, financial secretary, Bible Camp treasurer, counselor for Bible school students, and did innumerable other services as requested or needed. Her day and service never ended.

Perhaps Marion's last service as she approached death was her greatest. When struck by cancer, she was an inspiration as she continued her patient and calm attitude. She was not afraid to die. Much prayer ascended on her behalf, and it looked for a time that God had healed. It appeared that she was not convinced of this and she continued to speak of her "home-going." She continued to work while in pain and difficulty. Every consideration was offered and given to her. Her greatest longing was the salvation of souls, and to depart from this life. The end of struggles and the beginning of triumph came on August 13, 1972. Now she is with Christ her Savior, receiving honor that cannot be given on earth (John 12:26).

Marion Hellekson was an example in so many ways. May we be inspired

(Continued from page 4)
clean me up. Clean me up, God. For Jesus' sake."

Later, on his way to his room, Harris shook his fist at the saloons as he went by them. He mounted the stairs in a hurry, went to his room. With one sweep, he ripped the pictures off the wall. "Don't belong here now, I'm a Christian." He dumped his dice, his wallets, empty whiskey bottles into one of the boxes stacked in the corner and shoved it out into the hall. "You are done, too," he said.

"Want a bucket of hot water," he told his landlady. After he had scrubbed down the walls and woodwork, he scrubbed the ceiling, swept up his cigar butts, scrubbed the floor, and foraged for clean sheets. "Everything's gotta be clean," he told his cronies. "I'm clean. I was washed in the blood of the Lamb, my Savior, Jesus Christ." Then he laid his New Testament on the table beside the bed.

That was the story he told them at the mission, too.

And the "stew bums" and the dere-licts believed him.

"That's Sunshine Harris," they'd nudge each other and say.

"You mean that guy with the white beard and the clean shirt?"

"That's him. Used to be Old Harris, call him Sunshine now."

"That Old Harris? That cantankerous old cuss? Why, he was so foul-mouthed and rotten and dirty!"

"Yeah, yeah. But now he don't smell of anything but hair tonic, and he's been using it, on his hair."

"Huh! Well, if Jesus Christ can do something for that old 'souse,' I think I'm gonna go back to the prayer room too."

* * * * *

Eight years later, Mrs. Clarke walked behind Sunshine; homeless men on the street, outside the mission, held battered hats and were silent. One of them scratched his head as he said, "Well—they may be takin' old Sunshine's carcass home, but one thing I know—his soul's done been with God since day before yesterday, when the old boy died."

UNSHACKLED; Courtesy,
Pacific Garden Mission,
Chicago, Ill.

(Continued on page 12)

SPEAKING THE GOOD WORD

It isn't the thinking how grateful we are
 For the kindness of friends come to bless
 Our sorrow or loss
 'Neath the weight of the cross,
 It is telling our gratefulness.

It isn't the love that they have in their hearts,
 And neglect or forget to reveal,
 That brightens the lives
 Of husbands and wives
 It is telling the love that they feel.

It isn't the thinking of good to mankind
 That comes as a cooling drink
 To the famished ones
 Of earth's daughters and sons;
 It is telling the good that we think.

It isn't the music asleep in the strings,
 Of the lute, that entrances the ear,
 And brings to the breast
 The spirit of rest;
 It is only the music we hear.

It isn't the lilies we hide from the world,
 Nor the roses we keep as our own,
 That are strewn at our feet
 By the angels we meet
 On our way to the Great White Throne.

It isn't the silence of hope expressed
 That heartens and strengthens the weak
 To triumph through strife
 For the great things of life;
 It's the words of good cheer that we speak.

—Selected

(Continued from page 10)

all things for our good. Give thanks for all things that it may be well with you. "I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being" (Ps. 146:2).

—Mrs. Julius Olson
 Grand Forks, N. Dak.

(Ed. Note: Mrs. Olson, 28, mother of three small boys, was recently told by her doctors that she has multiple sclerosis. Her article is written out of this experience.)

