

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

June 10, 1980



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Summer in Scandinavia
Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

AT THE MASTER'S FEET

Pastor Gary Skramstad



Your first love

"Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love" (Revelation 2:4, NIV).

Are you one who can remember that first joy in knowing that your sins were forgiven by the shed blood of Jesus upon the cross? Oh, what peace comes when one is in a right relationship with God! Some have a very emotional experience, others have a very quiet one. Yet, the assurance is the same. Our sins are indeed forgiven and our home is Heaven.

We loved to read the Word and the Holy Spirit uncovered precious truths that helped us grow in the faith. We talked to God in such simple and believing ways. We yearned to visit with others who loved Jesus. We desired that others would likewise come to know the Savior. We told others about the meaning of living with Christ in us. We shared generously

with missions and ministries so others would be saved and mature in the faith.

Oftentimes this time of becoming convinced of God's commitment to us happens during our teen years. Those years are years of "idealism." Everything is possible. Everything is to be perfect. But time reveals that disappointments come, failures happen, the best do sin. Therefore some Christians give up. They are disillusioned. As they look at themselves and at others they offer one reason upon another why the experience of day by day first love cannot be theirs today.

Attention is now offered to deeds, hard work, perseverance, dislike of ungodly men, detesting the false apostles, and standing against impure doctrine. Yet God charges those believers in the Church at Ephesus that they have forsaken their first love. The aforementioned activities are good and right. But the element of love is missing. That devotion, that zeal, that commitment to Jesus needs to be fresh. How can we have a fresh faith in Jesus?

The answer to that important question can be answered best by looking to the Word of God and how that Word was applied to the lives of those we have known to be in close fellowship with Jesus. Many years ago I served the Winger Parish while attending the University of North Dakota and my first year in Seminary. Oscar Snustad was a part of the Dovre Church. He was special to us. But one thing that bothered me about him was his concern for sin in his own life. He felt so unworthy. Tears would well up as he talked about Jesus and the forgiveness of sin. Here was one of the most godly men in the parish weeping over his sin. No wonder his heart was concerned for souls. No wonder he loved so many and prayed that God would touch their lives. He knew what God had done for

him and was doing for him presently. Oscar is home with the Lord now but we have never forgotten him or others like him. Now we understand his concerns—our concerns.

The thoughts of a lofty self are ever present to a Christian. We must realize that is how Satan steals souls from God. We are no special gift to be given to an unfortunate God. God first gives himself to us. Our love is only a response to His love touching our lives. Where would we be today if it weren't for the grace of God? That forgiveness came not only long ago but must come today because I sin today.

Christians dare never get so lofty that they cannot sincerely pray for the least desirable in their community. We must believe that God is able to save to the uttermost—and in many cases to the "guttermost." All of our sins bring us to the gutter. We are all flowing to the sewer of hell. God alone is able to save. Those condemning thoughts, urges, lusts, desires, and groanings seem to creep back into our lives to show their ugly heads. That temptation can so easily become sin. When Christians recognize this they are drawn even closer to the Lord. And if a believer has slipped and earnestly repented and sought God's fresh forgiveness and strength he becomes like a new man. Much grace has covered many sins. The Lord wipes the tears from his eyes. Scars may be visible from such an experience but restoration is real.

May God preserve us from having to go through such a humiliating and horrible experience. Remember that first love. Return unto the Lord. Don't play with those deadly temptations. If your heart is encased with a thick skin of indifference to the need of others look at your own life. Confess your sins. Receive forgiveness and become clean.

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by Rev. Ralph Tjelta
DeKalb, Ill.

The Christian's Highest Good

DETERMINING GOD'S WILL

Introduction

About two months ago a young man came to my office desiring to speak about spiritual things. He felt a restlessness, and uneasiness within. He felt that God wanted him to be doing something different than what he was presently doing and yet he didn't know what it was that God wanted him to do. So he asked this question, how can I know what God's will for me is at this time?

Difficulty in discerning God's will for our lives is a testimony of the sinfulness of the human heart. If it were not for sinful human nature separating us from an understanding of God's holy will and a desire to do it, all would be well. The business of the fortune teller and palm reader, the popularity of the horoscope and other signs of the zodiac, and the anxiety-filled thousands who seek counselling should be sufficient to convince us that people estranged from God will do almost anything to determine their next step in life. And even in the Church, frustrated Christians wander aimlessly, unable to find God's will because they neither know it nor are presently living in it.

When a person asks how one can know God's will, he needs to be confronted with this question, "Whose will are you doing right now?" Either he is living in fellowship with Jesus and is already living in God's will or else he is living out of God's will and also out of fellowship with Jesus. A personal, intimate living with Jesus is a necessary

criterion to knowing and living in God's will. If one is out of fellowship with Jesus he cannot know God's will and neither will he honestly desire to live in it. The Holy Spirit must therefore bring him to repentance and faith in order that he might "walk in the light, as He is in the light," thus having fellowship one with another and having the blood of Jesus His Son cleansing from all sin (I John 1:7). It is inconsistent to think that one can be living in fellowship with Jesus and still have doubt, anxiety and worry about being

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unable to determine God's will. This is so because the soul living in fellowship with Jesus walks by faith, not anxiety, and by trusting confidence, not nervous fear. This soul realizes that life is not accidental, but is planned in God's love and wisdom and is guided each day by the invisible hands of a loving, heavenly Father (Wisløff, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*). This soul clings to God's promise, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou

shalt go: I will guide (or counsel) thee with Mine eye" (Psalm 32:8). Such a soul remembers that it is God's plan that is to find him and not he who is to find God's plan. He realizes that Jesus takes him along; he doesn't take Jesus along. He therefore patiently rests in knowing that in His own correct time, not too early or too late, God, through Jesus and the working of the Holy Spirit, will reveal His will and provide the proper counsel.

God's Word

When we say that there is a will of God we are assuming that there is also another will which seeks to determine our destiny. Most decisions in life are in fact decisions between two conflicting paths. We should understand that it is not a conflict between God's will and no will, but rather, that it is a conflict between God's will and my will, that is, my flesh, or God's will and the world's will, or God's will and Satan's will.

This conflict leads to another fundamental truth. God's will can be known only through His Holy Word, the Bible. God's Word teaches us not only what is God's will but also what is the enemy's will. The Bible teaches us clearly what desires are of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-20). In I John 2:16 the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are clearly put

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GOD'S WILL . . .

forth as those influences which originate from the world and not from God. The deceitful workings, deceptions, and lies of Satan are likewise stated in Scripture along with direct admonitions on how to defeat him in our lives and thus avoid doing his will (See Ephesians 5:11-18). And it is only in the Word that we can read of God's blessed will for us on this earth, namely, our justification, I Timothy 2:4, and our sanctification, I Thessalonians 4:3. God's will for most instances in our lives which are not specifically mentioned in the Scripture could easily and immediately be discerned if we put them to this test: will this decision encourage the influence of Satan, the world, or the flesh in my life? or will this decision renew and revive the truths of justification in my heart and further the process of sanctification in my life as I am living together with Jesus? If we allow God's Word to guide us in matters of faith we will also find God's Word quite capable of directing us correctly in matters of practice (Psalm 119:105).

