





# Thanksgiving

**“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.”—Psalm 100:4-5**

## *Thanks, But No Thanks*

I invite you to consider with me two common expressions with the word “thanks” in them, and to apply them to spiritual matters.

*The first is “Thanks, but no thanks.”*

This expression is used in our society as a polite way of acknowledging the generous offer of someone but then for whatever reason declining the offer. Perhaps we don’t want the contents of the offer or we may think that the offer is too much and we are undeserving of it.

During this month our country as well as many others set aside a specific day to remember to give thanks for what we have been given.

Thanksgiving was declared a holiday by our government in 1863 during the Civil War, and a fixed day—the fourth Thursday in November—was set by Congress in 1942 during World War II.

Surely there is nothing wrong with a day devoted to giving thanks, although for a Christian it is appropriate to do so

every day. And certainly there are many reasons for Americans to be thankful—food, shelter, family, freedom, and so on.

But this holiday, like many others, would be empty without the main reason for giving thanks to God. That reason is Jesus’ sacrifice for our sins. “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32)

Unfortunately, many people are blind to this true reason for giving thanks. Perhaps they don’t want what Jesus has to offer. Perhaps they feel the offer of forgiveness of sins is too much and they are undeserving. For them it is “Thanks, but no thanks.”

Let us as Christians use the holiday of Thanksgiving as an opportunity to share with others the main reason for living a life of thanksgiving, and direct people to the only true God to whom our thanks

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should be directed.

### Another Common Expression

Another common expression is “Thanks for nothing.”

Usually when this is uttered the speaker is not really giving thanks at all, but is sarcastically pointing out that he or she was let down by the help provided.

We Christians can be tempted to feel this way toward our God at times too. When our prayers seem to go unanswered by God or we do not receive what we think we should, our hearts may mutter, “Thanks for nothing.”

When we feel this way, I suggest we think of this expression in a new way. God knows our every need and how best to answer our prayers for our spiritual good as He directs our way to heaven.

“Thanks for nothing . . .” to now worry about.

“Thanks for nothing . . .” to separate us from Your love.

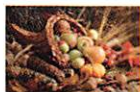
“Thanks for nothing . . .” being required of us to atone for our own sins.

“Thanks for nothing . . .” to prevent us from living our lives in service to You in Your kingdom work.

“Thanks for nothing . . .” greater than we are able to bear.

As Thy prospering hand hath blest,  
May we give Thee of our best  
And by deeds of kindly love  
For Thy mercies grateful prove,  
Singing thus through all our days  
Praise to God, immortal praise.  
(TLH #572:4)

—Prof. Joseph Lau  
Eau Claire, Wisconsin



## Thanksgiving Devotion

### “I Am Full”

Please read Philippians 4:10-20

If ever there was a holiday when it was fitting to talk about being “full,” Thanksgiving would be that day.

Eating is what most people associate with Thanksgiving Day. Families travel great distances to share a special meal together. Turkey is almost a requirement along with the staples of stuffing, mashed potatoes, and cranberries. And don’t forget the pies! Usually being full is not a problem on Thanksgiving.

But what if all that food were gone? What if the only thing Mom had to serve on Thanksgiving Day was a frozen pizza? And not even the \$6.00 deluxe frozen pizza but the \$0.97 party pizza? Would we still be thankful? Could we speak of being “full” after a meal like that?

As the Apostle Paul writes to the Philippians, he teaches us some valuable

lessons about being “full.” He writes, “Indeed I have all and abound. I am full...”

This “abounding” and being “full” had little or nothing to do with a full belly or a bountiful bank account. In fact, the apostle tells the Philippians that he was content (having a satisfied or a happy state of mind) whether he had much or nothing. “I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.”

The Apostle Paul himself faced things that few, if any, of us will have to worry about this Thanksgiving. In the course of his missionary journeys he was shipwrecked and imprisoned.

He experienced sleeplessness, hunger and thirst, fastings, cold and nakedness. While we may be in the midst of a “global financial crisis,” few of us need to worry about being thrown in a dungeon or being stripped of our clothes.

Despite all this hardship, what does Paul say? He proclaims that he is content and full! “Indeed I have all and abound. I am full...” And his secret comes as no surprise to us when he adds, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” The apostle was content in every situation because he had Christ. He found his fullness in his Savior, his Righteousness—Jesus!

Cannot we say the same?

In Jesus Christ we have full and free forgiveness of sins. In Christ we are filled up with grace. In Christ we sinners are filled up with the righteousness of God. In Christ we have the eternal supply of God’s love showered upon us. In Christ we are given something that will not

rust, fall apart, or run out. In Christ we believers have an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for us (see 1 Pet. 1:4)

It is Christ who gave Paul the strength to be content in every condition in which he found himself. It is the same Jesus Christ who gives each of us strength to be content in whatever condition we may be.

So, you see, dear fellow Christians, even before you sit down for your Thanksgiving dinner, everyone who is in Christ can say with Paul, “I AM FULL!”

Oh, bless the Lord, my soul,  
Nor let His mercies lie  
Forgotten in unthankfulness  
And without praises die! Amen.  
(TLH #27:2)

—Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer  
Hecla, South Dakota



## The End Times

### When God Comes Down!

“Boys, don’t make me come up there!”

It happened very seldom, but that’s how my father would warn us when my brother and I were making too much bedtime noise. It was all in good fun: giggling, harmless pillow fights, no bloody noses or anything—things kids will do on a sleepless night.

