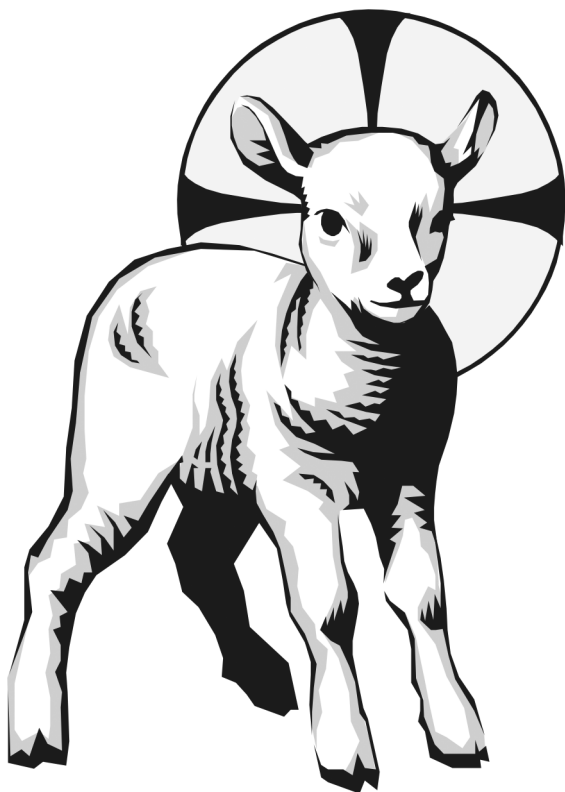


# Lutheran Spokesman



*"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes  
away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).*

# **“BEHOLD! THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!”**

**(John 1:29)**

**W**e are not told what time of the year it was when John the Baptist first pointed a bony finger at the figure of Jesus of Nazareth and spoke the words here recorded. It is of little consequence, for whether spring or summer, fall or winter, early morning or late afternoon—the invitation is the same.

Still today these inspired words ring out to us: “Look! Jesus—the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!”

The words are full of meaning for us, especially on the brink of another Lenten Season. Let’s consider them thoughtfully and so prepare to follow the passion of our Lord all the way to His glorious resurrection.

“BEHOLD!” — that is to say, LOOK (at Him)! For many today, Lent is a time to look around and take inventory of the things they might be able to

painlessly “give up for Lent.”

But the Lenten Season isn’t about me taking the initiative to try and better organize my life—it’s about looking at Jesus who set aside the full use of His divine power and gave Himself for me.

Don’t get me wrong; personal introspection has a place during Lent. When we look at ourselves without the rose-colored glasses, choosing instead the magnifying glass of God’s holy law, then we see our blatant sin and ugly guilt. It is vitally necessary that we see who we are....

Yet, don’t look at your sin and guilt too long. The Spirit of God invites us here to look away from ourselves—to behold, to look upon Jesus, the Lamb of God.

“THE LAMB OF GOD!” — When we look away from ourselves and gaze upon the Jesus revealed in the Bible

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(instead of some “Jesus” of man’s creation), we see the Lamb of God’s own choosing. Jesus was not my choice or yours. We were not consulted in advance, nor would we have chosen Him (Isaiah 53:2-3).

No, Jesus is the Lamb OF GOD, the sacrifice of God’s choosing! God Himself—the One who had been sinned against, whose wrath needed to be appeased—chose this Lamb.

Thank God He chose Him! For our holy God could never be satisfied or appeased by our trinkets of goodness. We could never provide a sacrifice that might be called pure and holy—to say nothing of sufficient to pay for our sin or for the sin of another (Psalm 49:7).

“WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!” — The Jesus we are earnestly invited to look upon is the Jesus of the Scriptures. He did not

come merely to settle petty differences among men or to right the world’s perceived wrongs and correct her ailments. He came to remove what all of these things grow out of—the ever fertile ground of sin. He came to remove the sins of the entire world of mankind—past, present, and future.

This is one case where we rejoice to be included with the rest of sinful mankind. For here we are reminded that Jesus came to take away *our* sins.

When we see Jesus, the Lamb of God, hanging on the cross for the sins of the world, let us then remember that our sins hang there too, for we are part of this world (for now).

We are among those who needed to be redeemed. We are redeemed! How? “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

—Pastor Andrew Schaller



**With Lent in view—**

*“Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44b).*

## HOW SERIOUS IS SIN?

How serious is sin?

In a day when many people deny the concept of sin and maintain that no one should be judgmental—in a day when many people further suggest that aberrant behavior should not be labeled as sin, but rather viewed as an illness or just the natural result of a poor environment, it is important to answer that question.

Sin is so serious in God’s eyes that He tells us, “Without shedding of blood there is no remission” (Heb. 9:22b). The

blood of mere mortals, however, would never suffice, for as the Psalmist insists, “None of them (no human being, that is) can by any means redeem his brother...for the redemption of their souls is costly” (Ps. 49:7a,8a).

How serious is sin? It took the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s own Son, to effect the remission or forgiveness of sins.

When we think of the shedding of Jesus’ blood, we naturally and properly think of His death on Calvary’s cross. It

was there in connection with His crucifixion that Jesus suffered the anguish of hell on our behalf.

Yet the blood shed on the cross was not the only blood shed by Jesus during His passion. Jesus had already shed His blood when He was scourged during His trial before Pontius Pilate. The evangelist Luke informs us that even earlier, while Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, His “sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” It is interesting that Luke, a doctor, should note and record this detail.

### Severe Agony!

Pierre Barbet, a medical doctor, explains (in his book entitled *A Doctor at Calvary*) how Jesus’ sweat was mingled with His blood to form “clots of blood” [a literal translation], which Luke then says fell to the ground. Dr. Barbet identifies Jesus’ physiological condition as haematidrosis—a medical condition that can develop when someone experiences extreme psychological trauma.

In such situations, capillaries under the skin become extremely distended and burst when they come into contact with the sweat glands distributed within the skin. The blood from the capillaries then mingles with sweat and, upon being exposed to the air, forms clots which fall off the body. This phenomenon causes the skin to become extremely sensitive and generally leaves a person’s body severely weakened.

What does this tell us about Jesus’ passion? It tells us that Jesus’ passion involved unbelievably severe physical agony!

Let no one suggest that, because Jesus was true God and therefore all-powerful, His suffering was not real or



was more easily endured than had He been a mere mortal man. In fact, just the opposite is true!

