

**THE INSPIRATION
AND INERRANCY
OF
HOLY SCRIPTURE**

Fellowship Day Essay

By Pastor Frederic G Kleinig

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THE INSPIRATION AND INERRANCY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

We have a sure prophetic Word
By inspiration of the Lord
And though assailed on ev'ry hand,
Jehovah's Word shall ever stand.

Abiding, steadfast, firm, and sure
The teachings of the Word endure.
Blest he who trusts this steadfast Word;
His anchor holds in Christ, the Lord.

The apostle Paul wrote to the Christians at Ephesus: "(Ye) are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." (Eph. 2:20).

From this we learn that the Christian Church, that is, the group of people who are really and truly converted, who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord, and who steadfastly believe that "there is salvation in none other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (cf. Acts 4:12), are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, that is upon the writings of the apostles and prophets, which form the only foundation and basis of the true Church of God. In other words: The teachings of the Bible form the one and only sure foundation of the Christian faith; and whosoever departs from these teachings, ignores them, disbelieves or doubts them, or even opposes them, such a one of necessity places his eternal salvation in grave danger. This tremendous truth is very definitely stated by the Lord Jesus Himself when in Mark 16:16 He says: "He that believeth not shall be damned."

It is for this reason, namely, to cause people to disbelieve or doubt the Word of God, that Satan, the old evil foe, has worked so hard, and is working so hard today, for he knows only too well that without God's Word no one can be saved. And since he also knows that this world is rapidly approaching its end, and that his time is getting very short, he is now making every effort, and has launched his final assault on the Church of God in order to bring about its final ruin.

Now, as we already have heard, the Church of God is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, that is upon the Bible, the Word of God. To destroy any building, you destroy its foundation, and it cannot stand. To destroy the Christian Church, destroy that upon which it is built, namely the Scriptures.

Those of us who are acquainted with the history of the Christian Church on earth will know how through the centuries Satan has endeavoured ever and again in various ways to remove the Church from its foundation. He instituted the bloody persecutions of the first centuries after Christ, the Bible burnings in the days of the later Caesars and of the Middle Ages, the introductions of the many false teachings throughout the era of the New Testament in order to lead the people of God away from the truth as revealed in Holy Scripture and thus bring the Church of God to its end. However, the Church survived every onslaught of the devil in accordance with the Lord's saying: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18).

But Satan, even though he also knows this text, nevertheless has not given up. As a matter of fact, he has during the last decades increased his efforts to accomplish his end. Also this has been foretold by the Lord in Holy Scripture. Read such passages as Matt. 24 and Luke 21, where Jesus Himself predicts the happenings of the last days of this world; look up also in the Old Testament what the prophet Amos wrote in Chapter 8:11-12, and Daniel in chapter 12:1-3. There are also many other passages in the Scriptures that speak of the things that are to come to pass in the time of the end, e.g. 2 Thess. 2, which speaks of the coming and revelation of the great Antichrist; 2 Tim. 3:1-7, dealing with the grievous times of the final period of this world's

history. But a passage we should not overlook is Rev. 20:7-9, where we are told of the last great deception, Satan's final effort to bring about the destruction of the Lord's Church on earth, when the devil will endeavour to destroy the very foundation of the Christian Church. And this is the subject I would like to bring to your attention this afternoon.

First of all, let me repeat - for it cannot be repeated often enough - that the FOUNDATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IS THE WORD OF GOD, THE BIBLE, which God in His mercy gave to the human race in order that it might learn from this book all the things that pertain to its salvation. St. Paul wrote to his pupil Timothy: "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. 3:15). And the reason why this book (namely the Bible) is able to do this is because it is the very Word of God.

And it is this, namely that the Bible is the very Word of God, that Satan does not want men to believe. He does not want them to accept the Holy Scriptures as God's own truth, as the absolute and ultimate truth in everything they say, not only with respect to the great truths relating to man's salvation, but also with regard to any other matter they may in passing happen to touch on.

Now let us have a look and see what God, the real author of Scripture says about the Bible. Here are just a few of the texts:

- a) 2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." (Note the words: ALL SCRIPTURE, meaning that there is NOTHING in the Bible that God does not want to be there, and every word that is there is His very own Word).
- b) 2 Peter 1:21: "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (They did not speak or write their own thoughts or ideas, but only that which was communicated to them by the Spirit of God).
- c) John 10:35: "The Scripture cannot be broken." (These words were spoken by the Lord Himself, and emphasise the fact that absolutely nothing can be removed or broken out of Holy Scripture. It has been written and is valid and endures forever).
- d) Romans 3:2: "Unto them were committed the oracles (Greek: ta logia, i.e., the words) of God." (The Sacred Scriptures, which were committed to the Jews, are the words of God).
- e) 1 Corinthians 2:13: "We speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (This text is very plain and definite. The very words of Scripture were taught the holy writers by the Spirit of God).

And since St. Paul does not set a limit to the words that were taught them by the Holy Ghost, it is logical to accept the fact that all the words they spoke (and wrote) were in some miraculous manner communicated to them by the Spirit of God, also these same words of the passages just quoted. For this reason we know for certain, and accept without the slightest shadow of a doubt that every word of the Bible as originally communicated to the holy writers is, also when it deals with secular matters, no matter what they may be, and how trifling they may appear, the VERY WORD OF GOD. Therefore also Martin Luther says: "We should not be bold in dealing with the Word of God. You had better think: I do not understand these words; but rather than alter them or take away something from God's words or add anything to them, I will let them alone and commit the matter to God. For one should treat Holy Scripture with reverence and great fear. But men do not do this. They are bold (presumptuous, self-willed) not afraid to speak evil of dignities as 2 Peter 2:10 says; for they consider God's Word nothing else than the word of men." (SL 7, 1858).

So then, the Holy Scriptures in truth ARE the WORD OF GOD, with Divine authority, the absolute truth, the Book of the Holy Spirit, able to teach a lost and condemned human race the

only way to peace and true happiness here on earth, and eternal bliss in the everlasting hereafter. What a Book!

