

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

April 8, 1986

Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

at the MASTER'S FEET

"God, be merciful"

God's attribute of mercy gives sinful man confidence to enter into the holy presence of his Creator. The cry of the penitent publican, "God, be merciful to me a sinner," resulted in his justification, according to Jesus' words in Luke 18:13. When a man realizes that he has no hope of justifying himself and his deeds, then God's mercy renews his hope and he dares to trust God. As King David experienced, "But he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about" (Psalm 32:10b).

It is our goal, then, that you and I should be surrounded by God's mercy, enveloped in His loving kindness. Both in understanding and in experience, let us seek the fullness of His mercy. As we think together today about God's merciful attitude and action, let us be led to rest fully in who He is.

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Burton Goddard defines mercy as, "A communicable attribute of God, expressing God's goodness and love for the guilty and miserable. It includes pity, compassion, gentleness, forbearance." While this definition is not exhaustive, it makes the point well that mercy is extended to the undeserving and depends on the character of God rather than on the worthiness of man. The man is wise who knows along with Jeremiah, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22,23).

As we look at Scripture to better understand mercy, we see a number of helpful derivative words.

The first we will look at is often translated "tender mercies" in the King James Version. See Psalm 25:6 and 40:11. The word "rechamim" is related to the Hebrew word for womb and speaks of an inner longing and love for another. The same word is translated "bowels" of compassion and is used in Scripture to describe a strong feeling of affection for another. See, for example, Joseph and his feelings for his brother Benjamin, in Genesis 43:30. What we see in part in man's emotion and experience is realized in full in God's "tender mercies." Out of His very being flows a strong emotion of concern for His creation. So it was that the psalmist prayed, "According unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgression" (Psalm 51:1).

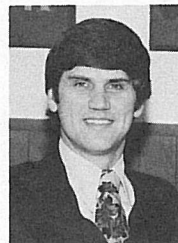
A second helpful aspect of God's mercy in the Old Testament is expressed by the word "chesed," variously translated as loving kindness, mercy, steadfast love, and unfailing love. "Chesed" is the most used word in the Old Testament to describe the

attribute of mercy. While it does speak of a human quality in some passages, for example, David and Jonathan, in I Samuel 20:8ff, it is used primarily in reference to God's kindness. When used of God it refers to a "kind of love, including mercy, when the object is in a pitiful state. It often takes verbs of action, 'do,' 'keep,' and so refers to acts of love as well as to the attribute" R. Lloyd Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*.

This mercy (chesed) is a great theme of the Psalms, and there we learn of its manifold effects in the lives of God's people. Because of the assurance of this "lovingkindness" of God, the psalmist claimed a place of favor in the presence of God (see Psalm 69:13).

Likewise, in Proverbs 16:6a, we read, "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged." God has chosen to deal with us and our sin on the basis of mercy, not justice. His enduring kindness causes Him to rescue us from the punishment of sin. Because of His mercy, He does not deal with us according to our sins.

Finally, we see that mercy and the mercy seat provide a place of covering for the sinner. The blood of Christ flows from a merciful God who chooses to cover our iniquities. Only the perfect sacrifice of Christ could do that and so that is what God in His mercy freely provided. Only because of God's everlasting mercy do we dare to pray, "God, be merciful to me a sinner." Thanks be to God.



by Pastor
Kenneth Moland

SINCE WE ARE SURROUNDED

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1-2).

We Are Surrounded By Those Who Need Us

Since we have been inspired by strong witnesses from the Bible and in our own lifetime, the need and challenge before us is to be a strong witness to a large host of people who are seeking the truth in Christ today as they look at us. As the saying goes, the only Bible some people read is the life of Christians. Who are these readers?

First, there are those who are baffled when a Christian does not get a fair deal in this world. They have the notion that God should somehow protect His chosen ones by making things go smoothly. Since this is not always apparent, the seeker's first thought might be to sue the transgressor in order to get his due reward. In rare cases this may be appropriate, but let us remember that we are living these few brief years not to prove our innocence or even make the standing crowd see the justice of God; we are here to uplift the sufficiency of Christ in all situations, especially in difficult times.

We accomplish that as we forget our own rights, letting Christ be all in all.

Secondly, think of that large group looking for something satisfying to do or be. They might be retired, disabled, living alone after their spouse has gone on, or even single and not settled down yet. Waiting at home for people to discover them or running ceaselessly to find meaning outside the home, they are discouraged in their search. They wonder if you as a Christian have a direction worth considering. By demonstration, and that's the only way, you can show them in a consistent way what gives you that amazing sparkle to keep going each day when other people in your situation have given up long ago. When they seem ready, what a golden opportunity to share your personal faith in Christ.

Thirdly, let us never forget to be sensitive to that large group who feel so guilty every day of their lives.

They stay away from our church gatherings; feeling not worthy, they are shy when they meet their fellow pilgrims on the street or they turn that shyness into a superiority that

forbids you to approach them. Nevertheless, they need acceptance from a compassionate heart. If anyone needs a persistent friend, these are the ones. “Let us show we are Christians by our love, by our love.”

“... the only Bible some people read is the life of Christians.”

We Are Surrounded By Those Whom We Need

In Scripture we get acquainted firsthand with many valiant souls who have made a slow trek in their growth towards God. Moses belittled himself before he learned that God would provide in those areas where he was lacking. Jeremiah spoke with deep emotion about the things he suffered because of God calling him to be a prophet. As disciplined and profitable as the Apostle Paul was in his service to Christ, it would appear that in his case also the biggest obstacle was himself: “I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate . . . Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” (Romans 7:15 and 24). If Paul, and you dear reader, have a question of this sort, you will find your answer in chapter eight of Romans! Because the Bible presents people as fully human, we can identify with their struggles and, better yet, we can share in their upward triumph of faith in Christ who brings the victory.

But thanks be to God, it is not only in Scripture that we come face to face with “people of fault” that have turned to faith. God has arranged that in our daily walk with Him we should have the encouragement of fellow believers who walk beside us. What would it be like if everyone we met walked as if he were carrying the whole world on his shoulders! Somber, heavy faces only add weight to our warfare, but



*by Pastor
Palmer E. Sevig,
Wallace, S. Dak.*

"What would it be like if everyone we met walked as if he were carrying the whole world on his shoulders!"

