

Interviews with God

•**I ASK:** *‘Why Do So Few Believe the Gospel?’*

•**THUS SAITH THE LORD:** ‘The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.’

I Cor. 2:14.

‘The carnal mind is enmity against God.’ Rom. 8:7.

How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.’ Mat. 23:27.

•**TO WHICH I RESPOND:** ‘We thank Thee, O Lord, for the assurance that Thou wilt have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. Although there are millions without faith, the fault is in them, not in Thee. We thank Thee that in the Gospel there is power which will overcome the natural resistance of the human heart. Give grace to Thy servants that this saving truth may be brought very close to all unsaved souls. In Jesus’ name. Amen.’



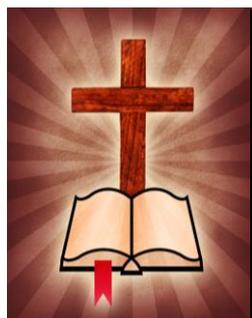
Instruction from Dr Luther

*The Writings of Faithful Teachers of the church are
Treasures from which We can Learn Much*

**WHERE THERE IS NOT TRUE LOVE,
THERE DOCTRINE CANNOT REMAIN PURE.**

True faith in Christ is to show itself in holding fast to the pure Word of God alone which in turn produces true Christian love. In John 15:9 Jesus says of this *‘Abide in My Love.’*

Luther comments on these words as follows: ‘To **begin to love is not difficult, but as Christ**



**WE LOVE EACH
OTHER BECAUSE
HE FIRST LOVED
US. 1 John 4:19.**

says in this passage, abiding in love is truly an art and a virtue. Even though, when they are first married, many couples are so madly in love that they **virtually eat each other up**, later on they become mortal enemies. Now, the same thing also happens among **Christian brethren.** Some **trivial incident destroys their mutual love**, and those who should cling to one another in love with all

their might allow themselves to be **torn apart and become the most bitter enemies.** That is what

happened in Christendom after the time of the apostles, when the devil raised up his trouble makers and heretics, so that bishops and pastors **burned with hatred against one another** and consequently the people, too, were divided into all kinds of sects and parties. As a result of that, Christianity suffered mortal harm, for where there is no love, there doctrine cannot remain pure.' *Essays For the Church, Vol 2, Walther, pages 57,58.*)

Studies on Bible Texts Found in the Drewes Catechism



Always Be Students of Luther's Small Catechism

Dr Luther: 'I am also a doctor and preacher..., yet I do as a child who is being **taught the Catechism**, and every morning, and whenever I have time, I read and say, word for word, the Ten Commandments, The Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Psalms, etc. **I must still read and study daily, and yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and pupil of the Catechism, and am glad so to remain.**

The First Commandment

TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART

In dealing with Question 19 of the Catechism: 'When do we trust God above all things?' the Catechism answers: 'We trust in God above all things when we put our whole confidence in Him and expect help from Him in all trouble.'

The first proof text for this truth is Ps. 118:8, 'It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.'

THE CONTEXT

In verses 1 to 4 the Psalmist by the Holy Spirit repeatedly urges every true believer in Christ to thank the Lord for all His goodness and for the fact that His mercy endures forever. Then in verses 5 to 7 Christ's Church is taught why they ought gladly to rejoice over God's Word and every blessing that is for their good. Often the believer is in such difficult trials that he does not know how he can survive and that all human help has failed him. Then he in faith sees the gracious, powerful help of the Lord in rescuing him from every trouble, so that he is not only safe and secure from all danger, but the circumstances have worked out so much better than he could possibly imagine.

Dr A. L. Graebner states: 'Here again the power of the Lord is contrasted with the strength, or weakness, of men. But the text is taken from a song of praise rising from the hearts and lips of those who have experienced the goodness and power of God. In verse 5 the Psalmist points to a certain distress, from the midst of which, as in Ps.42, the believers called upon the Lord.' (*Prooftexts*, p. 20).

Then the Lord answered him and helped him so that from gladsome experience he could joyfully exclaim the Scriptural truths which he had nearly forgotten: 'The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? The Lord taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.' (Ps.118:6,7).