Our Prayers

According to *Luther's Small Catechism*, "Prayer is the child-like communion of our hearts with God, in which we tell Him all our needs, and earnestly seek some gift from Him." Perhaps the most important part of that definition is the phrase "child-like communion of our hearts." The first act of prayer is bowing in humility before our Heavenly Father with a child-like heart. It is at this point in prayer where the presentation of the sacrifice is made (Romans 12:1). Failure to see the importance of the bodily sacrifice before God is what causes people to lay more emphasis upon what they should *do* than upon what they should *be*. The presentation asks just the opposite, that we look at what we are instead of what we do. Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the mourning, blessed are the meek, blessed are the hungry and thirsty, blessed are the merciful, and blessed are the pure in

heart (Matthew 5). Even our blessed Lord illustrates this. The greatness of His work came about because of the perfectness of His being. It was not just any crucifixion that won redemption. Rather it was the crucifixion of the spotless, blameless, blemish-less Lamb of God in sacrifice which won redemption for sinners. Thus it was that Jesus prayed, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." That person who presents his body, mind and soul to God as a living sacrifice, to do with as He wills, becomes childlike in heart. And he who becomes as a child before the Heavenly Father is ready to know His will and to do it. This is the transformation of God (Romans 12:2). It cannot be otherwise.

Directing Circumstances

That child of God who, because of the knowledge of God's Word, shuns conformity to the desires of the devil, the world and the flesh, and who is constantly presenting himself in childlike trust to the will of God can now be directed by the circumstances of life which God provides. Joseph's life was in many instances controlled by circumstances and yet he shines brightly as one who did the Father's will. The Apostle Paul likewise was directed at times by outward circumstances. Persecution and expulsion took him from Antioch into Iconium (Acts 13:51). A threatened stoning caused him to go to Lystra and Derbe (Acts

14:6) and disputation sent him to Jerusalem (Acts 15:2). The Apostles, together with the Church, sent him to Antioch, Syria and Cilicia (Acts 15:24) and the brethren sent him to Berea (Acts 17:10). A conspiracy against his life caused soldiers to take him by night to Antipatris (Acts 23:31), a storm at sea landed him on Melita (Acts 28:1) and an appeal to Caesar took him to Rome. At times, at least, Paul did not have much to say about where he went, yet who would dare say he was not in the will of God. From Paul's life we can learn that "to do one's duty daily in the mind of Christ is the highest form of spirituality and the greatest art in life" (Wisløff).

Spiritual Counsel

Twice in the book of Proverbs (11:14, 24:6), we are told that there is safety in a multitude of counsellors. Proverbs 20:5 states, "Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out." The will of God can also be discerned as one seeks the counsel of godly, spiritual people. To think that God's will can be found in spite of disobedience to Christian parents, disregarding the advice of godly pastors, and going against the counsel of Christian elders is to play the part of the fool. And yet young people plunge on in their wilful way thinking no one understands them or their circumstances or their problems. Is it any wonder they cannot find God's will and in the end reap the harvest of sowing to the flesh? The admonition in I Peter 5:6 to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God is preceded by the instruction that the younger are to be humbly submitted to those who are over them and in whose charge they remain. Young people, God's will can be found in the advice of mature Christians. The man of understanding will diligently seek it out.

Witness of the Spirit

An oft-quoted verse is Romans 8:14, "For as many are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Just

"To think that God's will can be found in spite of disobedience to Christian parents, disregarding the advice of godly pastors, and going against the counsel of Christian elders is to play the part of a fool."

how are we led by the Spirit of God? Stump (*The Christian Faith*), in describing repentance from the psychological standpoint, defines it as "that act of the Holy Spirit by which through the Law and Gospel He works a change of mind in the sinner, so that he comes to contrition for his sins and to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as His personal Savior." The Holy Spirit who directs the mind of man through the means of the Word to understand God's will concerning repentance, through that same Word also directs the mind of man to understand God's will in sanctification.

Consider the area of *emotions* first. Before coming to repentance sin has warped the conscience of man and has disturbed the peace and joy therein. Sin has also made the heart callous to the threats and promises of God so that man is no longer moved by sin and guilt. But once he has been brought to repentance the conscience functions in accord with God's Word and is filled with peace and joy as he lives in obedience to God (Stump). Furthermore, in the repentant heart the emotions are more powerfully stirred against evil and sin, and more fully enlisted in the cause of truth and righteousness (Stump). If disobedience enters such a life the peace and joy of conscience, under the light of the Word, are lost just as they were in the case of David after his sin with Bathsheba (Psalm 51:12). Great care needs to be taken, however, in using the emotional make-up as a determiner of God's will. First of all, we must be careful to use the dictates of conscience in reference to sin and guilt and forgiveness and inner peace and not just the surface emotions as so many are doing today. Next, we must always be in God's Word because the conscience can only function correctly when it is bound to the Word of God. Today we see so many who run here and there seeking God's will through the guidance of surface emotions and in ignorance of God's Word. This must be avoided.

Secondly, consider the area of the

will. Before man is brought to repentance by the Holy Spirit his will is antagonistic to God, unable and unwilling to repent, and not capable of functioning in the spiritual realm. But through the Word and the operation of the Holy Spirit in repentance, the will is freed from spiritual paralysis and is now firmly clinging to Christ. Self is relegated to the background, sin is shunned and righteousness is followed. The will of God has now become the norm of life. Through faith he is beginning to will and to do, imperfectly indeed, but nonetheless truly, the will of God. The will, already conformed in its main life purpose with the will of God, becomes ever more conformed to God's will in its individual acts and its newly formed habits (Stump). This is solely the work of God in the heart of man (Philippians 2:13) and is accomplished by Him in us through the Word as we go through various experiences of tribulation which work patience, experience, hope and love. In this all Christians, but especially young Christians, need to learn to persevere in patience and in the maintaining of a living relationship with Jesus by the grace of God. As this is done the Holy Spirit will direct us through the Word in prompting our conscience and will to do the will of God.

Intelligent Conviction

Intelligence is not intelligent conviction, which some prefer to call sanctified common sense. Intelligence in this case would refer to the earthly knowledge and ability of natural man. In this condition, though, the things of God cannot be understood. Here again the Holy Spirit through the Word of God brings about a tremendous transformation. Through repentance the intellect is given understanding of sin and grace and the things that bring peace to man's soul. The Holy Spirit has given to this intellect a constantly keener discrimination between right and wrong and a fuller appreciation of God's mercy in Christ (Stump). Man's priorities have changed and he now

sees life's situations in a new perspective because of increased understanding of God's dealings with man. This enlightened intellect is given a solid conviction through the Word of what is the correct path to follow. This conviction operates according to the priorities of God's Word and in constant knowledge of the presence of the flesh within and of its struggle against the Spirit in the heart of man. To advise one to get right with God and then do as one pleases, and this is the will of God, is to forget the restraint which needs to be placed upon the old nature in determining God's will. Sanctified common sense, or intelligent conviction, must always be aware that God's will must be done by God's strength and not by the ambitions of man's strength. To do God's will is not always the most joyous or the most easy, but it is always the best.