No wonder the devil hates it, and wants human beings, by nature his subjects, to despise, ignore and reject it, and thus keep them under his dominion for ever and ever. Brethren and sisters, don't be fools; never, under any circumstances, permit thoughts like this: Yea, hath God said this or that as it is written in Scripture; did He really mean it that way? May I depend on this? and other thoughts which would create doubts in regard to what you are told in the Word of God, I say, let no such thoughts ever take root in your hearts and minds, for such thoughts are inspired by the miserable devil, that roaring lion ever on the prowl, as St. Peter depicts him in 1 Peter 5:8. On the other hand, always remember that in your Bible you have the everlasting truth of God which will never let you down, by which you will never be deceived, and which, if you will but cling to its sacred teachings, will safely and unerringly lead you into the everlasting home of glory. You may depend on that, - absolutely.

Jesus said concerning the Word of God: "Thy Word is truth." (John 17:17). To Pontius Pilate He said: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth." (John 18:37). In numerous other passages of Holy Scripture it is emphasised that God's Word IS THE TRUTH. And that means that there are no errors of any kind in Holy Writ, for ALL SCRIPTURE is given by inspiration of God, who neither lies nor deceives. In 1932 the Missouri Synod in the USA at the time still a truly orthodox church, issued a statement on the Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Sacred Scriptures, and which reads as follows:

OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

1. We teach that the Holy Scriptures differ from all other books in the world in that they are the Word of God. They are the Word of God because the holy men of God who wrote the Scriptures wrote only that which the Holy Ghost communicated to them by inspiration, 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21. We teach also that the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures is not a so-called "theological deduction", but that it is taught by direct statements of the Scriptures, 2 Tim. 3:16; John 10:35; Rom. 3:2; 1 Cor. 2:13. Since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, it goes without saying that they contain no errors or contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters, John 10:35.
2. We furthermore teach regarding the Holy Scriptures that they are given by God to the Christian Church for the foundation of faith, Eph. 2:20. Hence the Holy Scriptures are the sole source from which all doctrines proclaimed in the Christian Church must be taken and therefore, too, the sole rule and norm by which all teachers and doctrines must be examined and judged. With the Confessions of our Church we teach also that the "rule of faith" (ANALOGIA FIDEI) according to which the Holy Scriptures are to be understood are the clear passages of THE SCRIPTURES THEMSELVES which set forth the individual doctrines. (Apology. TRIGLOT, p.441, section 60; Mueller, p.284). The rule of faith is not the man-made so-called "totality of Scripture."
3. We reject the doctrine which under the name of science has gained wide popularity in the Church of our day that Holy Scripture is not in all its parts the Word of God, but in part the Word of God and in part the word of man, and hence does, or at least might, contain error. We reject this erroneous doctrine as horrible and blasphemous, since it flatly contradicts Christ and His holy apostles, sets up men as judges over the Word of God, and thus overthrows the foundation of the Christian Church and its faith.

This fine Statement is scripturally correct, has also been adopted by the ELCR and embodied in the confessional paragraph of its constitution and which, moreover, cannot be repealed.

It may yet be mentioned that the old evil foe has many methods and ways of endeavouring to make people lose faith in Holy Scripture and ask the question: "Yea, hath God said?"

Since in ancient times there were no printing presses, and type could not be set up and carefully checked and established permanently, the men who then made copies of the original manuscripts written under inspiration by the holy writers did make errors in their transcriptions, misspelling words, leaving something out here or there, sometimes even adding to the original text what may have been a marginal note; yet in spite of the many variants in the Greek texts due to the copyists' slips, the amazing thing is that not one single doctrine vital to salvation has been changed. By His gracious providence God has given us such a fullness and variety of witnesses to the original inspired text that truly Christian scholarship has reproduced it with great faithfulness. God Himself has so watched over the transmission of the sacred text that we still have everything He wants us to have, as Jesus said: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35), and as He promised concerning them who would be converted by His Word as proclaimed (and written) by the apostles right up to the end of time: "Neither pray I for these (the apostles) alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word." (John 17:20).

So we need have no concerns that we shall ever lose even one i-dot of the things God has prepared for our salvation. St. Paul declared to his hearers in his time "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27), and this same entire counsel of God is still in Holy Scripture today, and is today still being proclaimed by those preachers who teach God's Word in its truth and purity, though their number is rapidly decreasing, and that of false prophets increasing, as the Lord foretold in Matt. 24:11.

Therefore let us be of good cheer, for the Lord is still in control, and His holy Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation. Only let us not foolishly and even wickedly cast away the treasure He has committed to our care, and blasphemously repeat after Satan the ungodly words: "Yea, hath God said?"

Martin Luther once remarked: "The devil is the master of a thousand tricks", and there is no doubt that Satan is now in the final stage of this world making use of every one of them in order to ruin the Church of God and lead into eternal doom as many human beings as possible. He does this in every way possible. Take, for example, Bible translations of today. As of course you all know, the original inspired manuscripts were not written in English or any other modern language, but in Hebrew (O.T.), and in Greek (N.T.). And even though the devil tried his hand through the slips of later copyists to corrupt the sacred text, the Lord saw to it that everything He wants mankind to know concerning their salvation still stands firm, sure and entirely dependable. We learnt that previously.

However, today these two ancient languages are no longer spoken by earth's millions. Translations into modern languages had to be made. With regard to the English translations the standard still is the King James Version. Its special merit is that it reproduces very faithfully the originally inspired text, especially all the great teachings necessary for salvation. It was first published in 1611.

But due to the fact that it appeared in the English language of 350 years ago, which contained words and phrases now no longer used, it was felt that for the people of today modern English was necessary, and so the Revised Standard Version appeared before the end of the last century. This is where Satan saw his opportunity. By that time liberalism, or modernism, as it was then called, had gained a firm foothold inside the visible church, and many Bible scholars of note had liberal tendencies, rejecting various Bible truths and coming up with their own rationalistic ideas. So, for example, it was held that the coming Redeemer, even Jesus Christ our Lord, was not known to the people of the Old Testament times; also that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the first among men, but not the true God. And quite a number of these liberals took part in the translation of the Revised Standard Version, and, as can only be expected,

translated the original text in a manner to make their heretical views appear as God's Word. We give you four examples, two from the O.T., and two from the N.T.:

OLD TESTAMENT

A.

Genesis 49:10

1. King James: "Until Shiloh (the Messiah) come."
2. R.S.V.: "Until he comes to whom it belongs."
3. Literal from Hebrew: "Till the Man of Peace comes."
(Note how the RSV avoids mentioning the coming Redeemer).

