

The Lutheran
SPOKESMAN



**"THE SCRIPTURE
CANNOT
BE BROKEN."**

John 10, 35

**JUNE
1959**

God The Father, Be Our Stay

Fear Not, Little Flock

It has ever been a source of amazement that people find it so very much outside of the realm of possibility to sever their relationship from a church organization, even for the sake of doctrine, as though by such action they were indeed setting themselves adrift from every source of strength and comfort. This fearfulness is to be expected in the citadels of Rome, where for centuries the Church of Christ has been identified with the organization now known as the Roman Catholic Church. For these people to be cut off from the *church* means to be cut off from the divine source of all spiritual blessings.

It is only amazing when this is to be observed among Lutherans. The background and training and tradition of these people is all in direct opposition to this dependence upon an organization. From infancy these people have been taught to praise God that He gave a Luther courage to defy the mightiest ecclesiastical organization. It is their heritage that, "Through might of ours can naught be done," "If God were not upon our side," "Fear not, O little flock, the Foe," "Who trusts in God a strong abode," and above all, "One Little Word can fell him." It has been emblazoned before their eyes in all its glory: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for *it* is the power of God."

Yes, to Lutherans who place

their trust in the Word and in the mighty Christ at the right hand of God organizations have never been very important. They note that the Lord uses whatever form of organization is at hand. In its absence the Lord is still the Lord of the Church, mighty in battle.

In the past century it was especially the theologians of the Wisconsin Synod who stressed the dangers of organizationalism, synoditis, or synodalatry. The writers of the *Quartel-schrift* in the first two decades of the present century constantly pointed out the dangers in the Lutheran Synods, which glorified their organizational life. Any hint of a visible organization taking God's glory to itself, for the success of the Word and the mission of the Church was severely castigated. For this so quickly leads to externalizing the concept of the Church and its functions and to compromising the Gospel for external goals. As a result, this Synod was singularly free from glorying in itself and its achievements in its writings, its memorial booklets, anniversary accounts, and so forth.

Oh Wisconsin, whither is your strength departed? How quickly the pride of Solomon's court replaces the sling of David. Recently a shocking sheet of paper crossed my desk. It was only 5½ by 8½ inches in size. But it told a tragic tale. And we do well to see the gravity for

ourselves who are made of the same clay. It was a flyer, F59-5, distributed by the Board for Information and Stewardship of the Wisconsin Synod. The heading was, "*A Congregation's Nightmare — If there were No Synod.*" It demonstrated this 'nightmare' in detail:

"*Our pastor dies* — there are no schools to train any more — so we have no pastor to preach the Gospel and give the Sacraments to us! *Our lady teacher marries* — there is no teacher for our children for there is no Synod to train them! *On Sunday morning* — we find no hymnals in the pews for there is no Publishing House to provide them for us! *In schools* — our children have no catechisms — none are printed — nor any Sunday School or Vacation Bible School material! *But worse yet* — a member moves away and reports there is no Lutheran Church in his new town — just many unchurched people — but who will provide the mission and chapel — there is no Synod! *And Christ pleads* — 'Look at the heathen dying eternally in foreign lands — Go ye into *all* the world —' But we must shake our heads 'No' to Christ for we cannot go ourselves and we have no one to send!"

True, the Lord leads people and congregations to work together to carry on the work of the Church. True, the Lord has granted many blessings through the Wisconsin Synod to its people. And I could even understand, though not ap-

plaud, a somewhat excessive journalism putting the matter negatively to dramatically emphasize these blessings. But to speak of being without a Synod as "a congregation's nightmare!" God preserve us lest this thought ever enter into our hearts or minds, namely, that a congregation of God's children would be in any danger or jeopardy of losing the means of grace because there is no Synod. Let it not once be mentioned among us that we are dependent upon an organization for pastors and teachers, when "He giveth gifts to men." For if we really consider it to be a nightmare to be without a Synod, then we no longer grasp the primary meaning of the Gospel as God's power. Is it not blasphemy to even imply that the Shepherd would have difficulty providing a pastor *If there were no Synod?* How horrible to picture Christ pleading hopelessly for us to go and preach the Gospel, hopelessly, because there is no Synod! Ah, the very words of Christ, "Preach the Gospel to every creature," are creative words of unlimited power which brings it about that the Gospel is preached to every creature. Yes, those words of power bring it about in one place or age that Synods are formed to carry out the work. In another age they bring it about that a rather worthless fellow traveling to Damascus becomes Christ's foreign missionary to the entire Greek-Roman world. The job was accomplished tolerably well.