SURROUNDED...

happy and lifted is the speaker (or "runner") who can find at least one eager, enthusiastic supporter in the audience. That person seems to say by his mere countenance: "You can do it; just keep pressing on!"

King Josiah gave encouragement to his priests to do their duties well (II Chronicles 35:2). Paul's Christian friends in Corinth were "stewardship slack" and not performing well, but Paul encouraged them by saying "Make room for us" and "I take such pride in you"; he commends them for encouraging Titus (see II Corinthians 7). It is probably not a coincidence that "encouragement" is listed in the center of seven gifts given to the church as recorded in Romans 12:6-8.

Joyce Landorff, known nationwide as a uniquely gifted Christian communicator, has written many top-selling books for Christians and those who are seeking. A clarion call to the ministry of encouragement is her

Idolatry

I think the prophet is a man who is especially sensitive to the sin of idolatry and he excels in his ability to describe the contemporary idols. Always he is striving to bring men to the worship of the true God, while men are so easily led to the worship of the idol . . . So in every generation, Christian preachers are called to describe the camouflaged idolatry of that day, proclaim the destruction that will come to an idolatrous people, and call men back to the worship of God.

Gerald Kennedy

unusual 69-page book entitled *Balcony People* in which she likens active Christians to athletes on the playing field; for each one actively engaged on the field an even more active group is needed in the balcony where they can pray, cheer, support and suffer with the players facing the foe. Concluding the section of being "balcony people" to pastors, Joyce Landorff writes, "If we ever do become balcony people of God to our ministers, you'll know it instantly. There will break out over pastors, missionaries, lay people, and congregations alike, the greatest revival the world has ever seen!"

Every Pilgrim Is Implored To Look To Jesus

Regardless of who you are - one who supplies a witness to others, or one who needs the witness of others - your life is not lived on a straight, level plain. You need constant nourishment. David, as he looks back (II Samuel 22), expresses in detail how the Lord literally led him in triumph. "The Lord was my support" (22:19). Writing to the Philippians, Paul without question says, "My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

The all-sufficiency of God is not only a fact worth knowing, but needs to be a faith worth living. In this world we are baffled by many questions that defy an answer and by placing our hopes in individuals or larger bodies we are so often disappointed. Without a saving faith in Christ which defies every obstacle, even death itself, or without a daily faith by which we know the Lord as the supplier of all our needs, we can easily become negative and conclude that all is hopeless.

Jesus faced His assignment of the cross with "joy." Before you think that must be a misprint, perhaps your definition of "joy" needs revising or re-defining. In itself the cross was anything but a pleasure, but it accomplished for humankind the greatest blessing of all time; angels could not deliver it, but they have been singing the Lord's praises ever since!

More hymns have been written using the cross as the centerpiece than any other object or theme. Yes, there is a strange and wonderful phenomenon of "joy" in the cross, a joy experienced by our dear Savior, as well as by those who have become one with Him.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God" (II Corinthians 1:3-4).

Pastor Palmer E. Sevig

Palmer E. Sevig was born in Minot, N. Dak., and grew up near Palermo, N. Dak. He received his B.A. degree from Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minn., and his theological training from Augsburg Seminary, Minneapolis. Ordained in 1953, he has served parishes in the Lutheran Free Church in Minneapolis (St. Olaf), New London, and Fergus Falls, Minn., and in the American Lutheran Church in Anamosa, Strawberry Point, and Rockford, Ia. He served as a chaplain in the Men's Reformatory in Anamosa for two years. He is now a member of the fellowship clergy roster of the AFLC and serves Calvary Lutheran Church in Wallace, S. Dak.

His wife is the former Shirley Lee of Minneapolis. The couple has two sons, Lee, on the editorial staff of a newspaper in Dubuque, Ia., and Todd, a graduate student at Ohio State University, Columbus, O.

"The all-sufficiency of God is not only a fact worth knowing, but needs to be a faith worth living."

The AFLC was formed in October, 1962, by people and congregations which were members of the Lutheran Free Church. They did not wish to take part in the merger of the LFC with the recently formed American Lutheran Church which was to take place on February 1, 1963.

The LFC had begun in 1897, and she stood for "free and living congregations" and was one with Augsburg Seminary in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Augsburg was a school among whose early leaders the most shining luminaries were Professors Georg Sverdrup and Sven Oftedal. The chief document of the LFC, apart from the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Symbols, was the Guiding Principles, a series of 12 statements outlining the freedom of the local congregation and the life of that congregation in the world. Perhaps the most quoted of all the Principles is the first one: "According to the Word of God, the Congregation is the right form of the Kingdom of God on earth."

The LFC remained outside of a merger in 1917 which brought together the three largest Lutheran bodies of Norwegian background: the Hauge's Synod, the Norwegian Synod and the United Church. They comprised the new Norwegian Lutheran Church in America, which later became the Evangelical Lutheran Church. It was that church, which together with the old American Lutheran Church (German), and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church (Danish), joined to form the new ALC on January 1, 1961.

But to go back, following 1917, the LFC at various times over the years had some pastors and people who looked favorably on a merger with the larger NLCA. But any attempts were always quashed by a

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS



larger opposition. As the 1950s came, however, a rising sentiment for merger was evident, so strong that annual conferences of the LFC authorized participation in negotiations looking toward the union of a number of Lutheran bodies. Not only were there negotiations, but there were also three referenda in the congregations, seeking authority to take part in the merger.

The first referendum, in 1955, failed of the three-fourths majority (one vote per congregation) which had been set as necessary for approval of the merger (64.2 to 35.8). In the second one, in 1957, the majority had been lowered from three-fourths to two-thirds and votes per congregation had been weighted according to size. But that vote also fell short (65.37 to 34.63) of approval. In a third attempt, in 1961, under similar rules as the previous referendum, success was achieved for the pro-merger forces (69.37 to 30.63). (Note: If the same rules had prevailed in the second and third referenda as in the first, with each congregation having one vote, the results would have been as follows: 1957 — 56.4 in favor to 43.6 opposed; 1961 — 61.1 in favor to 38.9 opposed).

Over the years of the merger discussions, there were always those who sought to resist the effort in debates on the floor of annual conferences, through the pages of *The Lutheran Messenger*, the organ of the LFC, and in local, district and church-wide forums. As defeat became apparent for those hoping to keep out of the merger, congregations and individuals who still opposed the

union drew closer together. Prayer meetings, consultations, and discussions sprang up in various places under varying leadership. Many letters were written as people of common mind endeavored to find one another.