B.

Isaiah 7:14

1. King James: "A virgin shall conceive."
2. R.S.V.: "A young woman shall conceive."
3. Literal from Hebrew: "The virgin shall conceive."
(Since many liberals reject the virgin birth of Christ it has been translated to cover their theory. Every young woman is a young woman, but every young woman is NOT a virgin. Note also that in the inspired original Hebrew there is the definite article "the". There was only one virgin who ever conceived, namely Mary the mother of Jesus).

NEW TESTAMENT

A.

Romans 9:5

1. King James: "Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever."
2. R.S.V.: "Of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, God who is over all be blessed forever."
3. Literal from Greek: "From them according to His body came the Christ, God who is over all be blessed forever."
(Notice how this has been deliberately mistranslated in the RSV so as to do away with the Godhead or Deity of Jesus Christ).

B.

Philippians 2:6

1. King James: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."
2. R.S.V.: "Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped."
3. Literal from Greek: "Who, subsisting in the form of God, deemed it not robbery to be equal with God."
(Again observe how the RSV cleverly hides the fact that Christ (the Son) is equal with God).

We have now given you four examples of how the RSV distorts vital portions of the Word of God. There are many more, but we have not the time to mention them all. But do not overlook one fact. St. Paul writes, again by inspiration: "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor. 11:14-15). The beautiful and dignified modern English language, in a number of cases an even better and more exact translation than the King James Version, are the baits the devil uses to deceive people in vital matters.

It might yet be mentioned in this connection that most churches today have placed the RSV on an equal footing with the King James Version, and use it in their services. That is, of course, a sign of the times. We of the ELCR have not done so, nor intend doing so. For if we did, we would naturally also condone all its serious errors.

Besides the RSV there are now many other versions in modern English, e.g., the New English Bible (N.E.B.) and particularly New Testament translations like Good News for Modern Man.

Most of these are, as far as errors and mistranslations are concerned, even worse than the RSV. But all have their good points too. They may be used for reference purposes, but with care. And as far as pastors are concerned, it is necessary that they have a sound knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, the two original languages in which the Sacred Writings were given, so that they may be in a position to check up on matters, not only in regard to translation, but also to ascertain the true meaning of various words and phrases. Our lay-people should demand this, so that they may not be misled.

Once again, we repeat: Never be in any doubt whatsoever that your Bible (King James Version) is reliable, and even though it too has certain shortcomings, e.g. Matt. 18:18, nevertheless we are still quite happy with it; and should it ever be necessary to make a correction in the translation or an explanation in regard to obsolete (out-of-date) words, it is the pastor's duty to point that out to his people.

Furthermore, should anyone for private reading desire a simple yet really good translation in modern English (also easily understood by children) we can recommend an American translation by Dr. William Beck, a conservative theologian and a good Hebrew and Greek scholar, and whose work is entitled: The New Testament in the Language of Today. Unfortunately his O.T. translation has not been published yet. But what we have seen of it is good.

Now we should like to tell you (and this is most important) of what many, if not most, present-day churches think of the Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Scriptures. Generally speaking, most of them don't mind what the individual ministers think and teach on this subject. They leave the matter open to the individual men. And thus the poor lay-people hear all kinds of strange doctrines. And the devil is very happy.

Then there are churches that still claim to be conservative, but in which Satan is working as Martin Luther put it, "with deep guile and great might." We shall therefore bring you, in order to warn you, a number of statements issued by them. Remember, Satan is "a master of a thousand tricks" and also in these churches he has his "theologians" (theologian means: Men who speak God's Words) but who in reality are "diabologians" (men who speak the devil's words), and often with equal cunning and deceit as their master. So, for example, there is a Lutheran Church in America calling itself "The American Lutheran Church" (TALC), which in its Constitution has the following fine statement concerning the Inspiration and Inerrancy of Holy Writ:

"The American Lutheran Church accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as a whole and in all their parts as the divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant Word of God, and submits to this as the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life."

(By the way, the American Lutheran Church was formerly in fellowship with the now defunct UELCA, the latter severing fellowship connections with the former, not because of any false doctrine or practice, but in order to bring about union with the former ELCA).

Now after reading the above quotation from the Constitution of the American Lutheran Church anybody would be fully justified in coming to the conclusion: Well, here we have a church that fully subscribes to the absolute inerrancy of the Bible, and which consequently teaches God's Word in its truth and purity, after the fashion of Martin Luther himself. But if you think so, you are in for a surprise. How those particular words (the quotation from the Constitution) are being understood in that church becomes clear when we examine a book published by that denomination in 1959, and entitled "The Bible is the Word of God." It was written by one of

their Seminary professors (John R. Lavik) with an introduction by another professor (Alvin N. Rogness). Here are some of the statements in that book:

1. "That 'all Scripture is inspired by God' is directly related to the fact that in the Bible the Word of God comes to us through the medium of human messengers and in the form of human language. Its specific revelation of God, at the heart of which is God's saving message to man, was given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Bible is thus at the same time a divine Word and a human word. (p. 19).

(Note our underlinings and study them carefully. The following further quotations will show what these men mean).

2. "The Lutheran Church (meaning the world-wide denomination) believes and confesses that the Bible is the only authentic source and norm (rule) for its preaching of the Word and its administration of the Sacraments. In its confessional statements the Lutheran Church does not claim the Bible to be the source or norm in relation to any other area of human life or learning." (pp. 37-38).

(Observe again our underlining. The writer grants, that the Bible is authentic (genuine and reliable) as far as preaching the Word (he means the great doctrines of salvation) is concerned, but in other areas (history, also that of the Creation; geography and other secular matters) the Lutheran Church in its confessions as contained in the Book of Concord of 1580 has not claimed that such matters are reliable; hence the Scriptures have not an absolute, but a limited inerrancy. It is true, the Lutheran Confessions contain no special section on the Inspiration and Inerrancy of Scripture; they do not mention the absolute or any other inerrancy of the Bible, and there was a reason for this. In those days Satan had not yet launched his great attack against the inerrancy of Scripture. At that time the great denominations within the visible church, (Catholics, Reformed, Lutherans) still held the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, genuine and reliable. Inerrancy of Holy Writ was then not questioned, and so no rebuttal was necessary. But it is very different today. There are not many theologians left who accept without reservation the absolute inerrancy of the Bible).