THE TEXT

Dr A. L. Graebner explains further: 'Now as the psalmist contemplates the ways of men, who, when threatened or assailed by enemies, will look about for allies among men and the princes of men, he takes comfort in knowing that the Lord is on his side and takes his part as his ally against all his

enemies. For while confidence reposed in men, even in princes is often misplaced, and human aid is often by sad experience shown to be of no avail, his experience has taught him that it "is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man; It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.'

Based on these sure and certain principles of God's Word and because the true believer has seen from Christian experience the Lord fulfilling these principles by His almighty power, He steadfastly confesses, 'It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.'

IT IS BETTER ... THAN.

The words, 'it is better... than' state a comparison. The believer has seen from both Scripture and from experience the absolute foolishness of relying on puny man. This is illustrated in the story of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, when he at the head of a huge army attacked Jerusalem. Humanly speaking, seeing how helpless he was, King Hezekiah in repentance and faith took the matter to the Lord trusting that the Lord would help him. Though Sennacherib mocked the true God and put his trust in his own strength and the power of his army, the Lord killed 185,000 of his men in one night, sending those who survived hurrying back to Nineveh. So little did Sennacherib learn from this, that he was murdered by his own sons while he was worshipping an idol.

TRUSTING IN MAN OR EARTHLY THINGS IS IDOLATRY

To trust in man or earthly things more than in the Lord God through faith in Christ is idolatry and results in utter disaster. To trust in man is to walk on a quicksand. *Dr A. L. Graebner* states: 'But what is true as to men in general and princes in particular is also true as to physicians and their remedies, fathers and mothers. Wealthy and influential friends and relatives, and whoever else may be looked upon as deserving of trust and confidence: it is better to trust in the Lord; and to confide in them instead of or above and before the Lord is idolatry.'

But the believer is urged 'to trust in the Lord'. This means that we are when we look away from our own works, knowledge, wisdom and power, repent of our sins and believing alone in Christ Jesus as our Saviour from sin, then by God's grace alone we are to put our complete confidence in the Lord, our God, in His power and wisdom to help, to flee to Him for protection and security, to take refuge in Him in times of danger and each day ask Him to walk with us guiding and directing us according to His will in our lives. The original Hebrew reads: 'It is better constantly to trust and take refuge in the Lord.'

Whoever in true faith devotes himself to God's guidance and government, with an entire dependence upon God's wisdom, power, and goodness, has a better security to make him safe, than if all the kings and rulers of the earth should undertake to protect him. The courage of Moses when he faced the crossing of the Red Sea, of Daniel when he was thrown into the lion's den, of his three friends when they faced the fiery furnace, and Paul as he faced the executioners axe, all grew out of their faithful trust and confidence in the Lord through faith in Christ. Such trust in the Lord will always make a believer invincible and fearless.

JEHOVAH

Who is the believer to trust in and to take refuge in? The Lord. This is the Hebrew word for 'Jehovah'.

In Ex. 3:13 Moses at the burning bush asks the Son of God, 'Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto You, and they shall say unto me, "What is His name?" what shall I say unto them?' The Son of God replied in Ex. 3:14, 'I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.' Jehovah is the name of the true God only.

It first of all refers to God as Judge over all mankind punishing sin. But above all, Jehovah refers to the unchangeable, eternally faithful covenant God in His essence. Especially it emphasizes that He is from everlasting to everlasting the same merciful Redeeming Lord over all, without change or shadow of turning. It stresses the unchangeableness of His promises. It is as Jehovah that God becomes the Saviour of Israel and of the world. The name Jesus means Jehovah saves. It is the name Jehovah God uses when He communicates with men and makes His Covenants. That is why we can truly trust Him in faith in the midst of every difficulty no matter how great.

Dr Jesse from old Missouri states:

‘To *trust* in God means to put our dependence upon Him – our dependence for strength to carry out our tasks, for protection from dangers, for deliverance from all afflictions. Unto such trust we are exhorted in Ps. 118:8. This text asks us to trust in the Lord. Thus did David. He had a hard task to perform as he went forth to battle against Goliath. For Goliath was large and strong, while David was small and weak. David knew that his strength could not avail. But he trusted in the Lord for help to perform his task. (1 Sam 17:45-47.) – Daniel was in *danger* because he did the will of God. But he trusted that the Lord would deliver him. And he lived to praise God for His deliverance (Dan 6:22). – The three men in the fiery furnace trusted that God could deliver them out of the land of the king (Dan. 3:17.) – David was in such great *affliction* that it seemed as though his sorrow could never be turned into joy. Yet he says to his soul, Ps. 42:11: “Why art thou cast down”, that is, why are you bowed down with grief as though there were no help! “Why art thou disquieted”, that is, worried? Though man can see no reason for hope, there is still a firm rock of confidence. “Hope thou in God”. And he confidently adds: “For I shall yet praise Him.” He also mentions the cause which shall prompt such praise. For He will prove Himself the “health of my countenance”, that is, He will make my haggard and sad countenance appear healthy, blooming, beaming with joy. He will turn my sorrow into purest bliss. He will prove that He is still my God, who never forsakes His own.