The reasons for maintaining an identity apart from the ALC, now one of the three largest Lutheran groups in the United States, seemed to sift down to five areas. A pamphlet, "A Statement on the Historical Situation," discussed those areas and was read at the Thief River Falls conference in 1962. Perhaps not everyone who helped form the AFLC felt equally strong about each of the five points, but in their totality they made a formidable argument against the merger.

In brief, they were as follows: 1) The ALC held membership in the World Council of Churches. There was concern that there was a looseness in the theological foundation of the WCC, a definite liberal leaning on the part of many of its members. Also it was thought that the WCC might lead to one world church, with an inadequate theological base. 2) The theology of the new church would not reflect a conservative stand on Scripture. As a part of the theological dimension, it was mentioned, too, that there was no desire to be a part of any "back to Rome" movement. 3) As to church polity, there was strong belief that the freedom of the local congregation should be safe-guarded in every way possible. Objection was made to the makeup of a General Convention with 500 lay delegates and 500 pastors. Without



by Pastor
Raynard Huglen

HISTORY . . .

a system of rotation, and even with one, individual congregations and pastors would have little representation. 4) There was the desire to uphold the low-churchly emphasis among Lutherans. It was stated that there was a place for simplicity in worship. 5) It was felt that the ALC doesn't represent the pietism needed in our day. Reference was made particularly to attitudes toward social drinking and the social dance. As to the former, those organizing the AFLC wanted to take a strong stand against it, believing that "the liquor industry and its products stand condemned and have nothing of value to contribute to life, and have rather left a vast wreckage of human hopes in their wake." The time of the Lutheran mergers was also the time when many of the Scandinavian Lutheran colleges made social dancing a part of their programs. The founders of the AFLC were protesting against this.

To make a long story short, a group of individuals sent out a general invitation for a conference in Thief River Falls, October 25-28, 1962, for the purpose of seeing what could be done to preserve a Lutheran Free Church. Chosen as the conference theme was "Press on Toward the Goal" and the text was Philippians 3:1-16. The registration committee reported 255 lay people in attendance and 23 pastors. They came from 76 congregations, seven states, and two Canadian provinces. It can also be said that they came from a number of Lutheran Church bodies. After the first few sessions, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church proved too small to accommodate the assembly and remaining sessions were held at a nearby elementary school auditorium.

The conference elected officers: Rev. John P. Strand, Tioga, N. Dak., president; Rev. Fritjof B. Monseth, Valley City, N. Dak., vice-president; and Rev. Richard Snipstead, Greenbush, Minn., secretary. Names to a Board of Administration (later known as the Co-ordinating Committee) were: Rev. Julius Hermunslic, Spicer, Minn.; Mr. Harvey Dyrud, Newfolden, Minn.; Rev. Morris Eggen, Spicer, Minn.; Mr. O.K. Ose, Thief River Falls, Minn.; and



Rev. Hamar Benson, McVille, N. Dak.

Other committees were set up to begin planning joint work for the 50-some congregations which were covenanting to labor together as free Lutheran churches. The committees were Missions, Seminary and Doctrine, Stewardship, Youth, and Publications and Parish Education. A Nominations Committee was also elected to serve at the first regular annual conference of the group, which subsequently met in Fargo, N. Dak., in June, 1963.

And the name chosen by this group was the Lutheran Free Church-not merged. It was believed that since the congregations involved were not moving from their historical position or beliefs, and since they were not taking part in the merger, the name Lutheran Free Church-not merged honestly described them.

But the name was to be denied them. In the first of two litigations in which Association people were involved and which grew out of the merger disputes, Judge Gordon L. McRae ruled that the Lutheran Free Church had legally merged with the ALC and the latter held claim to the name Lutheran Free Church. The trial was held in International Falls, Minn., June 18-21, 1963. An appeal to the Minnesota Supreme Court was made on Oct. 2, 1964. The decision of that court was handed down on Mar. 18, 1966. It was practically the same as that rendered by Judge McRae. The Association people had argued, in vain, that under the Guiding Principles no referendum result or annual conference action could deprive a congregation (of the right) of determining its own future by its own rules.

The minority of congregations from the LFC subsequently adopted the



name Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. The name means this: Association — a voluntary fellowship for common work; Free — a polity safeguarding the freedom of the local church; Lutheran — the fellowship abides by the Lutheran interpretation of the Scriptures; and Congregations — the local church is the "right form of the Kingdom of God on earth." The AFLC continues to hold to the Guiding Principles of the Lutheran Free Church as its distinctive statement of belief next to the major Lutheran Symbols.

The second court trial arising out of merger problems was held at Valley City, N. Dak., July 14-Sept. 4, 1964, with Judge Douglas B. Heen presiding. This action was brought by an anti-merger steering committee from within the AFLC to test the legality of procedures used for certifying congregations of the LFC into the ALC. The pastor in Valley City at the time of the merger was Rev. Fritjof B. Monseth. His congregation was split over the merger and certification issue. The pro-merger portion of First Lutheran Church, the congregation in question, sought to remove him from his pastorate when he refused to resign after the church was certified to the ALC. He believed, with some of his people, that a simple majority could hold the congregation out of the merger. Eventually he was locked out of the church but continued to occupy the parsonage adjacent to the church.

On Mar. 18, 1965, Judge Heen ruled that First Lutheran had been properly certified into the ALC. The portion of the congregation which agreed with Pastor Monseth, having thus lost its church building, later purchased the former Methodist church near downtown Valley City and has prospered in all ways.

The majority of Association people believed it was useless to pursue legal rights through the courts for redress of grievances. There was work to be done in building common endeavors and all energies and contributions should be bent toward that task.

While the AFLC was started by people of the LFC, they were soon joined by pastors and people from other Lutheran bodies. Indeed, it has already been noted that other Lutheran

bodies were represented at the Thief River Falls conference. The largest significant group to enter the life of the AFLC came from the Suomi Synod. This church of Finnish national background had merged with three other bodies to form the Lutheran Church in America on January 1, 1963, but some Suomi congregations or portions thereof have affiliated with the AFLC in northeastern Minnesota, upper Michigan and Minneapolis. Some former LFC congregations also withdrew from the ALC to join the AFLC. It is safe to say, as to individuals, the AFLC has people with backgrounds in nearly all of the Lutheran church bodies which existed in 1959.