But let us go on and see what further matters this liberal professor has to tell us.

3. "The Bible does not claim to, and we render it a great disservice if we insist that it should provide revelation in the field of physical science. The Bible reveals God specifically in His relation to man. From this viewpoint it deals with morals and religion. The content of the Word of God is the Law and the Gospel, and really nothing else." (p. 55).

NOTE: Once more closely study the parts we have underlined, and you will detect the footprints of the devil alright. The writer certainly accepts only a limited inspiration and consequently a limited inerrancy, for these two cannot be separated. When God said through St. Paul: "All Scripture, is given by inspiration of God," He certainly meant ALL Scripture, and when the Lord Jesus praying to His heavenly Father in the great high priestly prayer of John chapter 17 used the words: "Thy Word is Truth" (v.17), He certainly meant that ALL Scripture, not merely Law and Gospel, is the absolute truth, but every jot and tittle that has been written and is now standing on record in Holy Writ, is the inspired Word of God and factually true and correct. And this has also been verified again and again. When years ago liberal "theologians" claimed that Moses could not have written the first five books of the Bible, since it was very doubtful whether humans had learned to write so early in history, archaeologists discovered the Hammurabi Column which had been inscribed by order of an ancient King who lived at the time of Abraham, well before the days of Moses. Again referring to New Testament history, it was strongly suggested by liberals that St. Luke made an error with regard to the decree by Caesar Augustus "that all the world should be taxed" or enrolled, and that this taxing was NOT ordered when Cyrenius (Quirinius) was governor of Syria. But ancient inscriptions which have now been found clearly show that Luke was not mistaken, that Cyrenius was governor of Syria twice, the first time between 11 and 8 B.C., the second time between 6–9 A.D. It was during

the first governorship of Cyrenius that the order for the taxing arrived in Syria, and that it took place in Judea during 5 to 4 B.C., the time during which Christ was born.

So again those who contradicted the Scripture were put to shame; for how could Luke be wrong when what he wrote was inspired by the Holy Ghost, Who never makes mistakes?

And when a case arises which presents what men call "a real problem", and which cannot be checked because of lack of secular evidence, then, brethren and sisters, remember since the Scriptures are the inspired and hence infallible Word of God, they are ALWAYS RIGHT, and everything and everybody contradicting this Word is ALWAYS WRONG. Never permit Satan or any of his apostles to fool and deceive any of you concerning this matter.

We call ourselves Lutherans; then let us also be true blue Lutherans, and let us take the same wonderful attitude towards the Bible that Luther took. He wrote:

"When I hear the Word coming from above I believe it even though I am unable to grasp it, to understand it, and to get it into my head in the same way as I am indeed able to grasp by reason that two and five are seven, and let no one tell me anything else. Nevertheless, if God were to say from above: No, they are eight, THEN I SHOULD BELIEVE THIS CONTRARY TO MY REASON AND FEELING. Indeed, if I intend to question and judge God's Word, then I must not believe it. But I will believe Him who judges and decides. I will live and die on that. For I rely on Him whom I regard as far wiser and far better at counting than I am. And although I, too, am able to count, still I will serve Him by believing, and what He says shall be the truth to me even though all the world speaks otherwise." (SL 10, 1095). (Emphases ours).

Amazing man, this Martin Luther! No wonder God chose him to lead the Church, in the power and grip of the Antichrist, back to the Bible! May God grant that we are ever worthy followers of him!

But before we take our leave from those American professors and their church (for keeps it is to be hoped) we should yet like to say the following: In spite of that fine paragraph in their Constitution with reference to the Inspiration and Inerrancy of Scripture, which would lead one to believe that this church is truly orthodox, see how they teach! "It is not the 'official' doctrine which ought to be taught, but the doctrine which is actually being taught that decides whether a church is orthodox or not, because Christ has arranged that all things which He commanded His disciples be actually taught and not merely recognised as correct teaching by means of an 'official document'." (Dr. F. Pieper).

The lesson then is this: Don't at once believe everything you read or hear, but do what the Lord says in 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Today especially we must observe what their attitude is towards the written Word of God, the Holy Scriptures. If they accept, at least outwardly, but do not teach the absolute inerrancy of Holy Writ then they are deceivers, and you are required to obey the Lord's command: "Avoid them!" (Rom. 16:17).

And the same thing applies to a church which, although using Scriptural statements as window-dressings, nevertheless smugly tolerates men who attack the truths contained in the Bible, and thus plainly show that they are not of God, but actually servants of Satan. If you don't belong to such a church, don't join it (see Romans 16:17); and should you be a member there, you really won't gain much spiritually, but stand a good chance of losing everything, even your eternal salvation. In regard to membership in such a church the Lord says: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. 6:17-18).

But now let us come nearer home.

In 1966 the former two Lutheran Churches in Australia, the UELCA and the ELCA after 20 years of negotiating, amalgamated.

In the Constitution of the new Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) we find the following paragraph with regard to Holy Scripture:

“The Church accepts without reservation the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as a whole and in all their parts, as the divinely inspired, written and inerrant Word of God, and as the only infallible source for all matters of faith, doctrine, and life.”

If the reader will turn back to page 54 and compare the above statement with the statement of The American Lutheran Church on the same subject, he will find the wording somewhat similar. Both statements point to orthodox (right-teaching) Churches. But whether that now is so, has to be shown. Here again the paragraph from Dr. Francis Pieper’s Dogmatics must be and has to be used as the touchstone:

“It is not the ‘official’ doctrine which ought to be taught, but the doctrine which is actually being taught that decides whether a church is orthodox or not, because Christ has arranged that all things which He commanded His disciples be actually taught, and not merely recognised as correct teaching by means of an ‘official’ document.”

Before the amalgamation, at least up to 1940, when Dr. Wm. Janzow was still the leader of the ELCA, this church held to the position on Inspiration and Inerrancy as mentioned in the paragraph on this matter contained in the “Brief Statement”, recorded on page 51. (Be sure to read through that again). But later a change took place. In the early 60’s a leading official of the former ELCA, when asked whether the ELCA still held to the position on various matters as expressed in the “Brief Statement”, gave the following interesting answer: “The ‘Brief Statement’ presents a ‘static’ (meaning ‘stationary’ or ‘still-standing’) theology; today a more ‘dynamic’ (‘on-moving’) theology is required.” But isn’t the theology of the Bible “static”? Does not the Word of God always teach the same things? Does Scripture doctrine ever change? In any case, the former ELCA did not insist that the paragraph from the “Brief Statement”, so Scriptural and so beautifully clear, also on the matter of “absolute” inerrancy, be inserted in the Constitution of the LCA.

