



# Steadfast

## In the Word and Faith



Published by the Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Reformation  
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Vol LIV

September - October 2019

No 5

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## What Luther Says About —

### Future Life



**The Question of a Future Life.** To be sure, Cicero and some others have written about the immortality of the soul; yet they here and there betray that they did not constantly believe in this immortality of the soul. For somewhere Cicero writes: In death there is nothing of evil. If perception continues in death, then it is to be considered an immortality rather than a death; but if it is lost, then it must not be viewed as a misery which one feels. Does he not seem to waver here and to doubt? They (the heathen) certainly held that the body itself dies and utterly perishes; they knew nothing whatever of its resurrection. But I want to live not only according to the soul but also according to the body. I want my body too; I want the body which I now carry about on this earth, burdened with sins, miseries, and calamities, to return to the soul and to be reunited with it. If a philosopher were questioned about these things and about the resurrection of the body, he would know no answer. "There is no one at home." He would be silent about these questions, for, as the prophet says here, he belongs to the people that walk in darkness. (SL 6, 108 f)

**This Life a Preparation for the Next.** We are so to order our life that it is nothing else than a steady longing and waiting for the life that is to come. (SL 9, 1754)

**For Only This Life We Would Need No Bible.** One needs no Christ, no Baptism, no Gospel for human life and relations, for matters which pertain to this temporal life; for by implanted powers human reason knows and understands how such matters are to be handled and arranged. But in His kingdom Christ, through the Gospel, teaches us concerning higher matters, matters that belong in yonder life and that human reason is unable to understand and grasp. For He tells us where we may abide when this bodily, transient order and life ceases and we must leave this world and what is in it, together with this life of ours, and must enter upon a different sphere and life. (SL 9, 937 f)

**A Teaching That Will and Must Stand to the End.** But this article remains and still stands as the

dear apostles preached it, as Adam and all the fathers and saints believed it, and as it shall be reached as long as the world stands, until the time comes when it will become a matter of actual experience. This we will maintain without paying any attention to those in our midst who speak so bitterly of it and mock it. Rather we shall find comfort in the fact that they are unworthy of this faith, and we shall let them go as blind and leaders of the blind, as Christ says of the Pharisees (Matt 15:14), and we shall let them prate until they must stop. (SL 8, 1213)

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## Devotion — Matthew 21:1–11 — Part 1

### Christ's entry into Jerusalem

**Matthew 21:8: And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!**

To use God's Name aright, Luther teaches us: we are out of true faith to "call upon God's Name in all trouble, to pray, to praise, to give thanks." Some people call upon God's Name only when they are in trouble. They are like the college boy who writes to his father only when he needs money. Another boy makes of his father a close friend and confidant, and when this boy is in trouble he will go to his father with a naturalness that is born of long association. Make God your confidant, your trusted friend.

It is easier to pray than to praise. In times of great peril, national crisis, or personal extremities the exercise of prayer commends itself to the conscience. It was a natural act for George Washington to drop to his knees in the Valley Forge and supplicate God for His aid. Lincoln confessed that he was often driven to prayer because he knew of nowhere else to turn. When one of the soldiers of the Second World War was asked whether he prayed on Bataan, he said, "I guess everybody prayed there." While Lindbergh was making his historic flight across the Atlantic, the motley and colourful array of fight-fans at Yankee Stadium were asked to stand with uncovered heads for two minutes to pray for his success. No one thought it strange. It was the natural thing to do then. So there are times, even though rare, when all men feel that praying is as natural as breathing. They pray first, then argue about it afterwards.

But it is a more difficult art to praise. Ten lepers met Jesus one day. They were in dire need of help. It was easy for them to pray, "Have mercy upon us." But only one remembered to return to render praise unto Christ. The second commandment enjoins us to PRAY and to PRAISE.

1. *What the disciples did to praise God?*
2. *How are we to praise God?*

1. Since He was twelve years old, Jesus had often gone to Jerusalem to celebrate the feasts of the Jews. He had always travelled on foot. This time He entered the capital city of the Jews as King, a spiritual King, the King of Glory, the King of the Church, so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

Up until now He had never been publically and officially proclaimed as King, but now His time had come. He Himself made the preparations for His royal entry into Jerusalem, in no way restraining the disciples or the multitude from giving Him royal honours. In many ways this was His last appeal to His people to acknowledge Him as their spiritual King and the Promised Redeemer.

#### **Christ's Entry into Jerusalem (Matt 21:1-3):**

"And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and

straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her; loose them, and bring them unto Me. And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.”

