



Steadfast

In the Word and Faith



Published by the Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Reformation, Inc.
Office: 7 Graham Street, Kingaroy, Q. 4610.
Postal Address: Box 692, Kingaroy, Q. 4610.

Editor: Pastor G L Winter – glwelcr@bigpond.net.au

Vol LII

January-February 2017

No. 1.

Contents:

- Page 1: What LUTHER Says about *MINISTRY*
Page 2: Devotion – *The Purpose of Holy Scripture* - TJW
Page 4: *Are You Ashamed of Being a True Lutheran* - BLW
Page 5: *Blessed Fruits of the Reformation* – M L Gostch
Page 7: *The Chief Meaning of the Reformation* - SW
Page 8: Book Review: *Four Hundred Years* - BLW
Page 9: *Home and Mother*
Page 11: *Notes and News*



2017 – 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

This year marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The Reformation began when a German monk, Martin Luther, nailed 95 Theses onto the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. The date was 31 October 1517. Five hundred years have now passed by. What were the chief events of Luther's life? What were the teachings that he stood for? Do we who hold the name of Luther still value the work that the Lord worked through him those many years ago? These questions we hope to answer as we dedicate the whole of Steadfast 2017, Vol LII, to this topic.



What Luther Says About — Ministers

Ministers Are "Angels" of God. All who bring the Word of God, who are preachers or ministers of the Word, are called messengers (angels) of God, just as those are messengers of Satan who devote their service to Satan, who bring the doctrine of Satan, as the apostle Paul has indeed called them (2 Cor. 12:7). It is a very great glory for a miserable human being to be called a messenger of God and to have this name in common with the heavenly spirits. SL 14, 1721

A Minister's Prayer. Lord God, Thou hast placed me in Thy church as a bishop and pastor. Thou seest how unfit I am to administer this great and difficult office. Had I hitherto been without help from Thee, I would have ruined everything long ago. Therefore I call on Thee. I gladly offer my mouth and heart to Thy service. I would teach the people and I myself would continue to learn. To this end I shall meditate diligently on Thy Word. Use me, dear Lord, as Thy instrument. Only do not forsake me; for if I were to continue alone, I would quickly ruin everything. Amen. SL 2, 277

Right Relation of Ministers and Members. Not, says Paul (2 Cor. 4:5), that we lord it over you; but we serve you for Christ's sake. I am not installed to rule any Christian as lord, but to be his minister. One is

the Lord. But although ministers are servants, yet we must obey them and humble ourselves before them for the sake of the Lord. On the other hand, they are to serve us and also bear our infirmities also for the sake of the Lord. Therefore he who pleases himself cannot but offend and play the tyrant. W 25, 23

Loyalty Will Meet with Opposition. If ministers of the Word desire to be accounted faithful and prudent on the Day of Christ, they must be very sure that St. Paul did not speak empty words or prophesy in vain when he said: "There must be heresies among you that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Cor. 11:19). Let the minister of Christ know, I say, that as long as he preaches Christ purely, there will be no lack of perverse folk, even among our own people, who will disturb the church. SL 9, 15

Ministers Worthy of Honor and Care. Those who take care of souls are worthy of all care." W-T 5, No. 6287

Acknowledgment: From *What Luther Says* ©, Book 2, Nos 2896, 2903, 2904 2922, 2951, 1986 Copyright Concordia Publishing House. Reproduced with permission under licence number 17:3-1.

Devotion — *The Purpose of Holy Scriptures*

2 Timothy 2:16-17: All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect (complete), thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

‘**N**on multa, sed multum’, a Latin expression, a principle all serious students should follow, ‘Not many, but much. ‘Do not study a wide variety of different sources, but keep your focus on select, valuable texts.’ And what an important principle this is for Christians, not learning from many different sources, but with the chief focus on one source, the Bible. Church history, for example, can be quite interesting, but it has as its origin the works of man. There is nothing wrong with studying history, science, geography, but we must beware, for there is another dictum: ‘Je gelehrter, desto verkehrter.’ The more learned, the more wrong!

Jesus demonstrated the power of the Word. For forty days and forty nights the devil assaulted, culminating in those three great temptations. Each time, Jesus deflected and defeated him by using the Sword of the Spirit, the Word. The Word is powerful, when it is wielded with the full authority of the Triune God. The Word is powerful, because it is the means, the agent, through which the Holy Spirit operates.

1. We will consider how they were given, and be reassured as to their authenticity, accuracy and wisdom.

The Christian Church is much older than the Holy Scriptures. Not until the time of Moses were the first books written, as the Lord established the Israelites as His Visible Church here on earth. The Christian Church, the true invisible Church, was first established after the Fall, through faith in the promised Seed of the Woman. Up until this time God preserved His Word amongst His Church by

ensuring that it was faithfully passed down by word of mouth from one generation to the next.