Nor is it enough to simply *trust* in the Lord. We should trust in Him *above all things*. Ps. 118:8. Goliath, Pharaoh, Sennacherib, of whom we have heard, trusted in men and found their confidence vain. But none has ever been forsaken who trusted in the Lord. And God demands that you should “trust in the Lord with *all thine heart*”, Proverbs 3:5, that is, that you place *all* your confidence in Him. – True, we may use created things if God offers help through them, such as good friends, medicines, etc. To despise them is to despise God’s means, God’s help. But we should look upon them only as means in the hand of God. And if they fail, God still remains our God and will help. (*Large Catechism*, 390, 26,27.)’ *Catechetical Preparations* Part 1, pages 27,28.)

It happens in life that people often are really in trouble. A PROBLEM arises and it has got to be solved. Now they worry, become very downhearted and discouraged. They say: ‘I cannot do anything!’

Right from the start they should:

- a) **repent of their sins and believe in the forgiveness that Jesus has won for them;**
- b) **in true faith with firm trust in Christ they should take the matter to the Lord in prayer;**
- c) **then believe that the Lord in His almighty power will hear their prayer and help them in His own time and in His own way;**
- d) **not worry but continue to be faithful and have the firm confidence that everything will go well and the Lord will take care of us.**

Tragedy will strike! **But:**

(1) **God is in complete charge.** In Jer. 29:11 God says, ‘*I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you. I will give you hope and a good future.*’

(2) **God causes all things to work together for good for His children.** Rom. 8:28, ‘*We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.*’

(3) **God is never caught off guard.** Job 23:10, ‘*But He knows the way that I take.*’

Helping The Faithful Lutheran Christian In Finding A Godly Life's Partner¹

Christian Tips for Young Singles

There is a lot of pressure today on young singles when it comes to Christian dating in churches and communities but a lot of this pressure is often self-inflicted as well. While the pressure isn't high in secondary school, if one comes home from college and has not been able to secure a partner during these years of study, one is automatically looked at **strangely** by peers and other young people who have managed to find their life partners in this way.

Waiting for God's Choice

**It's hard to wait right now,
but you'll be glad you did for the
rest of your life.**

This is however, a **very important time in each young person's life**. You can so easily be snapped or moulded into someone else's idea of what your life should be. You are you and not what others define you to be. At all times hold fast to your faith in Christ, your love for His Word and your deep trust that He has a vital task for you in His kingdom and that He will never let you down.

#1: Understand & Believe that being single doesn't make you weird.

Being single is a **natural part of life** and once God has led you to the correct person to marry, you will be able to do so with His blessing and for your happiness. There is no stigma attached to being single these days. Don't give into any family pressure. Expand your horizons and do many Godly things you may not necessarily get a chance to do when you are married. Your days of being single and unfettered will not be forever.

#2: Marriage is not a solution and being single is not necessarily a problem.

Being single gives us the **opportunity to develop into a healthy follower of Christ with a strong and unshakeable faith**. When we rush into marriage because we feel that we need to solve the problem of being single, too often things come undone. Marriage is not what will make you perfect or content. **Being steadfast in your faith in Christ and having a mature knowledge of how important God's Word is for your life** with clear concepts of what is wrong and right will make for a good marriage partner, though.

#3: Skip the pressure of single's groups.

Please avoid single's groups unless they are a group of young people from your church. Many become a part of these groups just to 'play around'. Also you don't know the character and background of many among them. Find good friends, especially Christians, get to know other singles you can trust and rely on through work, your hobbies, interests and perhaps sport. But don't be drawn into the crowd where people are only there in order to find a mate or just for sinful worldly pleasures.

#4: Take it slow.