Notice here three significant points: The Lord knew that the animals were at the designated place, and He again took an opportunity to convince His disciples that nothing was hidden from Him. His Word has almighty power and authority. As the minute occurrences of the future are open before Him, so He, the Lord to Whom all things belong, can influence the heart of the owner even at a distance to yield to His wishes. The two disciples at this stage were absolutely in the dark as to the object of their mission (John 12:16).

This is the message that Jesus wished to convey—He had sent His disciples to procure an ass, the mother, and the colt, literally, *son of a beast-of-burden*. The phrase emphasizes the humble state of Jesus. He is mounted, not on a stately charger with embroidered and jewelled ornamentation, nor even on an ass for the saddle, (the Eastern ass being often of great beauty and spirit, and in demand for this purpose). He rides on a common beast of burden, furnished with the every-day garments of his disciples. Jesus comes in humility, yet with appropriate dignity. Instead of coming on a horse as a conquering general, He comes on a **colt**, as was customary for royalty. He comes as the Prince of Peace.

—TJW

## *Dr Luther's Small Catechism*



**LUTHER: “And finally, I strongly urge that the children be taught the catechism. Should they be taken captive in the invasion, they will at least take something of the Christian faith with them. Who knows what God might accomplish through them. Joseph as a seventeen-year-old youth was sold into slavery into Egypt, but he had God’s Word and knew what he believed” (1541) *Appeal for Prayer Against the Turks* AE 43:239.**

### The importance of Dr Luther’s Small Catechism

#### The 6 Chief Parts of the Catechism

In 1529 Dr Martin Luther wrote the small catechism, a basic summary of the most important teachings in the Bible. These are divided into six chief parts, and these make up the central teachings of the Lutheran Church. The chief parts are:

1. The Ten Commandments
2. The Apostle's Creed
3. The Lord's Prayer
4. Baptism
5. Confession and Absolution
6. The Lord's Supper

In Dr Luther’s Small Catechism the Lutheran Church has a book which Luther described as the **“Bible of the laity.”** It is not called this because it does not concern the pastors and is only written for the people, but because it **contains all that which every Christian must know for his or her salvation.** But it is also true that he wrote the Small Catechism as a book of instruction, particularly for the lay people who were ignorant of Scripture doctrine.

Luther was the ideal man to write the Catechism because of his thorough knowledge of the doctrines of Scripture. **He taught and practised only what the Bible contained and he knew the distinction between Law and Gospel.** His Catechism brought the bright light of God’s pure Word back to an age which was covered in the darkness of sin, error and salvation by works.

If we consider Luther’s Catechism it will be quite apparent to us that because of its brevity and clearness it is possible for a **child** to learn and keep it in memory for a lifetime. Many of our elderly readers are a living testimony to that. We cannot thank enough our parents, pastors, or teachers, who in our youth led us into the right knowledge of the Catechism. Thereby we recognize how **important it is that children learn the Catechism daily and are regularly instructed in its chief parts.**

And not children only. Do we who are **adults** truly read, learn and study diligently our Catechism? Is the Catechism, beside the Bible, the most precious book to us? Do we consider it our parental duty to see to it that our children are rightly instructed in the chief parts of our Christian creed and that we ourselves are diligent scholars of the Catechism? It would be a very good habit to form if **every evening before going to rest we read and considered one of the lessons contained in the Catechism.**

In the Small Catechism we find no polemical disputations or utterances concerning false doctrine as found in many of Dr Luther's other works. In the Small Catechism he simply concentrates on explaining the heavenly truths of Scripture. This has opened many doors for others from different denominations. In the Small Catechism the Lutheran church joyfully confesses the chief parts of the Christian doctrine and is so surely convinced of the truth of its confession that the opposition of the enemies cannot prevail.

However, with the Catechism a Christian is fully equipped to fight victoriously against every false doctrine and against the temptations of this present life. In the home the Catechism gives the children a helping hand and **protects them against falling into a sinful life because from the Catechism the child will learn that it should love its Saviour and lead a godly life and pray to Him who is ever ready to aid.**

With the Catechism the Christian has a trusty shield and weapon against all false doctrine. The Christian can use the Catechism to prove the preaching of the minister, whether it is in accordance with the Scriptures, or not.

Our Catechism is a book which teaches us the right way to heaven. **It teaches us that we are sinners who are reconciled to God through faith. Because of this we have forgiveness of sins and the righteousness which avails before God.** In the anxieties of daily life, the Catechism comforts us that through Christ God is our dear Father who will not leave us nor forsake us, but will keep us in faith in Christ Jesus until our end.

**Prayer:** Dearest Jesus, we pray Thee, make us diligent in the study of Thy Word, and bless our instruction therein. Without Thee we can do nothing; open Thou our eyes, that we may behold the wondrous things out of Thy Law; and grant us to believe all that the holy men of God, moved by Thy Spirit, have spoken; that we may grow in knowledge and faith, until we shall stand before the throne of the Lamb and know even as we are known. Amen.