As for the former UELCA, matters were different. This Church, formed in 1921 by means of the amalgamation of five Synods, and joined in 1926 by a sixth, around 1927 submitted through their intersynodical committee, at a meeting in Adelaide with representatives of the ELCA, the following theses on Inspiration:

1. For us as for the Congregation of believers in general God’s Word is Scripture as we now have it in our hands.
2. Because Scripture is inspired by the Spirit of God it follows as a matter of course that no errors are present in the Word as originally inspired by Him.
3. This does not exclude the presence of irregularities attached to the outward form of God’s Word, due to the fact that the Holy Ghost spoke through holy men to whose human imperfections He condescended to accommodate Himself. This applies especially to the present-day text corrupted by copyists and other adverse circumstances as well as to translations based on the aforementioned text.
4. The doctrine that by the Inspiration of Scripture is meant the “impulse to write” as well as the “suggestion of matters and words” is also our doctrine.

5. As far as the comprehension of the relation between the divine and human factors responsible for the origin of Holy Writ is concerned, we still see problems facing the church, and realise that it is the church's solemn duty to work towards their solution.
6. While thus recognising that there are still problems in the area of the doctrine of inspiration, and while hoping that this doctrine will yet be better comprehended and presented, we nevertheless reject as error any further development of this doctrine which would in any way alter the church's certainty that it possesses in the Scriptures the inspired, inerrant source of divine truth. (Underlinings ours, F.G.K.).

It would take a few pages of this paper to go into detail with reference to this statement, but, to save time, we shall draw your attention to theses 3, 5 and 6.

Thesis 3:

a) "Irregularities attached to the outward form of God's Word."

By this they mean errors in the written form of God's Word, namely errors in the Bible. They go on to say that these errors are due to the "imperfections" of the "holy men", meaning such things as lack of modern scientific education, primitive world-views, etc. Since there were no better-educated men around in those far-off days, and yet God wanted mankind to know His Word of salvation, the Holy Spirit had to condescend to accommodate Himself to the "imperfections" of the "holy men", just like we, if we want to chop some wood, but have for our use only a badly blunted and gapped axe to cut the wood, we have to make the best of it. And that the writers of the theses are referring not only to copies of the original manuscripts, but to the original manuscripts themselves, concerning which St. Paul wrote: "ALL Scripture is given by INSPIRATION OF GOD," is plainly shown by their using the word "especially". So, according to these "theologians" also the original manuscripts, written by the "holy men", are not without "irregularities", i.e., without errors.

Thesis 5:

Here appears the notorious reference to the "relation between the divine and human factors responsible for the origin of Holy Writ." This divine and human factor business is still a favourite theme of today's liberals. It is not only mentioned, but stressed, ever and again. Now what exactly do the liberals mean when they use this phrase: "Divine and human factors responsible for the origin of Holy Writ"? If we look back and study Thesis 2, we note that the writers of the Theses correctly state that the Holy Ghost communicated no errors to the "holy writers." What He inspired them to write was absolutely pure and errorless. The trouble lies not with the Spirit of God, Who made a one hundred percent job of the matter; the trouble lies with the poor, rather backward "holy men", whom the Holy Spirit had to use, since there were no better ones around at that time. You see it was the fault of the writers of the original text, many of whom were very ordinary, often quite uneducated men (farmers, fishermen, etc.) whom the Holy Ghost had to select. And now the Church, according to Thesis 5 has the rather formidable task and "solemn duty" facing it of establishing what is really the still pure Word of God and what is the word of man in the Bible, and especially what does not conform to the findings of modern science (so-called), like evolution, for example!

To give you an example to understand the matter clearly, let me put it like this:

A man wants to transfer a tank-full of clear, clean water into another empty tank. But unfortunately he has only one pipe that he can use for the job, and that pipe is on its inside rusty and dirty. - The water represents the Word as inspired by the Holy Spirit, the rusty and dirty pipe the "holy writers". As the clear, clean water passes through the rusty, dirty pipe, it dissolves at least some of the rust and dirt, and carries it along with it into the empty tank; but it is no longer clear and clean water. In like manner, say these "theologians" (actually "diabologians") what we have in the Bible is no longer really the pure Word of God, but a Word that is mixed with "irregularities", a rather pleasing and polite word for errors.

Note the cunning and deception of the devil.

Thesis 6:

Very cleverly put. Even though they declare that there are still “problems in the area of the doctrine of inspiration (meaning that the church has not yet, after all these years, succeeded in sifting truth from error in the Bible) we nevertheless reject as error any further development of this doctrine which would in any way alter the church’s certainty that it possesses in the Scriptures the inspired, inerrant source of divine truth.”

We assume that lay-people, also sincere Christian lay-people, and even many quite conservative pastors, unless they have very sharp eyes, will think the last part of the Thesis sounds really wonderful, and completely excludes any danger of false teaching in the matter of Inerrancy of the Scriptures. But take a careful look at the word “source”. That the “source” (the communication) passed on to the “holy men” was absolutely clear and pure they already admitted in Theses 2. But then they also have told us that it was due to the “human factor” that what issued from the “source” in its transmission to mankind through the “holy writers” became contaminated with “irregularities” i.e., errors. What pious, but deceptive, blasphemous disarming talk now to assure the children of God that they may be certain that in the Scriptures they possess “the inspired, inerrant source of divine truth” making honest, but simple-minded lay-people believe that their “theologians” are honest, sincere, orthodox men of God.

The Germans have a saying: “Trau, schau, wem?” meaning in English: “Look, whom can you really trust?”

Yes, indeed, whom can you really trust these days, especially in matters of religion?

This UELCA set of Theses on Inspiration and Inerrancy must have been known to at least some of the members of the Intersynodical Committee of the former ELCA, for they appeared with Dr. W. Janzow’s comments in the A.T.R. No. 4 in 1931. But already in the first section of the Theses of Agreement which formed the basis for the Union, and which deals with “Principles Governing Church Fellowship”, there appeared some points which are by no means “clear”. For example, it is stated that “in case of differences in exegesis (Scripture explanation) that affect doctrine, agreement on the basis of God’s Word must be sought by combined, prayerful examination of the passage or passages in question.”