In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus was preparing to bear the sins of the world, and the pressures of that upcoming passion were immense and obviously wearing. In spite of His divinity and consequent power, Jesus underwent this trauma—thus paving the way for Him to suffer on the cross in ways which He alone could and would suffer.

Jesus shed His blood in order to pay the penalty we deserved in view of sin and thereby He saved our souls. Sin is without question deadly serious!

Ye who think of sin but lightly  
Nor suppose the evil great  
Here may view its nature rightly,  
Here its guilt may estimate.  
Mark the Sacrifice appointed,  
See who bears the awful load;  
'Tis the WORD, the LORD's ANOINTED,  
Son of Man and Son of God! (TLH #153:3)

—Pastor Paul Nolting

# John Mark: From Disappointment To Acceptance

**T**he story of John Mark is not only humanly predictable but also widespread in its application. Timidity and sincerity battled for supremacy in his young heart, but he grew from disappointment to acceptance and even triumph.

Young Mark's mother, Mary, was noted in the early church in Jerusalem for her hospitality and Christian zeal. Her home served as a prayer-meeting place, and it was to this haven that Peter first went after his release from prison. Young John Mark was, therefore, fully acquainted with the power of intercessory prayer as well as with at least one apostle. In addition, his uncle Barnabas had become a leader in the church and had first introduced Saul of Tarsus to the family.

With this pedigree and against this background, it comes as no surprise that young Mark himself was zealous for the Lord and eagerly accepted the invitation to join Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey.

Alas, what lay ahead for the young man were not countless thrills but service long and difficult (for one with more enthusiasm than maturity). When Paul and his companions forged on to Perga, John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13).

What explains this desertion and failure? Travel illness or homesickness? Boredom or fear of future hardships? (We've all been young; fill in the blanks yourself.)

But time brings maturity, and two years later John Mark was again ready

for service and travel. Only this time Paul refused to have him, which led to a sharp disagreement between Paul and Barnabas. Paul would not give up his evaluation; Barnabas would not give up his nephew.

No doubt, John Mark was blamed for the bitter division. Could he ever outgrow this stigma of shame and failure?

## A Second Chance!

But there was one who heard of Mark's trouble, one who was quite familiar with failure and embarrassment himself—Simon Peter.

In fact, the whole of our Lord's Passion history is full of people given a second chance: Peter, the denier; the thief on the cross; and the Roman centurion beneath the cross—each grabbed the offer; others didn't.

Surely we (sinners young and old) also see ourselves in the story, not measuring up to God's standard—sinners all fallen short of God's expectations and glory. But God forgave, giving His own Son Jesus to a horrible death so He could forgive all.

In the councils of the eternal Godhead, there was and is no quarreling regarding our forgiveness. In Christ we daily and graciously have second and third and fourth—even unnumbered gracious opportunities, for God is most merciful and patient.

So John Mark went first to Cyprus with uncle Barnabas [note how God used the division to double up the mission teams] and later ministered with Simon Peter, who called Mark 'my

son' (in his letter to the scattered Christians in Asia Minor).

Evidently those believers became acquainted with John Mark, for he greeted them through Peter; obviously the relationship between Peter and Mark became very close. Mark heard Peter's preaching and teaching; he became aware of the details and human touches in Peter's life which were then reflected in his own writing—the Gospel according to Mark.

And when Paul was later imprisoned in Rome, he encouraged Timothy to hurry to Rome, adding: "Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry" (2 Tim. 4:11).

Quite a reversal of reputation indeed! Perhaps Mark was never fitted to be a trail-blazing missionary; obviously he was meant to fill another

niche in God's plans.

We thank the Holy Spirit for moving Mark to write his Gospel, and for his being of use to St. Paul in his hour of need.

We all were or still are young. When we were children we tended to act like children. We all make mistakes and have weaknesses in which we are sometimes greatly embarrassed and even have counted as failures. But our crucified Savior has won forgiveness for all.

And John Mark teaches us to persevere as we grow and are strengthened in our faith. Even as he went from seeming failure to acceptance, so all the faithful in Christ have gone from 'fallen short' to 'accepted' in Christ the Beloved.

—*Pastor David Fuerstenau*

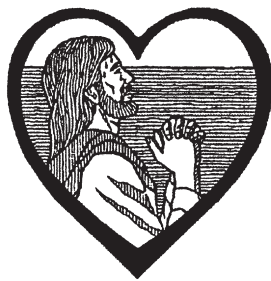


## The Friend Of Sinners

"Gospel" means "good news." Dear reader, after due consideration of everything you find "good" in the newspaper, what can compare with the news that, though you are a sinner, Jesus Christ, the holy and crucified Son of God, is truly your Friend?

Throughout His life on this Earth, Jesus showed Himself to be "the Friend of tax collectors and sinners." Not understanding how true it was, Jesus' enemies hung that moniker on Him, doing so with sarcasm and hatred.

Truly, rather than hobnobbing with the societal elite, with the politically prominent, or with those "who need no physician" (as He Himself once put it), Jesus made a point of socializing with



the (spiritually) sick.

And aren't we glad for that? Aren't we glad that Jesus didn't steer clear of or shy away from the woman caught in the act of adultery; or from Zacchaeus, who had made a practice of cheating people on their taxes; or from Pharisee Nicodemus, who had proudly practiced a self-righteous religion; or from count-

less other sinners—including His own disciples who “forsook Him and fled” during that first notorious “holy week”? Think of Peter, who denied knowing—he simply lied!—his Lord out there in the high priest’s courtyard.

But let’s go easy on Peter. In our Lord’s most dire hour, would we have done any better?

Come with me to Calvary’s hill. When Jesus was crucified, His was the center of three crosses. On either side were criminals. One was a scoffing sinner (“If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us!”). The other, also a sinner, “rebuked him, saying, Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong” (Lk. 23:39ff).

What a confession of sins! What a confession of faith! What a “death-bed conversion” (the only one in Scripture, by the way)! Though in excruciating physical pain—in fact, in the death throes—what the penitent criminal most desired was assurance of forgiveness before God in heaven. Then he prayed: “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”

Did the Friend of sinners then sen-

tence him to some time in a place called purgatory? Did He tell the penitent that he hadn’t accumulated sufficient good deeds and prayers? No. Immediately the Savior said, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

How comforting! Up to the last moments before He died on that cross, Jesus proved Himself the Friend of sinners.