PERSONALITIES

The address of **Rev. Francis Monseth** will be 1416 Peacock Lane, Brentwood, Missouri 63144, instead of the address previously given. Pastor Monseth is studying at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

Rev. Albert Hautamaki, bookkeeper at Association headquarters, is living at 10605 Union Terrace Way, Minneapolis, Minn. 55441. He also works in the area of public relations for the church.

Rev. Howard Kjos has accepted a call to serve the Lake Region Lutheran Parish (Tabor, Saron, Hope and Buffalo Lake) of Roslyn, S. Dak. He will take up his work there on Oct. 8. His previous parish has been at Hampden, N. Dak.

(Continued from page 11)

by her life and witness for many years to come.

The funeral service was conducted at the Bethel Lutheran Church, Grafton, North Dakota, on August 16, 1972. Marion is survived by one brother, Ray, of Bemidji, Minnesota. A memorial service in the Bible school chapel will be held this fall. Plans are to use memorials given in her memory for a fitting memorial at the schools. Blessed be the memory of Marion Hellekson. She was not a stranger to "dying to self."

—Pastor John P. Strand

WHOLLY GOD'S

When General Booth was asked what had been the secret of his success, he replied: "I will tell you the secret—God has had all there was of me. There have been men with greater brains than I, men with greater opportunities, but from the day I got the poor of London on my heart, and a vision of what Jesus Christ would do for them, I made up my mind that God should have all that there was of William Booth; and if anything has been achieved, it is because God has had all the adoration of my heart, all the power of my will, and all the influence of my life.

—Selected

THE MATCHLESS LIFE-MENDER

by James McConkey

In a certain old town was a great cathedral. And in that cathedral was a wondrous stained glass window. Its fame had gone abroad over the land. From miles around people pilgrimaged to gaze upon the splendor of this masterpiece of art. One day there came a great storm. The violence of the tempest forced in the window, and it crashed to the marble floor, shattered into a hundred pieces. Great was the grief of the people at the catastrophe which had suddenly bereft the town of its proudest work

THE ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd.
 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

BUDGET RECEIPTS

February 1 to August 31, 1972

	Proposed Yearly Budget	Current Budget	Total Budget
General Fund	\$ 41,590.00	\$ 24,599.21	\$ 12,934.77
Schools	72,073.00	42,042.58	17,467.53
Foreign Missions	38,000.00	22,166.66	16,784.67
Home Missions	42,000.00	24,500.00	12,986.02
TOTAL	\$193,633.00	\$113,308.45	\$ 60,172.99
To date last year			68,993.12
Anniversary Offering			
Praise Program and Debt Retirement		57,900.00	50,169.83
Legacies—\$294.70			
Library—\$317.00			

of art. They gathered up the fragments, huddled them in a box, and carried them to the cellar of the church.

One day there came along a stranger and craved permission to see the beautiful window. They told him of its fate. He asked what they had done with the fragments. And they took him to the vault and showed him the broken morsels of glass. "Would you mind giving these to me?" said the stranger. "Take them along," was the reply, "they are no longer of any use to us." And the visitor carefully lifted the box and carried it away in his arms.

Weeks passed by; then one day there came an invitation to the custodians of the cathedral. It was from a famous artist, noted for his master-skill in glass-craft. It summoned them to his study to inspect a stained glass window, the work of his genius. Ushering them into his studio he stood them before a great veil of canvas. At the touch of his hand upon a cord the canvas dropped. And there before their astonished gaze shone a stained glass window surpassing in beauty all their eyes had ever beheld. As they gazed entranced upon its rich tints, wondrous pattern, and cunning workmanship the artist turned and said: "This window I have wrought from the fragments of your shattered one, and it is now ready to be replaced." Once more a great window shed its beauteous light into the dim aisles of the old cathedral. But the splendor of the new far surpassed the glory of the old, and the fame of its strange fashioning filled the land.