If you do find the person you are looking for straight away, then by all means, that is great. But take it slow and if you meet a few people that you find intriguing and would like to get to know better, under the right circumstances of course, then give each of them the time they deserve. Do it in a Christian and Biblical way. Don't be disrespectful by brushing people aside and moving on too quickly.

#5: Don't let older singles scare you.

What do I mean by this? Well, you are young and you are seeing that there are a number of older Christian singles in your church who haven't found their life's partner. Remember you are in your church to learn about, and follow, God's Word. You are not there exclusively for a social meet. You would be surprised what you could learn about life, and faith, from these older unmarried people in your church and who knows, maybe their time just hasn't come yet and they may meet someone tomorrow or the next day who sweeps them off their feet.

¹ This series is occurring as a result of a number of requests from young people to deal with this topic.

#6: Don't come across as desperate.

While romance and family are important and awesome gifts from God, He is the giver of peace. Don't panic, **He knows what He is doing. Don't get desperate and run ahead of Him!** God promised Abraham and Sarah that they would have children, and it was their own impatience that made them step out of God's will and Abraham had children with their maidservant. This was not in God's plan and things would have turned out better for them if they had just stuck to God's original design and didn't try to force His hand. **In faith keep trusting the Lord that He knows best.**

A Brief History of the Church Life and Deeds of Dr Martin Luther

[Since what the late Professor Koch teaches is so true, 'History is a great teacher', let us take note of the following lessons of History and value God's grace in preserving His Word with us.]

CHAPTER II. - LUTHER'S BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD.



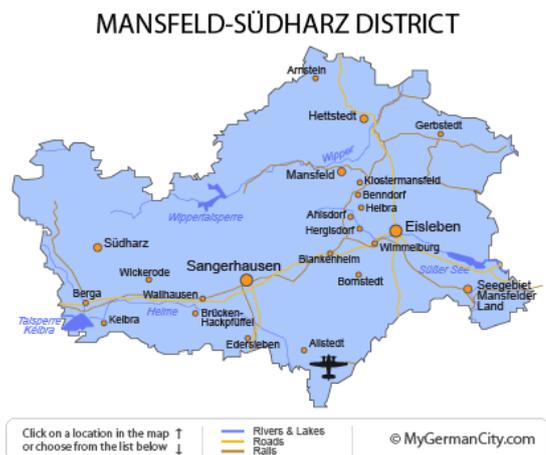
Luther was born on November 10, 1483, between eleven and twelve o'clock at night, at Eisleben, in the county of Mansfeld. On the following day he was baptized in St. Peter's Church and received the name Martin, after the saint to whom the day was dedicated, Bishop Martin of Tours. His parents were John Luther and Margaret, whose maiden name was Lindemann. They were originally from Moehra, a village between Eisenach and Salzungen.

Of his ancestors Luther says: 'I am the son of a peasant. My father, grandfather, ancestors were all peasants. Afterwards my father removed to Mansfeld and became a miner. Hence I sprang.' He came to that place in needy circumstances.

'My parents,' Luther says, 'were at first very poor. My father was a poor hewer (a miner who cuts coal from a seam), and my mother carried the wood upon her back by which we were raised. They endured many hardships; nowadays people would not submit to them.' Still, Luther always remembered the place of his birth with joy. He was accustomed to say: 'Haec est Islebia' – here is life, because there he received it. He never ceased to love his native land, and always faithfully sought its welfare.

God, in His goodness, blessed his father's labours in Mansfeld, so that He acquired a house and two furnaces. He also became a councilman and was, on account of his integrity, beloved and esteemed by the old count Guenther, and by all honest men. His mother had many virtues that adorn a good woman. Her fear of God, and her prayerful spirit, were particularly remarked. She was looked upon by all other pious women as a model of virtue and decorum. Both parents taught their son to fear God and abound in good works. The father often prayed aloud and fervently, at the bed-side of the child, that God would give his son grace to remember His holy name and to promote the dissemination of His pure doctrine. Because he loved piety and learning, and also for his son's sake, he treated pious ministers and teachers with much respect and kindness. But the parental discipline was at the same time severe.

Luther himself says: 'My father once punished me so severely that I ran away, and disliked him until he won me to himself again. My mother at one time chastised me about a trifling nut until the



blood came; and the stern and austere life which she led induced me to flee to a cloister and become a monk. They thought they were doing right and meant it kindly; they only failed to distinguish dispositions, according to which chastisement must be tempered. Punishment is necessary, but the apple should accompany the rod.'