Neither were we very frightened, for Dad never made the threatened trip upstairs.

Of course, our Father in heaven comes down, not up! He came down to visit Sodom. He fairly bristled, “I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to

the outcry against it that has come to me...” (Gen. 18:21). No mere giggling or late-night pillow fights here, but evil worthy of sudden and fiery death.

Earlier God had come down and seen that ‘the thoughts of men’s hearts were only evil continually.’ So evil, in fact, that He was determined to destroy the human race and start over.

But Noah found grace in God’s eyes and was commissioned to build an ark. That huge barge became Noah’s sandwich-board sign to his generation: ‘The End Is Near!’ But the antediluvian world paid no attention, carrying on with the normal, unrepentant behavior right up until the time the ark floated. The

great, universal destruction followed.

Someone once postulated that God comes down in times of 'epochal crisis.' Surely He came down to Eden (before the Flood), to Babel, against Sodom and Egypt. Surely these were times when men wished He hadn't come down.

But there were other times when God came down to instruct and promise. He came down and conversed with Abraham by the terebinth trees; He came down to Moses out of the burning bush, to Elijah in a still small voice at Horeb, and to Job out of a whirlwind. The Father also came down to the Mount of Transfiguration and commanded regarding His Son Jesus: "Hear Him."

When God comes down, things happen—gracious, amazing things. In their crisis of sin and rebellion, Adam and Eve were given the gospel promise from God of a Head-crusher, as well as tunics of skin to cover their nakedness. At least one animal (a lamb?) lost its life and its blood to cover them, which gave notice of the promised redemption.

That was achieved centuries later when God's Son came down and assumed human flesh. At that time Jesus came not as Judge but as Savior, paying for men's sins with His own life's blood, thus reconciling mankind to God.

To date, that has been the greatest 'come down' in world history!

### **One Last Time!**

In these last days—our end times—things are bad and will be getting worse again. "Perilous times shall come," Paul wrote to Timothy. At those times men will exhibit every kind of immoral and devilish behavior. False christs and false prophets will arise and abound, deceiving many. The great Antichrist will be exposed. More and more men will become lovers—lovers not of God and His Word but of self, of money, of pleasure.

Forgetting what happened in the days of Noah, when warned of the end, most of the world will scoff and carry on just as did the antediluvian world.

Jesus Himself gave a list of things to watch for in these end times. One thing is especially noteworthy: "the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Mt. 24:14). Since no human can ever know the date, this sign should not be used to try and determine the Day of our Lord's coming.

Rather, it provokes a sense of urgency on the part of the Church—that it busy itself with fulfilling the Great Commission to preach the gospel to every creature.

One sign will be unmistakable—not more rain bringing judgment but the Son of Man coming down on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory! St. John wrote: "Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, and they also who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him" (Rev. 1:7).

When God comes down again, many will find themselves in terror and anguish. The pagan, the atheist, the hedonist, the spiritist, the agnostic, the procrastinator, the mocker and the unconcerned have always hated God and His Christ from afar. They will see the victorious Jesus in person and wail before the judgment.

But those who have His forgiveness and are righteous by faith will be glad. For God's coming down this time—the last great event in world history—will mean the end to all persecution and suffering. It will mean questions answered, mortality cast off, the curse banished, glory revealed, and eternal happiness begun.

What saint does not want God to come down again—and quickly?!

Hence, let us be prepared always. Let us proclaim the gospel zealously and broadly. Let us do our part to prepare the world for our King and Savior, Jesus Christ, coming down one last time.

—*Pastor David Fuerstenau  
Ketchikan, Alaska*







# Harvest Festival Thoughts

## Firstfruits for Life

A drive through the countryside shows that this year's long harvest season is finally drawing to a close. After a very wet October and long backups at the grain elevators in November, the crops are finally in.

Perhaps it's no coincidence that our annual Thanksgiving celebration comes at this time of year, at the close of the harvest, when we can clearly see how the Lord has blessed the land and us.

In Bible times it was different. Their thanksgiving came at the beginning of the harvest. The farmers would take the very first of their produce, put it in a basket, and present it before the Lord as their offering of "firstfruits," as it is described in Deuteronomy chapter 26. In this way they gave honor to God. It was their way of saying "This is just the beginning, O Lord, and it all belongs to You, for it is You who made the soil and the sun. You are the one who brings the rains, and causes the seeds to grow."

Our annual ingathering of crops should be a reminder to us all of a greater harvest day that is coming. It will be a harvest of all people, on the day that our Lord Jesus will return and raise all the dead. He will gather all His believers to His right hand side and invite them to enter with Him into eternal life. The Bible says that there will be a great many others who will not be a part of this harvest that leads to life, but will instead be condemned for eternity.

Will you and I be at the Lord's right hand side on that day? How can we know?

The answer can be found in the harvest picture that God provides in His Word. Remember the firstfruits of the farmers in those days? When the very

first produce of the harvest was brought to the Lord, it meant that the rest would surely follow, and all of it really belonged to Him.

In the same way, the first Man who was raised to eternal life is also called the "firstfruits" in 1 Corinthians 15:20: "Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep."

Jesus died because of sins, not His own but for the sins of the world, including yours and mine. When His body returned to life and He rose up into heaven, He became the firstfruits of a great resurrection harvest which will happen on the day that He returns to judge the world.