"To do God's will is not always the most joyous or the most easy, but it is always the best."

Love for Christ's Body, the Church

God's will is not known apart from Christ's body, the Church, for faith immediately makes one a member of the Church. This faith is the gracious work of the Holy Spirit whereby He, through His indwelling in our hearts, renews the image of God in us and unites us with all true believers in the Church universal. This operation of the Holy Spirit, according to the will and Word of God, is an admonition to Christians to assemble together for the purpose of worship, prayer, comfort, exhortation, hearing the Word of God, and receiving the Sacraments (Hebrews 10:25). People who claim to be in the will of God and who do not desire to be in nor actually do enter into the house of God to join in worship and fellowship with

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President's message

To the 18th Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations assembled at Valley City, North Dakota, June 11-15, 1980.

Grace and Peace!

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Saviour who so "loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, and that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

As we begin, we want to express our sincere appreciation to Grace Free Lutheran Church and Zion Free Lutheran Church and Pastor Curtis Emerson as they serve as our hosts.

It is ten years ago since we were in Valley City for an Annual Conference. Then, as now, we were beginning a new decade. There the similarities end. There have been many changes in our world, our nation, and in our own church since that conference ten years ago. May these times of increased stress and turmoil only serve to humble us that we might "Keep the Lord always before us."



Pastor Snipstead Reports to the Church

Pilgrims in a Troubled World

We sense and experience a deepening concern among God's people as the shadows lengthen across the little landscape of our lives. Gone are the days of complete security in possession of much material goods. Humanistic philosophies of man's self-improvement and ability to solve all his problems are being badly shredded. Our once strong "one nation under God" shows signs of weakness and loss of respect as a world leader. Internally our moral fiber continues to crumble as liberal churchmen promote abortion, equal rights, acceptance of sexual deviation, more liberal divorce laws and individual freedom. Economically we are being forced to tighten our belts. Uncertainty about the future welfare of our monetary system prevails as we find ourselves in a recession, this coming hard on the heels of the record-breaking inflation rate of the past year.

But for all our problems and concerns America is still the best country in which to raise our families and earn our livelihood. Our problems and crumbling foundations are being permitted by God to teach us the lesson that we "here have no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

Within the AFLC

This fall it will be 18 years ago that a conference of people and congregations interested in continuing a fellowship of free and living congregations was called. Though the response in attendance exceeded expectations, there were many difficult hurdles to overcome before this small group could ever become vitally established and function as a church.

Under the guiding hand of our first president, the Rev. John Strand, we have experienced God's blessings beyond any expectations. We are continually humbled by the realization of what God has done, and we must also continually seek His direction for us as a Church. He surely did not raise up the AFLC simply to bless it beyond all expectations, so that we might glory in

the accomplishments of the past short 18 years.

Perhaps we might take just a few moments to reflect on some of the amazing things that have taken place in the brief time of the existence of the AFLC.

When we met in 1962, there were many who felt that we must have an involvement in foreign mission work. We had no missionaries, no mission field, and the prospects of getting our own work in a foreign country appeared very remote, if not impossible. We were consoled that there were many worthy missionaries and mission work that we could support. But God knew the heart-cry of our people for our own mission work. It took only two years and we had two missionary couples on the mission field in Brazil. How thrilled we were as a church. Today we have responsibility for mission work in three continents, as Mexico and India have been added to our World Mission work.

We also knew that if we were to survive as a church, we must have a seminary to train our pastors. A committee began work immediately to work for the setting up of a seminary. It, too, became a reality in 1964, and has graduated 69 men to date. The majority of these men are filling pulpits in our churches.

A need was also felt by many for a Bible School. Begun in the fall of 1966, this school has been a tremendous blessing to our AFLC. It is a joy to travel in our congregations and to see Bible School students filling vital roles within their own congregations. This will be so to an increasing degree. Our AFLC can never measure the total blessings that are ours as a result of our Bible School. One of the greatest surely is the individual lives that are changed and strengthened for Christian service.

From the forty-two congregations who were not certified into the merged church, our fellowship has grown to number over 130 congregations and Home Mission congregations not yet organized.

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a page for children

ROBERT MOFFATT Missionary to South Africa (1817-1870)

Is it not wonderful to think of doing one thing for over 53 years. That was keeping at it faithfully, indeed. Robert Moffat was a hero-missionary in South Africa for as long a time as this, and never once said he was tired of it and would give it up.

This brave missionary came into the world December 21, 1795, in a little town in Scotland. His parents were poor in this world's goods, but rich in having seven children, and they were sturdy, honest, good people.

When the little Robert began to go to school he had no text-book but the Westminster Shorter Catechism, with the alphabet on the title-page. He did not care very much about study, and the master sometimes tried to help him with his rod. When he grew older, he longed for "a life on the ocean wave" and ran away to sea. He had some hard times, and several narrow escapes, which made him glad to give up a sailor's life. He then attended a school which pleased him better than the first one, and studied bookkeeping, astronomy, geography, and mathematics. It was well that he gave his mind to these studies then, for in six months his school days ended. At 14 the boy became self-supporting, being set to learn gardening.

Robert's mother, good earnest Christian Scotchwoman that she was, did a great deal for her son. She was very much interested in missions, and it was from her lips that he first heard about the heathen, and the work of helping them. The mother talked cheerfully and wisely to her children, as they sat about the fire in the evenings, all knitting busily. The boys as well as the girls used to knit in those days. What do you think of that? Certainly it was a useful thing to do.

The gardener, to whom Robert was apprenticed, was a hard master, and it was then, when it was so hard to get, that the boy began to long for a better education. He joined an evening class and began to study Latin and geo-

metry. He also learned to use blacksmith's tools at this time, and how to play on the violin. His music was a great comfort to him long afterwards, and everything he learned was of use to him as a missionary. At 16 he went to England. His mother asked him to promise to read the Bible every day. He gave his word and kept it. In England Robert the gardener found a good place, and his master, seeing that he was anxious to learn, encouraged and helped him to study. Not long after beginning the life in England, the young man was invited to some special meetings and gave his heart to the Saviour. He was so happy that he wanted to tell everybody, and then an intense longing came into his heart to carry the news to the heathen. But he was not yet fitted to be a missionary and the London Missionary Society refused to send him. But one of the officers became interested in him, and advised him to come to Manchester, and study under his care. A Mr. Smith, who was much interested in missions, gave the young man a place in his nursery garden. It was a very good place, and more than that, gave him a chance to know Miss Mary Smith, who afterwards became his devoted and helpful wife.

By and by Mr. Moffatt was accepted by the Missionary Society and began to prepare for his life as a missionary. When the time came, he had to go alone to Africa, as Miss Mary Smith's parents felt that they could not give up their bright young daughter, though she was willing to go as the missionary's bride to the dark land so far away. Mr. Moffatt set forth on his lonely way. Arrived in Africa, he had all sorts of trials and dreadful experiences for more than a year before he reached the station in Namaqualand, known as Afrikaner's Kraal, north of the Orange River. Afrikaner had been a fierce and cruel chief, but some missionaries had led him to Christ. He now welcomed Mr. Moffatt and said he must stay. He bade the women bring materials for a kraal, or house of poles and mats, plastered with mud, and shaped a little like a beehive. In half an

hour the kraal was finished, and the missionary lived in it six months, though it was not very comfortable to have the hungry dogs running in and out, and snakes dropping down at any time.