As soon as Martin was able to learn, his pious parents took measures to have him instructed. His father, with earnest prayers, sent him to the Latin school, whither old Nich. Oemler often carried him on his arms. There he studied diligently and soon learned the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer; he also practised penmanship and studied Donatus, the youth's Grammar, Cisio Janus (a Latin Calender,) and memorized some Christian hymns. This school he attended until his fourteenth year. There also he experienced excessively harsh treatment. His teachers belonged to those 'inept schoolmasters', of whom he says that 'they often spoil fine talents by their clamouring (shouting loudly) and storming (violent outbursts), their knocks and blows, dealing with children as the jailor deals with thieves.' He complains of the 'hell and purgatory of the schools, in which we have been tortured about the casuals (things not important) and the temporals, learning just nothing, with all the chastisement, trembling, fear and misery.' 'How sorry I am,' he says in his epistle to the aldermen, 'that I did not read more poets and historians, and that no person taught me them.'

In the time of his childhood at Mansfeld occurred also the little event of his school-days, which he narrates in his exposition of Genesis, and upon which he makes some edifying remarks: 'When God proves us he permits manifold obstacles to obstruct our path, so that we cannot see His purpose; as when one amuses himself by playing with a worm, laying a stick or a straw in its way, so that it cannot creep whither it would, but must turn to and fro, and try everywhere and every way to get out of the difficulty. But this play of divine grace and benevolence we do not at first understand, and the benefits and the grace itself, which are shown us, we explain to our terror and destruction. It happens to us as it happened to me once, when I was a little boy, and to my companions, with whom I was collecting the alms by which we were supported in our studies. When we were going around from house to house, at the time when the Church celebrates the birth of Christ, singing in four parts the usual psalms about the child Jesus born in Bethlehem, we came to the house of a peasant, which stood alone at the end of the village. When the peasant heard us singing, he came out and inquired in rough, rustic words, where we were, and said, 'Where are you boys?' bringing some sausages along, which he purposed to give us. But we were so terrified at the words that we all ran away; although we had no good reason to be afraid, since the peasant had the serious intention to give us the sausages, and offered them in good faith. Our hearts had become timid on account of the daily threats and tyranny, which the teachers practised toward the poor pupils, and were thus the more easily alarmed by such sudden terrors. While we were running away the peasant called us, and we laid aside our fear, went to him, and received the gifts which he offered us.' We learn from this, at the same time, how he had to struggle with poverty at Mansfeld, as it is related of him also, that he attended funerals for a penny.

This tyrannical school discipline could only render our Martin shy and timorous (fearful, lack of confidence). But the religious instruction which he received also tended only to alarm and terrify him still more; for what he learned was mostly nothing **but papistic superstition and idolatry**. No one taught him to derive comfort from his holy Baptism; on the contrary, he says of his teachers: 'As soon as we have laid off our infant shoes, the act of baptism scarcely being completed, they deprived us of all again by telling us: O, thou hast long since lost thy Baptism and polluted thy baptismal dress with sin; thou must now think about atoning and rendering satisfaction for thy sins, of fasting and praying, of pilgrimages and foundations, until thou hast appeased God and been restored to His grace.'

Much less did he come truly to know Christ. 'I was accustomed from childhood,' he says, 'to become pale and terror-stricken when I heard the name of Christ mentioned; for I was not taught to think of Him otherwise than as of a rigorous and angry Judge.' He was directed to his own merits, rather, and to the intercession of the saints.

He remarks upon this: 'We were *shamefully deceived* under the papacy, for Christ was not set before us in His clemency (mercy), as He is by the prophets, apostles, and by Christ Himself, but he was represented as terrible, so that we feared him more than we did Moses, and thought that the

doctrines of Moses were milder and more benignant (kind) than those of Christ. Therefore we knew no better than to think of **Christ as an angry Judge, whose wrath we must appease by good works and holy living**, and whose grace we must secure by the merits and intercession of the saints. This is not only base lying, and lamentably deceiving poor consciences, but it is also a deep revilement of the grace of God, **a denial of Christ's death, resurrection, ascension and all his unspeakable benefits**, a defamation and condemnation of the Gospel, and an extirpation of the faith, while nothing but abominations, falsehoods, errors and blasphemies are substituted for it. If this is not darkness I know not what darkness is; and yet no one perceived it, but all regarded it as the pure truth.'