From a small fellowship of congregations which had no assets held in common at the beginning, apart from some contributions and offerings taken at the Thief River conference, the AFLC has developed a well-rounded program. A theological seminary was begun in 1964 at its present site, Medicine Lake in Plymouth, a suburb of Minneapolis. A Bible school was opened two years later at the same location. Two dormitories now grace the 25-acre property, most of which was purchased from the Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation, which had only shortly before built a large church structure there. The AFLC headquarters are in that building at 3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard.

World mission efforts have been made in Brazil. That work has recently spilled over into nearby Paraguay. Other recent work is in Mexico and India. Each field presents limitless opportunities for bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Home missions at first involved mainly shoring up small congregations and groups in need of assistance. Today a number of new congregations have been started with most of the activity in North Dakota, but also some in Minnesota, Michigan, Washington and South Dakota.

The AFLC began publishing her own magazine, *The Lutheran Ambassador*, a bi-weekly, in February, 1963. A pension, retirement and hospitalization program has been in operation almost from the beginning. A

continued on p. 13

Thine Arm, O Lord, In Days of Old

Thine arm, O Lord, in days of old
Was strong to heal and save;
It triumphed o'er disease and death,
O'er darkness and the grave;
To Thee they went, the blind, the dumb,
The palsied and the lame,
The leper with his tainted life,
The sick with fevered frame.

And lo, Thy touch brought life and health,
Gave speech and strength and sight;
And youth renewed and frenzy calmed
Owned Thee the Lord of light;
And now, O Lord, be near to bless,
Almighty as of yore,
In crowded street, by restless couch,
As by Gennesaret's shore.

Be Thou our great deliverer still,
Thou Lord of life and death;
Restore and quicken, soothe and bless,
With Thine almighty breath.
To hands that work and eyes that see
Give wisdom's heavenly lore.
That whole and sick, and weak and strong,
May praise Thee evermore.

Edward Hayes Plumtree
(*Service Book and Hymnal*)



Attention all Luther Leaguers!!

I am an M.K.

Now is the time to send in testimonies of what God has been doing in your life, such as a particular incident or how you came to know Jesus Christ in a personal way. Also, we would like to hear about how God has been working in your youth groups and the different things you are doing. It really encourages other people, especially other youth, to know there are other young people experiencing the same things they are and how faithful God is to each one

of us.

I Thessalonians 5:11 says to "encourage one another, and build up one another." So let's do it today by writing down God's work in our lives and send that to:

Joel Erickson, Devotional Life Secretary
AFLBS

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Thank you!

My name is Tanya Johnson. I am an M.K. (missionary's kid) from Liberia, West Africa. My parents are with the Lutheran Bible Translators and are translating the Bible into the Kissi language, one of the many language groups in Liberia.

January 1, 1973, we arrived in Liberia. Being an MK I naturally grew up in a Christian home. When I was seven years old I heard the story of how Jesus gave His life for us and how He wants to live in us, so I asked Jesus into my heart. Since then I have had my ups and downs, but have grown more and more in my love for God and His Word.

My senior year in high school I really struggled with what God wanted me to do with my life. I was being pulled in many different ways, one of which was toward missions. So I decided I would go to Bible school since that would be a good direction for whatever direction I went. Bible School (AFLBS) has really been a good experience for me. It has taught me so much more of God and His precious Word. I have really grown in my time here at Bible School.

No, I am not at this time going on to missions, but my two years here have been the best foundation I could have. Two verses that have really been special to me through the years are Phil. 2:6-7. Prayer is such an important part of a Christian's life, and the peace of God is so real and true. If you have the chance, I really encourage you to come to Bible School.

Tanya Johnson

forever.

I'll finish with two experiences. One is giving a speech to the senior class and ending with the thought of remembering God. Finally, God really worked on me last summer in the area of God's will for me. I pushed for it and He taught me patience.

I really love God and want to serve Him.

Todd Erickson

NEED A BETTER SELF-IMAGE? Look to . . .

- Moses — the most humble man (Num.12:3) God miraculously empowered him (Ex.3).
- Isaiah — saw the Lord and cried, "Woe is me . . ." (Is. 6:1-5). Isaiah's life was changed!
- Job — "now my eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent . . . So the Lord blessed . . ." (Job 42:5,6,12).
- Paul — confessed to be the "Chiefest of sinners" yet said, "I am crucified with Christ . . . the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God" (Gal. 2:20).

SEEK TO KNOW CHRIST AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION!

I really love God

I was brought up in a Christian home. As a little child I always attended Sunday School and church. We as a family believed in Christ, but we never went any further than that. It was as if we were content with the way it was. A good old Norwegian family.

Well, as I grew I knew all the good old Bible stories and I always tried to be a good kid, but nothing really spiritual was happening to me. Then came the first trip to Bible camp; little did I know at that time how much this would change my life. For it was there, as I was sitting in that front pew of the chapel, that I accepted Christ in my heart. At that time I never realized the whole concept of becoming a Christian, but I knew that God really loved me.

The next four or five years went by and I never really grew in the Lord very much. I'd go the Bible camp each year and come off on a

spiritual high but it never lasted very long.

My sophomore year of high school I came down for Campus Days at the Bible School (AFLBS). God spoke to me while I was here and told me "this is the place you should go to." So from then on I always told people I was going to Bible School, but it never really meant much to me.

That same year at Bible camp the Lord really convicted me of wondering if I was really sure of my eternal life. Romans 6:23 popped up and it really convicted me. I rededicated my life to Christ and from then on God has helped me grow each day in one way or another.

A big help was a Bible study group we started up. We eventually ended up singing and sharing at churches. We named our group "Friends", based on Michael W. Smith's song, "Friends." This really helped me to have friends that would be friends

editorials

WRITING HISTORY

This issue of the *Ambassador* contains a history of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations which we wrote a few years ago. It was written for the anniversary book, *The AFLC: Twenty Years of Beginnings and Blessings*, which was edited by Pastor Ralph Rokke.

As the footnote to the reprinted article indicates, some facts have changed since the history was written. A church is a constantly changing thing, not because her beliefs change, but because personnel changes, programs change and numbers fluctuate with growth and realignment.