**Hymn:**

Lord, grant that we e'er pure retain  
The catechismal doctrine plain,  
As Luther taught the heav'nly truth  
In simple words to tender youth.

That we Thy holy Law may know  
And mourn our sin and all its woe,  
And yet believe in Father, Son  
And Holy Spirit, Three in One.

That we on Thee, our Father, call,  
Who canst and wilt give help to all;  
That as Thy children we may live,  
Whom Thou in Baptism didst receive.

That, if we fall, we rise again,  
Repentingly confess our sin,  
And take the Sacrament in faith; -  
Amen, God grant a happy death! Amen.

(Hymn 272 verses 1–4, ALHB)

**Luther instructs us how to teach the Small Catechism**

This year, 2019, is the 490<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first printing of Dr Luther's Small catechism. The Small Catechism is a book of instructions which contains everything that Christians need know for

their salvation. The material is mainly presented in **question and answer form** and is presented in such a manner that anyone—from the very young to the elderly can benefit from it.



**Luther himself, read and recited parts of it every morning, or whenever he had time.** He considered himself but a **child and a pupil of the Catechism**; that he had not graduated from it and therefore needed to constantly meditate on the Ten Commandments, The Creed, The Lord’s Prayer, Psalms, etc. We too, should teach the Catechism properly and diligently learn it thoroughly.

How is this to be done? Luther himself suggests the following:

**1. The ministers and teachers should avoid the use of different texts and forms of the Ten Commandments, The Lord’s Prayer, etc, but adopt one form and adhere to it one year to another.** Chopping and changing the form of the material will lead to confusion. Then all effort and labour will be lost.

We only have to look at the confusion and mess in the religious world regarding the untold number of Bible translations that are available today to realize the truthfulness of point one.

**2. Teach the young and inexperienced so that not a syllable is changed and set them forth so that they can recite them in exactly the same manner one year after another.**

Nothing is more spiritually uplifting when either in church or in the home all generations can recite the same words together, whether it be the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, the Catechism, or the liturgy.

**3. Teach the young so that they can commit it to memory.**

**4. When the young, inexperienced, or others have learned the text, teach them the sense also, that they may know what it means.**

The words of John 13:7 are applicable, “Jesus answered and said unto him, ‘what I do thou knowest not **now**, but thou shalt know **hereafter**.’” When we were very young we did not understand very much. That is one reason why the Lutheran Church has the commendable practice of Confirmation. We continue to learn much after Confirmation, right up until the time of our death. Confirmation should never be seen as the end of instruction, but a portal through which we go which leads to a greater love and knowledge of our faith in God.

**5. Do not try to cover too much at once otherwise you run the risk of overburdening yourself and others and they will not be able to retain anything well.** So take your time and proceed logically and quietly, for example, from one Commandment to another.

This style of teaching and learning will be described by some in the world in disparaging terms like “rote learning” or “indoctrination.” However, we should not be put off with that as we would be using tried and proven methods. If it is good enough for the very best performers in areas such as music, sport and others to use **constant repetition and practice** to acquire skill and knowledge then it should be good enough for Christian purposes.

Let us never take Luther’s Small Catechism for granted but **treasure** until our dying day those wonderful words and truths we learned in our childhood. For example, “I believe that Jesus Christ, true God begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, **is my Lord**, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil ...”etc.

“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 one true faith...” etc.

Let us use Luther’s Small Catechism and thank God for it. May **“God’s Word and Luther’s doctrine pure, through all eternity endure.”**

**Prayer:** We thank Thee, Lord God, heavenly Father, that Thou hast taught us the chief parts of Christian doctrine. We pray Thee with all our hearts that you seal this witness of the truth in our hearts and keep us in the same, that we in Thy fear and trust may live according to it, and finally receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**Hymn:**

Precious Word from God in heaven  
Full of blessedness to me,  
All my trust to Thee is given,  
And my springs all rise in Thee;  
I in Thee find all I need,  
That my soul to God can lead.

What I read, help that I heed it,  
What Thou sayest, let me do;  
Strength to faith grant as I need it,  
And remind me still anew  
That the faith that counts above  
Is e’er active here in love.

Let Thy grace sustain, protect me,  
That my ways ne’er from Thee part;  
Thy enlightening Word direct me;  
Seal this treasure in my heart,  
That my faith shall steadfast prove,  
Till I reach my home above. Amen.

(Hymn 275 verses 1,4,5 ALHB)

(Acknowledgement: Portions of content from *Queensland Messenger*. Thanks for other assistance.)