Reader, do you say that your plans have been crushed? Thank God and take heart. Have you not long since learned that the best place for many of your plans is the trash pile? And that often you must fling them there before your blinded eyes can see God's own better plan for your life? And how is it with your life? Has sin blighted it? Have the mistakes of early years seemingly wrecked it? Have joy and sweetness vanished from it? Does there seem nought left for you but to walk its weary treadmill until its days of darkness and drudgery shall end? Then know this.

Jesus Christ is a matchless life-mender.

Try Him.

He will take that seemingly shattered life and fashion a far more beautiful one from its fragments than you yourself could ever have wrought from the whole. In Him your weary soul shall find its longed-for rest. And the fragments that remain of God's heritage of life to you shall mean in gladsome days to come, more than all the vanished years that are crooning their sad lament in your innermost soul tonight.

—The Lutheran Messenger

AN APPEAL FOR CONSECRATION

by Olga Winegartner

"Take my life and let it be consecrated Lord to Thee."

How often we sing and pray this beautiful sentiment, little realizing what it means in the eyes of God and what it should mean to us.

At holy baptism we have already been set aside as a temple for the Holy Spirit. Then we had our second birth. Our hearts were united with God and we became the children of His Kingdom.

As our physical bodies at birth needed food and protection, so our souls, born into the Kingdom, began to grow and feed on the Bread of Life.

People as a rule fear death; how much greater should our fear be of spiritual death. At times we fairly cry unto God to create a clean heart and renew a right spirit within us.

We are still His, but we so often get away from his inspiration through the Holy Spirit and the Word, that when we awaken to our condition our starving souls cry unto Him to empty us of self and to fill us with His Spirit. "A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

When we are right with God, the problem of trying to keep right with our fellowmen will disappear. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

Because of the Father's infinite goodness and love, we know that through Jesus Christ we can come boldly before the throne of grace and receive strength and life.

How beautiful is a healthy, robust body that never knew of physical sickness or weakness, yet how much more beautiful if it is completely consecrated and wholly surrendered to Christ.

When self is conquered and the Holy Spirit rules our body, our mind and our soul, rules our whole life, will not many, yes, all, of our problems be solved, such as the indifference in the church, the need for missionaries and servants of the Lord, the constant calling to fill empty treasuries, the question of amusements, the oppression of the poor and the innocent, the formal, cold-hearted charity, and the lack of love for our fellowmen?

Oh, that man would consecrate his wonderful gifts—bodily, mental, spiritual—to God his Maker. Fellow Christians, let us make a full surrender to God.

Let us live the life that Jesus lived, in business, in the home and in the church. For God searches the heart of man and knows every thought and intent, and no doubt is grieved with us and the condition in the world today.

We are not and cannot be sufficient unto ourselves. Man soars in his wisdom but will utterly fail, because he is limited. He who controls and rules the universe, also controls us, yea even those who defy Him.

My life is now within His care, come what will. Is yours? God has a place for every one of us, if we will allow Him to show us. The question is not so much, Does He want us to work in His vineyard? as, Are we sure he does not want us to work there?