Again this Lenten season, let us rejoice in the real purpose of Christ’s coming. Though we are guilty of sinning every day in thought, word, and deed, yet as there was enough grace and mercy for the penitent criminal, so there is ample for you and me. Because of Christ’s perfect sacrifice, our sin-debt before holy God is marked: “Paid in full!”

Isn’t that good news, better than anything else you might read in the daily newspaper?!

Nor is that end of the story! The rest of the story is—He ROSE AGAIN!

So the guarantee for all penitent, believing sinners is: the moment they die, they enter with Jesus into the Paradise above. Hallelujah!

—*Pastor Paul Fleischer*

(Written for “The Pastor’s Column” of a local newspaper)



## A Prophetic Passion Prayer of the Messiah

During the Lenten Season of the church year, we are accustomed to reading the passion history of Jesus Christ found in the Gospel accounts. They serve the salutary purpose of reminding us of the tremendous suffer-

ing our Savior endured for our eternal salvation. Never should we grow tired of these Bible accounts, because they show God’s supreme love for us poor sinners in Christ Jesus, as well as the ultimate sacrifice Jesus willingly made

in our behalf.

The record of Jesus' passion, though, is not confined to the New Testament but can also be found in prophetic form in the Old Testament. Perhaps the most familiar to us is Isaiah 53, where Jesus' vicarious atonement (or His substitutionary redemptive work) is beautifully foretold. Still another is Psalm 22, which opens with Jesus' anguished-filled plea to the heavenly Father, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

After Psalm 22, there is no other psalm quoted as much in the New Testament and relating to Jesus' passion as Psalm 69.

While penned by an inspired psalmist, this psalm is the voice of our Savior who can be heard offering a prayer to God the Father; Jesus seeks His Father's help, as He suffered terribly for our sins and was subjected to the venomous cruelties of His enemies.

Jesus' petitions also include the just plea for judgment upon all those who reject Him in unbelief in spite of all His efforts to recover them from Satan and to spare them suffering the eternal torments of hell. But then also, the Savior's prayer to the heavenly Father speaks of His glorious victory that is enjoyed by all those who are of a poor and contrite spirit, and of a believing heart.

In His plea for help, the Savior tells of His enemies who opposed Him. He said, they "are more than the hairs of my head"; they "hate me without a cause"; and they are "my enemies wrongfully" (v. 4).

Why would anyone hate and oppose the LORD who lived to serve, heal, and save sinners? Quite simply, they didn't want to be reproved of their sin

**THE PSALMS  
THE CHRISTIAN'S  
PRAYER BOOK**

**—Please read Psalm 69—**

and be told they needed Him as their Savior. Their animosity was aroused when Jesus—whose zeal for God's house had eaten Him up (v. 9; cf. Jn. 2:17)—cleansed the temple, and when He was hailed as the Son of David who was called on to save the people (cf. Mt. 21:12-15).

The very ones He came to save treated Him with "reproach," "shame," and "dishonor" (v. 19). And how did this affect the Savior? He said, "Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness" (v. 20). Still, in speaking of the enemies' reproach, the apostle Paul tells of Jesus willingly allowing Himself to be subjected to all the shame and ignominy for us as our Savior (v. 9b; Rom. 15:3)

**Unfathomable Suffering!**

The aspect of our Savior's suffering that is unfathomable to the human mind is the bearing of the colossal weight upon His soul and mind of every human sin throughout human history, as well as His suffering the full fury of God's eternal wrath in payment for them all! Our Savior helps to advance our understanding of what He was going through when, in His opening plea for help, He cries out, "Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in deep mire, Where there is no standing; I have come into deep waters, Where the floods overflow me. I am weary with

my crying; My throat is dry; My eyes fail while I wait for my God” (vv. 1-3).

As He pleaded for help in the midst of His suffering, were there any who came to His aid? Jesus answers, “I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; And for comforters, but I found none” (v. 20b). Even when He desired to receive a drink to quench His thirst after all His bitter sufferings on the cross, He says, “They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink” (v. 21).

Although our Savior endured all this so that every human soul could be redeemed eternally, He mournfully acknowledges that due to their unbelief, not everyone will finally be received into heaven. Jesus is found lamenting over Jerusalem for this very reason and sadly makes the observation, “See! Your house is left to you desolate” (Mt. 23:38). This same remark is in verse 25 of Psalm 69, where He petitions the heavenly Father to condemn those who reject and oppose Him (vv. 22-28) and finish out their life in unbelief.

Some would question this as coming from the mouth of the Savior, since He can be heard from the cross praying for His enemies, “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do”

(Lk. 23:34). However, the Lord Jesus is just and consistent when He calls for the condemnation of those who spurn His redeeming love and misuse their time of grace in turning a deaf ear to His call to repentance. Everyone needs to give heed to these words of Jesus, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mk. 16:16).

In this psalm there is much anguish as well as sadness heard in the voice of the Savior as He brings His pleas to the throne of God. We appreciate it that His prayer ends with joyful triumph and words of praise and thanksgiving (vv. 29-36). For the Savior’s passion does not end in defeat but rather in victory, since He dealt a deadly blow to Satan when His sufferings and death atoned for all our transgressions.

And so, with God’s eternal plan for man—salvation!—fully accomplished, the Savior speaks songs of praise for the name of God the Father—songs being sung by Him, by humble believers, and by the heavenly host.

Praise be to God the Father for planning our salvation, and to Jesus for willingly carrying it out, and to the Holy Spirit for giving us faith to eternally rejoice in it!

—*Pastor Mark Gullerud*



**Dec. 4, 2005, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Weslaco, Tex. welcomed its new pastor, Roland Gurgel (gown); others (l-r): Hans Hovda (Pres.), Gene Rutz, Pastor Daniel Fleischer, Pastor Luke Bernthal, Daniel Hanel**

# IT WAS I

Who sentenced Jesus Christ to die?  
Who really crucified God's Son?  
Who will admit to be the one  
Who sentenced Him to die?  
Who sentenced Him to die?