—BLW

## How Firm a Foundation – Part 1

All Christians struggle at times with the certainty of their own salvation. Doubts often arise, not in respect to the truthfulness of the Christian faith, but in respect to the genuineness of their own connection to that faith in light of their many sins and weaknesses. It may sometimes seem to be presumptuous and prideful to be too sure that one is indeed a child of God. The Apostle John encourages us to “have *confidence*, and *not be ashamed before Him* at His coming” (1 John 2:28). Such confidence belongs to true faith, as “faith is the substance (lit. *assurance*) of things hoped for” (Hebrews 11:1). We should desire and seek such “full *assurance* of hope unto the end” (Hebrews 6:11). Francis Pieper states, “*Assurance* constitutes the very nature of faith, and faith is the very opposite of *doubt*” (*Christian Dogmatics*, Vol 2, p 548).

True assurance must be derived from the objective Word of God, for “faith cometh by

hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17). Martin Luther writes, “You must be *certain* that your sins are truly and certainly forgiven you through the *external Word*; for Baptism and the Word will not lie to you” (SL XIII:2438). Many Christians lack assurance of their salvation because they look for it in the wrong places. Instead of fixing their thoughts upon the unchangeable and comforting Word of God, they look to their internal *feelings* and external *evidences* for their assurance. This is a serious mistake. Even if they glean some assurance from these sources, there is still room for doubt. The Scriptures tell us that “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9). Peter commends the “*more sure Word* of prophesy, whereunto ye do well to take heed, as to a light that shineth in a dark place” (2 Peter 3:19).

God has provided many promises from His Word upon which we can safely found the assurance and certainty of our salvation. These promises are objective, that is, they stand outside of us and always remain true in and of themselves apart from our subjective perceptions. They cannot change, and we cannot change them. If we cling to them, they produce in us a firm confidence, knowing that we have these promises from a “God who cannot lie” (Titus 1:2). If we deny or ignore them, they remain true nonetheless though we lose their benefit. Here are some wonderful promises that God has given us to help assure us of our salvation.

- “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life, and *shall not* come into condemnation; but *is passed* from death unto life” (John 5:24).
- “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will *in no wise* cast out” (John 6:37).
- “And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of *all* which he hath given me I should *lose nothing*, but should raise it up again at the last day” (John 6:39).
- “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and *they shall never perish*, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and *no man is able to pluck them out* of My Father’s hand. I and My Father are one” (John 10:27–30).
- “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, *shall be able to separate us* from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:35–38).
- “For the gifts and calling of God are *without repentance*” (Romans 11:29).
- “Being confident of this very thing, that *He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it* until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

but his leprosy was still removed as He conformed to the Word of God (2 Kings 5). It is

- “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body *be preserved blameless* unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Faithful is he* that calleth you, who also *will do it*” (1 Thessalonians 5:23–24).
- “But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an *unchangeable* priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing *he ever liveth to make intercession* for them” (Hebrews 7:24–25).
- “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, *reserved in heaven for you*, who are *kept by the power of God* through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:3–5).
- “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that *ye may know that ye have eternal life*” (1 John 5:13).
- “Now unto Him that is *able to keep you* from falling, and *to present you faultless* before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 1:24).

It is also important to know that we may at times still *feel* doubts, but such *feelings* belong to the old man. We are no longer that old man in Adam but that new man in Christ. For us such feelings no longer matter as we know and affirm the unchangeable truth. Also, we know that a weak faith is still faith itself. Martin Chemnitz writes, “If faith is not mistaken in its object, but lays hold of it, be it ever so tremblingly, with ever so weak a confidence, with only the striving for and desiring of it, such faith is indeed small and weak, but nevertheless true faith” (*Examen*, p159 ff). Many a child of Israel may have sat in the Passover house with fear and trembling on that fearful night that the Angel of Death passed over Egypt, but he still was as safe as one who sat confidently, for he had had enough faith to get behind the blood of the Passover lamb (Exodus 12). Naaman the Syrian may have had doubts while washing in the Jordan River seven times, important then that we assign doubts to the old man in Adam, and faith to our new man in

Christ. We may *feel* either or both, but the old man's doubts do not negate our new man's faith.

Pieper again says, "The Christian is sure of his justification in spite of the doubts that continually arise in his heart. For these doubts originate in his flesh, and they must not be cultivated and praised as virtues, but like all ebullitions [outbursts, ed] of the flesh they must be combatted and reprov'd as sin. 1 John 5:10; 'He that believeth not God [namely, 'the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son'] hath made Him a liar.'" (*Christian Dogmatics*, Vol 2, p549). Luther writes, "This is the reason why our

doctrine is most sure and certain, because it carries us out of ourselves, that we should not lean on our own strength, our own conscience, our own feeling, our own person, and our own works; but onto that which is outside us, that is to say, the promise and truth of God, which cannot deceive us" (SL IX:509).