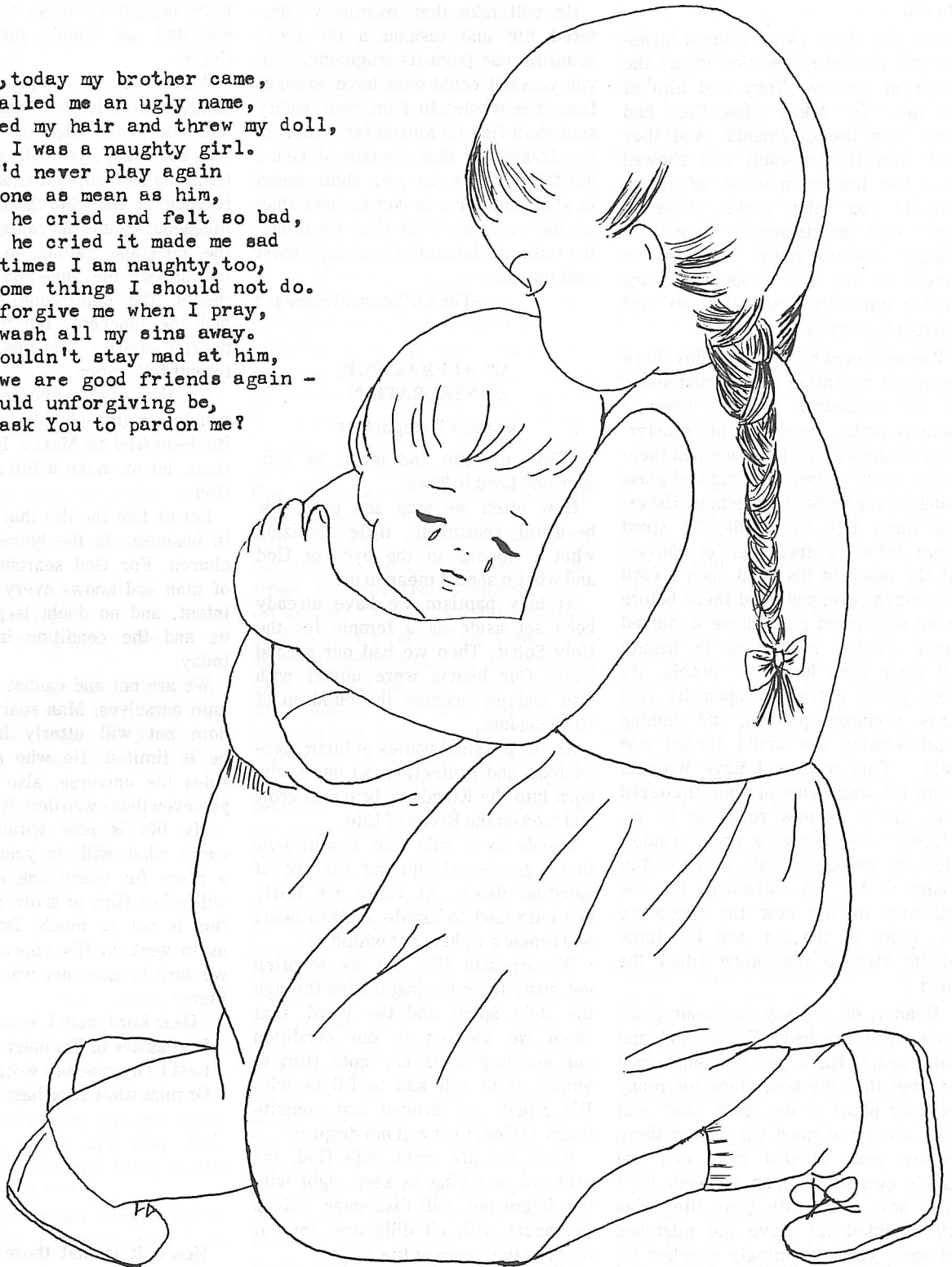
"Dear Lord, may I, ignoble clay,
Lie passive in Thy hand;
Lest I Thy gracious work delay
Or miss what Thou hast planned."

—The Friend

Hence it is that those who believe in Biblical teaching always have the highest estimate of the value of the human individual and the human race.

L. S. Keyser

Dear God, today my brother came,
 And he called me an ugly name,
 And pulled my hair and threw my doll,
 And said I was a naughty girl.
 I said I'd never play again
 With anyone as mean as him,
 But then he cried and felt so bad,
 And when he cried it made me sad
 For sometimes I am naughty, too,
 And do some things I should not do.
 But You forgive me when I pray,
 And You wash all my sins away.
 I just couldn't stay mad at him,
 And now we are good friends again -
 If I should unforgiving be,
 Could I ask You to pardon me?



Poem and illustration by
 Karlene Moline

CHURCH-WORLD NEWS

CHURCH OF NORWAY DEBATES RELATIONSHIP WITH STATE

Oslo—(LC)—The semi-official commission set up by the Church of Norway to examine church-state relations has firmly rejected a continuation of the present structure which gives the government final authority to determine church affairs.