When, however, God gave His written Word, His Church was rigidly bound to keep it. No one was permitted to add to or take away from the Word. So zealously did God regard His Word, any false prophet, anyone who dared to come with anything contradictory to what He had revealed, was to be put to death.

‘Ye shall not add unto the Word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord, your God, which I command you.’ Deuteronomy 4:2.

So what then is the Bible? The Bible ‘is the written Word of God’, written by the holy men of God, prophets, apostles, evangelists.

‘Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.’ 2 Peter 1:21.

It is true that God in His mercy condescended to use sinful men to write His holy book, but this in no way detracts from it being the Word of God, for

‘All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.’

God the Holy Ghost was in the holy men of God, told them what to write, and saw to it that they wrote the very words He commanded. In this sense then the Bible is a dictation, not an essay.

Verse 16 starts with a very comprehensive statement, ‘All Scripture,’ *pasa graphēe*. What does the word ‘all’ mean? Everything! Every word is there in the Bible because God wanted it to be there. All of Scripture, every Scripture, is ‘*theopneustos*’, God-breathed. God breathed into the holy men of God exactly what He wanted them

to write. Of the Lord, Whose inspired Word the holy Scriptures are, Moses said:

‘Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations.’ Deuteronomy 7:9.

And since God, Who inspired the Holy Scriptures, is faithful, His Word is faithful, for: ‘Thy Word is Truth.’ John 17:17.

The Greek word for ‘inspired’ describes the sails of a ship being filled by the wind, being carried along over the seas. Paul says every Scripture is the product of the Spirit’s work. He filled the writers and carried them along producing His Words. And even though God’s Word bears the mark or style of the writer’s personality, every Word is the true and sure Word of God Himself. Next time you read the Word, stop for a moment and contemplate that the eternal, all knowing and all loving God is speaking to your heart and mind and soul and spirit and be amazed at such condescending mercy and grace.

An important question is, What precisely constitutes the Scripture? ‘Graphee’ comes from ‘graphoo’, meaning ‘I write’. This is where the word ‘graphite’ comes from, the lead that does the writing in a pencil. Verse 15 describes them as the ‘Holy’ Scriptures, as Sacred, divine writings. Writings of God, writings which are of such authority that they are beyond violation. But what precisely are the ‘Holy Writings’ Paul is referring to?

There are no doubt many holy writings, in so far as they agree with the Word of God. The writings of Luther are of great instruction, contain much holiness and wisdom, and he certainly presents the words of the Gospel very beautifully. We have the Lutheran Confessions, the Apostles’ Creed, the books of Walther, the sermons of Pastor Kleinig. These were holy men, men of great faith, men of God. But their works are not considered as Holy Scripture.

We talk about the Scripture as being a fixed ‘Canon’, a fixed body of writings that has been preserved. To this ‘canon’ nothing must be added or taken away. The ‘Canon’ of Holy Scripture is divided into two sections, the Old and New Testament. The Old Testament is the 39 books of the Bible written before Christ was born, the New Testament the 27 books written after Christ’s death.

An important rule that must be remembered here is this: a Bible Translation is inspired only in so far as it agrees with the original text. The original manuscripts of the Old Testament were

written in Hebrew; the original manuscripts of the New Testament were written in Greek.

Firstly the Old Testament. How do we know that the books of the Old Testament are truly Holy Scripture?

‘The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of our God shall stand for ever.’ Isaiah 40:8.

‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.’ Matthew 24:35.

So right from the outset, we know that the Lord will preserve His Word.

We have the express testimony of Jesus Himself that the Old Testament is the Word of God, for He quoted the Old Testament, used the Old Testament as the basis for all of His teaching. He even told the Jews to search the Old Testament, John 5:39, for there is the divine testimony concerning Christ. If He used the Old Testament Scriptures just as they were and exhorted His hearers to do so, then we can be sure of their authenticity and accuracy.

Christ directly states and promises that His own and the Apostles’ Word shall be preserved and acknowledged as the infallible norm of faith to the end of time. He prayed for the true believers of all time at the Last Supper in John 17:20-24:

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.

And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them, that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.

Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.

How were the future believers of the New Testament to be brought to Christ?

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word, ‘Through their Word’, the teaching of the Apostles.

‘[Ye] are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner-stone.’ Ephesians 2:20.

So Whose word, then, is every word of the Bible?

Every word of the Bible is God’s Word, and therefore the Bible is without even the slightest error whatsoever. It is the absolute truth. Even

when the Bible speaks of minor or earthly matters (e.g. Geography, History, the history of creation, ages, etc.), it is infallible and absolutely reliable.

‘The Scripture cannot be broken.’ John 10:35. —TJW.

