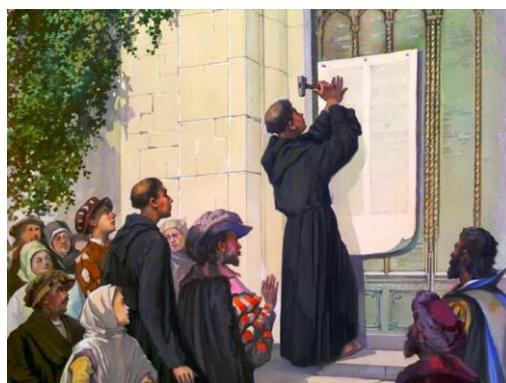
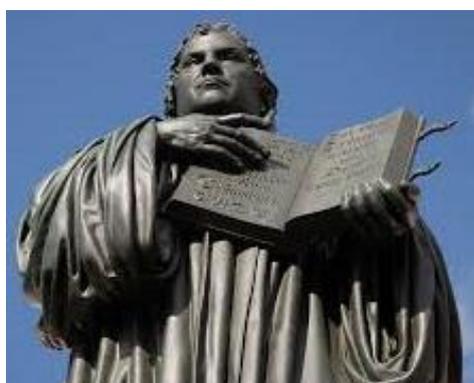


*Celebrating The 500th Anniversary Of The Nailing Of The 95 Theses
To The Castle Church Door At Wittenberg
By Luther On 31 October 1517*



What Moved Luther to Confess his Saviour?

Luther truly believed in Jesus as his Saviour.

Luther answered that question himself at Worms, when he declared, 'I cannot otherwise; I cannot help it; I must confess!' That is what the fire would say when asked why it burns; the sun why he shines. It was Luther's nature, his Christian nature, to confess his Saviour. Luther in his own heart experienced the terrors of the Law and the quickening sweetness of Christ and His Gospel; hence he cried, 'I cannot otherwise; I must confess my dear Saviour; my heart is full of Him!'

The Power of Luther's Conscience Ruled by Christ

Being a Christian, Luther also had a quickened conscience. When his enemies cried, 'You are a heretic, — recant; you are a rebel, — submit yourself; you are damned and cursed by the pope, — repent.' Luther did but — could but — answer, 'I cannot otherwise; I must confess. I would stand condemned by my own conscience, condemned by my God, ah, yes, condemned and rejected and denied by Christ, if I should refuse to confess Him whom I know to be my Saviour, and refuse to proclaim the Gospel which I know to be the only truth. Warned by my conscience, I cannot otherwise; I must give testimony to Christ and His truth.'

The Fervent Zeal of True Love for Christ and His Fellow-Men

Deep in the heart of Luther there was that burning fire of love for his fellow-men, especially for his own dear Germans. 'For my Germans,' said Luther, 'I was born; them will I serve.' Beholding the abject slavery of his fellow-men, and realising how the Roman hierarchy had taken possession of their property, their family, their body, their soul, their heart, their mind, and their very conscience, Luther, moved by compassion cried out, 'I cannot otherwise, love constrains me; I must confess: I must

deliver them from bondage. The Gospel and the liberty which made me free and happy I must give to my fellow-men.’ To save and deliver, to bless and enrich his fellow-men, such was the motive that moved and impelled Luther to sacrifice himself in the confession of Christ and in the proclamation of His Gospel. Luther confessed his Saviour. (*Four Hundred Years, (Page 94.)*)

Interviews with God

•**I ASK:** *‘Is It Unmanly To Be Religious?’*

•**THUS SAITH THE LORD:**

‘This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage: be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.’ Joshua 1:8,9.

•**TO WHICH I RESPOND:** ‘I pray, dear Lord, that our boys may be preserved from the foolish notion that only weaklings and women are deeply religious. As they study the records of the past, as they observe the achievements of the present day, may they realize that a mighty host of Thy loyal followers have been manly men, and leaders in all spheres of human activity. Open their eyes to see that millions of men of enterprise and courage are neither ashamed of their religion, nor a shame to it. Amen.’