However, according to a statement released here, the commission has not yet reached agreement on which of several plans proposed would be most beneficial.

One plan calls for a "State Church" which allows the church more self-government than it now has. Another proposes a church, registered as a confessional body, independent of the state, as is now the case with non-Lutheran free churches in Norway. A third plan suggests a free "Folk Church" which works in close cooperation with the state.

The commission, which has been functioning since 1969, is headed by Bishop Kaare Stoeysten of Agdar. It has launched rather harsh criticism of the present church-state relationship. The matter will be the subject of extended discussion when the semi-official Church of Norway Assembly meets next month.

In addition to the commission headed by Bishop Stoeysten, the Norwegian government has appointed a State Church Commission. The two groups have not made contact with each other yet, but Bishop Stoeysten said that he hoped the 117 pages of background material and recommendations gathered by his commission would be of interest to the government's study group.

PRESIDENT PREUS DECLARES LCMS AT DOCTRINAL CROSSROADS

St. Louis, Missouri, September 5—Declaring that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is at the crossroads,

President J. A. O. Preus today issued a call to action to every member that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod "continue to be the Biblical, confessional, orthodox, witnessing church that under God we have been for 125 years."

The call to action is the concluding portion of the 160-page report to the Synod by President Preus of the progress of the Board of Control of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, regarding the report of the Fact Finding Committee.

Over half of the report is comprised of transcripts of interviews conducted by the Fact Finding Committee with faculty members of the seminary. In a summary of the findings, President Preus noted several doctrinal concerns:

- a. A false doctrine of the nature of the Holy Scriptures coupled with methods of interpretation which effectually erode the authority of the Scriptures.
- b. A substantial undermining of the confessional doctrine of original sin by a *de facto* denial of the historical events on which it is based.
- c. A permissiveness toward certain false doctrines.
- d. A tendency to deny that the Law is a normative guide for Christian behavior.
- e. A conditional acceptance of the Lutheran Confessions.
- f. A strong claim that the Seminary faculty need not teach in accord with the Synod's doctrinal stance as expressed in the Synod's official doctrinal statements and resolutions.

The report also contains the Board of Control report which details circumstances affecting the progress of the board and states "the board to this date has found no false doctrine among the members of the seminary faculty." A minority report of the board is also included which lists

15 items as illustrations "... which cause us deep concern over the teaching at the seminary. In view of all this we cannot report in good conscience that there is no false doctrine."

The synodical President asks for our specific actions:

1. "The Fact Finding Committee Report indicates... that some professors at the seminary hold views contrary to the established doctrinal position of the Synod... The President is therefore asking the Board of Control to deal with those professors... and to give a completed report to him by February 1, so the President in turn can prepare the final report to the 1973 convention."
2. That the Board of Control deal personally with Concordia Seminary President John Tietjen (a) as to his own confessional stance and (b) as to his failure to exercise the supervision of the faculty as prescribed in the synodical Handbook.
3. That the Board of Control, and through that board, the administration of the faculty, direct the faculty that beginning the 1972-73 school year, to teach in keeping with the doctrinal position of the church.
4. That the Board for Higher Education and the District President immediately involve themselves in these procedures to the fullest extent under the governing provisions of the Synod's Constitution and Bylaws.

President Preus stated that many fine things can be said about the seminary throughout its long history, but "... we do have problems at the seminary which have increasingly threatened the unity of our Synod. The objective is the healing of the Synod, not its further division of fragmentation. It is the prayer of your President that in getting down to an

open and forthright discussion of the problems which trouble us, we will under the guidance of the Holy Spirit be able to reach consensus on the basis of God's Word and our Lutheran Confessions. We will then emerge from this ordeal a stronger, more united, and more committed church."

The report of the synodical President—the most recent development in the lengthy doctrinal controversy—

stems from an investigation authorized by President Preus in 1970 following complaints that the seminary was deviating from the teachings of the church body. The 1971 Milwaukee convention of the Synod directed the Board of Control "to take appropriate action" on the report of the Fact Finding Committee and that the President report to the Synod on the progress of the board.

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