And you know what that means. It means that the rest will surely follow, and it all belongs to the Lord. When our trust is in His death for us, our own resurrection to eternal life is as certain as the fact that HE is now truly alive! God guarantees it in His Word: "If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who lives in you" (Romans 8:11).

These bodies of ours which grow old and tired and finally fail will find a temporary resting place in the cold ground. But our Lord will come to harvest His own as surely as spring follows winter.

Because Jesus, our firstfruits, has risen, those who belong to Him by faith will not be far behind!

—Pastor Bruce Naumann  
Eau Claire, Wisconsin

(From the pastor's column of a local newspaper)

**We praise Thee, O God, our Redeemer, Creator...!**



# Studies in Second Timothy

*“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Tim. 2:15)*

## The Big Test

(Please read 2 Timothy 1:1-7.)

Since Christ’s Ascension, millions of people have died for His sake, and thousands of people throughout the world become martyrs in His Name every year.

But it sure is easy to be a Christian in our land—even in our Lutheran congregations.

Is there something wrong with that? We can find out. Be sure to re-read the above passage.

If you were baptized and grew up in Lutheranism, chances are you were helped and guided in one way or another by parents or a grandparent or by some dear, close friend, just as Timothy experienced.

It was easy to go through Sunday School and to enroll in Confirmation Class. You thought you had some real work then—memorizing the chief parts of the Small Catechism, dozens of Bible passages, a bunch of hymns, reading several books of the Bible, learning many historical facts, and so on.

As Confirmation Day approached, you knew you had a test to pass. Maybe it was an oral exam by the Board of Elders, and then another one in front of the congregation. And lo and behold—whew!—you made it! (You learned that pretty well everyone makes it.)

And looking back, it really wasn’t too hard. And from here on out, well, it was going to be easy to be Lutheran.

But look out! You may well be losing the Key to your Christian existence!

So here’s another test—the BIG one. You might need some guidance. Take three sheets of paper. Leave a few lines at the top of each sheet for the names, addresses, and perhaps a few details, on three people—preferably weak,

lapsed fellow-members or some outright unbelievers. Remind yourself that a large percentage of your congregation desperately needs the gospel through personal communication; and that many suffer the malady of lack of assurance in Christ and His promises.

And using the gifts the Holy Spirit has given you through the gospel (love, spiritual strength, self-control), you are now to do all you can to bring Christ to these three people.

Don’t argue with them. You do not have to convert them—that’s God’s work; just make sure they know the gospel. There’s no mad hurry either; take a few months; get to know and love them.

Examine your results and notes. What will you have learned?

## It Takes Pains...

Among many good things, you may learn that you are the dumbest, the most self-centered, thoughtless, Biblically-illiterate, shallow-faithed person you ever met. Good! For if you learned at least that much, you will probably be on your knees, saying with Paul that you are “chief of sinners” (as he went about bringing the gospel to people).

You will understand something of what Martin Luther went through in order to convince friend and foe of the gospel. And now you may understand what Confession and Absolution are. And how to go to the Sacrament for more of the love of God in Christ, more strength, self-control, patience, and lots of other virtues.

You learn that it takes pains (efforts) to witness, and that you will receive, often with tears, many pains and wounds for your troubles and prayers.

You will have an idea of what Paul



was saying to Timothy here. And rejoice! You have found the Key again. For now Christianity is not just a matter of being “easy”—not just “academic”—for now it is purely Christ! He is the gift of God that resides in you, and by His Spirit He supplies you with real life.

And you learn that the more you must explain Him to others, the more you retain Him for yourself.

You are now ready for three more sheets.

By the way, this article is not just written for young people. Some of you older ones have been taking it just too easy! So stir up the gift of God that is in you! Take the BIG test yourself!

—Warren H. Fanning (Pastor Emeritus)  
Sun City, Arizona



*At the June CLC Convention one day was designated “foreign dress” day; those having access to such cultural attire were invited to wear it as a form of encouragement and support for our on-going gospel work in countries such as India, Nigeria, Tanzania, & Kenya.*



*(Above) Peace Thru Christ, Middleton, Wis. Delegate Nathan Greve, Missionary Matt Ude, Pastor Aaron Ude, CLC President Pastor John Schierenbeck, Board of Missions Member Pastor Todd Ohlmann*

*(Left) Holy Cross, Phoenix, delegate Tim Maas visits with Carol & Robert Rankin of St. Paul, Denver, Colo.*



50th Anniversary Greetings  
from Nigeria

The NCLC Board of Officers  
P.O. Box 382  
Etinan Local Govt. Area  
Akwa Ibom State  
Nigeria

The Chairman,  
CLC Board of Missions,  
C/o 501 Grover Road,  
Eau Claire, WI 54701-7199

*Fellow Redeemed in Christ,  
May the Lord speak well of you all in the name of Jesus.*

*Please, rest assured that we are with you, in spirit and in truth, in the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the blessed Church of the Lutheran Confession. It is, indeed, an event of statistical significance. It is worthy of much rejoicing with heartfelt thanksgiving to the Lord for the privilege, through His all sufficient grace.*

*When one looks back over the years to see how our church body has grown from her embryonic stage to a congregation of believing souls, it is inspiring and marvelous. It is marvelous, what the creeping hands of yesterday are bringing to us today. It is a lesson for us, not to despise the creeping hands of today.*