Beware of the leaven of organizationalism That is a nightmare indeed if Satan makes us put our trust in the princes of external institutions. For they are as the grass which withereth.

But if you have this *nightmare* that you are without a Synod, we proclaim a message of cheer to you: As you huddle in the upper room behind closed doors, unable to preach and unable to teach your young, listen closely for the sound

of His voice who is in your midst. He says, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain they are retained." Christ's little flock, His brothers and sisters, do not have nightmares. They have PEACE.

W. S.

The Preaching of the Unconditioned Gospel

II

Though it involves the sinfulness of man, it is in no wise conditioned by the same.

It lies in the very astounding nature of the Gospel of Christ, that it is not and cannot be conditioned in any manner whatever. This is true to such an extent that its very nature and true greatness is destroyed as soon as it is in any way restricted or hedged in. This is especially true regarding the preaching of the Gospel. We need only keep before our eyes the fact that this Gospel is proclamation of acts of God, acts founded in His love, actuated by His grace, acts fully accomplished in and by God Himself. "I, even I, blot out thy transgressions for mine own sake and remember not thy sins." (Is. 43:25) What man could not do, God has done; it is finished; it is forever

accomplished and can not be changed or restricted or conditioned by any thing.

Therefore with desperate earnestness must we strive to keep this preaching of the Gospel unrestricted and unconditioned by anything at all among us, though our reason tell us a thousand times that this is unreasonable, though it whisper that it will bring about looseness of living, cut down results, and bring the downfall of the Church.

So it must remain rooted within our hearts that though the Gospel in its preaching involves the sinfulness of man, it is in no wise restricted by the same. Certainly it does involve the sinfulness of man, for what else is the great and wonderful work of God, but that He has taken the burden of man's sin and guilt, placed it upon the Lamb with-

out blemish and spot, and removed the burden from all men for all time and all eternity. Very much does it involve the sinfulness of the lost and damned world. It presupposes it, takes it for granted as something that is historically and factually there since the fall of man. It is interwoven, this Gospel, with 4000 years of patience and forbearance of the just and righteous God, who made it His beyond all shadow of doubt, that man was sinful in such a measure that he could under no condition even begin to free himself from the burden. Those 4000 years, from the fall to the birth of Christ, stand as a loud testimony before all men, proclaiming: He has given men ever greater and higher gifts of wisdom and knowledge, of power and wealth, of might and dominion, lest haply they might seek Him and find Him. He took out from among them one people, Israel, and for 2000 years declared them His very own people, hedging them in by the schoolmaster, the law. He tried to separate them from all people in an isolated land and gave them the Gospel of promise, lest haply this one people as a nation might remain with Him and be true to Him. And at the end it proclaims the bitter truth: they have all become unprofitable, Jew and Gentile, a world utterly bankrupt, vile and lost, helpless sinners all.

Indeed the preaching of the Gospel involves man's sinfulness, is pre-

dicted upon it. The very awe-inspiring greatness of the wonderful works of God involves the fact that where gift and blessing, promise and help of the omnipotent Lord did fail. His all encompassing love and eternal mercy reached into the turmoil, lifted the 4000 years burden of failure and with one mighty act did make it come to pass, that all the mountainous load of guilt was removed and cancelled out forever. He was made sin for us. The Lord placed on Him the iniquity of us all.

But it is finished now. It has indeed been accomplished and in the proclamation of this Gospel there must and dare not be a shadow of a doubt cast, that this could ever be true for any man, for any group of men, for any nation or race or kingdom. This Gospel is not conditioned by any of the present sins of men, and never can they stand in the path of the proclamation of the abundant grace of God. Whether this preaching be done to a congregation of Christians who have for years heard the Gospel, or whether it be preached to a multitude of unbelieving heathen — for neither group can sin be set as a barrier to be crossed, before the fullness of the Gospel can reach them. The very thought that the preaching for one group must be different from the preaching to another already sets conditions and bounds to the preaching of the wonderful works of God. The preacher then

forgets that he is but the bearer of good news to men, forgets that the news is not made up by him or in anyway made fit for consumption by his presentation of it, but that the good news is already fact, accomplished by God, and can but be proclaimed.