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word;  
What more can He say than to you He hath said,  
Who unto the Saviour for refuge have fled?

—S Wood

## *Greetings from Bible Lutheran Church of Los Angeles*

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the ELCR,

The Bible Lutheran Church of Los Angeles sends Christian greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray God's blessings upon your 2019 Annual Convention. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

We have had another fruitful year here in Los Angeles. We are most grateful for the opportunity to have read through (as a church) *The Judge is at the Door* by Pastor Peters. How many wonderful Christian truths we had the privilege to hear, not only from the Book of Revelation itself, but also from the whole Word of God. We also have just now started *Country Sermons, Volume 3* by F. Kuegele and are enjoying those messages.

continue to occupy ourselves with excellent Christian books. I have just completed a book called *Crowned with Glory* by Dr. Thomas Holland. The book encourages Christians to use the King James Bible as opposed to the many modern translations. God has promised in His Word to always *preserve* His Word in its truth and purity. "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt *preserve* them from this generation for ever." (Psalm 12:6–7).

Most modern translations of the New Testament are based upon an abbreviated Greek text assembled in the late 1800's by two unbelieving men named Westcott and Hort. Westcott denied Biblical infallibility, and Hort stated that those who believed in Biblical authority were "perverted." Both men also attacked the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ in various passages. In contrast the King James Bible is based upon the same authoritative Greek text that had been used as the basis of all translations throughout the history of the Christian church. It was also the same Greek text upon which Luther's German Bible was based. A rejection of this original Greek text is at the same time a denial of God's promise to *preserve* His holy Word. The ELCR is very blessed to have continued its use of the King James Bible and to have avoided these modern translations based upon the erroneous and abbreviated Greek text of Westcott and Hort. How reassuring to know that we have the true Word of God, upon which our faith can safely rest.

I wanted to share this with you as an encouragement to continue on the true orthodox Christian path though it is often unpopular and may at times seem old and antiquated. “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” (2 Timothy 4:3-4). “Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” (Jeremiah 6:16).

God’s blessings to you all,  
Bible Lutheran Church of Los Angeles

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## *The Deity (Godhead) of Our Saviour*

(Continued from July – August 2019)

There are many more Scripture passages which testify to the Deity of Jesus Christ our Saviour and Redeemer. From the passages quoted and those not quoted we are assured that it was the eternal Son of God, very God of very God, as the Nicene Creed puts it, who redeemed us from all sins from death and from the power of the devil. And so we are really and truly saved. Believe this with all your heart. Let it be your wonderful comfort in the hour of death. And in the meantime while you still live on earth, remember the beautiful and immortal words of Martin Luther, as you learnt them in the Small Catechism:

**“I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my LORD, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent sufferings and death. That I may be His own, and live under Him in His Kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.”**

But what about the “Jehovah’s Witnesses” and others who stubbornly and persistently deny the Deity of Jesus Christ?

St Paul gives the answer to this question in Philippians 2:5-11, in which passage he deals with Christ’s humiliation and exaltation. Note: The Name above every name is JEHOVAH. This Name is given also to the human nature of Jesus, and on the last day, when He returns in glory to judge the living and the dead, also those who up to that moment denied and rejected His Deity, will be compelled to kneel before Him and confess that Jesus Christ is LORD (Greek: “kurios”, Hebrew “JEHOVAH”) not, however, to their salvation, but to their eternal condemnation.

Note: Passages used by the “Jehovah’s Witnesses” to support their false doctrine that Jesus Christ is NOT true God, but the first Creation of God: Revelations 3:14; John 14:28; Mark 13:32.

- Re Revelations 3:14: “The beginning” in this verse does not mean that He was “the first” of God’s creation; rather He was the Origin, the original cause of the creation, the original active agent through whom all things were created. Compare John 1:3; Proverbs 8:22–23.
- Re John 14:28 and Mark 13:32: In these passages Jesus is referring to His human nature in the state of humiliation, when He did not always and not fully use the attributes of His divine nature.

One of the Laws of sound Scripture interpretation reads: “Scripture must be explained by Scripture.”