One of the first things Mr. Moffatt taught the people was to wash themselves and put on decent clothing, while he told them of Jesus who would take away their sins. The chief gave him two cows which saved him often from going hungry to bed, as his salary was not quite \$120 a year and how could he get everything needful for that sum?

After two years and a half, Miss Smith's parents consented to her going to Africa, and after a long voyage of several months she arrived, and was married to the good missionary. The two opened many stations, and did their work under the greatest difficulties that you can imagine. It was very hard to learn the language, for it was not written and there were no books. The interpreters took pleasure in telling them the wrong words, which made it harder. At last Mr. Moffatt was able to write a spelling book and have it printed in England, afterwards writing a catechism, and translating parts of the Bible. Nine years passed before there were any great signs of success, but then there was a wonderful awakening among the Africans, and a new church had to be built to hold the converts, while the sound of praise and prayer came from many homes. After 23 years of service, Mr. Moffatt took his wife and returned home for a visit.

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Our Memory Verse

"And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

Acts 13:3

Message . . .

Today the Association owns property valued at around five million dollars. The beautiful campus at Medicine Lake, providing facilities for our Headquarters, our Seminary and Bible School, was acquired in 1964. It is one of the choicest locations in the Minneapolis area.

The property at Osceola, now called "The ARC" (Association Retreat Center) became ours at a small fraction of its actual value. We believe that it will soon become a center that will hold precious memories of rich blessings experienced there for our AFLC people.

Our giving this last year went over the half-million dollar mark. This includes \$481,720 to budgeted goals, and the monies given to non-budget efforts, such as the Aberdeen mission project, debt retirement and church extension, puts us well over the half-million dollar mark in giving.

Yes, God has blessed. But as we pause to rejoice in our blessings, we must look to God in earnest honesty, to ask, "Why, Lord, have you blessed us so?" God has a purpose for our AFLC. Perhaps we have begun to see a little more clearly in recent days what that purpose is.

The Challenge Before Us

As we are here at Conference we are going to be faced with the largest increases in budget that have ever come before us as a church. The record inflation rates of last year coupled with a growing ministry throughout the church has brought us to this point. This year will undoubtedly be the most challenging one our AFLC has come through. In the face of what God has done for us in the past, is this the time to cut back? I do not believe so.

It will call for greater dedication from each of us. It will require greater prayer concern for the work God has entrusted to us. It will demand even more sacrificial giving on the part of all.

There are some helpful things that more congregations can do. Many of our congregations are submitting their contributions to the work of the AFLC on a monthly basis. This is most helpful. A number of congregations, includ-

ing a few Home Mission congregations, tithe from their regular offerings for the work of the AFLC. Perhaps more congregations might consider this. We would also like to urge our people and our congregations to put a little extra effort into the support of the AFLC benevolences during the summer months.

We have a goal before us this present budget year that is more than \$100,000.00 over last year's budget. We are running behind last year's giving at the time of this writing. We hope that by Conference time that will have improved. We have a challenge before us. As we consider how God has blessed in the past, will we rise to meet this challenge?

I have delayed referring to Home Missions until this point in my message. The work of Home Missions is heavy on my heart. We have often been reminded that in order to keep the work of the AFLC from becoming top-heavy, we must broaden the base. We have an active Home Mission program. There are some very good things that are happening in a number of our new congregations. But we are late in putting the thrust into this area of work. It takes time for a new congregation to grow and become self-supporting, and then to begin to assume its share of the responsibility in the total program of the church. As a church we must get behind the Home Mission effort 100%. If we do not do so and costs of the other work continue to increase, we are going to have to face the reality of having to cut back on our work in some other areas. The challenge is before us.

I would also like to address the question of the aims and purpose before the AFLC today. I suggested earlier that we are perhaps beginning to see one of the purposes God had in allowing us to be, and for blessing us so richly. I believe that our AFLC is going to have an increasing influence among Lutherans. This may not be so much on the level of synodical relationships, but on the congregational and individual levels. Many Lutheran leaders today are caught up in the impetus of healing the breach with Rome. This was one of the fears expressed in the days of the mergers. We are today seeing developments accelerating that will bring many Lutherans back to Rome. This, along with

liberalism, the social gospel, and lack of moral standards is causing grief in the hearts of many of our Christian brethren in Lutheran congregations across the land. God has raised up the AFLC for a ministry to these people. If we are to fulfill our ministry to these people, it is needful that we be completely Lutheran in doctrine and in practice. It is not something that we can take care of by resolutions at an annual conference. It must be a continuing reality in the life and practice of people and our congregations. We are low church and pietistic. Lutherans of other backgrounds can and will respect us, only if they find us sincere and genuinely Lutheran. The challenge is before us.

(To be continued)

Sin Wounds

No man ever sinned without wounding someone else. That is true regardless of how secret that sin may be. I may sin and no one knows but God and myself. Yet, even then, I involve others. I rob my own home. I lower the moral temperature of my companions, of my city, and of my world.

—Clovis G. Chappell

Moffatt . . .

After telling his story, and receiving great honours, he went back with Mrs. Moffatt to the work they both loved. After 30 years more, they returned to England. The next year Mrs. Moffatt died, and 12 years later, aged 87, the husband followed. He who once said, "I have sometimes seen in the morning sun the smoke of a thousand villages where no missionary has ever been," went to many of them with the true light that still shines.

—Julia H. Johnston,
Fifty Missionary Heroes Every Boy and Girl Should Know, Fleming H. Revell Company

editorials

In our devotions today we read the sixth chapter of Ephesians, known especially as the "Armor of God" chapter. And we do love and appreciate it for that description of what is needed in order to stand in the evil day. The armor is completed with that piece of offensive-defensive equipment, the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

But it is also in Ephesians 6 that we have some very fine words about parent-child relationships. Children are admonished to obey their parents in the Lord, for it is right and God-ordained that they do so. What tragic consequences follow from abuse of the Fourth Commandment. What a whirlwind we are beginning to reap in our nation from the disregard not only of parental authority but much other authority as well. It is quite astounding that people believe that the commandments of God can be broken with impunity, that is, without having to suffer the consequences. We like the way Gerhard E. Frost puts it: "No one ever violates these 'directions for running the human machine' except at his own expense and to his personal sorrow" (*The Law Perfect*, Augsburg Publishing House).

Paul has a word to fathers in that chapter, too, and we think of fathers now also because Sunday is Father's Day (June 15). And what he says is, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (v. 4). So there is a great responsibility in being a father. The Apostle surely doesn't mean that it is wrong to break a child's stubborn will, which may cause some tears of anger, but he means that a child

should be treated fairly and in love, not in any way which will lead the young one to despair. We know that all godly fathers will take that for what it is, a word from the Lord.

We honor fathers at this time of the year. It is a high and holy calling to be one. However, the day is observed in your home—gifts, special dinners, outings—may Dad feel the warm affection of those dearest to him, for whom he provides and whom he protects.