I s'pose that Judas could be blamed,  
When overcome by Satan's spell  
For thirty coins our Lord he'd sell—  
And sentenced Him to die,  
And sentenced Him to die. (Mt. 26:15)

"Let His blood be on all of us  
And let it stain our children too,"  
Thus cried the shouting, angry Jew  
And sentenced Him to die,  
And sentenced Him to die. (Mt. 17:25)

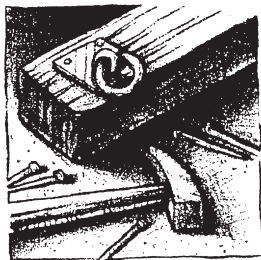
And how about the great High Priest  
Who reasoned that one sacrifice  
For the whole nation would suffice—  
And sentenced Him to die?  
And sentenced Him to die? (Jn. 11:50)

Or was it Pontius Pilate, when—  
The guiltless he could eas'ly save  
Yet washed his hands—the order gave  
And sentenced Him to die?  
And sentenced Him to die? (Mt. 27:24)

The soldiers too someone might blame;  
Their work for Pilate was complete  
When they with spikes nailed hands  
and feet

And sentenced Him to die,  
And sentenced Him to die. (Jn. 19:17)

So on and on the blame could go;  
Yet, surely, each of us knows why  
The Savior Jesus Christ must die.  
We sentenced Him to die!  
We sentenced Him to die! (1 Tim. 1:15)



The sins of every one of us,  
God heaped on Jesus Christ alone;  
And there upon His judgment throne  
He sentenced Him to die,  
He sentenced Him to die. (Isa. 53:6)

So I have sentenced Him to die!  
Oh, many a man was also there  
Who cursed, betrayed, and didn't care,  
But I know it was I  
Who sentenced Him to die. (Ps. 22:6-8)

My sins have sentenced Him to die  
Oh, many more have sinned like me  
And also nailed Him to the tree  
But I know it was I  
Who sentenced Him to die. (Isa. 53:4,5)

My heart in true repentance lies;  
Beneath the cross, His mercyseat,  
I lay my sins at Jesus' feet,  
And there forgiveness find,  
And there forgiveness find. (Lk. 18:13)

I'll praise Him every day I live,  
And pray His Holy Spirit send,  
That all my days until life's end  
His praises I will give!  
His praises I will give! (Rev. 5:11-13)

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—L.D. Redlin, 2004  
(References added by D. Fleischer)

## **Studies in First Thessalonians—**

“(We) wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come” (1 Thess. 1:10).

### **Chapter 2: 17-3:5**

## **Brethren**

“Brethren” is an old-fashioned word which has been replaced with “brothers” in most of the modern Bible versions.

Yet it is a good word, short for “brothers and sisters in Christ,” useful for expressing the truth that believers in Jesus Christ are all members of one family, the family of God. We who believe in Jesus are brethren, because Jesus has brought us all into God’s family by cleansing us of our sins. The Holy Spirit has given all of us admission into God’s family by Baptism.

Paul emphasizes this truth in First Thessalonians where thirteen times he addresses the congregation as brethren. He is concerned that his readers should understand that he regarded them as brothers and sisters in Christ because he was separated from them after a relatively short ministry among them.

In Acts 17 we learn how Paul’s time in Thessalonica was cut short. After Paul began his ministry in there, persecution had arisen. Many of the Jews there believed, also many pagan Greeks. But the unbelieving Jews were envious at the success of the gospel. They gathered a mob and attacked the house of Jason, one of the believers.

Out of concern for the safety of Paul and Silas, the congregation sent them on to Berea by night. This hasty depar-

ture left Paul with a burning concern for the Thessalonian believers. This concern grew more severe as time and again his plans to revisit the congregation were frustrated.

### **A Crown of Rejoicing!**

The term brethren was no mere formality with Paul. He truly considered believers his brothers and sisters in Christ. He said that they were a hope, a joy, and a crown of rejoicing to him and his co-workers.

Paul had great joy in those who had come to faith in Christ through his preaching. He looked forward to the day of Christ’s return when he and they would stand together among the multitudes of the redeemed. Paul cared about the welfare of these Christians. He was afraid that they might be shaken by the persecution that they had experienced, that Satan might drive them away from Christ.

Paul could not endure the situation of having had no word from the Thessalonians, so he finally sent Timothy, a brother, to establish and encourage them in the faith.

With these words the Holy Spirit shows us the close relationship and bond that we have with fellow believers—they are truly our brothers and sisters!

Just as we are concerned about the welfare of our blood brothers and sisters, so we are concerned about our spiritual brethren. When we are separated from them, we long to have word of them. We rejoice to talk with brethren and to find them strong and growing in faith. We are grieved to find any of them weak or straying. We miss the brother or sister in Christ whom the Lord takes home, but we look forward to the coming of Christ when all of us who believe will appear together before His throne to be with Him and rejoice together forever.

Paul's joy at hearing of the steadfast faith of the Thessalonians also reminds

us of the privilege of being involved in a gospel ministry. The Lord had given him a role in bringing souls to Christ, and for that Paul was humbly thankful. We too have a part in bringing souls to Christ as we support and participate in the ministry of the gospel in our congregations and in our church body, and as we bear witness to Christ in our daily lives.

In such work there is the joy of knowing that those whom the Spirit converts or strengthens through our witness will appear with us before the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming. They will be our brethren forever.

—Pastor John Klatt



## INTRODUCING the Books of the Prophets

# Obadiah

***“...Let’s not forget who has the ability to bring our enemies down. He is the one who has already destroyed the powerful triumvirate of the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh. With their power shattered, only minor skirmishes occur in our daily lives.”***

Tucked between *Amos* and *Jonah*, the book of *Obadiah* could easily be overlooked. This shortest of the Old Testament minor prophets’ books appears to be a straightforward account of Israel’s relationship with the neighboring nation of Edom.

Upon closer examination, we trust the Holy Spirit will show us truths that still apply to our lives today.

“The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord God concerning Edom...” Thus begins the book—with our Lord aligning Himself against the nation of Edom. Who were these neighbors of Israel and why was God pronouncing judgments against them?

The kingdom of Edom was strategically located in the mountains east of the Dead Sea. Edomite raiding parties

## Outline of OBADIAH

### **I. Certainty of Edom's Complete Destruction. (Vv. 1-9)**

### **II. This Punishment is a Consequence of Their Animosity and Active Hostility against God's People. (Vv. 10-16)**

### **III. The Certain Deliverance of the True Israel; the victorious extension of the kingdom of Christ. (Vv. 17-21)**

(Outline adapted from *Introduction to the Books of the Bible*, Drewes, Concordia Pub. House, St. Louis, Mo., 1965)

were known to storm out of the mountains, plunder their prey, then easily slip back into their mountain strongholds.

This brought the people of Edom a feeling of security that grew into arrogance. But we know that God has the last say also in the affairs of men. "The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; you who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to the ground?'" Who indeed? The Lord responds, "'Though you ascend as high as the eagle, and though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down,' says the Lord" (vs. 2-4).