The history remains the same although anyone who writes history must do a certain amount of picking and choosing of what he will use. Some things are left out because the writer isn't aware of them. Some facts are not used because they don't seem as valuable to the story as something else. Still others are passed by because they open old wounds and perhaps the present is not the time to do so. So the one who writes history makes

some subjective judgments. We submit that it is always so. The same is true of one who writes biography or autobiography. No one tells all. If ten persons set out to write a history of an organization, for instance, there will be ten different versions of the history.

Some day longer histories of the Association will have to be written. Among the less pleasant aspects of AFLC history that will have to be dealt with are two major disruptions which took place in the Seminary in earlier years. How objective the accounts of those can be is even questionable. So the task is not easy.

For the present, for the *now*, we present this brief history. Some of you have read it before. Many of you haven't. We trust it will give you a bird's-eye view of from whence we have come.

The brief history concludes a presentation of six items telling about our church. If you read them all (in this and the preceding five issues), you will have a pretty good idea of our history, our aims and beliefs, and how we do our work for God together.

Have you made your reservations for the Annual Conference at the Warm Beach Camp?

Reservations are being taken up fast at Warm Beach Camp, site of the 1986 Annual Conference of the AFLC. Conference dates are June 11-15. If you haven't registered yet, do so today! Please contact:

Cheryl Larson
6323 - 83rd Ave. S.E.
Snohomish, Wash. 98290
or call: 206-568-8469

See the January 29 issue of the *Ambassador* for information on costs.



fellowship corner

Our Citizenship is in Heaven

During the past season of Lent our thoughts may have turned to grief and dying. Some suggest ten steps to help the grieving. What about the dying?

Whether a person has a bushel of faith or as a mustard seed it still is a gift from God and most of us would not brag that we would never fear death. Our hope as Christians is that promise of Jesus, "I will never leave or forsake you."

Our real responsibility is to encourage one another and to warn of the danger of not being prepared to die. The question: do you have a living faith in our Lord Jesus? The Apostle Paul writes, Phil. 3:17,18: "Join with others in following my example, brethren, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. For, as I have often told you

before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ."

The Apostle Peter says: "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have suffered grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith — of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed" (I Peter 1:6,7). "You believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls" (I Peter 1:8,9). This is the solution whether you are the grieving or the dying.

Valdemar and Leonore Hovde
Minot, N. Dak.

Letter to the editor

SEEK THE OLD PATHS

Yes, I've always enjoyed the *Ambassador* through the years but haven't written anything to you for some time so thought I'd contribute a few things to your Opinion Page, as I see our times today.

History seems to show that when people once had had the knowledge of God's will among them it was easier for them to come back if they went astray than for those that had been lost from Him for generations. That is no doubt the reason for the New Testament admonition to the parents to bring up their children in the knowledge of the Lord, which would be through the Scriptures, that they would not then easily depart from them, although perhaps daily tempted to do so by the devil, the world and one's own fleshly lusts and greed.

Seems like now in our day again the worldly interpretation of love and happiness is so promoted on the TV every day with fighting, loving, shooting, sexual insinuations, etc., that it

would be almost impossible for children and young people to realize the amount of restraint needed to refrain from doing those things so widely advertised. Serious home and church teaching would be necessary and that is lacking too much these days.

We do know from history and the written Scriptures that fallen mankind has experienced many periods of hardship through the ages. Mainly, perhaps, because they rebelled against God's laws for fruitful living.

Especially shown perhaps are the Israeli people from the Old Testament, where God even let their enemies overcome them and kept them prisoners for up to 40 years at one time. But on account of their experiences they humbled themselves and became sorry for their acts so that God forgave them and led them back to their land again.

Here again we see that Israel's godless enemies were not impressed

We invite you

If you are like some of us, you don't know quite what to make of the present financial situation in the AFLC. Reaching 73 percent of a goal can certainly not be a cause for great jubilation. It is better than attaining, say, 55 percent, but it isn't satisfying.

If you are like some of us, you wonder, where do we go from here? Must we re-evaluate our work? Where can we adjust? Are there any failures in promoting the various aspects of our common endeavors, that is, have people failed to give because they haven't been informed as they should? Is it only lack of information that keeps people from supplying what is needed?

Our Annual Conference is soon upon us. We regret that there won't be much time for discussion of this big issue prior to the conference. But we do want to tell you that if you have some ideas to share on this matter of goals and reaching them, and you write soon, your letters can appear in the May 20th issue. Your signed letter must reach the Editor by April 26. That doesn't give much time, but you can make it if you write soon. If you have a suggestion, a possible answer, let us know.

Long letters will have to be discouraged. If the letters are fairly short, we'll try to use them as is. If they are too long, they will be shortened.

You are invited to write. May we hear from you?

— The Editor

with God's authority and tried not to let them go back home again.

Much more could be said about God's new covenant with man when He sent His Son to establish His kingdom here on earth and to teach fallen mankind how this redemption was possible through Him. Also, may we study the signs of the times of His Second Coming, for judgment this time.

Martin Gilberg
Berthold, N. Dak.

(Ed.note: We have taken the liberty to run reader Gilberg's contribution as a Letter to the Editor rather than as an Opinion Page article.)

Saviour, who died for me,
I give myself to thee;
Thy love, so full, so free,
Claims all my powers.
Be this my purpose high,
To serve Thee till I die,
Whether my path shall lie
"Mid thorns or flowers.

But, Lord, the flesh is weak;
Thy gracious aid I seek,
For thou the word must speak
That makes me strong.
Then let me hear thy voice,
Thou art my only choice;
O bid my heart rejoice;
Be thou my song.

May it be joy to me
To follow only Thee;
Thy faithful servant be,
Thine to the end.
For Thee I'll do and dare,
For thee the cross I'll bear,
To thee direct my prayer,
On thee depend.

Saviour, with me abide;
Be ever near my side;
Support, defend, and guide.
I look to thee.
I lay my hand in thine,
And fleeting joys resign,
If I may call these mine
Eternally.

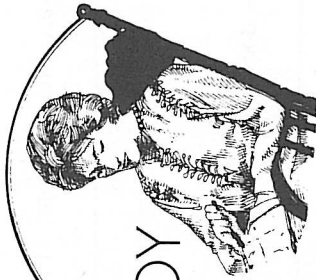
— Mary J. Mason

"Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord . . . who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity" (II Tim. 1:8,9).