So far, so good! This is certainly the correct procedure. But now follows an interesting statement explaining what to do if the “combined prayerful examination” does not bring about the desired result, namely agreement. It reads:

“If this does not lead to agreement, because no unanimity has been reached on the clarity of the passage or passages in question and hence on the stringency (binding nature) and adequacy of the Scriptural proof, divergent views arising from such differences of interpretation are not divisive of church fellowship, providing that...” (Underlining ours) Th. of A., I, 4e.

Now follow five so-called safe-guards, which, however, have so many loop-holes that they are useless unless both parties understand the Scriptures the same way, not one holding them to be absolutely inerrant, the other regarding them as having limited inerrancy.

So then the paragraph in the Constitution of the LCA (look it up again on page 57) will lend itself to a somewhat similar treatment as that of the ALC in the USA.

And it has done so!

Soon after the merger took place in 1966 it became apparent that there was no real unity with regard to the Inspiration and Inerrancy of Scripture. Thereupon the LCA Commission on

Theology and Inter-Church Relations prepared a statement on the subject, which was then accepted by their General Convention at Albury in New South Wales in March, 1968.

The statement reads as follows:

1. In the exercise of their teaching function, whether dealing with a group or a congregation or with individuals, pastors of the LCA should not run counter to the letter and the spirit of the Theses of Agreement.
2. The Theses of Agreement use the term "inerrancy" in its normal sense of freedom from all error and contradiction, "factual" as well as "theological". The only "errors" in the Scriptures acknowledged by the Theses of Agreement are those which found their way into the sacred text through deliberate or inadvertent alterations made by copyists. Of course, this "inerrancy" cannot be seen with human eyes, nor can it be proved to human reason; it is an article of faith, a belief in something that is hidden and not obvious. We believe that the Scriptures are the Word of God and therefore inerrant. The term "inerrancy" has no reference to the variant readings found in the extant textual sources because of copyists' errors or deliberate alterations; neither does it imply an absolute verbal accuracy in quotations and in parallel accounts, such absolute uniformity evidently not having been part of God's design. (Thesis VIII, 10).

The Theses carefully avoid the use of the term "error" in such cases, since that term would contradict the terms "inerrant" and "inerrancy" which are so often used in the Theses, and would assume what is not true either in doctrine or in logic. Similarly, members of the LCA should avoid speaking of errors in the Scriptures.

3. It should be recognised that the Theses of Agreement carry a very difficult subject to the limits of human cognition and linguistic expression, without either violating the character of the Sacred Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, or stripping the holy writers of human thought, feeling, and activity.
4. As regards interpretation, it is necessary to adhere to the old, and incidentally the only reasonable hermeneutical rule that the literal sense of the Scriptures must be regarded as the intended sense unless a figurative meaning is clearly demanded by the nature of the text itself, or by the context, or by the so-called analogia fidei, that is, by a Biblical article of faith. It must be admitted, however, that the decision on what is literal and what is figurative may at times be difficult to determine.
5. The hermeneutical principle that Scripture interprets Scripture must not be abandoned. One who regards as a mere allegory or symbol what the Scriptures clearly recognise as historical truth or fact, in effect denies the authority of the divine Word and cannot consistently maintain that it is the voice of God speaking through man.
6. To make rationalistic considerations, as well as scientific theories, the reason for departure from the clear sense of the Word of God is to set aside the authority of the Word and leads, at least in principle, to the rejection of all supernatural and miraculous elements in the Bible, including the supreme miracle of the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, the vicarious atonement, the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ, etc.

NOTE: This paragraph, when pointing to the danger incurred by those who depart from the meaning of Scripture because of some objection raised by human reason, does not say or imply that all who are thus motivated carry their principle to its logical conclusion.

7. The Theses of Agreement, the fruit of prayerful labours extending over many years, have been adopted in all seriousness and in good faith by both the former UELCA and ELCA as a unifying document. They should be respected and treated accordingly. Should amendments become desirable in the course of time, such amendments would have to be

submitted to the entire Church after thorough theological examination and discussion. Meanwhile, a deliberate disregard of the Theses in teaching and preaching would appear as evidence of bad faith, and would constitute a serious threat to the unity of the Church. There may of course be inadvertent disregard of the Theses due to ignorance of their content.

This is the Statement the LCA found necessary to adopt at their General Convention at Albany two years after the amalgamation, thereby clearly showing that all was not well with regard to the vital teaching concerning the Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Bible. However, for obvious reasons which we shall mention in our summing up of this statement and the following one which was adopted at Horsham in October 1972 the Albany statement did not bring about the desired result. So, as just mentioned, another statement was submitted to the General Convention recently held at Horsham, Victoria, and again adopted by the Convention. This is how it reads:

THE THESES OF AGREEMENT AND INERRANCY

The Theses of Agreement in applying the term “inerrancy” to Scripture mean to stress its full authority while taking into account the rich complexity of the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God in all its parts and aspects and also the word of man in all its parts and aspects. Accordingly, while understanding inerrancy in the normal sense of freedom from all error and contradiction, “factual” as well as “theological”, the Theses state that this inerrancy “cannot be seen with human eyes nor can it be proved to human reason; it is an article of faith, a belief in something which is hidden and not obvious.”

This understanding of inerrancy implies that, although error may appear to be present in the Scriptures, it is not really so. Some such cases are directly mentioned in the Theses: errors which found their way into the sacred text through deliberate or inadvertent alterations made by copyists, as well as the absence of verbal accuracy and uniformity in parallel accounts. In addition to these, the Theses likewise make reference to apparent errors in other directions: seeming deficiencies relating to and caused by the fact that the holy writers retained the distinctive features of their personalities, that they used contemporary methods of historiography and used the terminology of contemporary views of nature and the world. These evidences of the limitations of the human mind in no way invalidate the inerrancy of God’s written word, but illustrate the servant form of the written Word of God, which is interested not in technical precision for its own sake but in a popular, intelligible presentation which best serves the saving purposes of God.