1517-2017: 500th Anniversary of Luther Nailing the 95 Theses

Are You Ashamed of Being a True Lutheran?

In Luke 18:8 the Lord Jesus says: ‘When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?’ With these words the Lord indicates



that one of the SIGNS of the LAST DAYS will be the GREAT INDIFFERENCE towards GOD’S WORD and the widespread falling-away from this heavenly Truth. These are days concerning which our Saviour says that unless they were shortened, no person would be saved, but because of the elect these would be shortened (Matt. 24). This falling-away will take place in particular in the Church of the Reformation. In these evil days large masses will bear the name Lutheran but in name only. There will be a great deal of talk about Luther and they will praise his doctrine and be proud to bear his name.

But of Luther’s courage to confess Christ, of his loyalty and faithfulness to Christ’s Word, of his zeal to retain God’s Word in its truth and purity, THESE WILL NOT BE KNOWN. For they are ashamed of Luther’s doctrine pure. On the contrary, those who insist on clinging solid as a rock on the Truth as Luther taught it, will be despised, ridiculed as troublemakers and loveless.

In Luther’s day it was the pope who called all of those who followed Luther, “Lutherans”, in order contemptuously to describe these as only the followers of a mere man. But this name of shame became for true Christians who love God’s Word a NAME OF HONOUR. It has become a banner under which true soldiers of the cross have been proud to fight the good fight of faith for the glory of Him who bore abuse and shame for their sakes.

Today, in these last times, the majority of those who bear the name ‘Lutheran’ permit error to corrupt the Truth, faith and unbelief to be

intermingled. Luke-warmness is shown in their ATTITUDE TO GOD’S WORD. In spite of their outward social activities, they are POOR in regard to the true treasures, the Word and Sacraments. They cannot distinguish properly between error and Truth, also between Law and Gospel. The most loathsome doctrines are being spread. People stand by quietly and permit the Bible to be called a book of errors by their Seminary Professors and their pastors. Missing are the proper God-pleasing deeds which flow from faith.

How is it among us of the ELCR? Are we ASHAMED TO BE TRUE LUTHERANS?

Because we are only a small church and outwardly before the eyes of the world we bear a humble form, even Christians within our midst, when they are not on guard against their Old Adam, tend to become ashamed of the orthodox Lutheran Church.

Being certain that we are saved alone by grace through faith in Christ we should regard it as a MOST GLORIOUS PRIVILEGE, as a proof of God’s grace for which we cannot thank God enough, that we are members of that Lutheran Church which teaches God’s Word in its truth and purity. It is alone by God’s grace that we are members of the church of the Reformation. By God’s grace our ELCR has God’s pure Word. Our Federation clings to the Word of Christ in every point, as Christ requires (John 8:31, 32). Let us regard belonging to the orthodox Lutheran Church as the HIGHEST SPIRITUAL HONOUR.

— BLW.



Blessed Fruits of the Reformation - Part 2

(Taken from "The Reformation and Its Blessed Fruits" by M. L. Gotsch)

II. Reformation of the Church

12. What is meant by "Reformation of the Church"?

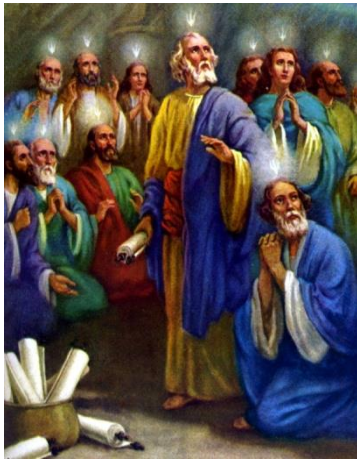
The deliverance of Christendom from the bodily and, above all, spiritual bondage under which it was held by the merciless powers of the Roman papacy, by the preaching of the pure Gospel as possessed by the ancient Apostolic Church.

13. How was the Apostolic, or Christian, Church founded?

Before ascending to heaven, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ said to His disciples, or apostles: **"Go ye and teach (Greek: Make disciples of) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching then to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And, lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."**

(Matt.28:19,20). By preaching His Word, through which the Holy Spirit kindled faith in the hearts of the hearers, the apostles were to gather congregations of believers in Christ in all the world. This they did, and thus the Christian Church, the communion of saints, or believers, was founded.

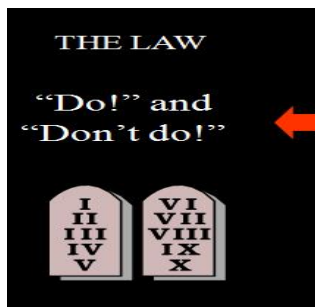
14. What may be called the birthday of the Christian Church?