Hymn No. 231 (*Concordia*) - "Come, O Come, Thou Quickening Spirit"
-Mrs. Herbert Presteng

May 1986

WMF BIBLE STUDY



Lesson 5 Key Words from God's Word

GRACE

Hymn No. 230 (*Concordia*) - "Gracious Spirit, Dove Divine"

We know from Scripture that all men have sinned and are guilty before God. Left to himself, it is absolutely impossible for man to achieve his own salvation. If sinners are to be saved, it is only possible by the grace of God. In this study we want to look at what His grace is.

1. What do you think of when you hear the word "grace"? _____

2. The grace by which we are saved is a personal attitude of God. How is this attitude described in the following verses? Jn. 3:16; Titus 3:3,4 _____

3. What does grace exclude? Rom. 11:6_____

4. Whose merits does grace include? Rom. 3:24_____

God is gracious to sinners only *in Christ* and *for Christ's sake*.

5. How is this grace applied to our lives? Eph. 2:8,9_____

"Faith is a grasping of Almighty power;
The hand of man laid on the arm of God;
The grand and blessed hour
In which the things impossible to me
Become the possible, O Lord,
through thee."

—Anna E. Hamilton

6. To whom is God gracious? Titus 2:11_____

A. Why is this so important for us to understand?_____

7. How is the grace of God offered to us? Acts 20:24,25; 1 Thess. 2:13_____

8. All men are not saved by His grace. Why not? Acts 7:51; Matt. 23:37_____

9. What are some blessings the believer receives, who is saved by grace?

- A. Rom. 5:1_____
- B. Heb. 9:14_____
- C. Heb. 13:5_____
- D. Ps. 34:4_____
- E. Gal. 4:7_____

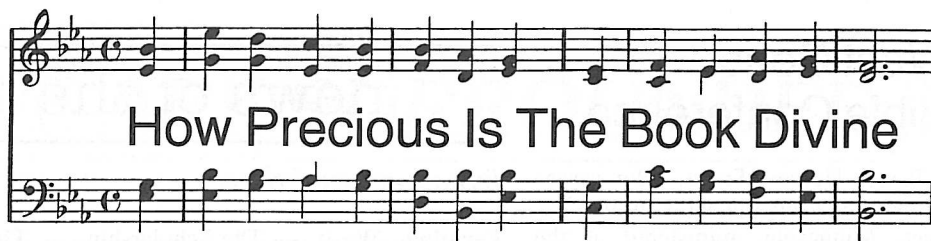
Our hymn study

Concordia, No. 93

John Fawcett, 1782

Tune: St. Peter

Alexander Robert Reinagle, 1826



The *Concordia* contains no less than 12 hymns in laud of God's Word. These are hymns that should be sung often. They are a dynamic instrument in prodding us to study our Bibles more diligently. This one is based on Psalm 119:105 (see also "O Word of God Incarnate," #89).

HISTORY . . .

recent acquisition is the Osceola, Wis., Association Retreat Center. A former U.S. Air Force radar base, it is being used increasingly as a place of spiritual renewal and for permanent homes.

Two auxiliaries, the Women's Missionary Federation, for women, and the Luther League Federation, for youth, serve well in their respective areas.

An annual conference is held each year in June. The location varies from year to year. All voting members of the congregations may attend and participate. The permanent boards of the AFLC are the Co-ordinating Committee, Board of Trustees (Schools), Board (now Committee) of World Missions, Board (now Committee) of Home Missions, Commission on Evangelism, Board of Pensions, Stewardship Board, Youth Board, and the Board of Publications and Parish Education.

A winter Bible conference is held each February. Summer family Bible camps have been held each year since 1963. For many years they were held at Alexandria, Minn. Later they were held at Lake Bronson, Minn. Since 1980 they have been held both at Lake Bronson and Osceola.

In addition to these Association-sponsored events, conferences and camps are also sponsored by individual congregations, groups of congregations and districts.

The AFLC uses a full-time evangelist travelling throughout the church.

*How precious is the Book divine,
By inspiration giv'n!
Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine,
To guide our souls to heav'n.*

*It sweetly cheers our drooping hearts
In this dark vale of tears;
Life, light, and joy it still imparts,
And quells our rising fears.*

*This lamp thro' all the tedious night
Of life shall guide our way,
Till we behold the clearer light
Of an eternal day.*

There is also a director of development, who is available for counseling in stewardship, with particular emphasis on wills and estate planning.

From 50 or so congregations the Association has grown to about 130 congregations. Most are in Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Wisconsin, but others are to be found as far away as Fall River, Mass., Mt. Juliet, Tenn., Nogales, Ariz., and Oregon and Washington, 15 states in all. Still largely a rural church, she will likely not be as much so after the next two decades.

Two presidents have thus far served the AFLC. Rev. John P. Strand was in office until 1978. He was then succeeded by Rev. Richard Snipstead. The terms are for three years and begin on October 1.

Perhaps this brief history can be concluded in no better way than by quoting three sentences from Dr. Bernhard Christensen's description long ago of the Lutheran Free Church. They describe what was and is the purpose of the organization of another group of Lutheran congregations which has hoped to continue in that tradition, the AFLC.

Two related hymns outside the "Word of God" section of *Concordia* are "Deep and Glorious, Word Victorious" (#160) and "O Father, May Thy Word Prevail" (#159). For John Fawcett see #58.

The composer of St. Peter, Alexander Reinagle, was born into a well-known musical family of Austrian extraction living in England. He was a church musician all his productive life and composed many hymn tunes still in common use in the Church.

-Don Rodvold

It is an attempt to build an effective and orderly Christian fellowship with a minimum of human organization.

It is an experiment in extreme ecclesiastical democracy and decentralization.

It is a searching test of faith in the power and Spirit of God (from "What is the Lutheran Free Church?").

(Ed. note: Some facts have changed since the above was written a few years ago. Three winter Bible conferences are held each year now, not only one. No mission work is being done in Paraguay at present and the work in India is in question. A Home Mission congregation has been started in Arizona. Since the death of Rev. Kenneth Pentti last summer, no new evangelist has been chosen. The director of development has become "business administrator." At the 1985 Annual Conference the number of congregations on the roster was 148, not 130. The congregations are to be found in 16 states and one Canadian province.)