Many of you won't read this until the day is over for another year, but let every day be a day of loving intercommunion within the family.

SIMPLIFICATION

At the meeting of the Board chairmen last month, there was discussion about how to tell the story of progress toward meeting our budget goals most effectively. After considerable discussion it was decided to simplify the Budget Reports which appear periodically in the *Ambassador*.

As you will notice in the Report in this issue, only three columns of figures remain instead of six. What we have now are Total Budget (goal for the year), Received to Date (what has come in thus far), and Per Cent of Budget (how far we have come in meeting the goal). At the top of the last column there will also be an "ideal percentage" figure indicating where we *should be* at that particular cut-off time.

It is hoped that this shorter form will be less confusing and give a more realistic picture at a quick glance.

It is also hoped that our people and congregations will follow these reports closely, see the needs and react accordingly. There shouldn't be any reason for anyone who reads the *Ambassador* to not know how things stand in regard to budget needs.

The challenge before the AFLC this year is a great one, a goal just over \$100,000 higher than last year's. Like they say, "We can use all the help we can get." And remember—it is the Lord's work and what we fail to do, God forbid, just won't get done.

ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

BUDGET RECEIPTS

Feb.1 - April 30

Fund	Total Budget	Received to Date	% of Budget (Ideal 25%)
General Fund	\$104,140.00	22,207.32	21%
Schools	179,802.00	28,550.77	16
Home Missions	105,252.00	13,004.06	12
World Missions	156,636.00	21,143.85	13
Praise	36,407.00	2,804.74	8
TOTAL	\$582,237.00	\$87,710.74	15%
1979-80	\$481,635.00	\$75,885.85	16%

Minneapolis women met at Medicine Lake

The Minneapolis District Women's Missionary Federation met Tuesday, April 8, at Medicine Lake Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, for the spring rally. President Mrs. Marlin Benrud directed us in a hymn sing just before the morning session at 10. Pianist for the day was Miss Orpha Flaten.

We read together our theme verses from Colossians 2:6, 7. Then the theme song, "Deeper and Deeper," was sung. The theme for the day was "Rooted in Christ."

Mrs. Chester Heikkinen of Morgan Ave. Lutheran Church brought the morning devotions, sharing John 15:16 and I Chronicles 29:11. Mrs. Carol James extended a welcome from the host church, where she is WMF president. Pastor Richard Snipstead was our morning speaker. He brought a mission presentation about his recent trip to India. He shared the verses, Acts 1:8 and John 10:16.

The Seminettes favored us with several songs both in the morning and afternoon sessions, under the direction of Mrs. Kenneth Moland.

During the business meeting reports were given by the secretary, the treasurer, Mrs. Eldon Kinnunen, a Cradle Roll report by Mrs. Wallace Raleigh, and a report from the My Missionary for a Day Secretary, Mrs. Harlan Hjermstad. One hundred-nineteen members had registered and ten churches out of 20 responded at roll call. There was also an election of officers. Mrs. Benrud was elected to a second term as president. Mrs. Aini Myking begins her first term as treasurer. A nominating committee was also elected, with Mrs. Amos Stolee, Mrs. John Narmand and Mrs. Carlyle Larson as members. Mrs. Kinnunen was thanked for her faithful service through two terms as treasurer. The offerings for the day were voted to be used for the following WMF projects: Honorary Membership and In Memoriam and My Missionary for a Day. A total of \$506.05 was collected.

Mrs. Robert Dietsche brought a greeting from The ARC, our Association Retreat Center at the former Osceola Radar Base.

Mrs. Wendell Johnson of Sunnyside Lutheran, Stacy, Minn., shared in the afternoon devotions from Colossians 3:1-4 and Ephesians 3:14. Mrs. Nelson, a teacher's wife from the Mustard Seed Academy of Amery Lutheran Church, Amery, Wis., thanked for all the Campbell soup labels. These will be used to receive sport equipment. Mrs. Robert Lee was asked to share a testimony. She was glad to claim God's promise in Malachi 3:6.

Pastor Yeddo Gottel was the afternoon speaker. He brought greetings from the mission field in Brazil. He informed us about what he and his wife have been doing and will be doing while he furthers his studies. He used John 15:1-8 as his text and also shared the verses, Isaiah 53:2, Ezekiel 15:2-5, Hosea 10:1, Acts 15:9 and Jude 13. He gave a very inspirational message about Jesus as the vine and Christians as the branches.

Rev. Jay Erickson, host pastor, in closing the rally used the benediction from the Book of Jude.

Ruthann Nelson
Secretary

Ortley Cradle Roll

Ortley Lutheran WMF, Ortley, S. Dak., held its annual Cradle Roll party at its April meeting. Special guests recognized were the children enrolled in the Cradle Roll and their mothers and grandmothers. The program was presented by Mrs. Darrell Pies and Mrs. Bill Moberg, Cradle Roll chairwomen. Children's devotionals, songs and a flannelgraph Bible story of Naaman were presented. Following the program, luncheon fellowship was enjoyed.



God's will . . .

other believers need to re-examine their relationship with God and need to understand that this is not consistent with the will of God for us.

It is the will of God that we not only attend church but also that we exercise our spiritual gifts in "building up" the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts diversely and in accord with His will (I Corinthians 12:11). Any decision for determining God's will which hinders fellowship, ministry to others through the exercise of spiritual gifts, or the witness to non-believers is to be held suspect. That decision which encourages these things

honors the Church, the Lord Jesus, and the Heavenly Father Himself. We should always choose in its favor.

Love for God's Glory

David wrote in Psalm 40:8, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart." The heart attitude revealed here reflects the statement in the Catechism, "It is the will of God that all His rational creatures should praise Him forever in perfect holiness and happiness." From this we conclude that the chief endeavor of every life should be to return to God that glory which belongs to Him alone. At the finish of His life on earth Jesus said to the Father, "I have glorified Thee on the earth" (John 17:4). That person who causes glory to be given to God in and through his life is doing the will of God. May God grant that His good and gracious will may be done also among us.

Front row, left to right, Carla Pies, Philip Pies, Rebekah Moberg, Esther Moberg, Carrie Pies; Back row, Donita Burns, Valerie Christofferson, Peter Moberg, Jodi Swanson. (Not pictured, but present—Art Berger, Jr., Jennifer Lee, and Carrie Decklever)

20. Is the way to the Father's house difficult? vs. 5, 6 _____
21. Can we be sure we are believing the truth? How? _____
22. Do we need to live a useless, meaningless life? v. 12. What are "greater works?" _____

23. What exciting promise is there in vs. 13, 14? Do you make use of this privilege as often as you could? Have you discovered how to pray to obtain results that glorify God? _____

24. Study the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit, beginning with v. 16. How is it described? vs. 16, 17 _____

What is His work? v. 26 _____

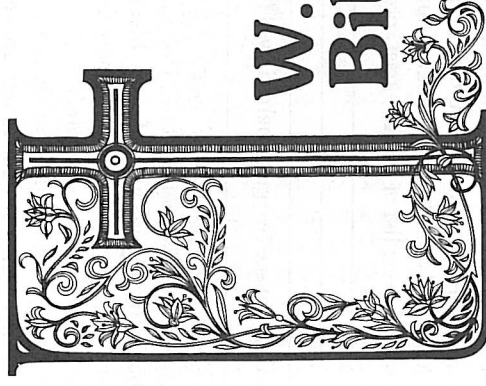
25. What must we do to have a close fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus? vs. 21-26 _____

His commandments are *His Words* like John 1:12; 3:3; 4:14; 6:35, 37; 13:8; 14:23; or "every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." Keeping a fresh word every day in our hearts will unite us in His love. Love will then constrain us to do His will. We will have joy and peace!