There are various manifestations of conditioning the Gospel by the sin of man. One type, which seems innocent, begins by acting as if salvation had not yet been accomplished, still lies in the future, because it lies further along in the sermon. Having set up this curious mental attitude, the preacher then proceeds to hammer away at his audience, as if they were all wretchedly lost, trying like the heathen before Christ to solve the problem, but all woefully failing. He leads the hearers into a frame of mind where they must all feel they are unredeemed ones, still under the curse.

When this has been thoroughly accomplished, then suddenly he turns and proceeds to affirm that all this is, of course, not true. Jesus has come to redeem all men from their sins. But alas, the damage has been done. In order to remain logical and consistent in his demonstration, he cannot entirely deny what he so determinedly established before. He falls far too often into the conditioning of the Gospel with a declaration something like this: But if you are ready to give up your sinful life, then the forgiveness of sins is your portion. And lo, he has made

the Gospel dependent on man and has plunged his devout hearers into the blackest despair, unless in mercy God has given them better knowledge than the preacher possesses.

Man is so doctrinally inclined and feels so secure in having the right doctrine. His logical distinctions begin to curse him. This preacher thinks he is truly preaching "Sin and Grace". By repeating this expression so often as the total of preaching, he begins to place them on the same plane. Having doctrinally separated them and then placed them on the same level, it is no wonder that the Gospel is beclouded and spoiled, conditioned by sin in men. Suddenly the gospel is nothing new at all, but still the old heathen religion of despair.

Another type of this conditioning of the Gospel by sin lies in the preacher thinking of the shortcomings of his flock. He bids them find in themselves a certain degree of willingness to serve before they dare to think themselves Christians, thus denying the very heart of the Gospel, which claims for itself the honor, that God, the compassionate, works both justification and sanctification, and He alone. Neither my sins as a burden of guilt, nor my sinful incomplete life, can ever set a boundary to the infinite grace of God. If that were not sure and true, all hope were lost.

Indeed that is despair, the darkest, blackest despair, if it should

still depend upon my willingness to turn away from sin; darkest despair, if for any moment or hour it should be true that the old hopelessness of men still rests upon me. Thank God, this is not so. Then, turn with joy to our delightful tasks as the heralds of God, who are to proclaim His wonderful works, which He has performed and finished to the end for all the wretched sinners in the world. Against the vile background of the helpless state of man we paint in glowing words the truth that all the burden and all the guilt, all the condemnation has been removed for Jew and Gentile, for small and great, regardless of anything in man, though their sins be as scarlet. Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds, — abounds in such measure that the darkness of sin has been entirely dispelled by the brightness of His redeeming light.

W. S.

A Reminder

All subscriptions to the Lutheran Spokesman expire in June. If you have subscribed since January of 1959 your subscription expires in June 1960. If you subscribed in 1958 and have not renewed your subscription, your subscription has now expired. Please send your remittance to the Business Manager:

Mr. V. Sprengeler
137 King Court
Cheyenne, Wyoming

Note: This series was begun by W. Schaller, Sr., in the April issue. Since the Lord has prevented him from completing the series he asked me to finish the work. This and the succeeding articles are based on material written by Prof. Schaller and on many, many discussions which I had with him in the past twenty years on this subject. I am presenting them over my signature since it is proper that I accept responsibility for the presentations as they appear at this time.

W. S.

Prof. W. Schaller, Sr. was called to his eternal rest on May 25th. Burial took place on May 28th at Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. The obituary will appear in the next issue.

Conference Announcement

God willing, the next meeting of our conference will be at St. Paul's Church at Winner, South Dakota, Pastor Otto W. Eckert. The opening service will be on Wednesday evening, August 19th, with sessions beginning the next morning, continuing until Monday, August 24th. Further details will be announced in the August issue of the SPOKESMAN.

E. REIM, Chairman

The Bread of Life

For the summer months we are suggesting that we return to the Bible History stories of the Old Testament in our family devotions. What joy there is to be found in the account in Exodus of the mighty works of Jehovah! How marvelously He delivers His people from all their enemies and makes them to be His very own. May each family experience again that this is *their* Lord who bears *them* on eagles' wings far above all the dangers and difficulties of life! For each brief reading several stanzas of hymns from the Lutheran Hymnal are suggested, which may be read or sung.

EXODUS

Theme: "I shall be your God, and ye shall be my people."