More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.

—Tennyson

West Coast Bible Conference

Pastor Herbert Franz, who serves St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Cloquet, Minnesota, ministered at the AFLC Western Bible Conference at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Kirkland, Washington. The theme was "The Church in Fervent Prayer."

To teach us about prayer, he spoke from what seemed a limitless supply of experiences from his long walk with the Lord.

Here are a few highlights from his four teaching sessions.

"Prayerlessness is sin against God and sin against our fellow man.

"Then you come to the end of your own resources and realize Jesus is all you have, then the prayer, 'Lord, help me,' will bring Jesus with all you need.

"The family altar is God's design for resolving every crisis in the home. Its establishment is not a matter of convenience but of priority.

"If you are not 'living in the Book' and abiding day by day with the Lord, you will be subject to spiritual famine, drought, and pestilence (II Chronicles 6).

"Hurt comes before healing. Let Jesus put His finger on the pestilence in your life and perform His divine surgery.

"Effective intercessory prayer demands denial of the self-life.

"God hates pride. He cannot do anything with a proud person. Are you willing to pay his price to become a spiritual Christian?

"If you truly *want* God's power in your life, you can have it.

"Just pray, 'Lord, help me. Bring me to fullness of life in Thee'."

He led us through both laughter and tears and challenged us all to a higher level of commitment.

We love you, Pastor Franz. May you bless others as richly as you have us. Thank you, in Jesus' name.

As a means of grace it is intended for the strengthening of such as are already disciples, who confess to be children of God . . . The Lord's Supper is for those who are disciples.

John P. Milton

news of the churches

from here and there . . .

Ferndale, Wash. — The Scholarship Committee of Triumph Lutheran held a potluck dinner after church on March 16. Seminary Intern Stephen Snipstead of Arlington, Wash., and a son of a former pastor of the congregation, preached at the morning service at which an offering for the Scholarship Fund was given.

Mason, Wis. — Rev. Wendell Johnson, Stacy, Minn., is concluding evangelistic meetings in the parish tonight. The services began on Sunday and were held in each of the three congregations, Faith, Moland and Drummond.

Minneapolis, Minn. — At the annual Sweethearts' Banquet at Faith Lutheran on Feb. 9, Mabel Stein gave a beautiful presentation through slides of the greatness and creative power of God.

Kalispell, Mont. — Biblical marriage has been the topic of study at recent Worship and Praise meetings on Sunday nights at Faith Lutheran. The book by the same name, by Calvin White, has been the basis of the studies.

Dalton, Minn. — "Christ's Love for Us" was the theme of the Lenten sermons in the parish this year. Holy Week communion services were held in each of the four congregations, Monday through Thursday.

Tioga, N. Dak. — Rev. Richard Anderson, Lakeville, Minn., was guest speaker at special services in Zion Lutheran, Mar. 9-13.

Minnewaukan, N. Dak. — Christian Life and Growth services are in progress at Trinity Lutheran this week, through Thursday. Rev. Herbert L. Franz, Cloquet, Minn., is the speaker.

Stacy, Minn. — Sunnyside Lutheran and Hope Lutheran, Wyoming, had Easter Memorial Gardens in their churches on Easter morning. Easter lilies and other flowers were brought in memory of loved ones.

Badger, Minn. — The elementary children in released time at the Badger School are preparing a musical to be presented on April 27 at Badger Creek Lutheran. Some of the children are from Oiland Lutheran and there are some others taking part also. The musical is about a little tree that grew at the time of Christ.

Grafton, N. Dak. — The editor of *Morning Glory*, Rev. Ronald Wik, is speaking at special meetings in Bethel Lutheran this week, through Thursday. He is from Borup, Minn.

Thief River Falls, Minn. — The three choirs of Our Saviour's Lutheran presented the program "Crown Him With Many Crowns" on Holy Thursday night.

Update on India

Rev. Bhushana Rao Dasari, who has served with AFLC World missions since September of 1983 has resigned his call as "On the field Director and Coordinator of AFLC mission endeavors in India". In his letter of resignation effective February 20, he stated: "we feel that it is God's will for us as a family and also for the Bible Faith Lutheran Church of India to become an independent organization."

It is the desire of the World Missions Committee to continue our AFLC mission work in India through the Bible Faith Lutheran Church. The World Mission Committee is presently working to solidify its relationship with the BFLC.

Help needed to build radio station

Mr. Ray Lark of the Amery Lutheran Church, Amery, Wis., is making plans to build a radio station for LUTHERAN OUTREACH (Bay Broadcasting) Nak Nek, Alaska. Volunteers are needed to help in this construction project. If you are an adult and interested in investing two weeks of your summer time in this mission venture call (715) 268-2322 or write: Mr. Ray Lark, Rt. 3, Amery, Wis. 54001.

ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS
3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

AFLC BENEVOLENCES
February 1-28, 1986

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% of TOTAL*
General Fund	\$ 208,000.00	\$ 7,916.06	4
Schools — AFLTS	115,278.00	4,500.31	4
AFLBS	173,200.00	5,973.22	3
Home Missions	265,000.00	11,359.54	4
World Missions	298,000.00	14,816.24	5
Capital Investment	25,000.00	417.76	2
TOTAL	\$1,084,478.00	\$ 44,983.11	4
1985-86	\$1,109,382.00	\$ 52,209.57	5

*Goal 8%

Newfolden, Minn. — The Life in Christ Crusade at Westaker Lutheran, Mar. 9-13 had to be cancelled due to the impending surgery of Mrs. Donald Greven, Minneapolis, Minn. Her husband was to have been the speaker. We are glad to hear that Mrs. Greven is getting along fine.

Culbertson, Mont. — Rev. Herbert L. Franz brought the messages at evangelistic services in Bethel Lutheran, Mar. 2-6. Pastor Franz is heard in the area on KEYZ, Williston, N. Dak., on Sunday mornings.

Eben Jct., Mich. — In the Fellowship Coffee Hour at Calvary Lutheran after church on Mar. 16, Betty Rajala was honored upon her retirement from some 30 years of teaching.

Russell Duncan, former member of the Co-ordinating Committee dies

Mr. Russell Duncan, 75, a member of the AFLC Co-ordinating Committee from 1964-70, passed away on Feb. 24 in Fargo, N. Dak. He had been in declining health in recent years.