—F G Kleinig

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## Reformation, 1519: Luther disputes with Miltitz and Eck

Cajetan's failure to adjust matters favourable to Rome induced the Pope to send a second legate to Germany. Leo X, no doubt, would rather have excommunicated Luther at once, but fear of offending the powerful Elector of Saxony, Frederick, forced him to try persuasion. Charles von Miltitz, a Saxon Knight, was chosen as Cajetan's successor. He was commissioned to present to the elector the golden consecrated rose. ("This used to be considered as a peculiar mark of the Pope's favour and esteem"). The elector had formerly expressed a wish to receive it; but on this occasion he is said to have received it with "cool and almost contemptuous politeness." Having failed to influence the elector against his favourite professor, Luther, Miltitz went to Leipzig. Finding Tetzel there he twice rebuked him with the greatest severity on account of his abominable practices in the business of indulgences. Miltitz's own letters furnish proof that, as he passed through Germany, he had received sufficient evidence of the frauds and private vices of Tetzel. (Yet in spite of this a modern Roman Catholic D.D. can say, "Tetzel's conduct was above reproach." Tetzel, weighed down by the reproaches of his best friends, fell ill and died not long after, as it is said, of a broken heart. While Rome poured out her wrath upon him, it was Luther who alone wrote to him in the most consolatory terms).

During his journey to Altenburg, where the interview with Luther was to take place, the legate found that everywhere the people were ever ready to defend Luther and his cause. This fact induced the legate to treat the Reformer very civilly. On meeting Luther he exclaimed, "Oh Martin! I thought you were some old theologian, who had carried on his disputation with himself in his warm corner behind the stove. Now I see how young and fresh and vigorous you are. Besides, you have a large following, for on our journey I made enquiries to discover what the people thought of you, and I noticed so much that where there is one on the Pope's side there are three on yours against the Pope. If I had an army of 25,000 men I would not undertake to carry you out of Germany." His exhortations to restore peace he accompanied with tears, which Luther called "crocodile's tears." ("The crocodile is said to weep when it cannot seize its prey"). The interview ended with Luther's promising to observe silence in future respecting indulgences provided his adversaries would discontinue their provocations. After they had supped together, Miltitz bade Luther farewell with a fond embrace and a kiss, which Luther rightly called a "Judas kiss."

Luther's enemies, however, soon broke the promise of silence given by Miltitz. In writing against Carlstadt, who had defended the Reformer, Dr Eck published thirteen sentences directed against the principal doctrines Luther had put forth. Luther at once saw that he was the person aimed at. "This man," he said, "names Carlstadt as his antagonist, and at the same time makes his assault upon me." Rome itself thus broke the agreement.

Dr Eck was a learned and able doctor of divinity, and had formerly been a friend of Luther. A thirst for fame and glory, and a desire to show his theological skill caused him to take up arms against Luther. He challenged both Carlstadt and Luther. The challenge was accepted, and George, the Duke of Saxony, offered the disputants his city of Leipzig as the scene of debate. In June, 1519, these three men met in Leipzig. After Eck had disputed several days with Carlstadt on "Free Will," he opposed Luther on the "Supremacy of the Pope." Luther easily proved from Scripture that Christ is the head of the Church, and not the Pope. Even more church fathers, he said, give his interpretation of Matthew 16:18 than Dr Eck's. (The learned Roman Catholic D.D., Launoy, tells us that only SEVENTEEN fathers support Dr Eck in his interpretation of Matthew 16:18, while FORTY-FOUR fathers support Luther.) Dr Eck soon found that the Wittenberg doctor was his superior. He asked the learned hearers to pardon himself if he "should not be able to produce such a mass of accurate testimonies as the learned doctor had laid before them." When the papal advocate could no longer refute Luther's arguments, he had recourse to a "mean and despicable artifice," accusing the Reformer of Hussite heresy. But Luther calmly replied that "not all of Huss' teachings are heretical." When Luther thus confidently defended Huss, the whole audience became extremely excited. Duke George exclaimed, loud enough to be heard by all, "A plague upon it." Some days later Luther produced four propositions

of Huss which were perfectly Christian, although they had been formerly rejected by the Roman Council of Constance. After debating on various other doctrines they closed the debate. Luther joyfully returned to Wittenberg and was enthusiastically received, especially by the students. The proud, haughty, and vain-glorious Dr. Eck had been humiliated. Writing privately to his friends he confesses that “the Wittenbergers defeated me on several points, first, because they brought books with them; secondly, because they took down the debate in writing and examined it at home at their leisure, and thirdly, because they were more numerous. Two doctors (Carlstadt and Luther), Lange, vicar of the Augustins, two licentiates, Amsdorff, and a very arrogant (?) nephew of Reuchlin (Melanchthon), three doctors of law, and several masters of arts, lent their assistance both in public and private, whereas I stood alone, having nothing but a good (?) cause for my companion.” The historian, D’Aubigne, adds: “Eck forgot Emser, and all the doctors of Leipsic.” These claimed that “had we not come to the help of Eck, the illustrious doctor would have been overthrown.”

(*The Australian Lutheran*, April 1916, p 5-6)

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## Notes and News

**Hospital:** Since the last *Steadfast*, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ spent some time in hospital. May they find comfort in the following passage:

### Read: Psalm 19

VERSE 1—“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork.”