Even at the very time of the book's writing, enemies were already gathering against Edom.

Why did God single out these people to bring them down? The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, Jacob's elder brother, thus distant "cousins" of the Israelites. The interaction between these two nations, however, was rarely if ever on friendly terms. Often throughout their history the people of Edom had joined the enemies of Israel in pillaging and plundering the Israelite nation. The last of these raids came after the Babylonians sacked Jerusalem and carried off the cream of the Israeli society.

The Lord pronounces judgment on Edom for these actions. "For violence

against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever" (vs. 10). God chastises Edom for watching and rejoicing in Israel's troubles and also for taking part in their plunder.

### **A Message For His People**

But the Lord also has a message for Israel. "But on Mt. Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, but the house of Esau shall be stubble..." (vs. 17-18). Four years later Edom was sacked by the same Babylonians that they had aided. Other nations such as the Nebateans came in over the years and finished the job.

Unlike this fate of Esau, Jacob (Israel) was restored to his land by the grace of God.

How are your enemies doing? Do they seem to gang up on you when you've already been brought low? The arrogance of the people of this world seems to fly right in the face of God. His Word and His people are so lowly regarded at times that we may begin to feel very insignificant indeed.

Let's not forget who has the ability to bring our enemies down. He is the One who has already destroyed the powerful triumvirate of the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh. With

their power shattered, only minor skirmishes occur in our daily lives. Even if we lose possessions, family, or even life itself, the ultimate victory has already been placed in our hands by Christ Himself.

God has also promised a restoration greater than He promised Israel. On the

last day we and all believers will be gathered to the heavenly Mt. Zion, and “there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness.” There we shall see our Conqueror face to face and know full well that the victory is His. “And the kingdom shall be the Lord’s” (v. 21).

—Teacher David W. Bernthal



## The Christian Citizen

—Eighth in a Series—

### INTEGRITY ISSUES: CHARACTER MATTERS

“When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan” (Proverbs 29:2).

In our great country we citizens are the ones who elect those who govern on the local, state, and federal levels. This is a serious responsibility—one that requires us to assess the positions of the candidates on the issues we consider to be most important. Our own convictions on national defense, economic policy, taxation, jobs, education, defense of human life, and the environment (among other things) should be compared with the positions of those who are running for office. This will surely help us to make wise choices on Election Day.

But what about the personal character and integrity of the individual candidates? To what extent should this be a factor when considering which candidate to support?

In the course of recent United States politics, various scandals have erupted over the behavior of elected officials.

Many have adopted the position that a person’s attitudes and actions in his personal life have little or nothing to do with his job performance in government. This idea conflicts both with the Scriptures and with common sense. Someone who cannot be trusted to be personally honest or moral with the people who are closest to him can hardly be entrusted with the responsibilities of public office.

When exercising our right to vote, we ought to give serious consideration to measures of personal integrity which the Lord identifies for us in the Scriptures. Here are some of them:

**HONESTY** — “Arrogant lips are unsuited to a fool—how much worse lying lips to a ruler!” (Proverbs 17:7) It is easy to throw up one’s hands and despair of modern-day politicians ever being completely honest and forthright—it seems they have too many disparate people they must please in order to get elected. However, the bold liar—

or one who can be shown to habitually and purposefully deceive—surely ought to be disqualified from a Christian’s support.

**WISDOM** — “Remove the wicked from the king’s presence and his throne will be established through righteousness” (Proverbs 25:5). A man who seeks public office will often be called upon to appoint others to positions of great responsibility in government. It is a measure of this person’s wisdom to observe the kind of people in whom he places this trust. Sometimes you *can* judge a man by the company he keeps.

**COMPASSION** — “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy” (Proverbs 31:8-9). When a candidate’s positions are favorable toward powerful interests who support him, this may or may not be a moral flaw on his part. His position may be one of conviction or it may be one of convenience. But when he has the compassion and courage to stand up for those who are powerless, that is a sign of true strength of character.

**FIDELITY** — “Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral” (Hebrews 13:4). When a man stands before the Lord and pledges faithfulness to his wife “so long as we both shall live” and then goes back on that promise, how can he be trusted to keep his oath of office?

**HUMILITY** — “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment” (Romans 12:3). A man who behaves as though he considers himself to be superior to the public who elected

**“...In our great country, we citizens are the ones who elect those who govern on the local, state, and federal levels. This is a serious responsibility—one that requires us to assess the positions of the candidates on the issues we consider to be most important.”**

him is one who seeks to be served by his power and position rather than serving the best interests of his constituency.

**PIETY** — “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD” (Psalm 33:12). The people of our communities, state, and nation are best served if their leaders are Christian. (A person cannot, of course, read a candidate’s heart. Still, a civic leader who professes faith in Christ, and whose life appears to match his confession, has a distinct advantage over one who lacks these qualities. Only a follower of our Lord Jesus can embody the best characteristics of leadership for the right reason—that is, a humbling knowledge of sin and of the grace of God in Christ.) Also, a Christian will be in the best position to preserve freedom of religion in our land, knowing that in order to flourish the kingdom of Christ does not need the coercive power of the state.

While it is plain that no one can measure up to these ideals entirely, we do well to look for them in our candidates. Above all, do not neglect to PRAY “...for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:2-4).

—Pastor Bruce Naumann

## “Baptism Now Saves You”

(1 Pet. 3:21, NASB)

Imagine receiving a telegram: “You are the heir of a treasure of untold worth. It is being sent to you via ship across the Pacific. Here is the combination to the safe.” Sounds great!

Next telegram: “The ship sank.” That treasure would change your life so much if you could just get your hands on it, but it isn’t going to do you much good if you can’t reach it.

According to the Scriptures, Jesus Christ was crucified, dead, and buried for you! He endured that to redeem you from being damned forever. That He bore the punishment you deserved means He won a life that you don’t deserve—that is, a life of joy and peace, a life that never ends.

It’s a treasure that has your name on it, but how are you going to get it? Christ did all this for you centuries ago. There is no time-machine to take you back, and there is no spacecraft that can take you to heaven to seek your treasure from Christ in person. How are you going to get your treasure?