I. JEHOVAH DELIVERS HIS PEOPLE, CH. 1-18

June 7: A new king reigns in Egypt, 1: 1-14; 521, 1-2

June 8: The oppression of Israel increases, 1: 15-22; 521, 3-4

June 9: The birth and training of Moses, 2: 1-10; 521, 5-6

June 10: Moses kills an Egyptian, 2: 11-15a; 329, 1-3

June 11: Moses flees to Midian; his marriage, 2: 15b-22; 329, 4-5

June 12: The Glory of Jehovah appears, 2:23 - 3:6; 296, 1-2

June 13: "I will send you to Pharaoh," 3: 7-12; 296, 3-4

June 14: 'I am that I am' sends Moses, 3: 13-22; 485, 1-2

June 15: The 'Almighty' sends Moses, 4: 1-9; 485, 3-4

June 16: In anger God commissions Aaron, 4: 10-17; 485, 5-7

June 17: "Israel is my first-born son," 4: 18-23; 554, 1-3

June 18: And the people believed, 4: 27-31; 554, 4-6

June 19: "Let my people go," 5: 1-9; 19, 1-2

June 20: Israel's plight becomes worse, 5: 10-21; 19, 3-4

June 21: Moses cannot comfort the people, 5:22 - 6:9; 7, 1-4

June 22: "They shall know that I am Lord," 6:28 - 7:7; 19, 5-6

June 23: Aaron and the magicians, 7: 8-19; 26, 1-2

June 24: The Plague of Blood, 7: 20-24; 26, 3-4

June 25: The Plague of Frogs, 7: 25 - 8:7; 26, 5-6

June 26: Pharaoh hardens his heart, 8: 8-15; 39, 1-2

June 27: The Plague of Gnats, 8: 16-19; 39, 3-4

June 28: The Plague of Flies 8: 20-24; 39, 5

June 29: Pharaoh hardens his heart, 8: 25-31; 21, 1-2

June 30: The plague on cattle 9: 1-7; 21, 3-4

July 1: The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, 9: 8-12; 21, 5-6