*Our heartfelt thanksgiving goes to the omniscient God of missions for the CLC—Nigeria mission work. As a privilege, through His grace, the Lord is using NCLC mission work to accomplish much for His kingdom; a thoroughfare reaching out to other parts of Africa, with the saving Gospel. Glory goes to God alone.*

*Memorial thanksgiving goes to the Lord, in honor of Mr. Oscar Erpenstein, for having used him, as instrument to open the mind and heart of those who knew not, and knew what they knew not, to know that they knew not. Mr. Erpenstein was in the flock shepherded by the Rev. Rollin Reim, St. Stephen Lutheran (CLC) Millbrae, California.*

*We cannot forget mentioning with thanksgiving to the Lord, the two missionaries, Carl Thurow and Norbert Reim, who came to give us the name NCLC in 1974, and our pioneer resident missionary, Pastor Dave Koenig. His exemplary Christian faith with his costly courageous steadfastness is written in the history of CLC—Nigeria mission work, with thanksgiving to the Lord.*

*Praise God. In spite of all oppressions, havocs of the devil, there is CLC in NCLC. So, truth is never suppressed.*

*Meanwhile, love to all in the CLC, with special regard to the Rev. Paul R. Gurgel. He has a large, edifying paragraph in the annals of the CLC—Nigeria mission work.*

*Please, for your information, the Rev. Pastor E. E. Essien is gone to rest in the Lord. Burial is fixed on August 14, 2010. The family expects missionaries Koenig, Paul, Udo and others to attend the burial.*

*Grace, mercy and peace be with you from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father in truth and love.*



Sincerely,  
Pat Udo

*Pastor Udo with Mr. Erpenstein and today with Pastor Benson  
(r.) at the mission house in Efa, Nigeria.*



# Portraits of Christ

from the Gospel of John

## Chapter Twelve

### The King

Not many people in our world know what it is like to have someone as a king.

Many countries, such as ours, have representative governments which “derive their just powers from the consent of the governed” (as Thomas Jefferson penned in the Declaration of Independence).

The idea of having a monarch who has absolute power is foreign to us. A quick internet search revealed that there are currently less than a handful of countries ruled by a king. It is true that many nations have kings and queens, but their role has been pretty much reduced to that of a figurehead.

So what is it like to have a king? There are many examples to which we can turn. The Old Testament record is full of men who have filled that role—from Saul all the way to Zedekiah. These men led the fight against enemies on the battlefield so that their people could be safe and protected.

But if that is indeed what a king does—and here in John 12 Jesus is spoken of as a king—why do we see that “Jesus...found a young donkey [and] sat on it” (v. 14). What kind of king is this who would enter the capital city “sitting on a donkey’s colt”? (v. 15)

Certainly we can understand how such a king would be made a laughingstock! Who would want such a one to be king over them?

Jesus Himself helps us to understand the incongruity. When He was standing before Pontius Pilate and was asked, “Are you the king of the Jews?,” Jesus replied, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here” (Jn. 18:36).

Christ’s battle against sin, death, and the devil culminated in victory on the cross with His words, “It is finished!” His ruling activity now takes place in the hearts of those who are His by faith.

#### Just the King I Need!

You see, just because Jesus did not ride into Jerusalem with a display of outward might did not make Him less of a king. Just because the enemies He fought were not physically visible did not lessen the battle He fought against them.

Instead, we discover that this Jesus humbly riding on the foal of a donkey is exactly the King that we need!

Think of this. Those very enemies that the Lord Jesus came to defeat—and did so successfully!—were our rulers by nature. Ever since the Fall every human being, including you and I, have been born in the image of our fathers—that is, in sin. Thus we were children of the devil, condemned to spend eternity in hell.

But Jesus has “destroyed the works of the devil!” (1 Jn. 3:8) He “has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us!” (Gal. 3:13)

And now to the end of time we can confess with the Apostle Paul, “The Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom” (2 Tim. 4:18).

Jesus, a humble King on a donkey? Yes! He is my King! He is just the King I need!

Ride on, ride on, in majesty!  
In lowly pomp ride on to die.  
Bow Thy meek head to mortal pain,  
Then take, O Christ, Thy power and reign!”  
(TLH #162:5)

—Pastor Paul Krause  
Markesan, Wisconsin





# Cross Purposes

## Turning Back to God

The Lord tells us through the pen of the Apostle Paul: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent [that is, without self-control], fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof..." (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

Where is the thinking Christ-believer who can legitimately deny that the above indictments aptly describe the society as well as the time in which we live?

Furthermore, the same apostle said to the elders of Ephesus: "For I know this that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30). Who is the faithful Christ-believer who—standing in awe of the Word of God and the manifold grace of God—will deny that that prophecy of St. Paul which came to pass in the early church is being fulfilled also in our day?

Can any true disciple of the Lord who trembles at the Word give a good reason why—*except that the Heavenly Father is gracious* and does not desire the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his wickedness and live—the Heavenly Father should stay the deserved judgment upon the nation and the church at large?

Immorality common to mankind since the fall into sin is boldly flaunted today. In times past when there was still some sense of shame, gross immorality was for the most part practiced behind closed doors. Today there is little shame

but rather an increasing loss of moral conscience! Compounding the evil in our society and, in fact, greatly contributing to the present state of affairs is the church at large which—having rejected to a great extent the authority of the Word of God—has lost its moral authority.

In the face of the current political deterioration and increasing loss of civility even in the highest echelons of authority, well-meaning people are calling for a turning back to God. In the face of the rampant ungodliness that has engulfed our society, we commend any concern and every effort to return the nation to godly principles.