Studies on Bible Texts Found in the Drewes Catechism

Always Be Students of Luther’s Small Catechism



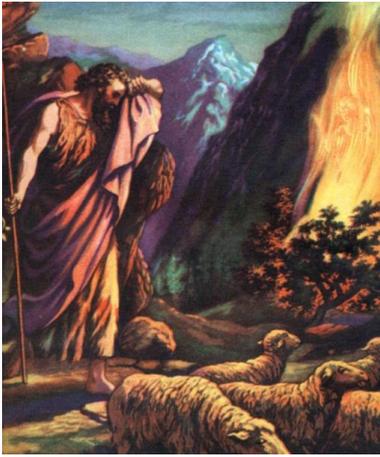
Dr Bente: In his sermon of September 14, 1528, Dr Luther declares that **the Catechism is the Layman’s Bible**, which everyone must know who wishes to be considered a Christian and to be admitted to the Lord’s Supper. He then proceeds: **‘Hence all children** should behave accordingly and **learn. And you parents are bound to have your children learn these things.’**

Dr Bente: ‘In the same way *Dr Luther* urges the same things in his Catechisms. For here we read, “Therefore it is **the duty of every father of a family to question and examine his children and servants at least once a week** and to ascertain what they know of it [the Catechism], or are learning, and, **if they do not know it to keep them faithfully at it”.**’

Second Commandment

In the Drewes' Catechism the proof passage which teaches the Biblical use of oaths is found in Deut.6:13, ‘Thou shalt fear the LORD, thy God, and serve Him, and shalt swear by His Name.’ What does the word ‘fear’ mean here?

It refers to a Child-like or filial (loving relationship of a child to its father) fear, that is, the honour, reverence, respect and awe which we have for someone that we avoid displeasing them and seek to please them. It is only when true faith dwells in the heart that the New Man is present in the Christian. According to the New Man the true child-like or filial fear that God requires of His children,



moves the believer in Christ to take 'delight' in God's Word, also the Law, and eagerly to "meditate" in it (Psalm 1:2). He says with the Psalmist, 'O how love I the Law! It is my meditation all the day,' (Psalm 119:97). Such child-like fear takes possession of the New Man, or the 'inner man', as Paul by the Holy Spirit calls him, that the believer with Paul says, 'I delight in the Law of God after the inner man.' Moved by the grace of God in Christ Jesus the believer finds his delight in and rejoices over doing the will of God according to the New Man (Romans 7:22).

How do we know that such Child-like or filial fear is meant here? [1] When true Christians are addressed to 'fear the LORD God' then only Child-like or filial fear is meant because only true Christians have this fear in their hearts produced by the Holy Spirit through the grace of God.

[2] When this fear brings about Godly conduct then it can only be Child-like or filial fear. Deut.6:13 states that when a true Christian shows this fear he will want to serve the LORD God. To serve the Lord means to do what the Lord tells us in His Law flowing from faith in Christ and out of love to Him. A second way which this verse teaches that a true Christian shows this Child-like or filial fear is to swear by His Name.

The Hebrew scholars, Keil and Delitzsch, state: 'Fear is placed first, as the fundamental characteristic of the Israelitish worship of God; it was no slavish fear, but simply the holy awe of a sinner before the holy God, which includes love rather than excludes it. "Fearing" is a matter of the heart; "serving", a matter of working and striving; and "swearing in His name", the practical manifestation (appearance, Ed.) of the worship of God in word and conversation. It refers not merely to a solemn oath before a judicial court, but rather to asseverations (solemn declaration, Ed.) on oath in the ordinary intercourse of life, by which the religious attitude of a man involuntarily reveals itself.'

What does it mean to swear by God's Name?

According to Scripture to take an oath means 'to call upon God to help us to speak the truth and to punish us if we speak the untruth' (*Drewes' Catechism* page 9). Hence we are saying in effect: 'What I say is the Truth. God who knows all things will bears witness to that, or if I am deceiving, may His punishment come upon me.' There is a right kind of taking oaths and sinful oath taking.

In [Matt. 5:34](#) Christ is referring to sinful oath taking when He says, 'Swear not at all.' According to the context Jesus distinctly condemns the incessant, frivolous taking of oaths, especially in ordinary conversation. He is not implying that taking of oaths under all circumstances is wrong.

TAKING AN OATH WHERE GOD'S HONOUR IS AT STAKE.