July 2: The plague of hail, 9: 13-26; 33, 1

July 3: The relief from the hail, 9: 27-35; 33, 2

July 4: The plague of locusts, 10: 1-11; 33, 3

July 5: The Lord hardens Pharaoh's heart, 10: 12-20; 28, 1-2

July 6: The plague of darkness, 10: 21-29; 28, 3-5

July 7: All the first-born shall die, 11: 1-10; 265, 1-3

July 8: The Passover announced, 12: 1-13; 265, 4-5

July 9: Passover-festival instituted, 12: 14-27; 195, 1-2

July 10: The vengeance of the Lord,
12: 28-36; 195, 3-4

July 11: Jehovah delivers His people,
12: 37-51; 195, 5

July 12: Pillar of cloud and fire,
13: 17-22; 54, 1-3

July 13: Egyptians pursue Israel,
14: 1-9; 258, 1-3

July 14: "The Lord will fight for you."
14: 10-20; 263, 1-2

July 15: The wheels fall off,
14: 21-25; 263, 3-4

July 16: Jehovah routs the Egyptians
14: 26-31; 262, 1-3

July 17: "The Lord will reign forever,"
15: 1-21; 262, 3-4

July 18: Jehovah, Israel's Physician,
15: 22-27; 425, 1-2

July 19: Yearning for the flesh-pots,
16: 1-8; 425, 3-4

July 20: Jehovah the Provider,
16: 9-21; 425, 5-6

July 21: Man lives not by bread alone,
16: 22-36; 434, 1-5

July 22: Jehovah satisfies His people,
17: 1-7; 437, 1

July 23: Jehovah protects His people,
17: 8-16; 437, 2-3

July 24: Moses' family reunited,
18: 1-12; 23, 1-2

July 25: Jethro counsels Moses,
18: 13-27; 23, 3-4

II. JEHOVAH ESTABLISHES HIS COVENANTS, 19-24

July 26: My kingdom of priests,
19: 1-15; 287, 1-3

July 27: The Glory of the Lord,
19: 16-25; 287, 4-6

July 28: The Ten Commandments,
20: 1-17; 287, 7-9

July 29: "I will come and bless you,"
20: 18-26; 287, 10-12

July 30: Jehovah's Covenant,
23: 20-33; 298, 1-2

July 31: A Covenant of Blood,
24: 1-11; 298, 3-4

August 1: Moses on the Mountain,
24: 12-18; 298, 5-6

III. JEHOVAH'S DWELLING-PLACE, 25-40

August 2: Offerings of willing hearts,
25: 1-9; 438, 1-5

August 3: The Ark and Mercy-Seat,
25: 10-22; 1, 1-2

August 4: The Table of Showbread,
25: 23-30; 531, 1-3

August 5: The Golden Candlestick,
25: 31-40; 456, 1-6

August 6: The Holy of Holies,
26: 31-35; 2, 1-3

August 7: The High Priest,
28: 1-30; 371, 1-4

August 8: "Holy to the Lord,"
28: 31-43; 371, 5-7

OBEDIENCE

A Study of the New Testament Use of the Term

It seems almost inevitable that in times of controversy, particularly when the discussion turns around the question whether a certain Scripture passage is to be applied to a given situation, the charge of "legalism" is raised against those who call for simple and unquestioning obedience to the Word that is under consideration. The underlying thought is that those who stress that particular passage, who call for obedience, do so because they are interested in the Law for its own sake, that they derive a certain satisfaction from invoking its authority, that they employ it in uncharitable comparison to bolster their own self-esteem at the expense of others, that they are lacking in the true spirit of the Gospel and the brotherly love which will be its fruit.

Since we have been involved in just such a controversy where the issue is one of obedience, and since the dangers of legalism *are* very real and ever present, we do well to look to ourselves first of all, to see just where we stand. Since to call for obedience to a given word *may* come out of a spirit of legalism, the charge should not simply be brushed aside. But we should also know whether it *must* necessarily mean that. For if the error lies only in the misuse of a word, we certainly

do not want to be deprived of the right use of the same, particularly if, like "obedience," it is a Scriptural term and one whose meaning is precious. For this reason we propose to undertake a study of the New Testament use of this word, extending over a series of perhaps three articles. For the first we shall restrict ourselves to the actual meaning of the term as this is indicated by its origin and by the way in which it is employed in the New Testament.

It so happens that the word used most frequently in the New Testament to express the idea of obedience is at the same time one which by its origin is most expressive and meaningful. For the Greek word *hypakoē* simply means a humble and submissive, but at the same time a most attentive *hearing*, the very idea which is expressed in young Samuel's answer to the Lord's call: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." We have precisely the same thought in the Latin *obaudire*—which is the root of the English word *obedience*—as well as in the German *Gehorsam*. In each case the meaning is that of a careful hearing of the voice of authority—in our specific case the voice of the Lord, our God. (We shall be as sparing as possible with these foreign words from here on.)

But the real test of the meaning of a word is to note how it is used, preferably by the same writer or in related works. In our case there is no lack of material, since the term occurs so many times in the New Testament. The first and most common use is with reference to servants and slaves, for whom to hear the word of their master meant that they were, willingly or not, to recognize his authority and comply with his orders. So servants (slaves) are told to obey their masters in the flesh in all things (Col. 3:22, also Eph. 6:5). This thought is extended even to inanimate objects when, after the Lord Jesus had stilled the tempest on the waters, men marvelled "that even the winds and the sea obey Him" (Matt. 8:27, also Mark 4:41 and Luke 8:25). The thought is carried out in full when in Mark 1:27 we read that "with authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him." And Paul uses the same meaning when in Rom. 6:16 he lays down the principle that "to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants (literally: slaves) ye are to whom ye obey."

The relationship moves to a higher level when the passage speaks of children who are to obey their parents in the Lord (Eph. 6:1), or of the way in which Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord — which is the reason why she is presented as an example for Christian women (1 Pet. 3:6). But the highest level

is certainly attained, and a most sacred truth revealed, when it is said of the relationship of the Son of God to His Heavenly Father that He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8). For the word which is chosen here for the obedience of the Son of God is the same one of which we stated before that by its origin it implies a humbly submissive and eagerly attentive listening to the voice of that Father who has sent Him. That is what is implied when the Letter to the Hebrews, speaking of the *body* which had been prepared for the Son as the instrument of His obedience when He came into the world (Heb. 10:5), actually leads one back to a passage in Psalms which says: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine *ears* hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required." (Ps. 40:6). If we look at the entire passage it is clear that the reference to the opening of the ears does not describe a physical healing of deafness, but rather expresses the idea of obedience as we have already learned to know it: a humbly submissive and eagerly attentive *hearing* of the voice of God.