### ...To the God of Scripture!

However, unless such a call is a call to return to the God of Scripture, it lacks substance. It is a futile call (1 Kings 18: 20-29).

Furthermore, Holy Scripture makes the case that a return to a "god of choice" for relief or blessing is, in fact, part of the problem plaguing churches and the nation. Returning to a "god of choice" is idolatry (see Isaiah 44). Nowhere in the Bible does the Lord God promise to look with favor on idolatry! To the contrary, the Lord frequently chastised Israel because of idolatry (Exodus 32, Ezekiel 23:39) and punished the heathen nations.

A true return to God is, first of all, a return to the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. There is no other God! The gods of Judaism, of Mormonism, of the Jehovah's Witness, of Islam—in that each denies the deity of Jesus Christ—are not the living Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier God.

Furthermore, a return to the true God is by way of repentance—daily repentance. Repentance in the full sense

*In the aftermath of the Reformation celebration, we append to this "Cross Purposes" feature a brief but timely commentary by Pastor Fleischer. — Editor*

### WHEN WILL THEY EVER LEARN?

"Pope John Paul II whipped himself with a belt, even on vacation, and slept on the floor as acts of penitence and to bring him closer to Christian perfection, according to a new book by the Polish prelate spearheading his sainthood case."

Is this Luther all over again? As a young monk Luther was troubled by his sins and concerned about his relationship to God. We are told that in his room he cried out, "Oh, my sins, my sins, my sins." Seeking relief from the conscience pangs and desiring to make himself right with God, he engaged in self-flagellation. Frequently he went without food. He slept on the floor. Even as a priest Luther engaged in such activity, torturing himself to the point of fainting—all in a vain attempt to find peace with God.

Luther came to the knowledge of the truth. Unlike the pope, Luther learned that self-inflicted wounds of penitence did not give him peace or a favorable standing with God. He learned and believed that his comfort and hope lay in the truth that *Christ Jesus was wounded* for his transgressions.

In his quest to find peace with God, Luther was helped by an old monk, John Staupitz, who urged him to read his Bible and put his trust in Jesus. In the Bible Luther found that the sins which gave him such unrest were washed away in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was led by the Spirit of God to believe and trust that he was saved by grace through faith without works. He also knew that he could not come to greater perfection—he still had his sinful flesh about him, as do we all—through personal merit or punishment. The demands or commands of the law of God, administered by self or another, hardly give peace or perfection. A penitent sinner simply comes before the offended Lord, honestly and contritely laying before the Lord the daily knapsack of sins. He finds forgiveness in Christ; he believes that perfection and righteousness are found in Christ, and that these are assimilated through faith alone.

Further to the point, sainthood is not earned but bestowed. Sainthood is not a result of a church edict after death—supposedly validated by the good recommendation of men—but it is a reality for the Christ-believer in this life. In his epistles the Apostle Paul was not speaking of the dead but the living when he addressed the "saints who are in Ephesus" (Ephesians 1:1) or those in Rome "called to be saints" (Romans 1:7).

A saint is one who by faith in Christ is recognized as holy in the sight of God the Father. The gospel is the power of God unto sainthood, sanctification, and eternal salvation. Part of the deception of the Roman Catholic Church is the suggestion that sinners can or must contribute something to attain that which our Lord God has already given us by faith in His Son.

After coming to knowledge of the truth, hardly did Luther sleep on the floor again to attain Christian perfection or peace with God!

of the word is heartfelt sorrow over sin. The just and holy God is offended by every thought, word, and action that is contrary to His holy will! An essential of true repentance is faith in the forgiveness of sins through the atonement of the Lord

Jesus Christ from which then flow the fruits of repentance—a sanctified life—to the glory of God the Father!

Christ-believers living in this or any other country live in a temporary country as Abraham did who looked for a better



country (Hebrews 11). As Abraham, so Christ-believers await deliverance to the “sweet and blessed country, the home of God’s elect” (TLH #613).

In the meantime, we will engage ourselves in exercising concern through every legitimate political and social means, through speaking and living truth, and by praying for the nation in its perils. We will stand firmly upon the Scriptures and witness to Christ. But we will not promote nor join in the call for a return to an idolatrous “god of choice.”

Friends in Christ, the private prayer of one who calls upon the true God through our Lord Jesus Christ will accomplish (as God wills) what a million prayers to an idol can never accomplish.

Furthermore, as we live unto Him who will bless a nation for the sake of His people in it, we will keep our eyes focused on heaven. Our prayers will be directed to Him to guard and keep us in the face of the great physical and spiritual dangers confronting us.

We will pray our dear Lord Jesus to keep us in the faith and to protect His

Church until the day of our grand and glorious deliverance when we shall join Abraham in the better country.

We will witness to the love of Christ and the power of His cross as we witness to those about us, preaching repentance and remission of sins.

What ultimately carries the day is truth, and the truth is that calling on a god of choice is not the way either of sparing a nation or of saving a soul.

The truth is that our help is in the name of the living Lord who issues the invitation, “Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify Me” (Ps. 50:15).

Yes, “...Give to the Lord glory and strength. Give to the Lord the glory due His name...” (Ps. 96:7-8). Commit the cause, whatever it may be, to Him who was and is and ever shall be—the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost! Whoever turns to Him shall not be ashamed or turned away from the throne.