He was a leader in the organization of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Fargo, and a strong supporter of AFLC work through the years.

He was a person of many interests, which he pursued with enthusiasm and commitment. These interests included not only farming and business, but legislative work (he was a member of the Legislature in 1966-67), authorship (he wrote four books) and community and church service. He was a long-time Gideon.

Russell Duncan was born at Calvin, N.Dak., Aug. 5, 1910, to M.S. Duncan and Margaret Higgins Duncan. In 1919 he moved with his family to Wyndmere, N. Dak. In 1928 he returned to Calvin, where he farmed until moving to Fargo in 1951. While in Fargo he operated Russell Duncan and Sons Seed Company for 20 years and also maintained his farming interests.

On June 15, 1934, Mr. Duncan married Anna Mohagen in Grafton, N. Dak. They had three children, who also survive, in addition to his

Western N. Dak. WMF Workshop

The District WMF Workshop is to be held April 19, 1986 at Zion Lutheran Church of Tioga, North Dakota. Registration will be from 10 am to 10:30 am Central Standard Time. Our theme is "Vision For The Lost" taken from Acts 16:10. We hope to have Mrs. Ceta Rude

Preaching missions

Dalton, Minn.

Tordenskjold Lutheran Church

Merle Fagerberg, lay pastor

April 14-16

Rev. Paul Gunderson, Minneapolis, Minn., speaker

Grand Forks, N. Dak.

Trinity Lutheran Church

Bruce Dalager, pastor

April 27-30

Rev. Gary Jorgenson, Stanley, N. Dak., speaker

wife. They are Marvin, Fairfax, Va., Marilynn, Mrs. Darrel Moe, Grafton, and David, Cedar Falls, Ia. There are 13 grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Two brothers and two sisters also survive. He was preceded in death by his parents and one sister.

The funeral service was held at St. Paul's Lutheran on Fri., Feb. 28, with interim pastor David Rinden of Fergus Falls, Minn. officiating.

Blessed be his memory.

(Ed. note: Russell Duncan served on the Co-ordinating Committee in a crucial time in our church's history. For eight months in 1977-78 I had the privilege of having him and his wife in my congregation as I gave interim service to St. Paul's Lutheran.)

from Lake Alma, Sask. give the Bible study and a skit on "Know Your Missionary" by the Beaver Creek Lutheran Church ladies. Various other churches in our district will provide music and devotions.

Hauge Retreat to focus on witnessing

The Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation is sponsoring a three-day retreat on "Practical Witnessing" April 16-18. Sessions will be held at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis.

Witnessing for Christ in relationship to one's church, home and community will be considered by Pastors Wayne Hjermstad, Brooklyn Park, Minn., James Peterson, Mondovi, Wis., and Ronald Wik, Borup, Minn., and Mr. Harry Bodsberg, field representative, Amery, Wis.

Meals and lodging are available at the ARC. Cost for the retreat is \$35. It is open to all believers who wish to become more effective in sharing their faith with others.

IN MEMORIAM

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

ILLINOIS

DeKalb

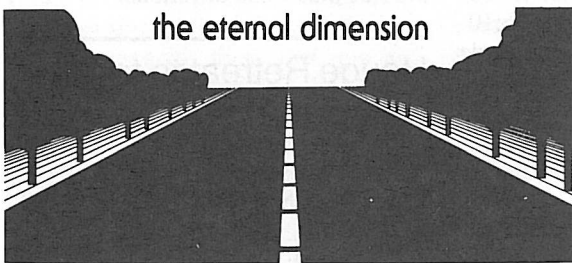
Pong Teh Sie, 82, Feb. 25, Grace

Ben Eike, 86, Feb. 27, Grace

God sustains

And if the Creator who works forever, and His Son and the Holy Ghost who work with Him, were to withdraw Their hands, all things would soon collapse in ruin. Therefore we confess in our Christian Creed: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." If He did not uphold and sustain us after He had made us, we should long since, yes, even in our birth and cradle, have perished and died.

Martin Luther
(*Day By Day We Magnify Thee*)



life's
most
popular
game

Do you know about life's most popular game? It is what we call the game of double-living. It is to pretend to be one kind of person while you are really another. A double-life may be practiced regarding marriage faithfulness. It may be practiced in business dealings. It even is practiced in the religious life. We know of a man who was the quiet, faithful leader of a boy's group in a Christian congregation. Everyone thought he was honest and trustworthy. These were among the traits he was to instill in the boys he was leading. But one day his employer terminated his employment because he had embezzled company funds. What a shock to those who knew him best. He had been living a double-life.

It seems that it is in the religious realm where the double-life is most practiced. People claim that God is most important to them, but lesser things occupy their lives. Jesus spoke

of this in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:24). He taught that a religious double-life was not really possible. He taught that those who attempt it deceive themselves. No one can serve two Lords.

One of the greatest dangers in the American church today is the idea that the double-life with God is possible. We see evidences of it in many places. The church's calendar reveals it, the church's announcements to the community reveal it, and the personal pursuits of many of her members reveal it. What this reveals about the church is that she still claims to love God with all her heart, while behind the scene she has many other lovers. In this kind of situation, God becomes our claim to the right to exist in society as a Christian congregation, while our lives go off into other things which are more attractive. The danger with this way of living is that we as congrega-

tions, or individuals, go along life's pathway thinking all is well, when it is not well. It is important that we learn as soon as possible that the pathway of the double-life in religious matters leads to sure and great destruction. Israel, in the Old Testament times, failed to learn that lesson. It led to her downfall. If we fail to learn the dangers of the double-life, we will continue to think that all is well. If we do not find out that all is not well, we will never learn the true source of the double-life, which is our sinful hearts. We will never learn the reality of our personal sin and will never feel our need for God's personal forgiveness.

God gave Israel many warnings and many opportunities to repent. She failed to respond and she perished. Let us heed the warnings of God and hear His call to turn to Him while there is still time. Annanias and Sapphira are good examples of people living a double-life in the Church. There you see how serious an error the double-life is. Read of it in Acts 5:1-13. Remember, you cannot serve God and another god. You will love only one and you will hate the other. *Make The Lord The True God Of Your Life.*

Pastor Emerson Anderson
Cleveland, Ohio