It must be borne in mind that a proper and adequate description of the written Word of God with its unity of the human and divine is beset with great difficulties. Since this is the case, pastors, teachers, and members of the Church should take great care not to violate the Church’s declared confessional position on inspiration and inerrancy. On the other hand mere inadequacies of understanding or expression in this difficult area should be treated with brotherly forbearance. Responsible clarity and charity must go hand in hand here, so that the Body of Christ may build itself up among us in love and peace, through the truth.

Some ways of speaking or teaching in the matter of inerrancy which are contrary to the sound doctrine of the Scriptures and of the Theses of Agreement are herewith specified:

1. to speak of “errors” in the Holy Scripture;
2. to hold that what according to clear biblical statements “actually is or actually happened” may be regarded as what actually is NOT or actually did NOT happen;
3. to adopt uncritically and to propagate all the claims of historical criticism which often rest on or lead to an unbiblical scepticism as to the historical bases of the Christian faith;
4. to use modern knowledge as a means to judge any biblical statement and attack the authority of Scripture;

5. to make faith in the inerrancy of Scripture in any way depend on the human certainty attained by rational argument and demonstration;
6. to regard all statements of the Scripture as being of equal value and importance.
7. to treat the Bible in such a way as though its divine authority rendered historical investigation unimportant or irrelevant.

Now for our comments on these Statements

1. General Comments applying to both Statements.

We print both Statements so that the reader may be able to compare them. On close and careful study he will find that both cover the same ground, and that there is no essential difference between them. Statement H (Horsham 1972) really repeats what Statement A (Albury 1968) has already said, though there is a variation in expressions and wording. Now just as statement A failed to settle the matter at issue, namely Inerrancy of the Scriptures, we opine that statement H will not achieve a settlement either. We recall a statement by the German general, von Manstein, one of their ablest strategists, who, when asked what his opinion was of the arrangement and positioning of the Russian armies in eastern Europe in 1941, replied: "It was a deployment arranged to meet every contingency. At extremely short notice they could go over to the offensive or remain on the defensive." In like manner both the A and the H statements are so arranged that they meet both contingencies, whether liberal or conservative. They are designed to make both sections happy. Both statements contain elements to please both parties. Actually both statements are of the "Yes-No" type, and such statements which affirm a thing and then again deny it, are usually not worth the paper they are written on.

Secondly, it is rather striking that both statements bring no Scripture text to prove their assertions. How different from the paragraph of the "Brief Statement" which we quoted on page 51 of this paper! But then we recall the fact that several years ago an LCA pastor told us: "The Theses of Agreement are our Bible!"

Thirdly, the reader will notice that the learned theologians who prepared the statements used high-flown and difficult language, often involving such complicated and difficult theological terms the average layman has no idea what they are really talking about, and even pastors sometimes do not get the point as to what is really meant. Worse still, "liberal theologians" often express their thoughts in such a veiled and camouflaged manner that unless one has knowledge of their stand on various doctrines of Scripture and realises what they are really aiming at, he is apt to be deceived. Moreover, they also have the habit of not fully spelling out their thoughts, so as to keep one guessing, or else putting them in such a way that they may be taken in different ways. This of course is done to keep both "conservatives" and "liberals" happy, and, above all, to keep them together in the same camp.

St. Paul handled matters differently. He wrote to the congregation at Corinth: "When I came to you, fellow Christians, I didn't come to tell you God's truth with extra fine speech or wisdom.... I didn't use clever talk to persuade you, but I let the Spirit and His power prove the truth to you so that your faith will not depend on men's wisdom but on God's power" (1 Cor. 2:1, 4-5, Beck's Translation).

The point St. Paul here makes is perfectly clear. Most of the members of the Corinthian congregation were no doubt plain, simple folk, not versed in the language and thinking of the philosophers and learned men of their day. Therefore Paul preached to them the Word in the language they could follow and understand.

Fourthly, consider that this type of statement is not infrequently submitted to conventions for adoption. But since most church conventions are made up not only of pastors but also of lay members, the latter as a rule in the majority, and most of these latter ones not at all well-versed in theology - most lay people seem never to get much beyond the ABC of the Christian religion

- then how in the world can such people vote intelligently on such statements? What of course usually happens is that they take their cue from the speakers debating the motion, and then cast their votes in accordance with their own personal feelings on the matter and also in favour of the speaker who appealed to them most. Such remarks as: The Seminary Professors say so, and such learned men must know what is right; the President supports it; our own pastor is in favour of it, are often heard. And that then as a rule decides the issue. But the question: “What does the Lord say about it in His Word?” is seldom heard. And so the motion is put, adopted, usually unanimously, the statement becomes “the voice of the church”, and as such provides the guide-line to be followed. But if the statement happens to be a cunningly veiled “double-header”, matters go on as before.

Finally, we must have a look at both statements both A (Albury) and H (Horsham), since both are basically the same, even though the wording is somewhat different. Here are the points we desire to make.

Both statements appear to be designed to make both “conservatives” and “liberals” happy. For example, when we read in both that “the Theses of Agreement use the term ‘inerrancy’ in its normal sense of freedom from all error and contradiction” and thus one “should not speak of ‘errors’ in Holy Scripture” then no doubt the “conservatives” rejoiced and believed they had scored a vital point. Statement A also points out that “the hermeneutical principle that ‘Scripture interprets Scripture’ must not be abandoned”: that is correct. The “conservatives” must have felt happy to notice these points appearing in both statements. And since “conservatives” generally are inclined to be rather naive (meaning possessing childlike simplicity and trust mixed with a dash of stupidity), they must have also thought: Now we have our friends the liberals in the corner.

But when it also speaks about someone regarding “as a mere allegory or symbol what the Scriptures clearly recognise as historical truth or fact” is acting contrary to the sound doctrine of the Scriptures and of the Theses of Agreement (H) then we ask: “Are all LCA theologians agreed on what constitutes such ‘clear recognition’? What about Gen. 1-3, which is regarded by a number of Seminary professors as ‘pictorial’? Will they be required to change their minds about that, and if not, will they be disciplined?”