Deut.6:13 teaches that if we from faith have child-like awe and reverence for God in our hearts then we will want to serve Him alone and one of the ways we can do this is the rightful taking of oaths, that is, to 'swear by God's Name'. Christ Himself teaches us that when the honour of God demands it, it is our duty to take an oath. Most solemnly before the High Priest Jesus declared on oath that He was the Son of God (Matt.26:63). To continue to be silent now would be tantamount to a denial of a truth which was essential in His Messianic ministry. So He answered with an emphatic: 'I am.' The ordination vow of the pastor, the marriage vow and the confirmation vow come under the taking of oaths for the honour of God.

Again in regard to the promise of the coming Saviour which the LORD gave to Abraham we read: 'For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.' (Heb. 6:13,14) And again in Heb. 6:17 we read: 'Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath.' But this promise of the coming Saviour, sure as it was in itself, the Lord in addition supplemented with an oath by Himself, there being no greater to swear by, Gen. 22:16-18. Dr. P.E. Kretzmann correctly states: In the case of Abraham, therefore, it is seen that the promise is secure, God having pledged Himself with an oath to perform it. The Lord accommodated Himself to the weakness of the human beings who were included

in His gracious will. In a more emphatic way than by a mere promise He wanted to demonstrate to us the unchangeableness, the immutability of His gracious and good will. His solemn oath came between Him and us, as an added guarantee for the fact that His promises were intended for us all, lest any single one be tortured by doubt. We learn here that an oath taken for God's honour affirms and guarantees the truthfulness and certainty of His promises.

TAKING AN OATH WHERE THE WELFARE OF THE NEIGHBOUR REQUIRES IT.



We also learn in Heb. 6:16 that we can take oaths where the welfare of our neighbour is concerned in cases where the truthfulness of a matter is to be affirmed: "For men verily swear (take an oath) by the greater; and an oath for confirmation (serves as confirmation [of what has been said] and) is to them an end of all strife." The aim of such an oath is for the confirmation of a statement, it settles the matter in dispute, it brings all controversy to a speedy end, Ex. 22:10,11. That is why Deut.6:13 states, "Thou shalt fear the LORD, thy God, and serve Him, and shalt swear by His

Name." Deut.6:13, "Thou shalt fear the LORD, thy God, and serve Him, and shalt swear by His Name." That is why Abraham (Gen.24:3) acted in accord with Scripture when he required of his servant, Eliezer, that he should take an oath not to get a wife for Isaac from the Canaanite women. That is why Christians should be prepared to take an oath in court, because it is God's will that they tell the truth and that the guilty be punished and innocent be set free.

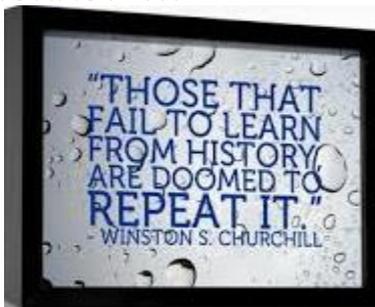
That is why, provided the wording is not anti-Scriptural, Christians are to take oaths of loyalty when they join the armed forces.

Dr. Luther states in the large Catechism: 'Since using the holy name for falsehood or wickedness is here forbidden, that we are, on the other hand, commanded to employ it for truth and for all good, as when one swears truly where there is need and it is demanded.'

A Brief History of the Church Life and Deeds of Dr Martin Luther¹

[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 VI - LUTHER TELLS HIS FRIENDS ABOUT GOING INTO THE MONASTERY



Luther now communicated his resolution to the monks. He afterwards said: 'I intended to make my purpose known also to my parents, that I might hear their opinion upon it, as I was an only son, and heir to their property. But they taught me from Jerome that I should pay no regard to father and mother, but flee to the cross of Christ. They also adduced the words of our Lord: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9:62)."'

Upon this he invited his friends to supper, delighted them once more with songs and instrumental music, and asked them to rejoice with him for the last time, as he was resolved to enter a monastery. They entreated him to, change his purpose, but in vain. He said to, them: 'To-day ye see me, henceforth no more.' He relates this himself, and adds 'Thus I remained firm in my resolution, thinking I would never leave the cloister.' In the same night, the 17 July, 1505, he hastened to the monastery of the Augustinians, and obtained admission, as previously agreed upon. He left all his possessions behind him, taking with him only Virgil² and Plautus³. The next morning he communicated the event to other friends by letter, and

¹ Continued from the last issue of the Messenger

² **Virgil** (70-19 BC) was an ancient Roman poet. One of Virgil's quotes was: "It never troubles the wolf how many the sheep may be.