Pentecost Day on which the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the apostles in Jerusalem, ten days after Christ's ascension into heaven. The apostles, especially Peter, preached the **Law and the Gospel** to the multitude which had assembled about them and admonished them to repent of their sins, in faith receive the crucified and risen Christ as their Saviour, and be baptized in His name. Thereupon three thousand people confessed their sins, professed their faith in Jesus Christ, and were baptized. **That was the birthday of the Apostolic, or Christian, Church.**

15. How were the local congregations, in the days of the apostles, organized?

The congregations elected their pastors by popular vote and charged them to preach the Gospel to them and administer the Sacraments. They also elected deacons (our word for elders, BLW) and such other officers as were needed. The **Office of the Keys** was universally regarded as "the **peculiar** (special, unique, BLW) Church power, which Christ has given to His Church on earth," and therefore to **each local congregation**. According to the words of Christ: **'One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren,'** (Matt.23:8). The Church, lay members and pastors, was a community of brethren with Christ as the only Head and Master. Every word of the Bible was regarded as the revelation of God's will to all men, which each Christian, therefore, should search, believe and obey.



THE GOSPEL

"Done!"



The Two Keys Are The Law And The Gospel.

16. Show that at Luther's time the form of the Church was contrary to the institution of Christ.

The Pope declared that he had received the Office of the Keys from the Apostle Peter, whom the Roman Church calls the first Pope, and all succeeding Popes, and that this Office of the Keys gave him power to rule the whole Church according to his pleasure; indeed, that even all earthly rulers and governments were

subject to him; that as the "vicar (representative, BLW) of Christ" he could prescribe and regulate all matters of doctrine; that unconditional obedience in both spiritual and temporal matters must be rendered to him by all.

17. Why did the people submit to a claim that was contrary to the Word of God?

The people were told that they must not judge spiritual matters. They therefore were not permitted to search the Scriptures. Those who did proclaim the truth or protested against the false doctrines of the Roman Church were persecuted, imprisoned, and even put to death, such as Huss, Hamilton, Tyndale, and many others.

18. Tell of the blessings the Church received through the Reformation.

The Gospel was again proclaimed in its purity from pulpit and platform, and the people were told diligently to search the Scriptures. By thus hearing and reading God's Word, their eyes were opened, so that they could distinguish between truth and error. False doctrines and abuses were rejected, and the Church of Jesus Christ was restored to its proper form.

19. Which is the chief article of our Christian faith, which tells us how we may be saved and to which the Christian Church must return to be and remain the Church of Christ?

The article of justification or forgiveness of sins. The Bible teaches that we poor sinners cannot be justified in the sight of God by our own works, but that our sins are freely forgiven for Jesus' sake, who in our stead perfectly fulfilled the Law and by His death has made satisfaction for our sins. If we believe in Him, our sins are forgiven and we are declared just, or righteous, before God - justified.

Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:



Every week I preach justification by faith to my people, because every week they forget it.

~ Martin Luther

20. With what words do you confess in the Third Article of our Christian Creed that your justification and conversion is exclusively God's work?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers.

21. Tell of another achievement of Luther which is benefiting our Church to the present day.

The order of church services in Wittenberg, where Luther lived, was revised by him. Prayers and hymns that people could understand were put in place of Latin ones. Sermons based on Scripture were preached, while formerly stories of saints and legends were told in the pulpit, and the preaching of God's Word was made the chief part of the service. The communicants were given the Lord's Supper in both kinds, while the daily Mass was dropped, etc. We still have the order of service of the time of the Reformation in our agenda.

22. Of what benefit was this order of service to the pastors and, through them, to the congregations?

To conduct a sacred service as Luther had worked it out required a pastor who was well versed in Scripture and able to preach the pure Bible doctrine. He also had to perform rites outside of preaching, and this, too, required an able and faithful minister. A general visitation of congregations followed, the fruit of which was a general uplifting of the clergy.



I simply taught, preached, wrote God's Word: otherwise I did nothing. The Word of God did it all.

~ Martin Luther

The Chief Meaning of the Reformation

This year marks the five hundredth anniversary of one of the most important and blessed events in human history, the Reformation of the Christian church. It was on 31st October 1517, that a little known Catholic monk named Martin Luther from a little known German village called Wittenberg posted his Ninety-five Theses on the door of the Castle Church. This treatise, based upon the Word of God, challenged the Roman Catholic scam of selling indulgences for the forgiveness of sins. By God's mysterious providence this academic intended discourse was reproduced via the newly invented printing press, and within several weeks it was being read throughout most of the cities and villages of Europe. Large portions of the population were outraged by this fleecing of the flock, and began to register their voices in protest against the Mother Church. Soon other writings appeared from the fearless monk and it became progressively clear to many that the indulgence issue was but the tip of the iceberg of ecclesiastical errors and corruptions. Thus began the Reformation, one of the most profound and impactful evidences of God's hand in human history.