But we must come to the main point, which renders both statements really useless, and that is the one which harps on the so-called “human side” of Scripture. Although the writers of both statements do not mention the matter by this name, they certainly refer to it in unmistakable terms. Statement A speaks thus in Section 3: “... the Theses of Agreement carry a very difficult subject to the limits of human cognition and linguistic expression, without either violating the character of the Sacred Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, or stripping the holy writers of human thought, feeling, and activity” (Underlining ours). Statement H deals with the matter in more detail. It points out that the Theses of Agreement take “into account the rich complexity of the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God in all its parts and aspects and also word of man in all its parts and aspects” and later on informs us that the Theses of Agreement make reference to “seeming deficiencies relating to and caused by the fact that the holy writers retained the distinctive features of their personalities, that they used contemporary methods of historiography and used the terminology of contemporary views of nature and the world. These evidences of the limitations of the human mind in no way invalidate the inerrancy of God’s written word, but illustrate the servant form of the written Word of God, which is interested not in technical precision for its own sake but in a popular, intelligible presentation which best serves the saving purposes of God” (Underlining ours). Then follows: “It must be borne in mind that a proper and adequate description of the written Word of God with its unity of the human and divine is beset with great difficulties.”

It is definitely true that the Scriptures have a “human side”, if we wish to call it that.

The Bible was written by human beings, using human language; the holy writers recorded human events, human history, at times carefully collected and checked by human historians.

But in spite of these human efforts the Scriptures themselves declare, 2 Peter 1:20: “Holy men of God spake as they were moved (“literally carried”) by the Holy Ghost.” The result of this “moving” was, as St. Paul puts it in 1 Cor. 2:12-13: “The things that are freely given to us of God we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, BUT WHICH THE HOLY GHOST TEACHETH.” And since the Holy Ghost is “the Spirit of Truth” (John 16:13) Who guides “into all truth” (John 16:13), we know from the very outset that, since He is the real author of the Bible, and ALL Scripture has been inspired by Him, and, that “Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35) that in Holy Scripture we indeed have God’s truth, the absolute truth, the truth without the least admixture of error, also when it speaks of secular matters, as the Lord Himself said: “Thy word is truth”. (John 17:17).

When liberal “theologians” speak of the “human side” of Scripture - and they usually stress that - they mean something very much different from what we do whenever we happen to mention this term. They figure this way: The Scriptures were written by human beings; all human beings are subject to error; therefore the Scripture contains error.

But all liberals are not the same; there are also so-called “moderate” liberals. The “moderate” liberal still teaches that the Bible is inerrant in the great doctrines pertaining to salvation (theological inerrancy), but contends that there are mistakes in Scripture with respect to secular matters (history, geography, bad grammar, etc), and therefore rejects “total” inerrancy, which is demanded by the Scriptures themselves, since Christ Himself declared: “The Scripture cannot be broken.”

Now we also know that certain doctors of theology in the LCA have made statements which plainly indicate that they do not subscribe to the “total” inerrancy required by the Word of God. One of them wrote (R.T.R., XIX, 2): “One thing Christian theology can never admit, namely, the presence of ‘errors’ in the sense of false statements in Holy Scripture.” (Underlining ours).

To the uninitiated this sentence will probably appear correct; but it is so shrewdly constructed that it says something quite different from what is seems to say. The writer uses two words in that sentence, “error” and “false” which originate from the Latin language, “error” from “errare” (to wander away, to make a mistake) and “false” from “fallere” (to deceive). So what this doctor of theology means is this: The Scriptures do not contain any statement by means of which the reader is intended to be deceived, but they could, and in fact do, contain mistakes in secular matters, in numbers, etc., which are unintentional, mainly due to the rather limited knowledge in secular matters of the holy writers living in those ancient times. (By the way, were these writers not inspired? Does, then, the Holy Spirit also possess only limited knowledge?)

So this professor certainly does not believe in “total inerrancy”.

Another LCA doctor of theology wrote several years ago in an essay entitled “Soundly Interpreting the Scriptures” p.2: “It pleased the Holy Spirit to give us God’s Word through human beings limited in their outlook and often not equipped with historical and cosmological acumen and knowledge known by men today.... Should not it be openly and frankly admitted that apparently it did not please the Holy Spirit to provide us with Scriptures that are in all their historical, cultural and cosmological details accurate and that in many parts of the Scriptures it is so that the historical facts do not measure up to the scientific historiographical rules supplied by historians? All this belongs to the human side of the Word”.

This long involved sentence with its “big” words briefly means this: The men who wrote the Bible were of limited education. They did not know many of the things we know today. These were the men the Holy Spirit had to appoint to write the Scriptures, since there were no better ones around at the time. As a matter of fact, it pleased the Holy Spirit, for some reason or other, to provide us with a Bible that contains a considerable number of errors.

Well, this professor also certainly does not believe in “total” inerrancy, and we wonder just what he teaches his students!

Now comes the sixty-four dollar question: Could those last words of Section 3 have been inserted into the Statement on Inerrancy to provide room for and to keep within the LCA teachers holding such views?

Again, in section 4, the closing sentence: "It must be admitted, however, that the decision on what is literal and what is figurative may at times be difficult to determine" does call for some comment.

It is on record that a theological professor in the LCA claims that Gen. 1-3 is not real history, "hence these things described there must be taken as pictures or symbols, as in the book of Revelation." A second professor, according to the Conference minutes, "questioned also whether there was a real Garden of Eden. These things (Tree of knowledge of good and evil, fruit, serpent) are quite possibly figurative. It was maintained that all these views are permitted by the Theses of Agreement." (Our underlining).

Thus the last sentence in Section 4 must have been placed there for a purpose. What purpose? To provide room for professors who hold such views?

Since then further statements have issued from within the LCA which definitely prove that they have leading men, especially in their seminary, who hold heterodox ideas concerning the Scriptures, and which ideas appear in veiled and cleverly camouflaged form in both the Albury and Horsham statements, both making ample reference to the "human side" of Scripture.

Note our underlinings in the Horsham statement. That is why we could never accept a statement like that. A church that takes its stand on a basis of that kind has really not much to offer, but on the other hand can very seriously endanger a person's eternal salvation!

Brethren and Sisters: Cling faithfully to the sure foundation, the eternal, unchanging, abiding Word of God; remain firm in the sacred teachings of your Bible, never give away even one Word of it! And when your last hour comes, base your faith steadfastly on its glorious promises, and Satan will in vain try to upset your faith and deceive you, and so lead you to eternal ruin.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life!" (Rev. 2:10).

F.G. KLEINIG - 12/11/72.