³ **Plautus** (255-185 BC) was a Roman playwright. One of his famous quotes was: 'Patience is the best remedy for every trouble.' Luther took with him some of the works of these two men.

thanked them for all their manifestations of kindness. He also wrote to his parents, and sent them his ring of Master of Arts and his secular clothing.

His friends were saddened even to tears, that one so gifted should be buried alive in the cloister. Two whole days they, with other students, watched the monastery and besieged it, as it were, hoping to obtain Luther again but in vain. The doors remained closed and bolted, and during a whole month no one was permitted to see him.

LUTHER'S DECISION DEEPLY GRIEVED AND ANGERED HIS FATHER

His father also was deeply grieved at the event. In his answer he addressed him in less respectful terms than formerly, and denied him all paternal favour. He even undertook the journey to Erfurt for the purpose of changing his son's mind; and when the latter excused himself on the ground of his being called by a terrible apparition from heaven, he replied: 'God grant that it may not be a deception or a satanic illusion. Why, have you not heard that parents should be obeyed, and that nothing should be done without their knowledge and counsel?'

But his father finally permitted himself to be persuaded by his friends. Two of his sons had died of the plague, and the information had been brought that Martin also was dead. Upon this his friends



urged him that he should make the sacrifice and consent that his son should enter the 'holy order'. He had many scruples and was strongly disinclined, but said at last: 'Let it pass; God grant that it may be well.' Still he did not consent cheerfully.

WHY DID GOD ALLOW LUTHER TO SPEND TIME IN THE MONASTERY?

According to monastic custom, Luther now dropped his baptismal name of Martin and assumed that of Augustine. This he subsequently looked upon with horror, and considered it a renunciation of his Baptism. Why God permitted him to

enter the cloister he himself explains: 'God, whose mercies are innumerable and whose wisdom is infinite, out of such error and sin brought forth great good. It seems to me that Satan foresaw in my youth what he now suffers. Therefore he so raged and raved against me and sought, with such manifold inventions, to hinder and destroy me, that I often marvelled, and wondered whether I was the only one among mankind that suffered his attacks. But it was God's will, as I now perceive, that I should learn, by my own experience, the philosophy of the schools and the holiness of the cloisters, that is, become acquainted with them by many sins and ungodly works, so that the ungodly people might not be able to boast against me, their future opponent, that I condemn what I do not understand.'

SPIRITUAL DEATH DOMINATED THE UNIVERSITIES

With the wisdom of the papistic universities, Luther had already become acquainted. At a later period he justly called them schools of Satan. 'For,' he observes, 'they have deserved nothing of me. I believe I do not lack understanding and my industry⁴ is known; but I have given my advice that young persons should avoid the philosophy and the theology of the schools as they would the death of their souls.' Therefore he again repeats the apostolic warning: 'Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit (Col.2:8),' which he unhesitatingly applies to the philosophy of the schools.

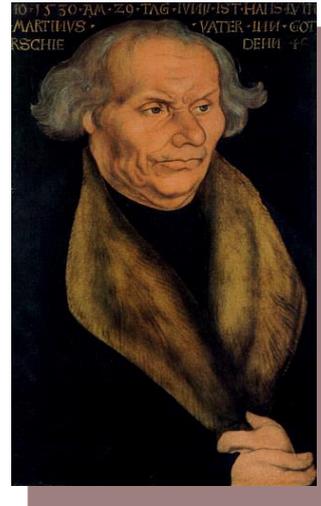
⁴ His hard work.

‘What else have our universities in the whole world hitherto been than destroyers of excellent talents and corrupters of youth? Not only because these had full license to practice every sin and vice, which is the least ground for complaint; but because no sound, saving doctrine was taught, and the study of Christian doctrine was obscured by irksome, useless and mischievous sophistries⁵, by which many good and noble minds were confused, and prevented from bearing valuable fruit.’ He complains of the ‘spectres⁶ of the high schools, which we have established with inhuman gifts, and by which we were burdened with many doctors, preachers, masters, priests and monks, that is, with great, rough, fat asses in red and brown caps, who taught us nothing good, but only rendered us more blind and frantic.’