In order to appreciate the Reformation of the Christian church, we must first understand the preceding Formation of the church by the work of God and the Deformation of the church by the work of the devil. According to the Holy Scriptures, God created man good and holy, but man fell into a state of death and condemnation through his own sin. But God would have all men to be saved and through the atoning work of His dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, He made a way of forgiveness and reconciliation. Most men reject this Gospel of the grace of God in Christ, but some truly believe it unto righteousness and life. All those who believe the Gospel are born of God and together these children of God make up a spiritual communion known as the invisible Christian church.

While this communion is spiritual and invisible, it manifests itself visibly wherever two or more believers are gathered together in Christ's name, about His Word and Sacraments. In the days of the early church, God used the apostles to establish many of these visible churches throughout the known world. These churches were orthodox in their faith and governed by the Word of God. All members were of equal dignity, and each had access to the Word of God and Sacraments. Together they possessed all the gifts of God, but delegated the Office of the Keys to

qualified men who ministered in behalf of all. In Christ's kingdom greatness consisted, not in exercising dominion and authority, but in ministering to one another as fellow-servants. The Word of God formed this early Church, and history bears witness of its power to convert the hearts of men and to bring forth the fruits of righteousness.

For the first three centuries the Christian church preserved the truth and purity of God's Word as she strove against false teachings and suffered much for her faith. But things were soon to change for the worse. Even in the apostle's own times 'the mystery of iniquity' was already at work. That which restrained the immediate advent of the Antichrist was the presence of the Roman Emporium which openly displayed its opposition to the truth by persecuting the saints and delivering many of them to torture and death. But during this time the church grew all the more. It was said of this period that 'the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church'.

Satan is the master of a thousand tricks. He could see that his strategy was not working and so he soon changed his tactics. Rather than working from outside the church through the persecuting Roman Emporium, he now decided to work from inside the church through the seat of Antichrist. This hidden strategy proved to be much more effective to the hurt of the church. In 312 AD the Roman Emperor Constantine declared that he had seen a vision of the Cross of Christ promising him victory as he went to the Battle of the Milvian Bridge outside of Rome. Having won this battle, he attributed his success to Christ and declared the Christian religion as his own. Shortly thereafter he proclaimed legal status to the Christian religion and encouraged all to join the church. Christianity now became fashionable in the Roman Empire and ambitious and self-serving men sought positions of Christian influence and power. Soon the man of sin began to make his appearance in the office of the Bishop of Rome, first asserting a priority over other cities, then a spiritual supremacy over all of Christendom, and finally a spiritual and temporal authority over all the world.

As directed by his infernal master, the Pope (as he was now known) sought to obscure and overthrow the chief saving doctrines of the Word of God. He replaced the one and only sacrifice of Christ for the sins of mankind with his own sacrifices of the Mass performed daily by his priests. He denied that salvation was by grace alone through faith and asserted a salvation earned by human merit. He denied the people

access to the Word of God by forbidding the Scriptures to be read by the common man or to be heard in one's native language. He placed his own word and the decisions of church councils on the same level as the Scriptures and where they differed condemned the Word of God as false. He also introduced many frauds and superstitions such as purgatory in order to solidify his false doctrine of works. Finally, he set up idolatrous mediators between God and man, his many fictitious saints and his so-called 'Queen of Heaven' under the image of Mary, the mother of our Lord. All of this had one purpose and that was to do away with the only means by which men can be saved, faith in the true Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Having seen the Formation and Deformation of the Christian church, we may now more easily appreciate the Reformation of the church. This marvellous work was accomplished by the power of God's Word working especially through that faithful servant of God, Martin Luther. The Reformation was nothing less than a full exposure and overthrow of Satan's endeavour over many

centuries to cripple and destroy God's saving Gospel. The Reformation was a thorough return of the Christian church to the truth and purity of God's Word. To Satan's perversions, the Reformation said, 'Away with your Masses and pretended works. Away with your purgatory and false teachings that oppose the love of God and make His Word of none effect. Away with your fictitious saints, your Babylonian queens, and all your other wicked idolatries.' And to God's dear church, the Reformation said, 'Lift up your eyes to your beloved Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Realize that He suffered and died for you and for your sins. Your salvation is of grace, and not of works. It stands on the authority of God's Word alone. Trust and receive this precious Word and enter into a life of everlasting joy and thanksgiving.' These are the great truths and treasures freely restored to us through the blessed work of the Reformation. May we ever thank and praise God for this work and pray that God would preserve its blessed fruits in us unto the end. Amen. —S Wood.

BOOK REVIEW — Four Hundred Years

Commemorative Essays on the Reformation of Dr. Martin Luther and Its Blessed Results. Edited by Professor W.H.T. Dau, 1916.