A further illustration for this opening of the ears is supplied by a custom in Israel that is described at some length in Deuteronomy 15:12-17. If a Hebrew man had been sold to another Israelite, this bondage was to end after six years. The seventh year was to bring him his

freedom. But if he would say to his master, "I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee (the master) and thine house, and because he is well with thee," then his master was to take him to the judges (Exod. 21:6) and there at the door of the sanctuary pierce his earlobes with an awl — "and he shall be thy servant forever." The custom seems cruel until we remember what women have been doing willingly for generations, for fashion's sake. In this case the pierced (opened?) ear is the root of the English word *ant's* willing obedience to the master whom he loved — and a symbol or type of the perfect faithfulness of Him who said, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God" (Ps. 40:7-8), and who, though He was a Son, "yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Heb. 5:8-9).

Remembering that this perfect obedience of the Savior was rendered in our stead, we find it quite natural that the same word with all its implications of humbly submissive and eagerly attentive *hearing* is the preferred term in Scripture for those who through Him have become children of God. Whether this was obedience to some direct word of God (Abraham - Heb. 11:8), or to His Word as it was spoken to them by His apostles

(2 Thess. 3:14; 2 Cor. 2:9 and 7:15), or whether it described the general attitude of these children of God (Rom. 6:16; Phil. 2:12; Philemon 21), it was in each case a fruit of their faith (Heb. 11:8 - "By *faith* Abraham obeyed"), and therefore truly a *new* obedience. This consideration by itself is already enough to refute the thoughtless charge that "legalism" is indicated simply because someone calls for obedience among Christians, even though it be only to some single word of God.

But there remains one further use of our term, a use which reveals the full glory of this expression. Please note, for instance, how Paul speaks of *obeying the Gospel* (Rom. 10:16) and immediately explains what he means by quoting from Isaiah 53: "Lord, who hath *believed* our report." For the highest and most blessed way of *obeying* (hearing!) the Word of God is *faith* — faith that has heard what God has done, who was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself; faith in Him who hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19); faith which, hearing, takes God at His word.

Now we know what is meant when the same apostle thanks God for those who "have *obeyed from the heart* that form of doctrine which was delivered you" (Rom. 6:17), what a fellow apostle meant when he spoke of "*obeying the truth* through the Spirit" (1 Pet. 1:22),

or what is meant when Scripture speaks of "bringing into captivity every thought to the *obedience of Christ*" (2 Cor. 10:5). We know that unbelief is meant when we read of those "that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:8). A child needs no explanation when it comes to Acts 6:7 with its remark that many priests also became "obedient unto the faith," nor does it take a wise man to give the right interpretation for Paul's reference to his apostleship "for obedience to the faith (literally: *obedience of faith*) among all nations" (Rom. 1:5). We recognize the reference to faith even in the simple mention of *obedience* in Rom. 15:18 ("to make the Gentiles obedient") and Rom. 16:19 ("your obedience is come abroad unto all men"). And when in his closing doxology (Rom. 16:26) Paul glories in the Gospel made known to all nations "for the obedience of faith," we know that he is speaking of the obedience that is faith, even as was Peter when he addressed his First Epistle to the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto *obedience* and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (chap. 1:2).

These are some of the wonderful implications of the term "obedience." It expresses some very tender relationships. It rises to a point where it becomes a synonym for faith. Surely, we need not fear the reproach of "legalism" simply be-

cause we have called or may be calling for obedience to the Word of God, or to some particular passage in that Word. Let us indeed be constantly on guard lest we inject the legalism of our flesh into this wonderful term. Let us prayerfully strive to gain an ever deeper understanding of the nature of true evangelical obedience. But let us never surrender the term. And let us wear with pride the name that Peter uses for the Christians: obedient children (1 Pet. 1:14). For these obedient children, *tekna hypakoēs*, are literally CHILDREN OF OBEDIENCE.

E. REIM

(To Be Continued)

Note: For the sake of our Greek scholars let me add that other terms for obedience have not been overlooked, such as the different forms of *peitho* with their implication of persuasion, or *hypotasso* with its connotation subjection to an established order. We hope to touch on them at least in passing in the articles which, God willing, are to follow.