26. Make a summary of the cures for a troubled heart. _____

27. Now we have come to the end of Jesus' farewell words of comfort in the Upper Room. Look at the wonderful legacy He left them in v. 27. Read it together. Does this promise soothe away your aching sadness? I hope so.

Closing prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, help us let our pride crumble and allow You to wash our sinful hearts in Your cleansing blood. Then teach us to love and serve one another as You loved and served. Give us grace every day to ask, "Is it I?" Strengthen our hearts to resist the awful suggestions of Satan so he cannot make us captives. Teach us to pray in Jesus' Name and begin to do the "greater works." We thank You for the comforting work of the Holy Spirit, teaching, helping, revealing Christ and His Words. In faith we will take the gift of Your peace and not let our hearts be troubled or fearful. We will trust You for strength and power to keep Your commandments. We pray all this so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Amen.



W.M.F. Bible Study

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

July, 1980

Study assignment: chapters 13 and 14

We could spend days, weeks, months or more in this next section, sometimes called "the holy place" (13-17). I can only hope and pray we will diligently make time to explore, discover and apply some of the riches here. Have you noticed, in answering the questions, underlining a verse here and there in your Bible does not necessarily make a desired change in your life? Isn't it rather earnestly seeking with *all* our hearts, praying sincerely over what we read and being willing to be obedient to *all* we see is the will of God? Don't we need a revival of godly repentance (II Cor. 7:10) and of obedience (Is. 1:18-20)?

So far, we have seen in John how Jesus has presented Himself to the world as Life, Light and Love, and how in unbelief He was rejected. Now we see how the last 24 hours are given to ministering to "His own" precious disciples, supper with "His own," Judas finally excluded (ch. 13), the farewell words to "His own" (chs. 14-16), and the beautiful prayer for "His own" (ch. 17). None of the matters included in these next five chapters were recorded by Matthew, Mark or Luke. In every age disciples of Jesus have felt deeply indebted to the Holy Spirit for this most precious part of the Bible. Explore it thoroughly these months for your own personal blessings and seek to graciously pass on to others some of its riches. Give praise to the Savior! You will be blessed.

CHAPTER 13 LOVE SERVING

1. What is the sad story of "His own" in John 1:11? Compare with 12:37.

2. Who are "His own" in 1:12, 13? Have you memorized this and can you claim with sweet assurance from the Holy Spirit you are "His own?" If not, remember God wants you to have this. Perhaps you should seek help from your pastor or a friend.

3. What does 13:1 say about "His own?"

Knowing they were about to forsake Him shamefully in a very few hours, He still loved them. This is hard for our narrow, selfish human nature to comprehend. But the love of our Lord for we who claim Him is equally difficult to understand. That He should bear with our countless infirmities, our endless inconsistencies and petty grievances—that He should go on forgiving and forgetting and forever restoring us again and again as we by His grace humbly repent—this is marvelous indeed! Surely this is "love that surpasses knowledge!" Eph. 3:19.

4. List five things Jesus knew in vs. 1, 2, 3 and 11.

5. Against this background of great knowledge, what did He do?

6. Peter said, "You wash *my* feet? Never!" Peter felt so unworthy, but what does Jesus' answer teach us?

7. What was Peter's reaction when he learned that unless he was clean he could have no part with Christ? v. 9, Ps. 51:2, 1 Jn. 1:7.

8. Can you write down the deeper meaning of v. 10?

9. What is the plain, practical command of Jesus in v. 14? Compare with Gal. 5:13 and Phil. 2:4-8.

CHAPTER 13:21-30 LOVE TROUBLED

10. Why was Jesus troubled, v. 21?

Is it safe to say Jesus is always troubled by those who turn away? Doesn't He know more than anyone the consequences of such an act?

11. Jesus did not name the betrayer. What effect did this have on the disciples? v. 22

12. We know the giving of the morsel was a sign of friendship. What does this tell us about Jesus? v. 26

13. How could Satan enter Judas' heart? v. 27

14. What were the awful results of yielding to Satan? v. 30

CHAPTER 13:31-35 PERFECT LOVE OF CHRIST

15. Notice Jesus' tenderness in v. 33. Can you think of reasons why He gave the command to love one another as He had loved them? vs. 34, 35

CHAPTER 13:36-38 IMPERFECT LOVE OF PETER

16. How could Peter be so bold and confident? (1 Cor. 10:12)

A humble sense of our own weakness, a constant dependence on the Strong One—these are the true secrets of safety. "When I am weak, then I am strong!" (II Cor. 12:10).

CHAPTER 14 JESUS' CURE FOR A TROUBLED HEART

Searching this beloved chapter for cures for your troubled heart should bring wonderful comfort to you. Reviewing Ch. 13, we can see many reasons why the disciples were very troubled at this time. (1) It was shocking to see their Lord stoop and insist on washing their feet. This humbled them, but also troubled them. (2) They heard Jesus say He was troubled as He announced who would betray Him. How could anyone betray Jesus! (3) They saw Jesus offer the morsel of bread to Judas and then saw him actually pull out! (4) Jesus told them He must now leave them (v. 33) and they could not go with Him (v. 36). (5) He promised to Peter that he would deny Him three times. More shock!

17. Make a list of things that cause our hearts to be troubled. It won't be hard to share a long list of things—past, present and future.

18. Can you see two great helps in v. 1?

Here is that word "believe" again. This word is tricky because even the demons "believe" for salvation. Acts 26:18 is a good word that explains all that is involved in believing. Somewhere I found this: Real faith is, "Believing more thoroughly, trusting more entirely, resting more unreservedly, laying hold more firmly, and leaning back more completely."

19. How can vs. 2 and 3 provide comfort? Is the future always bright for the child of God even if circumstances are very hard?

FELLOWSHIP CORNER

Christian education in the home

We see the importance of teaching the young God's Word in the home in II Tim. 3:14-17. Note verse 15: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." This undoubtedly refers back to II Tim. 1:5: "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also."

Sunday School and confirmation instruction are very important in teaching God's Word to our children and should complement the home instruction. Sad to say, in many cases the opposite is true. We, each of us, have the responsibility before God of teaching our children the way of salvation and how to live the Christian life according to the Scriptures. Parents who mean business with the Lord Jesus and in their love for each other will have a lasting effect on their children, making them want to live for the Lord.

Coupled with the above, we realize the importance of the Ten Commandments, although we know that salvation cannot be attained by the keeping of the Law, except to point out our sins and as a pattern for Christian living. The two positively-stated commandments are, the 3rd: "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy;" and, the 4th: "Honor thy father and mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Of the eight negatively-stated commandments, I shall touch briefly on the 5th, 6th and 8th.