Thus Luther grew up in the **darkness of papistic** error, and even as a child was compelled to experience its **bitterness. Not a drop of grace**, not a ray of heavenly truth, refreshed his heart, which was filled with terror on account of Christ's wrath. Therefore he vowed, already in his childhood, to make a pilgrimage to Rome and 'become pious' as he, according to a manuscript account, once expressed it when the conversation turned upon his visit to Rome. **Thus he had entirely lost Christ whom he had put on in Baptism, and would have been eternally lost if God had called him away in that condition.** This he himself confesses when he says: 'If God refused to help us until we become grateful, what would have become of me when I was *twelve years old*?' (to be continued).



Biblical Ways To Live Peacefully With Others

Oh, Be Careful Little Mouth –

Even a fool is thought wise and discerning if he holds his tongue.

Prov.17:28, *'Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.'*

Reckless words, spoken hastily and without thinking, inflame many conflicts. See these texts — Prov. 12:18; Prov. 13:3; 17:28; 21:23; 29:20 — to realize how reckless words pierce like a sword. They also bring out the blessings and healing the tongue of the wise brings. Although we may seldom set out deliberately to hurt others with our words, sometimes we do not make much of an effort not to hurt others. *We simply say what comes to mind without thinking about the consequences.* **In the process, we may hurt and offend others, which only aggravates conflict.** Taken from *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict* by Ken Sande, p. 121.

Food for Thought

What have you said recently without thinking?

The word 'reckless' usually conjures up images of someone driving a car with no concern for the people around them. A *reckless driver* can cause havoc on the highway, putting his or her life, as well as the lives of others, in harm's way. If we spot someone driving recklessly, we usually grab our phones and alert the police. But what about someone speaking recklessly?

Simply saying what comes to mind can be looked upon as being authentic and honest. Some people admire the blunt- sharp-speaking person and often encourage others to do it. But it can also be looked upon as not thinking, or reckless. The lives of the one speaking and those hearing then are caught in harm's way. If you're caught in harm's way, the result is usually some kind of harm. ***By the love of Christ who redeemed us let us be careful with what we say.***

But I Don't SEE It!

Rom.11:33, *'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!'*

Although **we can be sure that God is always working for our good and the good of others**, even through trials and suffering, **we will not always know exactly what His will is for us**. In many cases his ultimate purposes will not be evident for a long time. In some situations His ways and objectives are simply too profound for us to comprehend, at least until we see God face to face (Rom. 11:33-36).

Deut. 29:29 tells us, *'The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.'* This text tells us that God may not tell us everything we want to know about the painful events of life, but **He has already told us all we need to know in His Word**. Therefore, instead of wasting time and energy trying to figure out things that are beyond our comprehension, **we need to turn our attention to the promises and instructions that God has revealed to us through Scripture**. Adapted and Taken from *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict* by Ken Sande, p. 64-65.

Food for Thought

Does believing that God works for your good in a conflict depend on your ability to see what that good is? What happens to your belief if you don't see that good for several weeks, months, years... or not at all this side of heaven?

In these situations, **we must hold tight in faith to the wealth of promises in Scripture** and faithfully follow God's Word. In times of **greatest uncertainty** we must continue by the grace of God more than ever before to believe that God is working all things for the good of those who love Him and are called according to his purpose (Rom. 8:28). Keep on believing that when His time is ready, **His will** will be done. We may not understand what God is doing, but we are always to trust in Christ and never doubt that He knows what He is accomplishing.

DISCERNING THE TIMES – Does the Bible Approve of Homosexuality?

One of the most destructive issues of our time has been the movement to embrace **homosexual behaviour**, same-sex **'marriage'**, and the distorted versions of masculinity and femininity that accompany this lifestyle. References sympathetic to the homosexual lifestyle appear now in books, on television, in films, and in video games and graphic novels. Our children and teens are inundated with a message of 'tolerance' and 'acceptance' of homosexual behaviour, and sadly even some professing Christians are preaching this message.