Over the centuries people have, from their own imaginations, invented ways for obtaining eternal life and happiness. Every one of those ways is centered in what people try to do—trying to impress God with sincerity and good works; trying to win His blessing by dying in a holy war; trying to become one with Him through self-cleansing meditation. You name it, they’ll try it. If you were to set out from San Diego



in a rubber raft equipped with a snorkel, you would have a better chance of retrieving your treasure from the bottom of the ocean than you ever would of trying to earn eternal life by means of what you can do.

So how can you get your divine treasure? Jesus sends it to you! He doesn’t use FedEx, He uses His gospel! The gospel is the means by which His grace travels across the centuries, yes, by which it travels all the way from heaven to us.

His gospel is in His Word and His Sacraments. The power of life is not in you, it is in His gospel, because He puts His power in His gospel. That is what makes His Word different from any other word you’ll ever hear. That is what makes His sacraments different from any other ceremony you’ll ever experience. God puts His power in them, and His power changes things. His power changes you.

For example, when you were baptized, all your sins—past, present, and future—were washed away. Yes, baptism is a cleansing flood that washes away the contamination of sin. Through the baptism which Jesus ordained, the life-giving power of His sacrifice is applied to the sinner. Even the sinful nature you inherited from

*Continued, p. 24*



# CROSS PURPOSES



## CHRISTIAN OR LUTHERAN?

Recently an invitation came through e-mail to participate in a Christian website. The information states that this website will be “bringing true, online Biblical community to the web” (sic). It is described as “God’s new tool to spread His kingdom.” The website will offer services to attract and bring Christians together in different activities all over the web. It even offers sermons.

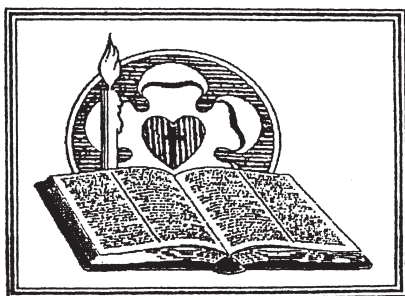
There is a reason why this writer has not mentioned the website. We appreciate the fact that Christianity is being promoted in this “post-Christian” age. Yet we cannot promote or participate in “Christian” endeavors that themselves promote “an agreement to disagree” mentality toward doctrine. When one looks at the website, one finds names such as Colson, Osteen, Swindoll. One can access The Lutheran Hour as well as Bible churches and community churches. Sermons are available from men and women of different faiths. One of the sponsors is the Beth Moore Ministries as well as the ecumenical Promise Keepers. Basically it offers a “Christian” smorgasbord.

We thank the Lord for anyone who is led to confess the Lord Jesus Christ through whatever forum Christ is preached. Nevertheless, we cannot be part of or identify with a Christianity that is so broad-based as to include any and all differing definitions of Christianity.

Within the broad definition of “Christian,” one can find those who

deny creation and promote evolution. Inspiration of the Bible is not a universal teaching within Christianity today. There are promoters of and defenders of homosexuality. Abortion is a viable option within some “Christian communities.” In some Christian definitions and practices, ethics has replaced the teaching of justification by grace through faith. Emotion has replaced faith in Christ as the evidence of saving faith. Some who are identified with Christianity in fact teach salvation by works. Some hold that there is a collaborative effort between God and man in conversion. Others deny the power and efficacy of Baptism. Still others do not teach the Real Presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament. There are charismatics whose religion is subjective—and, in fact, judgmental of such as have never had the “experience.” Millennialism has affected many who call themselves Christian. Most of Christianity today has little if any concept of what Scripture teaches concerning fellowship practice.

So we will not promote or participate in a Christian endeavor on-line or off-line that breaks down the line of demarcation between truth and error. We know very well that we will be accused of being out of the mainstream and out on the “far right.” But whose approval do we seek, that of man or that of God? Paul said, “For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a



servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10).

Over an hundred years ago an eminent Bible student and faithful teacher, Francis Pieper, asked in an essay, “What would happen if the Church would identify Christianity with morality and teach salvation by moral conduct instead of salvation by faith?” (*What is Christianity and Other Essays*, CPH, 1933, p. 12). Certainly Christian teaching promotes morality not as the foundational teaching, but rather as a fruit of gospel preaching. Sanctification follows on justification. But that is where modern “Christianity” is today—the promotion of moral conduct is emphasized at the expense of salvation teaching.

Pieper answers his own question: “In that case the Church would lead men to damnation, not to salvation” (ibid). He continues, “But the greatest fraud in the world is a Church that discards the crucified Christ and proclaims salvation by works in His place; for it robs men of salvation” (p. 13). “We must therefore avoid the old, but ever new, error that Christianity is essentially moral conduct. Never! Never! Christianity is faith in the gospel, faith in the free remission of sins, which Christ has gained for all men. By this preaching of the gospel, we save souls and so accomplish the primary purpose for which the Christian Church exists” (p. 14). We reiterate, the Christian life flows out of the regenerate

heart as the redeemed child of God lives his salvation-life to the glory of the Savior God.

The great commission of our Lord says, “Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature” (Mk. 16:15). In Matthew we read, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you” (Mt. 28:19,20). They of ill will may accuse the gospel and us as the cause for the evils in the world. They err, and must answer to God!

So then are we Christian? Do we identify with that name? Most assuredly! We could not deny that name without denying Christ! Built upon the doctrine of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20), we are Christian!

But in today’s milieu of churches identified as Christian, we are Lutheran! “In these days it is not enough to call ourselves Christians in general, if we would candidly and fairly declare our faith. There was a time when it was enough to say: ‘I am a Christian.’ For the first 300 years of the Christian era that expression was sufficient to set forth the peculiar faith of a man’s heart... Since the Christian world is divided into a thousand sects, how can others know what we believe when we only declare: ‘We are Christians’? Do not now even those want to be called Christians who reject Christ, oppose His gospel, [and] deny his eternal divinity and perfect atonement? Yes, if all the enemies of Christ and of His Word were honest enough to openly confess their undying animosity to the Crucified One and

renounce the name of ‘Christian,’ then there would be no need of any other name than that of Christian by which to express our faith. But as even the enemies of Christ adorn themselves with His name...it must be evident to everyone that a time has arrived in which the friend of Christ must more distinctly declare himself, if he would not deny his adorable Redeemer before the world...” (*What is a Lutheran?*, 8th edition, undated, p. 14) “As dear then as the truth is to us, as dear to us as is the glory of God, and our own salvation, so little can we especially in these days of general distraction give up the name ‘Lutheran,’ by which we distinguish ourselves from false believers of every age, and openly confess the truth of every age” (p. 20).