Referring to the history of our Lutheran Church here in Australia *Pastor F. G. Kleinig* wrote in 1962:

'How can they (lay people and pastors, Ed.) properly appreciate, value, and remain loyal to their own church, if they are ignorant of its past weal and woe, and especially of its grim battles for the truth? And not knowing the vital points of the past, and from both sides at that, how can they possibly pass sound judgment on the present?'

These words apply with **even greater emphasis** to the HISTORY OF LUTHER'S REFORMATION, especially in these evil days when large numbers of apostate "Lutherans" seek to return to the Church of Rome. Well might we ASK: **HOW CAN WE REMAIN TRULY LOYAL TO THE ORTHODOX LUTHERAN CHURCH WITHOUT A THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF THE HISTORY OF WHAT LUTHER STOOD FOR, FOUGHT FOR, AND DIED FOR?** That is why the contents of this book **FOUR HUNDRED YEARS** are so important for us all, especially our young people, to study and to take note of today. The editor *Prof. (later Dr.) WHT Dau* gives two reasons for the purpose of the book:

'It desires to be viewed, first, as a thank-offering to God and an appreciation of God's instrument in the upbuilding of His one, holy, Christian Church on earth.

"Secondly, the special studies here offered, by focusing attention on a particular feature in the character of Luther and his work, or on a critical episode in his activity, exhibit the many-sidedness of the Reformer, and the wealth of information that can be gathered by effort concentrated on a given point...'

The reprint of 320 pages, consists of 27 essays on various aspects of Luther's life, as well as a chronological table, written by old Missouri Synod pastors.

Recommending it Prof. L. Wessel of old Missouri declares:

'It is...an arsenal equipped with weapons of offence and defence against the vilifiers of Luther and his work; a portrayal of an era of Church history that fosters and strengthens Lutheran

consciousness. **To know the Lutheran Church is to love her.**' (*Australian Lutheran*, June, 1917, p.7.)

This book is a **MUST** for every true Lutheran family who love the Word of God. Below is but a short excerpt from **Luther At Worms** and the **Contents** of the book.

'God, in His great mercy, willed otherwise. His Word was again to come into its own. **Luther was His instrument in bringing it back. Luther at Worms signifies the open Bible to the world.** The work of the Reformation had passed its crisis. Like an avalanche it rushed onward crushing whatever Pope or Emperor would cast in its way. Rome's dam restraining the Water of Life was broken, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, once again released, poured forth to work the miracle of salvation for hundreds, for millions. Twelve years after the days at Worms, Luther, reviewing the progress of the Word, was constrained to declare that such great things had been done by the power of God as no man could have either imagined or expected.

And to-day? The open Bible, or 'So speaks our Lord Jesus Christ,' – that is the last decision in matters of conscience acknowledged in Christendom the world over. Church and State alike are reaping the fruits of *Luther's Reformation through the Word*. None more so, however, than we, who are of the true Church named for the Reformer.... **With fervent thanks to God for Luther, His instrument, we erect to the memory of the champion of the Word at Worms a monument, not of marble, not of brass, but of hearts bearing this inscription:**

*God's Word and Luther's doctrine pure
Shall to eternity endure.*

BLW.

(This book is available through the ELCR Book Agent, Paul Winter. Contact winterpk@cleamail.com.au)

Home and Mother

However irksome, difficult, and discouraging the mother's duties may be at times, may she not find rich comfort in this deep conviction: 'Here is the home into which God Himself has placed me; here is the man, sinful, weak, and faulty though he be, whom I am to assist to be a useful member of human society and, if possible, a child of God, an heir to everlasting life, and whom I am, as God gives me grace, to protect against the wiles of the devil, evil associates, and the discouragements and temptations and sins of his own human heart'? Let her remember to pray, 'God, give me strength for this noble work!'

Worn and weary from labour, what bliss and comfort should come to her as she sees her own child and can say of it: 'The Lord gave it to me. Here is an immortal soul, clothed in human body, that will at one time be glorified and changed to be like unto Christ's glorious body. I am to be a blessing to this child in a way in which no one else can be a blessing to it. I am to aid this son of mine, I am to train, govern, and rear him, so that those with whom he deals and those who know him may say, 'Blessed is the mother of such a son'. I am to rear this daughter of mine that she may be even a better wife and mother than I am.' What a motive for her daily to hear or read the Word of God, so that, filled with the Spirit of God, she may show forth in her own life: 'Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.' O mother, homemaker, 'blessed art thou among

women!' What is the pain which you are called upon to endure for your children compared with the reward of being their loved, esteemed mother? What is the labour which you bestow upon them compared with the privilege of living with them here to aid and to bless them; and what is the expense which you incur in rearing them compared with the reward of seeing them forever blessed with their Creator and Saviour in heaven?