The papistic philosophy of the schools had driven Luther to despair. He entered the cloister for the purpose of finding salvation. We shall see whether he found it. [Luther has to learn that salvation was found alone in the Scriptures, that it was only through faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross and not by his works he was saved.. Ed.]



July 17, 1505 Martin entered the Augustinian Monastery in Erfurt.



Luther's Father.

(From Life And Deeds of Dr. Martin Luther by Rev. Hermann Fick (an old Missouri pastor) and translated by Prof Loy., pages 21-27. To be continued).

DEFENDING YOUR FAITH

(Woomby, May,2016)

Matt. 10:32,33, ³² Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. ³³ But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.’

Heb.10:23, ‘Let us (constantly) **hold fast the profession** (confession) **of our faith without wavering, (for he is faithful that promised.)**’

1 Peter 3:15, ‘**but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer (a verbal defence) to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear?**’

PREPARATION

- (a) Know your Bible and Catechism.

⁵ Teaching of false, corrupt human wisdom.

⁶ A SPECTRE is something feared as a possible unpleasant or dangerous occurrence.

- (b) Always be kind and friendly, but be firm in your faith.
- (c) Don't be afraid to speak.
- (d) Have a strategy.
- (e) Practise Biblical responses to past questions.

APPROACH

- 1) **Clarify**, if necessary, what is the **chief reason** why they have asked the question:
 - (a) Are they asking because they are **curious**? This may require a simple brief answer.
 - (b) Do they have some **church background** or **sincerely** want to know more? This may involve a more lengthy discussion.
 - (c) Are they being **nasty, sarcastic and asking simply to poke fun at the Christian faith**? This may require a response:
 - i) where you firmly but plainly state your faith and indicate that if ever they genuinely want to know more you are happy to tell them. But you don't want to get into an argument nor do you want what is precious to you to be discussed in a disrespectful manner.
 - ii) where you discuss with them first, "Just why are they so upset or annoyed about this question?" Then give them a plain and firm answer and leave it at that unless they are prepared to discuss matters in a more kindly manner.
- 2) **Gain more information** as to what they want to know so you can deal specifically with the main point in question.
- 3) Try where possible to discuss matters on a **person to person private** basis until you have the experience in discussing matters with a large group. You can control the discussion better and you often have more time to reflect on your answer in a person to person private discussion
- 4) While they are talking, **think** of what either the Bible says or your catechism says about the matter.
- 5) When ready, **reply in a simple manner**, always referring to: 'Here is what I believe from the Bible' Or: 'This is what I believe because Jesus teaches this.'
- 6) After giving an answer, where possible **use a short Bible text to back up** what you have said.
- 7) If it is a **difficult question**, or you are **unsure of your answer**, or you **need more time to reply**, don't be afraid to direct these questions back at them:
 - i) 'Before I give you my answer, it would help me to understand what you think about this question?'
 - ii) 'Why do you believe that' Or 'What are your reasons for saying that?'
 - iii) 'I would be very interested to know, what proof you have for saying that?'
 - iv) **Then you can say: 'Since this is a very important question, I would like to think about it more. Would it suit you if I gave you my answer tomorrow?'**
- 8) **Don't let them get you into an argument.** Explain your faith. Use Scripture to affirm what you believe. Answer objections where possible. Then either use the broken record technique or say: 'We have discussed this enough for now. Let us leave the matter rest. Please think about what I have said. If there are new points you would like to ask in the future we can talk about it then.' Then either suggest they talk to you parents or pastor; or change the subject; or politely move away.
- 9) Where possible relate the matter to their salvation or the importance of their reading the Bible.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES
(Summary of Responses Resulting From Discussion)

- **Why, if God says He is kind and good, does He allow bad things to happen to people?**

Suggested Responses

1) **Wrong Assumption:** We know better than the mind of God.

ANSWER:

- (a) The only way we can truly know everything we need about God is from His Word. Would you like to hear what His Word says about this question?
- (b) The Bible says that God is kind and good. It also says that God uses the evil in the world to punish sin, to show unbelievers how much they need Jesus as their Saviour and to test the faith of true believers.
- (c) The Bible teaches that nothing evil comes from God. All evil comes from Satan, his evil angels and from sinful human beings. Sinful human beings are responsible for the evil that they commit. But with the power of Christ's grace as they believe in Jesus they can resist evil and do good. It is only in heaven when we will be perfectly good.