MIGHTY GOD, in whose hands are all things in heaven and on earth and under the earth, Thou who rulest the wind and the wave, Thou who ridest upon the storm, Thou who sendest the sun and the rain, Thou who numberest the stars and fixest the constellations of the skies; with all Thy greatness and Thine infinite majesty Thou art yet our Father, our Friend, our Lover. Give us eyes to see what Thou hast written in the limitless book of the universe. May Thy heavens and their hosts, the days and nights of the years Thou dost send, the working of Thy power in the tireless processes of nature, preach to us of the might and the wisdom and the love and the providence which Thou dost unceasingly exercise. Protect us from the folly of viewing this vast universe with unseeing eyes and unimpressed minds. Deliver us from the foolishness of men's puny guess-work, science. But let us hear even dearer and clearer than Thy voice in nature, Thy revelations in the Word, which is more to be desired than much fine gold, sweeter also than the richest droppings of the honey comb. Grant us the insight to behold that Thou art the same when Thou speakest in this Word and when Thou dost write the story of creation in Thy handiwork. We will keep silence before Thee and let Thee lead us, knowing Thou wilt not rest until Thou hast taken us to the cross of Christ, where the darkened heavens and the hidden sun proclaim Thy greatest glory, the love that saveth to the uttermost, Amen.

(*Moments with God*, p20)

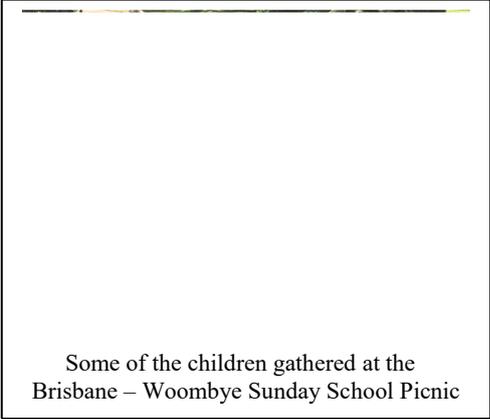
**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Brisbane Congregation:** On 4 August 2019, Immanuel Congregation celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the congregation which took place 20 July 1969. In the service, both Pastors Gavin and Bryce Winter preached on the text Ps 27:4, “One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.” Dealing with the theme, DEAR MEMBERS OF IMMANUEL BRISBANE, ON THIS OCCASION OF YOUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY, Pastor Gavin Winter dealt with Part 1—MAY YOU BE THANKFUL FOR THE BLESSINGS GOD HAS GIVEN YOU OVER THE LAST 50 YEARS; and Pastor Bryce dealt with Part 2—MAY YOU PROMISE TO BE FAITHFUL TO THE SAVIOUR AND HIS PRECIOUS WORD INTO THE FUTURE. After a community lunch, in a Bible study a history of the congregation was presented in video form, and Pastor Bryce Winter presented a series of lessons we can learn from the congregation’s history.



**Sunday School Picnic — Brisbane – Woombye:**

The Maroochy Botanic Gardens was the venue for a combined Sunday School Picnic between Brisbane and Woombye Sunday Schools on 27 July 2019. Pastor Gavin Winter took a devotion on the story of Jesus meeting the Woman at the Well of Sychar (John 4). The usual activities of treasure hunt, races, and ice creams were enjoyed by the children.

**Baptism** — On 14 August 2019, \_\_\_\_\_ was brought into the Kingdom of God in a private service conducted by Pastor Gavin Winter in the home of \_\_\_\_\_



Some of the children gathered at the Brisbane – Woombye Sunday School Picnic

The baptism was announced publicly to the congregation by Pastor Gavin Winter on 22 September 2019, when the sponsors were also appointed. They are \_\_\_\_\_ May God grant that this dear soul of Jesus may remain firm in the Christian faith unto her end.

**Neurum Creek Camp:** A camping weekend was held at Neurum Creek on 5–9 September 2019. Over 50 members of the Federation gathered to spend this time together. On the Saturday afternoon, Pastor Gavin Winter conducted a Bible Study on the topic, *Australian Geology through Biblical Glasses*. He showed how the effects of the Flood can clearly be seen to the observant eye in our Australian landscape. On the Saturday evening, a community dinner was held, in which all shared their food. The sermon text for the Sunday address was Joshua 1:9, “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.” Dealing with the theme GOD’S WORD OF GUIDANCE TO YOU, he explained, 1. REMAIN STEADFAST TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH YOU HAVE BEEN TAUGHT AND DO NOT FALL AWAY FROM IT and 2. GOD PROMISES TO BE WITH YOU AND BLESS YOU IN ALL THAT YOU DO. Camping in the one place gives much opportunity to spend time with fellow Christians. —GLW

**100<sup>th</sup> Birthday** — On \_\_\_\_\_ by God’s grace turned 100. On this occasion Pastor Tim Winter and a small group of family members spent time with \_\_\_\_\_ with a devotion and hymn singing. On 17 August, this special occasion was celebrated with a larger number of family at \_\_\_\_\_. She received congratulatory messages from the Queen, Prime Minister, Premier, Governor General, Governor and Federal and state members. On 12 August, the following prayer of thanksgiving was read out after the service followed by the singing of Hymn 450 in memory of this important occasion:

**“O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt Thee, I will praise Thy Name: For Thou hast done wonderful things, Thy Counsels of old are Faithfulness and Truth. Amen”** (Isaiah 25:1).