'Tis true, many a wife and mother will say, 'Who is sufficient for these things? Our own shortcomings discourage us.' You are right. It is especially the mother who must, if she is conscientious, daily come to the conviction that her duties exceed her strength, that she falls short of being all and doing all that is mapped out for a true homemaking mother. But do we Christians not know of that ever-flowing spring of water of life from which every

wearily servant of God may draw draughts of refreshment during the toils of the day and the watches of the night? Let her heed the word of Jesus: 'Rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it.'

The first and foremost duty of the mother is to replenish her own soul from the Word of God, of which it is truly said that it 'creates light in the midst of darkness, alleviates sorrow which admits of no other alleviation, and directs a beam of hope to the heart which no other topic of consolation can reach, while guilt, despair, and death vanish at the touch of its holy inspiration.'

'How poor are they that have not patience!' But in the Word of God there is an infinite supply of patience for the most troubled and irritated mother. Hopelessness will paralyse us, but the hope which the Bible inspires is ever strong and maketh not ashamed. There the mother will learn that wonderful Christian art — not Christian science — of casting all her cares upon Him who careth for her. There she will meet Him through whom His own mother became the blessed among women; Him whom Mary and Martha served and who blessed them with that one thing needful; Him to whom clung the poor Canaanitish mother with a heart almost broken in twain because of the affliction of her daughter, whom she conquered by prayer, and from whom she went away with that wonderful commendation, 'O woman, great is thy faith!' and with that rich gift, 'Be it unto thee according to thy faith.' There, in the Word of God, she may daily behold Him who is also the Lamb of God that taketh away her sins and will give her to drink of that water of which He says Himself: 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.' John 4, 13, 14.

O mother, whatever thy tasks, whatever thy duties, however poor the home, and however difficult the work mapped out for thee, 'Be not afraid, only believe.' Go daily with a believing heart to thy Saviour and to His blessed Word, and thou shalt experience the truth of what He said who is the Truth, that thou art blessed in thy work and art a blessing to others; for He doth daily enrich thee and doth daily employ thee with all thy gifts for the happiness and salvation of all in thy house.

What an example to all who see her as a quiet woman, daily going about her duties, patiently and cheerfully serving the whole household! Said a boy to his father: 'Papa, Charles Brown told me that he saw a most wonderful thing to-day. He saw a woman leap upon the back of a running horse and from it through a ring of paper, landing again upon the running horse's back; and this she did three times in succession.' Said the father: 'Son, I daily see something much more wonderful than that, and you may see it yourself. It is your mother, daily rising before any of us are up, preparing a good breakfast, getting you all off to school, keeping this whole house cleaned and in good order, never complaining of the many duties, never weary of the little and the great kindnesses that she performs for every one of us, and doing this not for an hour or for a moment each day, but all day long; not for one or two days, but for years. That, my boy, is truly wonderful.' It is wonderful! A patient, self-sacrificing woman who daily serves the family without losing good cheer and patience is one of the miracles of God's grace.

Let the world speak of a 'household drudge'. Those who have learned to look upon her whom God made to be a helpmeet for man as God describes her know what a treasure a devoted and godly wife and mother is to her family. 'Her price is far above rubies; the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her. . . She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. . . She riseth also while it is yet night and giveth meat to her household. . . She stretcheth out her hands to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. . . Strength and honour are her clothing. . . She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household and eateth not the bread of idleness. . . Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. . . Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.'

A true, genuine woman is neither a society butterfly nor a household drudge. She is neither a gad-about nor a slattern. She is neither a gossip nor a sullen recluse. She is God's creature for help to others. She goes daily to Him who is the Source and Fountain of all blessings and carries these blessings, in all that she does, in all that she says, and in all that she thinks, to those who are near and dear to her and who come in contact with her. She is learning to say with that 'blessed woman': 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.' She need not attend the meeting of suffragettes to find out what duties and what works are awaiting her. In her home she daily finds more to do than she can accomplish.

Besides this the Lord Jesus has given expression to His high esteem for a godly woman and to His exalted opinion of the value of her services by giving her a place and a work in His Church. When He visibly walked here upon this earth, we are frequently told of the women who ministered unto Him. We hear of Mary and Martha's entertaining Him at their hospitable home. Even when upon the cross, many of the women who had served Him would not leave Him, but were eye-witnesses of His suffering and hearkened to His dying prayers and instructions. When Joseph and Nicodemus laid away His body in the new sepulchre, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James, beheld where He was laid, and 'when the Sabbath was past, they brought sweet spices that they might anoint Him.'