The 5th: "Thou shalt not kill." The multiple murders, including the approximate one million abortions per year, make one shudder. Hate is also classified as murder, I Jn. 3:15. We may ask, "How long will it be before the judgment of God will strike America?"

The 6th: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." In *Luther's Small Catechism Explained*, Question No. 80 asks: "Why is this sin so fearful?" An-

swer: "Because it affects both soul and body more than any other sin." As with murder, the sin of adultery begins with the harboring of evil thoughts, Matt. 5:28. What with watching soap operas and other lax movies on TV, no wonder there are so many unmarried couples living together and divorce so common that even some professing Christians condone that sin. Mal. 2:16a states, "For the Lord the God of Israel, saith that He hateth putting away." Read also Gen. 2:24 and Mk. 10:2-12; thus we see that God's plan for marriage is for life. Now we realize how important it is for children to have a good knowledge of the Commandments and Christian counseling before their teenage years to impress on them the importance of living pure lives in associating with the opposite sex. During this time it is important for them to read good Christian books which parents and grandparents must provide them. Phil. 4:8 is such positive admonition for both young and old to give heed to. Both in reading material and otherwise our minds should concentrate on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report.

Now a few words on the 8th commandment. Question No. 96 in the Catechism: "Do we sin when we speak truthfully of our neighbor's faults?" "Yes; when we do so with an unloving heart, either because we wish to hurt our neighbor, or thoughtlessly and in gossiping." Matt. 12:36: "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." So much anguish is caused by idle gossiping. Let us practice I Cor. 13:4-7.

In Rom. 13:10, we read that love is the fulfillment of the Law. Let us pray our Lord to fill our hearts with His love. Then our homes will be sweet haven where children and teenagers can come with their problems, anxieties and disappointments, and to find that someone cares.

Harvey P. Dyrud
Newfolden, Minn.

Rev. G. T. Carlsen dies

Rev. Glenn T. Carlsen, 48, son of the late Pastor and Mrs. C. J. Carlsen, passed away on May 14. Funeral services were held at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Stillwater, Minn., where he was serving as pastor, and burial was in Stillwater. He had previously served in St. Louis Park, Minn., and Spokane, Wash.

An American Lutheran Church clergyman, formerly of the Lutheran Free Church, he is survived by his wife, the former Carolyn Olson; two sons, John and Rolf; three daughters, Mary, Karen and Sarah; two brothers, Rev. Carl and Rev. Erling; and two sisters, Grace, Mrs. LuVerne L. Nelson, and Ruth, Mrs. Thomas Moen.

Blessed be his memory.

Dahles preparing a record

A phonograph record is being prepared by Pastor and Mrs. Trygve F. Dahle, to be entitled "I Will Praise Him." Available later in the summer, orders for it are being taken by Miss Amelia Carlson, Spicer, Minn. 56288.

Included in the record are some of Pastor Dahle's own compositions, such as "Listen, Dear Young Christian." Among other English selections are "Shepherd of Love" and "My God, How Wonderful Thou Art." There are some songs in the Norwegian language also, as "Tryggere Kan Ingen Vaere" and "Han Skal Aapne Perle Porten."

Sponsored by Green Lake Lutheran Church, Spicer, Minn., Rev. Dennis Gray, pastor. All profits will go to a scholarship for seminary students.

Dial-A-Devotion

Green Lake Lutheran Church, Spicer, Minn., inaugurated a daily Dial-A-Devotion ministry in mid-April. It may be dialed at 796-5944 (Area Code 612).

The initial gift for this outreach was given by Mrs. Tom Sand in memory of her husband.

Rev. Dennis Gray is pastor of the church.

YOUTH

Free at Last

His cold, dark eyes raised to meet hers evenly. He shoved his hands in his pockets, shrugged his shoulders, turned and walked away.

"Tom!" she called after him, but he was gone. Her wrinkled face showed signs of worry and care. Her soft, gray hair revealed she was no longer young. Her seep-set blue eyes seemed to sink even deeper now as she stood alone, wondering what had gone wrong.

Tom had grabbed his leather jacket and, as he stepped out into the raw winter wind, his empty laugh rang out through the trees. The dear old lady, thinking she could tell him what to do! He wasn't a kid any more and he'd had enough of her nagging. It was time to move on. He revved the engine of his shiny new Trans Am and spun out of the driveway. He headed down the old country road sending the speedometer to fifty . . . sixty . . . seventy-five. He rolled down the window, letting the wind blow through his hair. Maybe he'd head for town, buy a few supplies and go find some place to stay. Or maybe he'd just bum around town awhile. Ahead of him the light turned red. He glanced around and, seeing all was clear, sailed through. Fifty feet later he elevated his chest and then slowly exhaled, sinking comfortably into his seat. He was free! He could do as he pleased and nobody could stop him and nobody would be around any more to nag him.

He drove on, thinking of all the orders and restrictions that had bound him so tightly before. Church had long been a hassle. He couldn't imagine how he'd ever enjoyed it when he was younger. In fact, he'd even looked forward to it then. But that was years ago and things had changed; people had changed. He remembered old Mrs. Rutherford. She'd been a swell teacher. She'd even given rewards for those who learned their assigned Bible verse and, of course, Tommy had always learned his. Once Mrs. Rutherford had given him a Testament and

he'd been so proud of it he carried it to school with him every day. Yeah, Mrs. Rutherford was a real saint. Then there was Mr. Carmichael. He ruled with an iron hand. When Tommy forgot to raise his hand Mr. Carmichael would glare at him and wouldn't let him answer any more questions. Pretty soon Tom didn't want to answer the questions any more. He didn't like to do his lesson. He didn't even like Sunday School any more.

He wouldn't have to wake up for church or Sunday School now. He could sleep all day if he so desired. He chuckled to himself as he recalled his mother's voice. "Get up, Tom. It's church today. Don't forget to wear your tie and you'd better hurry. It's getting late." He would lie in bed a few more minutes until she'd come rushing into his room like he'd just committed some crime. "Tom!" she'd reprimand. "Get up right now! You have ten minutes until we leave."

"Yeah, Mom. I heard you the first time," he'd drone. "I'm coming. I'm coming."

It'd be great to sleep in for a change and not hear his mother's nagging voice.

He didn't realize he'd now reached a speed of eighty-five and, deep in his thoughts, he didn't see the light turn red. He again sailed through, but as he crossed the intersection there was the sound of crunching metal and broken glass flying through the air.

The sterile smell of the hospital filled his nostrils and he opened his eyes to see the wrinkled face of the gray-haired lady. Her soft, blue eyes showed signs of tears and her lips trembled as his eyes met hers. Her tiny hands reached out and cupped his tenderly. He stared at her coldly. "You didn't have to come," he spoke without emotion, "I can handle myself."

A tear splashed upon his calloused hand and for just a moment he ached for her. He remembered her voice as she tried to call him back. "Tom!