Candidly, in these days we must even be more specific as to what kind of Lutheran we are. As Lutherans we hold

fast to Luther’s doctrine pure and without qualification because his doctrine is drawn from Scripture.

Be that as it may, and for our purpose now, we are Christians who are Lutheran. If we are truly Lutheran, we cannot promote or participate with those to whom the name “Christian” is purposely broad to allow and teach whatever one chooses, while covering false doctrine in the cloak of Jesus.

Luther said, “The perfectly pure, the only, and certain Word of God must be the foundation of our faith” (WLS:II, par. 2693, p. 863). We say then that if it is not Scripture, it is not Lutheran—or Christian! If we are Christians, we will not deny our Lutheran name, either by omission or by teaching, by joining or by supporting anyone who teaches contrary to Scripture!

—*Pastor Daniel Fleischer*



**Above: West Central District Women’s Retreat, Chadron State Park, Nebraska, Sept. 2005.**  
**Left: Some participants from Redeemer, Cheyenne: Sylvia Sprengeler, Karen Gallaher, Laila Fleischer, Karen Lesco.**

# SMORGASBORD

## • MORE FROM E. SCHALLER!

As one who was privileged to sit at Prof. Egbert Schaller's feet and of late has enjoyed reading his printed sermons—even sharing them on occasion with our congregation—we were pleased to receive the following bulletin announcement.

*A new volume of SELECTED SERMONS by E. Schaller has just been published, and copies are now available. This booklet, Volume IV, is organized in five series of sermons preached by Pastor Schaller to his congregation over the course of five years during the 1950's. The quality of these sermons recommends them for daily home devotions, as many of our members have been using Volumes I, II, and III (also still available).*

*Twenty-seven sermons were delivered during three Trinity seasons, featuring God's work with Abraham and His people in Old Testament times; another thirteen sermons (in two series) were preached during Lent, centering on Jesus, our great High Priest and His words from the cross.*

*Order from P. R. Koch, 3425 Morgan Ave., Eau Claire, Wis. 54701 Phone 715-835-5083; or e-mail parekoak@aol.com. Price is \$6.00 per copy, plus postage.*

The above came directly from Prof. Koch. To whet our readers' appetite a bit more for these excellent—thoroughly scriptural, law-and-gospel-based—sermons, we share the following from the “Foreword” to the latest edition of *SELECTED SERMONS BY E. Schaller*.

*“Our Lord endowed Pastor Schaller with a full range of gifts as theologian, educator, and defender of the Truth. He was a valued contributor to church periodicals and theological journals over the period of four decades.*

*“He earned the esteem of his contemporaries as a mainstay during doctrinal controversy, served as one of the theological founders of the Church of the Lutheran Confession, and supplied spiritual nourishment for the flourishing of Christian faith-living wherever he spoke.*

*“Those who knew E. Schaller as pastor, teacher, colleague, or friend will agree with the testimony of the Lord that ‘his works do follow him.’ Those who did not know him in person will arrive at their own estimation via the printed page before them. It is hoped that one and all will benefit from the way Pastor Schaller conveyed God's messages to the hearer's heart. He was a premier communicator of God's Word—both law and gospel.”*

In our “information-glut” day and age, few books that can be purchased for \$6.00 per copy—they are not available in internet version—will be more beneficial to the reader. “Order . . . and read!”

## • CHRISTIAN OR LUTHERAN

The writing by the title in this issue (p. 17) stands on its own. Yet we'd like you to know it is a follow-up to “What is Wrong Within Lutheranism?” in our February issue. The author is doing us all a favor as he calls attention to the pitfalls of modern Christianity and Lutheranism.

—the Editor

*Fourteen Bible-centered devotions for the person who wants to know more about God and life with God. They were first composed for the "unchurched" living in nursing homes.*

## **#13: Have we mentioned attitude?**

Attitude is simple, and simply basic. It's the way we feel about ourselves in our relationships and the way we feel about others in our lives. Bad attitude is a huge hindrance to happiness, while a good attitude (like love) makes our world stay in orbit.

Though many folks have an attitude problem about Jesus and His place in their lives, He met others whom He describes like this: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn (over their sins) for they shall be comforted; Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:3-6).

He also told a story to some who "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others" when He pointed out the IRS officer who, in praying, "would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'" Was this the kind of attitude that pleases God? Yes! says Jesus. "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." So the tax collector received God's favor and mercy; God picked him up when he put himself down before God.

In another story (Luke 7:1-10), we hear of an Army captain who felt desperate for one of his servants, who was "sick and ready to die."

When his messengers asked Jesus to

### **Articles which have appeared in this series:**

- #1: Who are you? (Jan. '05)
- #2: "I don't know God very well." (Feb. '05)
- #3: How do I get to heaven? (Mar. '05)
- #4: Tell me more about Jesus! (Apr. '05)
- #5: Why is God concerned about me? (May '05)
- #6: Why is it always about Jesus? (June '05)
- #7: Are you window-shopping for heaven? (July '05)
- #8: What is your religion? (Aug. '05)
- #9: What is my status with God? (Sept. '05)
- #10: Will I lose anything in coming to God? (Oct. '05)
- #11: "So here I am!" (Dec. '05)
- #12: It's all in who you know! (Jan. '06)

come and heal the servant, they tried to impress Jesus with the captain's fine character and good deeds, saying that he was worthy, that he loved his neighbors, and he had even financed the building costs for one of their churches.

The captain himself sent a different message, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy....I did not even think myself worthy to come to You." What a remarkable, humble attitude!

How did it come out for the captain? Jesus healed the servant and then made this comment to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel." That's the key! Whereas we humans are impressed with the outward appearance, Jesus looked into his heart. There he honored Jesus as his Savior-God, ready and willing to bless

him. The man KNEW it! He depended on it! And Jesus did not let him down! and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise” (Psalm 51:17).  
 Amen! And Hallelujah to Jesus!