*Not she with traitorous kiss her Saviour stung;
Not she denied Him with unholy tongue;
She, while apostles shrank, could danger brave,
Last at His cross and earliest at His grave.*

And this loving, devoted service of godly women is spoken of in the entire history of the Christian Church. As Timothy was instructed by his mother and grandmother, so today thousands of Christian women are instructing children in the Word of Truth, in the fundamental facts of Bible History, and in the first truths of the Catechism. Everywhere in our congregations there are women who assist in the work of the Church, provide for the orphan, aid the sick and poor, give their talents, their gifts, and their abilities in music, in language, in Christian knowledge, and their time to some work wherein Jesus, their Saviour, is glorified and His precious saving Word is brought to their fellow-men.

Let us not forget that woman's work does not consist in doing one wonderful, marvellous thing in one hour of her life, but in daily performing innumerable services to her fellow-men. Her calling and station expose her, it is true, to the temptation to seek ease and to seek to avoid, in one way or other, the dangers and risks which accompany her duties; in other words, she is tempted to seek to enjoy the advantages of her peculiar position without being called upon to render the service, make the sacrifices, and endure the trials of that position. But if her soul daily says before the throne of grace, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord,' she will, in the strength of that resolve and with the help of God, overcome these temptations. Yes, she will learn to realize that in the very sacrifices she is making and in the danger she is incurring lies the value of her services. If women complain that men 'do not respect them' and do not give them that due regard and consideration which is theirs by right of their very nature, let them remember that many bring this unfair

treatment upon themselves through shirking the duties which have been allotted to them. On the other hand, a noble woman need not be concerned about the opinion of the ignorant and brutal; the best men have ever shown a high regard for godly women. A great general of France, who was known for the profound respect and affection with which he regarded his mother, is reported to have said: 'My opinion is that the future good or bad conduct of a child depends entirely upon its mother.' This statement is too strong, it is true, but it gives expression for his own esteem for, and gratitude toward, her through whom he had received great blessings. We all know the devotion and consideration which George Washington felt for his mother. And what letters of childlike piety and affection did Luther write to his mother when God had made him the first man of Europe! What kindness and sincere attachment speaks from every one of his letters to his wife! Who can doubt that such women were blessed? Even so now, wherever placed and whatever her immediate duties, let 'the handmaid of the Lord' give herself to devoted service in the home and in the Church, and she will be 'blessed among women.'

S.
The Lutheran Witness,
1933, pp33-35

Notes and News

PRAYER:

The Believing Christian Prays that True Love to God May be Kindled in His Heart.

EXHORTATION.

*God is Love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him.
We love Him because He first loved us. 1 John 4, 16-19.*

God is Love; and because God is Love, He desires that all His believing children should also abide in true love. Love is a bond which is mutually to unite God and our heart; it is also to unite us with our neighbour's heart.

Accordingly, (1) the believing Christian prays God that He would fill his heart -with His holy love. For this gift, too, is one of those good gifts which come' down from above. (2) Nor must he despise the means by which the love of God may be awakened and increased in him, namely, the devout hearing and meditation of the Word of God and the worthy use of the Holy Supper. (3) If he dwells in the love of God, he must manifest his love by a holy Christian conduct, becoming speech, and God-pleasing works. For love is like a fire: it cannot hide its flames and smoke.

(4) He must be very careful, however, lest he relapse into .the love of the world like Demas; for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Out of love to God, therefore, he must avoid the world and the friendship and society of the world, because these draw him away from the love of God. (5) He must abide in this love until death, and thus depart this world with the love of God in his heart. (6) This love of God must increase in him as he increases in years. We ought to be ashamed to have spent twenty, thirty, yea, forty years in the lust and love of the world, and during all that time to have forgotten to love God. For such waywardness a Christian, when God has opened his eyes, should make amends by all the more fervent, ardent, and constant love, and should abide in such love until death. (*Starck's Prayerbook*, page 184.)

Believing, but not Understanding.

'I will not believe anything but what I understand,' said a self-confident young man, in a hotel one day.

'Nor will I,' said another,

'Gentlemen,' said one who sat close by, 'do I understand you correctly, that you will not believe anything that you don't understand?'

'I will not,' said one, and so said each one of the trio.

'Well,' said the stranger, 'in my ride this morning I saw some geese in a field eating grass; do you believe that?'

'Certainly,' said the three unbelievers.

'I also saw the pigs eating grass; do you believe that?'

'Of course,' said the three.

'I also saw sheep and cows eating grass; do you believe that?'

'Of course,' was again replied.

'Well, the grass which they had formerly eaten had, by digestion, turned to feathers on the back of the geese, to bristles on the backs of swine, to wool on the sheep, and on the cows it had turned to hair; do you believe that, gentlemen?'

'Certainly,' they replied.

'Yes, you believe it,' he rejoined, 'but do you understand it?'

They were confounded and silent, and ashamed. —J.H.

(Taken from *The Australian Lutheran*, October 1913, p.8.)