E. R.

Change of Address:

E. Reim % Schaller
525 E. Merrill Ave.
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

Congregational News

ELLENSBURG, WASHINGTON

Since February there is a group of Lutheran Christians in Ellensburg, who, together with their pastor, were constrained to withdraw from the local Wisconsin Synod congregation because it wished to continue in fellowship and membership in that Synod. The events accompanying this withdrawal were in a measure distressing, and yet very enlightening. As Old Simeon said of another and darker day, "the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed." One becomes amazed and appalled at the arguments men, 'willing to justify themselves', will use to vindicate their unscriptural course of action. May the flesh be subdued within them that they may learn not to trust in men, and the things of men, but in the Lord God and His Holy Word, through Jesus Christ, their Savior!

This small but sturdy group of twenty communicants has called the undersigned to be their pastor. They are in the process of organizing themselves under the name of St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church. Services are being held in the pastor's home with attendance ranging from 25 to 35. The pressing problem is to find a more suitable place of worship. Sunday School and confirmation classes are being conducted.

Naturally the congregation is not in a position to support the pastor. Quite willingly he has gone to 'tent making'. During the two month per-

iod when the pastor was unable to find work in this small town, his family was spared embarrassment and hardship through the financial assistance of Trinity congregation (Spokane) and the mission treasury of the Interim Conference. We appreciate this spontaneous consideration. In the middle of April the pastor found suitable employment and "daily bread" is quite adequately supplied. The congregation is doing what it can for the pastor's support and is supplying funds for the mission treasury. May the Lord bless our testimony together with yours, that the "first works" may flourish among us and be restored to others.

GILBERT SYDOW

COLOMA, MICHIGAN

And, from the eastern end of the Wisconsin Synod, news of another congregation has been submitted to us for publication. On May 4 Salem Lutheran Church of this city abruptly terminated the call of Pastor Ralph Schaller. He had previously suspended fellowship with the Wisconsin Synod and taught his congregation that the Synod's position in matters of Church Fellowship was unscriptural. Consequently the congregation in April had filed a protest with the Synod stating that their lack of action against the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, was disrupting their congregation. This action was unexpectedly reversed in the May Building meet-

ing, when the motion prevailed compelling the pastor to resign.

At this time about 60 communicants have withdrawn from the congregation and continue to honor their call to their pastor. Services are being conducted and the group is in the process of organizing a congregation. These people not only left their former congregation, but did so just after completing a new church building. May they learn the full joy of these words: "In all places where I record *my name* I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee." For where the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, there is His Name hallowed on earth.

Cause for Rejoicing

One of the foremost problems we have faced in our Conference has been the training of our young people in a Lutheran High School and preparing workers for the Church. At our last meeting (January) the need was clearly recognized but we were unable to move forward because of our still unorganized status.

We therefore rejoice that at Mankato, Minnesota the members of Immanuel Congregation are bending every effort to begin work this Fall at both the secondary and college level. We wish to report on the progress which has been made by giving you the essence of some resolutions passed by Immanuel Congregation on May 25th.

1. The congregation recognized the need for Christian High School

Education for its young people and especially for the training of pastors and teachers. It therefore gave its blessing to a proposed project of some of its members to establish a Lutheran High School and to provide college courses and a theological seminary.

2. The congregation consented to the use of the name, "Immanuel Lutheran College," for the proposed institution.

3. The congregation authorized that Articles of Incorporation be drawn up which would at this time limit the membership on the Board of Control to members of Immanuel Lutheran Church, thus maintaining the supervision of doctrine and practice in the proposed institution.

4. The congregation further offered a slate of candidates from which such a Board might call its first instructors.

5. Use of certain rooms in the Church was made available for college and seminary classes.

Several men from this congregation own extensive property in Mankato on which is a school building. They are making this available to the "association" for a Lutheran High School.

Fervently we beseech the Holy Spirit to guide and bless these Christians in this wonderful undertaking. May He use His Might to overcome all the obstacles and hindrances and bring this educational plant to reality in September, 1959! Amen.

W. S.

The Lutheran Spokesman

1906 Garrett Avenue
CHEYENNE, WYOMING



RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED



The Rev. R. Reim
422 Forest Avenue
Fond du Lac, Wis.

Published bi-monthly at Cheyenne, Wyoming. The issues appear at the beginning of February, April, June, August, October, and December.

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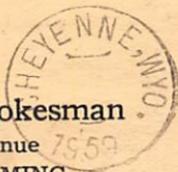
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