Wait!" and he had grabbed his jacket and walked from her into the chilling winter air. He remembered the agony and helplessness that had filled her words as he had turned away. And her last words before the door had slammed shut, "I'll be praying, Tom, praying that . . ." and that was all he'd heard. Now he wondered, what had she been praying? Why should he care?! What did it matter anyway? All she'd ever done was nag and restrict him.

She saw his eyes grow cold again and knelt down beside the bed. "Tom," she spoke, "I'm sorry."

"Sorry?!" he almost laughed, "What are you sorry for? You never did anything wrong," and as the words came out mockingly from his lips he suddenly realized their truth. He lifted his dark eyes up to the wrinkled face and stretched out his hand. Hesitantly he lifted it up and wiped the silver tear from the woman's face. "I'm sorry," he sobbed, "So sorry!" He sat up and they embraced each other.

"When can I get out of here," Tom suddenly asked, breaking the silence, "and . . . and come home?"

"As soon as you're dressed."

For the first time in years he looked with adoring eyes upon the gray-haired woman, his mother. He squeezed her hand tightly and in the joy of the moment said, "Mom, wake me up early for church on Sunday."

by Stephanie
Krueger



1980 Senior Class

R1: Tammy Hjermstad, Lori Finstrom, Kayleen Swajanen, Rachel Johnson, Bonita Carlson, Mary-Ann Herset, Donette Carter.
R2: Andrea Krueger, Lori Jordan, Heidi Smith, Keith Kinneberg, Sandra Russum, Julie Jenson.

R3: Tammy Spading, Barb Elmquist, Mary Johnson, Jean Strand, Ruth Nelson, Cathy Johnson, Diann Walker, Julie Hass, Mary Haugen.

R4: Gene Vukonich, Christie Dietsche, Judy Bergstrom, Steve Snipstead, Pam Anfinson, Carol Twedt, Sue Gross, Deb Mortrud, Brian Pederson.

R5: Mark Gaulke, Joel Nash, Randy Crestik, Don Grothe, Mike Palkie, Dave Hjelvik, Keith Quanbeck, Arlin Aasness.



1980 Junior Class

R1: Margaret Hill, Judy Benson, Jean Gustafson, Pam Johnson, Kim Rudebusch, Pam Jacobson, Nancy Copes, Bonnie Johnson, Debbie Beaman, Amy Sletten.

R2: Deb Anderson, Joyce Strand, Jeanette Rau, Kelly Nelson, Don Quam, Mark Molstre, Karla Kneeland, Becky Wall, Kris Kloster.

R3: Mary Tollefson, Linda Triplett, Lisa Eckrem, Curt Munch, Del Palmer, Lloyd Quanbeck, Priscilla Mundfrom, Janeen Galland, Renee Flach.

R4: Wendy Moe, Darrell Haugen, Kendra Wittmer, Brad Sorensen, Anders Macy, Mark Olson, Jim Huckins, Todd Gerholdt, Sharon Bredfeldt, Joe Ocasio.

R5: Dave Snipstead, Jean Kjorstad, Marv Schauland, Harold Voth, Wayne Peterson, Jerry Moan, Gerald Twedt, Jon Benson, Scott Carlson.

Absent: Ralph Erickson, Loide Gottel, Les Johnson.



AFLC Schools' Graduation, May 16, 1980



After the commencement address by Pastor Phil Haugen, thirty-six AFLBS seniors received their diplomas and three seminarians received their Graduate in Theology degrees.

The graduation marked the end of the fourteenth year for the Bible school and the seventeenth year of AFLTS.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Swajanen, Eben Junction, Mich., congratulated AFLTS graduates, Charles Knapp and Dr. James Gerdeen.

Personalities

Rev. Richard Snipstead, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, spoke at special meetings at Sarpsborg Lutheran Church, rural Dalton, Minn., May 4-7.

Address of *Lay Pastor and Mrs. Walter Beaman* is Box 287, McIntosh, Minn. 56556. They had previously lived at Shevlin, Minn.

Rev. and Mrs. Karl Stendal have returned to the Twin Cities after serving in the Tioga, N. Dak., rural parish since 1978. They are now living at 5456 Emerson Ave. No., Brooklyn Center, Minn. 55430.

Address of *Dr. and Mrs. James C. Gerdeen* is 1852 Flandrau, St., St. Paul, Minn. 55109. He is serving Victory in Christ Lutheran Church in St. Paul.

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR
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Lay Pastor Verle Dean, Route 2, Spicer, Minn., is serving as lay assistant at Green Lake Lutheran Church, Spicer, this summer. Rev. Dennis Gray is pastor of the congregation.

TEACHER WANTED

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St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Cloquet, Minn. 55720

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Science/Math major preferred; other majors considered
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Experience preferred
Salary negotiable
Write to address above or call
1-218-879-3206 for information.



A Minister's Musings

Pastor Einar Unseth



What of the future?

Proverbs 23:18

"How many of you have during the last two weeks thought seriously of what the future holds for you?" This profound question was asked by a local attorney as he spoke at the Honor Society program in our high school a week ago. That attorney suggested that it is important to consider the future.

Recently a young man from our church was interviewed by an employer for a salesman position. The employer asked, "Where do you see yourself five years from now?" The applicant responded, "As a missionary." Thereupon the interviewer stated that he wouldn't take any more of this man's time. That employer acknowledged that there is a future, but he apparently is mainly concerned with the temporal future.

The Bible testifies to the fact that man has a future. Proverbs 23:18 states, "For surely there is an end (future); and thine expectation (hope) shall not be cut off."

For some people their hope for the future has been cut off. Such appears

to be the situation for a young baseball player by the name of Mark Fidrych. Only four years ago he was named American League rookie of the year when he won 19 games for the Detroit Tigers. Of this seemingly phenomenal pitcher, a sports writer stated, "His future looked like forever." However, his future in baseball now looks extremely dark, because for the past three years he has been on the disabled list most of the time. His hope for the future has evidently been cut off.

Our national leaders are today much concerned about the future of our nation. This week an editorial contained this shocking statement, "The argument is that the next war will last about 15 minutes, obviously insufficient time for mobilization." If this premise is accurate, then there are only two courses of action open to us if we should be attacked. One is to push the red button and release our ICBM's. The other is to surrender. The people who make such a prediction have indeed a pessimistic view of the future.

The Bible assures us that there is a future. Proverbs 23:18 reminds us,

"For surely there is a future." And when the Bible speaks of the future it refers not only to the coming days on earth, but also to the future in eternity. Thus the Bible teaches about Christ's second coming, admonishing us to be prepared and waiting for the great future event.

God's Word also speaks of a future day of judgment when Christ will separate all people one from another, the saved into His everlasting kingdom, and the unsaved into everlasting fire. A blessed future awaits all believers who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. It is a future where all the former things are passed away and all things are made new.

Since there is a future that we will all have to face, surely it is folly to shut our eyes to it. How foolish it is to live here ignoring God and the future and to confine our thoughts to the things present and visible!

We don't know what the future holds for us in this life, but we can know what it holds for us beyond this life if we have Christ as our Savior. For the Bible tells us that Christ is the hope of the Christian. When Christ appears in glory, the Christian shall appear with Him, and all his hope will be fulfilled. Therefore, as we think of what the future holds for us, let us place our trust and hope in Christ.