Scripture makes clear, that engaging in homosexual behaviour of any sort is sinful ([Gen.18:20;19:5](#); [Lev.18:22, 20:13](#); [Rom. 1:26–27](#); [1 Cor. 6:9–10](#); [1 Tim. 1:10](#)). But some in the church have taken to reinterpreting key passages on homosexuality or even denying outright that these passages mean what they plainly say. *So what exactly does the Bible say about homosexuality?* And how do pro-homosexual Bible scholars try to work around those passages?

Late last year a pro-homosexual group published a Bible translation *dubbed the Queen James Bible (how blasphemous!!!)*, based on the 1769 King James Version. The editors of this new 'translation' have only made a mockery of a beloved Bible translation.

The changes that the editors made to various passages on homosexual behaviour exemplify the ways in which pro-homosexual scholars *twist Scripture* on this issue. We will examine a variety of Scriptures dealing with homosexual behaviour and **three primary arguments** that pro-homosexual scholars use to justify it.

Sodom and Gomorrah

Beginning in the Old Testament, the first passage dealing with homosexual behaviour is Genesis 19. Here, two angels in human form visit Lot in Sodom and stay with him and his family for the night. In the course of the evening, the men of the city demand access to Lot's guests: ⁴ But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed (surrounded) the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: ⁵ *And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, 'Where are the men which (who) came in to thee (you) this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them (commit homosexual acts with them).'* ⁶ *And Lot went out at (through) the door unto them, and shut the door after him,* ⁷ *And said, 'I pray you (I beg of you), brethren, do not so wickedly (do not behave so wickedly).'* ([Gen. 19:4-7](#)).

Just as in many other occurrences in Scripture (e.g., [Gen. 4:1](#), [17](#), [25](#)), the word known in this passage refers to sexual activity. The angels eventually strike the men of the city with blindness ([Gen. 19:11](#)) and declare that the Lord will destroy the cities ([Gen.19:13](#)).

How Do the Homosexuals View this Passage?

While the sin issue in view in Genesis 19 is clearly homosexuality, homosexual advocates typically reframe the issue in two ways: 1. lack of hospitality, or 2. gang rape.

Advocates of the inhospitality view claim that the issue in the text is with Lot's refusal to introduce his guests to the men of the city. According to this view the Hebrew word used in [Gen.19:5](#) for 'know', yada, commonly means 'to be acquainted with'. This is indeed one of the primary definitions of yada, but as with all languages, *particular meaning is determined by context*. Based on the context of Genesis 19, yada is a reference to knowing someone sexually. If yada simply refers to acquaintanceship here, Lot's refusal to introduce his guests to the town was a breach of the rules of hospitality—and the sin is Lot's. **So why did God see fit to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah and spare Lot?** Within the context of Genesis 19, the definition that some pro-homosexual scholars insist on for yada makes the passage *ludicrous*.

The second view, that the sin is not homosexuality but gang rape, is the position that the Queen James Bible takes. They falsely claim that the men could have been guilty of bestiality by having sex with angels. Holy angels are absolutely in no way in the category of 'beasts'. Additionally, the text gives no indication in [Gen.19:5](#) that the men of the town were aware of the real identities of Lot's guests. The two angels were men, insofar as the residents of Sodom could perceive. Finally, [Jude 6-8](#) makes clear that the men of Sodom were not simply trying to commit a 'power-dominating act'—they had given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh – homosexuality. Why did God destroy Sodom and Gomorrah? Because they were guilty of the terrible sin of homosexuality.

Levitical Laws

There are two verses in Leviticus that clearly condemn homosexual behaviour as sinful: 'You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.' ([Lev.18:22](#))

'If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them.' ([Lev. 20:13](#)).

How Do the Homosexuals View these Texts?

They claim that these texts only refer to idol worship. The Queen James Bible states: 'Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind in the temple of Molech; it is an abomination.' ([Lev.18:22](#), emphasis added). Again: 'If a man also lie with mankind in the temple of Molech, as he

lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death.’ ([Lev. 20:13](#), emphasis added)

There is no textual support in the Hebrew manuscripts for the additional wording, ‘in the temple of Molech.’ By this added phrase they claim that homosexual behaviour would only have been prohibited when associated with pagan rituals. These texts are **Moral Law** as indicated by the fact **that such detestable behaviour is an abomination, absolutely detestable before God.** Homosexual behaviour is an abomination in the sight of God, whether or not it is in the context of ritual pagan idolatry.