God responds gently to the person who comes to Him with humble apology, for the Bible assures me: “A broken

—Paul R. Koch

## —The Bread of Life—

### Daily Bible readings for home devotions April, 2006

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Reading</u>        | <u>Thought gleaned from the text</u>             | <u>Hymn</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1           | Mark 7:1-23           | A dishpan religion doesn't cleanse souls         | 376         |
| 2           | Mark 7:24-37          | A come-to-Jesus religion cleanses all            | 388,1-3     |
| 3           | Mark 8:27-38          | If He be the Christ, then follow Him!            | 346         |
| 4           | Mark 9:2-13           | This was an eye-opener...really!                 | 388,4-6     |
| 5           | Mark 9:14-29          | O faithless generation, how long...?             | 460         |
| 6           | Mark 9:33-41          | First or last, but always as a child             | 286         |
| 7           | Mark 10:13-22         | As a little child, not as a miser                | 630         |
| 8           | Mark 10:23-34         | With God it is possible to save souls            | 423         |
| 9           | Palm Sunday 11:1-11   | He comes in the name of the Lord                 | 162         |
| 10          | Mark 12:18-37         | Know the Bible and know God's power!             | 404         |
| 11          | Mark 13:1-23          | Through much tribulation...into the Kingdom      | 422         |
| 12          | Mark 13:24-37         | Do we read the signs in nature perceptively?     | 610         |
| 13          | Mark 14:1-26          | Mary lives in glory; Judas in infamy             | 310         |
| 14          | Good Friday 15:1-41   | They crucified the King of kings                 | 174         |
| 15          | Mark 15:42-47         | Had Joseph's waiting been a waste of time?       | 390         |
| 16          | Easter Sunday 16:1-13 | He is going before you...always!                 | 190         |
| 17          | Mark 16:12-20         | Unbelief and hardness of heart ... or rejoicing? | 301         |

*As Mark's account closes, we are directed to "the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs." Naturally, this leads us into the ACTS of the Holy Spirit working through the Apostles. As the Spirit softens hearts to repent and receive Jesus as Savior, the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus grows and flourishes.*

|    |              |                                               |     |
|----|--------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----|
| 18 | Acts 1:1-8   | Luke introduces his theme: the Kingdom of God | 213 |
| 19 | Acts 1:9-26  | It was time to replace Judas with Matthias    | 212 |
| 20 | Acts 2:1-13  | Pentecost already! And none too soon!         | 504 |
| 21 | Acts 2:14-28 | A sermon that needed another sermon           | 228 |
| 22 | Acts 2:29-35 | The subject was not David, but Jesus          | 207 |
| 23 | Acts 2:36-47 | What is there to do—but repent?!              | 428 |
| 24 | Acts 3:1-10  | All hail the power of Jesus' Name!            | 339 |
| 25 | Acts 3:11-26 | To bless you...from your iniquities           | 167 |
| 26 | Acts 4:1-12  | There is no other name but Jesus              | 114 |
| 27 | Acts 4:13-22 | You be the judge!                             | 27  |
| 28 | Acts 4:23-37 | Grant us boldness to speak Your word!         | 34  |
| 29 | Acts 5:1-16  | Of course, Satan can manipulate Christians!   | 405 |
| 30 | Acts 5:17-32 | To give repentance and forgiveness of sins    | 367 |

## Celebrating 25 Years

“Don’t mess with Texas”—familiar to residents and visitors alike as a motto of the Lone Star State—is also on many litter signs warning potential law breakers that “if you litter, you will be messing with Texas.”

Certainly I would not want to mess with Texas by breaking the law; however, there is one area in which Texas has been “messed with,” at least by members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church!

For the past 25 years the Lord has used St. Matthew's to “mess with” the religious scene here in Texas. Upon my arrival as pastor last April, the then-President of the congregation (Mr. Harold Gutzman, now with the Lord) extended me his hand, welcoming me to what he called the “buckle” of the Bible belt. As far as the church scene goes, he said, there is “a little of everything”—a perfect area to “mess with”!

For 25 years the Lord has taken this

little group of Christians and “messed with” the people of Dallas and their ideas of what the Bible teaches and doesn't teach. Skillfully, by His Spirit, the Lord has used a variety of His children at St. Matthew's to individually witness His saving Word; to physically build and maintain the church property; to encourage each other in the Word; to grow together in the faith; and even to bring the gospel to folks in Killeen, Texas and the Oklahoma City metro area.

Mr. Gene Rutz—while serving as pastor at Bethel Lutheran Church in Houston (Spring), Texas years ago—had also served several families in the Dallas area. On November 13, 2005, when St. Matthew's celebrated 25 years of the Lord's blessings, Mr. Rutz served as guest speaker. He gently reminded the congregation and visitors that the most important thing in life is faith in Jesus Christ—faith preserved



West Central District Pastoral Conference in Cheyenne (Sept. '05); standing: J. Naumann, G. Dummann, P. Fleischer, R. Grugel, P. Reim, T. Wheaton, N. Pfeiffer, J. Klatt; kneeling: Mk. Gurath, Matt Gurath, J. Sandeen, R. Roehl, Vicar Thurow, A. Schaller

by God through His Word unto eternal life.

The Bible text that guided this meditation was “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day” (2 Timothy 1:12).

“Messing with Texas” in the litter department—not a good idea! “Messing with Texas” in the department of the spiritual is something we pray the Lord will continue to do through His faithful Word proclaimed by His family of believers in this congregation.

Thanking the Lord for His continued blessing!

—*Pastor Matthew Hanel*



W. C. Pastors & Cheyenne train depot “boot”



Continued from p. 16—

Mom and Dad was dealt with by your Savior through your Baptism.

And now, even if it is twenty, forty, sixty, eighty years later, your Baptism has lost none of its power. The power of God’s forgiveness in Christ will continue to wash over you throughout your life until you have a change of address to the heavenly mansions.

—*Pastor Delwyn Maas*

## Announcements

### Project Kinship Sponsorships Available

The Project Kinship Committee reports that sponsorships are still available for orphans in our overseas mission field in India. CLC members who would like to become a sponsor for a child, or desire more information, should contact Pastor Tom Schuetze, 6768 Paw Paw Ave., Coloma, MI 49038. Phone: (269) 468-4368. E-mail: [tschuetze@netzero.net](mailto:tschuetze@netzero.net) The cost to sponsor an India orphan is \$50/month. Co-sponsorships (sponsorships divided between two individuals) are also available at a cost of \$25/month.

### Installation

In accord with our usage and order, Eric Libby, who was called to serve as pastor of Our Savior’s Lutheran Church, Jamestown, N.Dak. was ordained and installed on January 15, 2006. Participating were Pastor Douglas Libby (who preached the sermon) and Pastors Matthew Gurath, John H. Johannes, John M. Johannes, and Nathan Pfeiffer.

—*Pastor Michael Roehl*

**Send Change of Address to :**  
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