2) **Wrong Assumption:** God is responsible for evil.

ANSWER:

- (a) The Bible teaches that besides being kind and merciful through Christ, God is just and punishes sin.
- (b) Faithful parents are kind when they help and care for their children. They are just when they punish the wrong their children do in order that the children may avoid it in the future. Does that make the parent's actions evil in punishing the sin of the children? No, and nor does it make a just God evil when He punishes the terrible evil in the world in order to restrain it, or to lead people to see their sins and to repent.
- (c) There is a vital difference between "God not being responsible for sin" and "God permitting sin to occur."

Parents may rebuke the sin of their children for which the children are responsible. But it often occurs with teenagers or adults that they refuse to listen to the rebuke and parents can't do anything else but say: "I plead with you to stop doing this evil thing. But if you continue to do it, the responsibility is yours. If you won't listen, then you have to learn the hard way, by experiencing the severe consequences that will result."

The Lord often patiently bears with unbelievers. Through faithful teachers or through His Word He rebukes sin; but many stubbornly won't listen. So He permits them to go their own way, so that they learn from hard experience how terrible sin is. Also if they repent and turn to Christ in true forgiveness, **they learn how great God's pardon and love in Christ really is.**

A Christian can then ask that if they want to learn more, would they like to speak to their pastor.

(To be continued).

Young People, Let Your home Always Be A Christian home

Precious gifts in the home are children. It is God's plan that they should have their place in it, and Christian parents have always esteemed them as God-given blessings. Children need the home, that home in which they are brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Besides bodily care and protection of the parents, they need also spiritual care and guidance. Where children are thought little of, where they are not wanted in the home, there the parents set themselves against the divine word: 'Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord.' Psalm 127:3.

Our Church is in need of men and women who with firm Christian convictions, faith, and love, hold the marriage tie sacred, who love their children and rear them according to the directions of the Lord. It needs young people who love their homes and intend some day to set up their own homes in the fear of God. Only those parents and young people who love their homes, cultivate home life, and daily worship God in the homes can and will be the pillars of Christian congregations. Our Church needs such homes, where not only the daily bread is taken, but also the Bread of Life which nourishes souls unto eternal life. —LM (*The Queensland Messenger*, 21st August 1937, p. 113.)

Report on the January Luther League Camp held at James Byrne Centre, Highfields from the 27th – 29th January 2017

Over the weekend we occupied Kelly House and Sanctuary House in the James Byrne Centre. The facilities were excellent and supported the activities of the weekend. On Friday afternoon, we settled in to our allocated rooms and after tea, organised a game of pass the parcel which included a variety of activities and items.

After breakfast on Saturday morning, the attendees drove out to Mt Kingsthorpe in convoy led by Uncle Selwyn. We climbed Mt Kingsthorpe, up to the lookout which provides a spectacular view. After this we stopped briefly at Settlers Park, Kingsthorpe, then returned to the James Byrne Centre passing through the scenic estates on the northwest side of Highfields. When we got back we enjoyed lunch. With the free time in the afternoon there was volleyball, cricket, table tennis and other games.

In the afternoon, Pastor Bryce presented the Bible study: *Responding to Questions on Moral Purity*. Groups were formed and they worked together to respond to questions in this regard. After this the annual Federation Luther League meeting was held. After tea, Kingaroy Luther Society provided activities. In relation to Australia Day, we dressed up in Australian items such as Australian flags and capes and other clever costumes.

was awarded for the best costume as an iconic gumnut character. Teams were formed and competed in several exciting and clever games including a team race involving stepping only on sheets of paper, musical chairs and other games. Edible prize money was distributed at the end. Much fun was had by all.

On Sunday, there was a preaching service with Holy Communion at the Highfields Church. Pastor Tim took the confessional address in preparation for Holy Communion. Pastor Gavin took the sermon with the text Luke 5:8 and covered: *to become true servants of God we must, firstly, acknowledge the greatness of our sin, and secondly, rely totally upon Jesus for His grace and help.*

After church, lunch was had back at the James Byrne Centre. After lunch the attendees packed up, Pastor Tim provided a devotion, the hymn 543 was sung after which we parted. We were blessed with favourable weather. Acknowledgements go to all those who contributed and all who were part of the weekend. Many had to travel long distances, amongst these were

**The crowd was kept entertained
and engrossed in the game.**