—Pastor Em Daniel Fleischer  
Oakdale, Minnesota



## Chapel Talk on Chapter 17 of the Book:

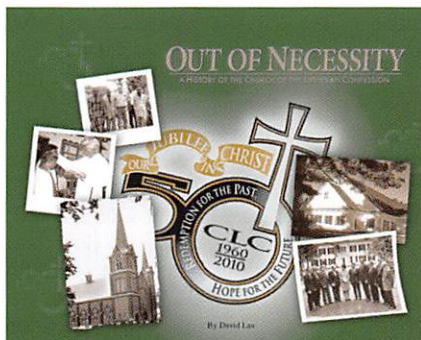
### **OUT OF NECESSITY: A History of the Church of the Lutheran Confession**

Dear Friends in Christ,

Chapter 17 of the history of the CLC is entitled “Doctrinal Controversies.”

Yes, we have to admit that in the history of our church body there have been serious debates and controversies concerning doctrinal matters. I doubt that there is any church body on Earth that has never had such controversies.

But we should hasten to add that the controversies in the CLC have never dealt directly with the basic teachings of Christianity. There has never been any





*Delegates  
to the 1962  
Conference  
of the CLC  
in Markesan,  
Wisconsin*

dispute among us as to whether the true God is the Triune God, whether Jesus is true God and true man, whether Jesus died for the sin of the world, whether we are justified by faith rather than by works, whether the Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God. By the grace of God we have been spared from such controversies, even though many other church bodies have been troubled by these things.

Still we have had controversies on doctrinal matters, and in some cases these controversies have led to the withdrawals of some of our members because they did not agree with the resolution of the controversy that was adopted by the CLC. Our history book refers to eight controversies in the CLC. We do not have the time to go into detail on any of these controversies this morning. We would probably need a full class period on each one of these controversies to get a good grasp of the specific problems and how they were resolved.

The point I want to make here this morning is that sometimes controversy is necessary, and that God uses controversy to get us to study His Word more carefully and to examine our own beliefs and practices in the light of God's Word.

There was one major doctrinal controversy in the Christian Church in the days of the apostles. It was a controversy that involved the apostles Paul and Peter and the brother of the

Lord Jesus named James. The question that was debated was a very important one: What is necessary for salvation? The one party taught that faith in Jesus Christ is necessary for salvation and nothing else. The other party insisted that faith in Christ was necessary for salvation but that following the Old Testament regulations concerning circumcision and the eating of certain foods was also necessary for salvation. Those that taught this are generally called Judaizers because they were insisting that following the Jewish laws was necessary for salvation.

### **Acts Chapter 15**

The book of Acts tells us about this controversy in chapter 15. It came to a head at the conclusion of the apostle Paul's first mission journey. On this mission journey Paul preached the gospel of Jesus to Jews and Gentiles. He assured the Gentiles that they too were children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. He did not tell them that they had to follow certain Jewish rules in order to be saved.

But when he came back to Antioch after his mission trip, some of the Christians from Jerusalem were telling the Gentiles: "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." Since these Christians came from Jerusalem, the birthplace of the Church, and since they claimed to represent the views of James, the brother of Jesus, this became a major controversy.





*1962 elected officials of the CLC: Prof. C. M. Gullerud, Moderator; Pastor Paul F. Nolting, Secretary; Pastor Paul Albrecht, President; Pastor Maynard Witt, Vice President*

The apostle Paul was certain that the position he was taking was the right one. He regarded the Judaizers as false teachers. So we read in his letter to the Galatians: "We did not yield submission to them even for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you." Paul did not want to go along with the wrong view even for a moment for the sake of avoiding an argument or for the sake of outward peace. He resisted what he considered to be false teaching. He spoke up.

At one point in this controversy it seemed that even Peter was siding with the Judaizers. Peter stopped eating with the Gentile Christians in order to please the men from Jerusalem. Paul could not let this pass without saying something, even though it would involve more controversy. Paul wrote to the Galatians: "When Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face." Yes, here we have the unpleasant scene of one apostle disagreeing with another apostle in front

of the whole congregation. Controversy in the church! You see, it is sometimes necessary.

How was it resolved? The book of Acts tells us: "When Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question." They had a meeting, just like our church conventions today. There at that meeting, on the basis of God's Word, they resolved the controversy. Peter, Paul, and James, the brother of the Lord, all agreed that the view of the Judaizers was false teaching and could not be tolerated. In Peter's words: "We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved." May our gracious Lord help us always to resolve our controversies through the written Word of our Savior God. (TLH #260:5-6)

—Pastor David Lau  
Eau Claire, Wisconsin



*In September 2010 the Women's Retreat West met for Bible Study and Christian fellowship at Chadron State Park, Chadron, Nebraska.*



## Comments on A BOOK REVIEW... or

### *Defending the Good Name of a Seminary Dean*

It all began as a book review intended for the *Lutheran Spokesman*. Early in 2009 your editor had in mind to inform our readers of a book of sermons titled *Morning Bells at Our Saviour's* by Rev. Norman A. Madson (1886-1962)—a book compiled and edited by his son Norman A. Madson, Jr. in memory of his parents. Most of the sermons in the book were preached by Rev. Madson when he served in the pastoral ministry at Princeton, Minnesota, while he was a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS). He was called to and served as Dean of Bethany Lutheran Seminary (ELS), Mankato, Minnesota, 1946-1959.