**Prayer:** GRACIOUS Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, we thank and praise Thee for graciously bringing our dear sister, \_\_\_\_\_ to the 100th year of her earthly pilgrimage on the narrow path to her eternal home. Her life has been rich in abundant blessings from Thy loving hand. Though none of us deserves these, yet You have provided for her in all her earthly needs. What You said to Joshua (24:45) applies to our beloved sister: **“There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.”**

Especially do we thank Thee for all the **spiritual blessings** that You have given her. Earthly blessings last only for a time. But the blessing of saving faith, the pure Word and all true spiritual blessings last for eternity in heaven. Truly by Thy grace alone we have seen the truthfulness of Psalm 128:1: **“Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD (IN FAITH REVERENCING THE LORD ALL THEIR LIFE); that walketh in His ways.”** Already in her Baptism our dear sister experienced the great

blessing of spiritual regeneration. Right throughout her life the pure Word was a Lamp unto her feet, and a Light unto her path (Psalm 119:105). Oh, what a blessing she experienced at her Confirmation that she could with her own lips by the power of God's free grace in Christ renew her Baptismal covenant. Oh, how the Lord in due course blessed her with a loving God-fearing husband, and a loyal Lutheran family. The greatest of all blessings is when the Lord helps us to remain separate from a false teaching church and to adhere to the orthodox Lutheran Church where one's soul is always properly cared for.

Yet Lord, You have been with her during the many and often severe trials that confronted her. Through sickness, hardships in maintaining a livelihood, through the illness and loss of two of her daughters, You continued to prove Yourself to her a **“Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble”** (Psalm 46:1).

Yet while we pour out our hearts in thankfulness for all the blessings You have granted our beloved sister, we acknowledge, as she has, that not only our sister but all of us, have often sinned against Thee and deserved Thy wrath and displeasure. But let us rejoice, as our sister does, alone and constantly in the **blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, which cleanses us from all sin** (1 John 1:7).

While long life for the Christian has its pain and sorrows, yet it has its joys. The greatest of these is being able joyfully in the power of Christ's death and resurrection constantly to live for Christ and to be used for His glory and for the salvation of His elect. Yet now not only for us, but in a special sense for our sister, each day for the Christian is a day closer to enjoying the perfect bliss and glory of heaven for evermore. So we ask Thee, continue to preserve our sister in the true faith. When the life's work of our sister is at an end let her with Simeon, Thy servant, depart in peace. For her eyes too have seen Thy salvation.

Finally, oh merciful Saviour, grant that we may recognize that You have set a limit to our life in this world. Help us to number our days, see how brief they really are and how unexpected and sudden it is when You call us to appear before You. Grant us true wisdom not only from Your Word but also from the example of our sister, that we constantly in repentance and faith are ready to meet You joyfully and that we make with Your help the best possible use of our time of grace here in this world. The greatest joy would be that everyone here present would by grace alone when Christ's time is ready dwell forever not only with our sister but especially with the Saviour for all eternity. In this way help us always to remember the faithfulness of older soldiers of the cross. We ask this for the sake of our Saviour who redeemed us at such great cost. Amen.



**Harvest Thanksgiving Service — Kingaroy:** In these difficult times of drought and financial hardship “Good Shepherd” ELCR set aside 1 September to reflect on God's Word as to the vital importance of constantly showing our faith in Christ by a life of thankfulness to the Lord for all He has done for us. As seen in the picture, true Christians have much to be grateful to the Lord for, especially for Christ's work of atonement, the Holy Spirit working and preserving faith in our hearts by the Gospel, and the Father

in His grace keeping His Word in its truth and purity. Then there are so many earthly blessings that we daily receive which are impossible to count. From the Word of God we learnt how true thankfulness impacts our lives.

**Birthday – Brisbane:** Congratulations to Pastor Gavin Winter on reaching the milestone of his birthday on . On behalf of the Federation, Pastors Bryce and Tim Winter would like to convey their best wishes and God's blessings on this special occasion and acknowledge his 42 years of faithful service to our Federation. —BLW