Romans 1:26–27

The Apostle Paul’s epistle to the Romans contains a substantial New Testament passage on homosexual behaviour. In [Romans 1](#), Paul is explaining the sinfulness of man, ‘who exchanged the truth of God for the lie,’ and man’s willing rejection of God. He sums up the results of this rejection in verses 26 and 27: ²⁶ *For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:* ²⁷ *And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.* An accurate translation of this reads: ‘For this reason **God gave them up to vile passions.** For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, **and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.**’

In a plain reading of this passage, the Apostle Paul demonstrates that because of man’s rejection of the truth for a lie, God gave humanity over to their sin. Homosexual behaviour is a prominent part of these consequences. [Rom. 1:29–31](#) is a list of further sinful acts and behaviours associated with this giving over. Also in [Rom. 1:32](#) Paul condemns not just those who practice these things, but also those who approve of them.

How Do the Homosexual Advocates View these Texts?

John Shelby Spong, a homosexual advocate and retired bishop of the Episcopal Church, attempts to damage the Apostle Paul’s credibility and characterizes these statements on homosexuality as something other than the Word of God. In his wicked view the Apostle Paul was allegedly repressing homosexual desires and that led him to condemn homosexual behaviour in general. Furthermore, he argues that in Paul’s time, homosexuality was socially unacceptable, so Paul was supposedly forced to react negatively to homosexual behaviour. When asked in one interview how he could so easily dismiss the Bible’s words on homosexuality, Spong replied, ‘I don’t see the Bible as the Word of God. I see the Word of God as that which I hear through the words of the Bible. There’s a very big difference.’ A big difference indeed—between the orthodox Christian view of Scripture as ‘God-breathed’ ([2 Tim. 3:16](#)) and Spong’s heretical view that accords divine authority to his own thoughts!

Other homosexuals falsely believe that Paul condemns homosexual behaviour only in the context of idolatry. Neither of the above views has any Biblical support. No matter how people try to explain away Rom. 1 the plain meaning of the words stand: **homosexual behaviour is sinful in the eyes of God.**

Conclusion

Try as they might, the arguments of pro-homosexual scholars simply are an **anti-Scriptural perversion.** In the very first book of the Bible we read that God created a man and a woman for the first marriage (not a man and a man or a woman and a woman). Just a few chapters later, God’s Word

plainly condemns homosexual behaviour—a condemnation that continues into the New Testament and is still binding today.

The true church must stand on the authority of Scripture in this matter and speak the truth about homosexuality. If they are to be saved they must see the **seriousness of their sin and that they stand under the terrible wrath of God.** As the Law of God strikes them they are to repent in true sorrow. Then through **the Gospel of Jesus Christ alone who paid for the greatest and blackest sins by His atoning sacrifice on the cross** they are by faith in their Saviour to receive forgiveness and pardon. Then they are to show the fruits of faith by renouncing and avoiding this evil lifestyle with the help of the Holy Spirit.

This is what the Lord teaches in 1 Cor.6:9-11: *‘⁹ Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, ¹⁰ Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.’* [Source material: by Steve Golden, AiG–U.S. January 29, 2013].

Unsigned Letter From a Concerned ELCR Member

January 2012
The Secretary
ELCR Luther Society

Dear Secretary

To avoid the risk of this sounding like a finger-pointing, personal attack, I have arranged for it to be typed and sent anonymously to the ELCR young people in general, in the hope it will be read out at the upcoming Luther League get-together.

As a senior member of the ELCR, it distresses and saddens me deeply to see the decline in standard of dress amongst the young ladies in particular. I understand that the closer it gets to the last day, the more revealing fashions will become and the harder it will be to buy suitable clothing, but I implore you to reassess and modify your wardrobes to meet God's and the ELCR's standards of modesty and decency.

As a fellow sinner daily in need of grace and forgiveness, I fully understand how varied and constant are the temptations to sin; but as a fellow Christian who desires the eternal salvation of **all** ELCR members, I would ask you to earnestly and sincerely revisit your confirmation vows, and out of love for your Saviour, besides doing all you can to lead a chaste and decent life, encourage other young ELCR members to do likewise.

Eternal bliss and glory will then surely be your reward.

Yours in Christ
A concerned and loving senior ELCR member.



We were delighted to receive these reports and decided that they both deserved to be printed. Thank you both - your efforts are much appreciated!