One reason it was felt such a book might be of interest to Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) readers is its supplementary section called "Sermons for Special Occasions." Within that section are a couple "CLC sermons" which this reviewer—at the time, a young CLC Seminary student—heard in person, including an October 1961 Reformation sermon (Turner Hall, New Ulm, Minn.) and a September 1962 Anniversary sermon (for and at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, for its 95th anniversary). Dean Madson's earthly sojourn would come to an end in December, 1962.

This quick historical sketch suggests something which is not insignificant: during the last couple years of his life Seminary Dean Madson had—for conscience reasons based on the Word of God—severed fellowship relations with the synod and seminary which he had served so faithfully, admirably, and long, and had taken membership within the newly-formed Church of the Lutheran Confession.

The why and wherefore behind this action taken by Dean Madson is detailed in our book *A BOOK REVIEW...AND AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE—* and aptly subtitled, *Dean Norman A.*

*Madson's association with the Church of the Lutheran Confession.*

Besides containing a review of the *Morning Bells...* volume, the book includes a number of personal memoirs of Dean Madson by other CLC pastors and professors who had the privilege to sit at his feet in Bethany Seminary, while also reprinting some of Dean Madson's sermons,

particularly those preached after he had become a member of the CLC. Readers of the book will discover that Dean Madson was by word and deed a staunchly confessional, orthodox Lutheran theologian, even as were his CLC colleagues such as Professors Edmund Reim (1892-1969) and C.M. Gullerud (1908-1995).

#### **Readers Agree: An Interesting Supplement!**

Lurking in the background as we wrote/compiled this book was a desire to set the record straight regarding off-hand comments heard over the years, particularly from folks connected with the ELS—that Dean Madson's words and actions in his retirement years were those of a senile if not incipient Alzheimer-ish and even "crazy" old man. Against such a scurrilous insinuation (sins against the eighth commandment), our book presents abundant evidence to the contrary. We are happy—thankful!—that the good Lord has permitted us to defend the good name and reputation of Dean Norman A.

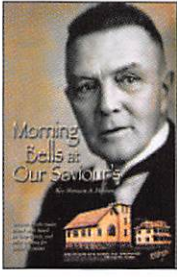




Madson, a long-time powerful spokesman and influence for conservative, orthodox Lutheranism and faithfulness to God's Word during some trying and difficult days in the Church Militant.

Allow us then to refer to more objective comments from a few of those who have purchased the book:

Item 1) "...I spent nearly all day Sunday reading your book. So much of it was relevant as we knew Dean Madson personally, but only in a social way and as a listener at his chapel talks at Bethany. Thank you for your time and efforts in remembering a great man."



Dean Norman Madson of the book seems good....It did not crack even when I laid the pages flat for easier reading."

Item 3) Passed along second-hand: "[A retired Bethany College, ELS, professor who read the book] did not feel the book was in any way harsh or unfair."

Item 4) Since the name of Dean Norman Madson appears a number of times in the CLC history book written by Pastor David Lau [OUT OF NECESSITY—A History of the Church of the Lutheran Confession], our book serves as an interesting supplement to Pastor Lau's book, as is indicated in the following words of a reader: "Among many other things that I could write to express my gratitude and appreciation [for your book], let me say that the Addenda and Appendices 'bring to life' much of the early history of the CLC that, of course, could not be included in OUT OF NECESSITY...—so THANK YOU!"

Item 5) A fellow servant in the CLC writes: "...I am afraid I do not have the courage of Dean Madson, to welcome being counted among the 'trouble-makers,' as your APPRECIATED book quotes Madson on p. 255....I thank you for your A Book Review..., for otherwise I would not have access to ANY of the Dean's sermons...printed in the Addenda section. That's a wonderful contribution you have made to the cause of the Truth!!"

Dear reader, A BOOK REVIEW... deserves to be in the church library of every CLC congregation, right next to OUT OF NECESSITY... At the same time, those having a copy of OUT OF NECESSITY... in their home would be equally well served having A BOOK REVIEW... next to it.

As the Dedication Page suggests, for younger (second, third, and future generation) CLC members, A BOOK REVIEW... presents both a word-and-action (doctrinal-and-practical) reaffirmation of the synod's stance taken before the world in 1960 and which it continues to uphold fifty years later.

Then also A BOOK REVIEW... can be used for Christian witness and outreach. We say so because a careful reading will help folks understand what true Reformation Lutheranism—true Bible-based Christianity!—was and is all about, namely, the gospel of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen again, for the justification of the world of sinners before holy God.

The 276-page perfect-binding book A BOOK REVIEW...AND AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE—Dean Norman A. Madson's association with the Church of the Lutheran Confession sells for \$12.95 per copy (copies to be mailed should add \$2.50 postage) and is available through the CLC Bookhouse, 501 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI 54701; clcbookhouse@ilc.edu. Or order directly from the author, Pastor Paul Fleischer, 1741 E. 22nd St., Cheyenne, WY 82001; paulgf@qwestoffice.net.

—Your editor



# Surveying CLC History

From the 25th Anniversary Booklet (1985)

“Reflections—Projections”

*“Projection” Number Eleven of Twelve*

## THANKSGIVING

### I. To Be Shared

### II. Knowing What to Do With a Lot

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms” (1 Peter 4:10, NIV).

If we give a child a cookie, we expect the child to enjoy it. If, on the other hand, we give the same child a sack full of cookies, we expect it to be shared and passed around.

The greatest gift of all is God’s love for us through Christ. Jesus died on the cross to bring this love to all. Like any other gift given to us, we are to use it. Use God’s love by accepting it and enjoying it. Use God’s love by loving God. Use God’s love so you won’t be lonely or afraid. Rejoice and be glad that God loves you and has paid for all your sins.

But God did not limit His love to just a select few. He gave a whole sack full of love. His love goes far beyond the love which we need. “But where sin increased, grace increased all the more” (Rom. 5:20, NIV). God’s forgiving grace

covers more than our sins. It gives hope greater than our fears.

What are we going to do with that great love which Christ has given in overflowing measure?

Peter suggests that “each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” Peter suggests that we are to minister—that is, to serve others—with God’s love. Christ has given us His love beyond our own needs, but that doesn’t mean it is wasted love. He tells us to pass it on to others.

Thanksgiving means thanksgiving! Tell others of Christ’s love. Share this love by spending time with the lonely, by cheering up the sad, by giving of your means for mission work.

It is easy to know what to do with a little love, but see if you can use the unlimited love Christ has given to you!

—Pastor Emeritus Arvid G.W. Gullerud  
Spokane, Washington



*The “natural altar” used by Prince of Peace Lutheran congregation, Hecla, South Dakota at its annual Harvest Festival this fall. More pictures of the event are on hand for next month’s issue. Nathan Pfeiffer is pastor.*





# 50th Anniversary Observance



## “Berea—Then and Now”

“Berea—Then and Now” was the theme of Professor Steven Sippert’s message to 50th anniversary worshippers at Berea Lutheran Church of Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, on June 20, 2010.

Prof. Sippert called attention to the fact that, guided solely by the truth of God’s Word and grounded firmly in faith in Christ Jesus, the Bible Bereans (Acts chapter 17) treasured Holy Scripture and measured all—including the Apostle Paul’s message—by its divine standards.

With its birth date paralleling that of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC), those who founded and continued the ministry of Berea Lutheran Church have sought to follow the footsteps of their biblical namesake. From its beginnings in a Minneapolis home, to its first church home in the city of St. Paul as a mission congregation of the CLC, to its present Inver Grove Heights (St. Paul suburb) location, through several building and expansion programs—all along the way God has blessed the preaching and teaching of His Holy Word and Gospel in both our church and our Christian Day School (established 1978).

Current membership of the con-



*Prof. Sippert and Pastor Schierenbeck*

gregation is 380 souls, with enrollment in the Day School at 28.

Those over the years who have provided pastoral leadership include Gordon Radtke (conducted first worship service), Marvin Eibs (1960-1970), Paul Larsen (1970-1983), and David Schierenbeck (1983-present).

Full-time Day School teachers have included Marlys Gerth, Beth Nolting, David Bernthal, Robert and Judith Snell, Susan Rehm, and Matthew Thurow (presently).

It was a wonderful anniversary day as the Lord granted good weather, a jubilant anniversary service, a wonderful program, and a fellowship meal. Many willing hearts and hands served in





*Front: Gene Lang, Berea President; charter member Don Kirchgatter; back: Brian Ludvigson & Doug Bester, program speakers; Cindy & Mike Taylor, DVD History*

readying all for this God-glorifying festival.

“Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Your Name be glory because of Your mercy and truth” (Ps. 115:1).

As our Lord guided and blessed the Bereans in the book of Acts, so may we ever look to Him as our Strength and Hope in the future.

—*Pastor David Schierenbeck*



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

The *Lutheran Spokesman*, with a paid circulation of 1,886 and a total distribution of 1,988, is owned and managed by the Church of the Lutheran Confession of 3015 Avenue K NW, Winter Haven, FL 33881.

—*Benno Sydow, Business Manager*

### Installations

In accord with our usage and order, David Naumann, who was called as pastor of Peace Lutheran Church, Orofino, Idaho, and St. John's Lutheran Church, Clarkston, Washington, was installed on Sunday, August 1, 2010.

—*Pastor Terrel Kesterson*

In accord with our usage and order, Janelle Hein, Ellen Bergstrom, and Ann Radichel who were called by Grace Lutheran Church, Fridley, Minnesota, as teachers in its Christian Day School, were installed on Sunday, August 8, 2010 (Janelle and Ellen as co-principals).

—*Pastor John Hein*

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 GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
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 SPOKANE VALLEY, WA 99206-7213

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According to our usage and order, Dr. Dan Sullivan (music, Gr. K-8) and Miss Jill Tiefel (Literature/Composition, Gr. 5-8), who were called to be teachers by Messiah Lutheran Church and School, Eau Claire, Wis., were installed on the weekend of August 21-22, 2010.

—*Pastor Paul Tiefel*

According to our usage and order, Scott Schiermeister, who was called by Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Loveland, Colorado, to be its pastor was installed on Sunday, October 3, 2010. Assisting in the installation were Pastors Timothy Wheaton and Paul Fleischer.

—*Pastor James Sandeen*

### 50th Anniversary Celebration

Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, Wis. is celebrating “one fifty-year period of God’s ongoing Grace” with the following special services to which all of the brethren are invited:

Oct. 23-24—“His Word of Grace”; Bible Class/Sunday School: “The Early Years.”

Oct. 30-31—“His People of Grace”; BC/SS: “Christian Education”

Nov. 5-6—“His Work of Grace”; BC/SS: “Over the Years”

Nov. 12-13—“A Future with His Grace”; BC/SS: “The Next Years”

Cover: John Fox