

What Are the “Tongues of Angels” in 1 Corinthians 13:1?

by Wayne Jackson

Christian Courier: Questions

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Does the Bible sanction a speaking in “tongues” that involves the utterance of “ecstatic” sounds that are understood only by the speaker and God? Sincere Pentecostal folks answer in the affirmative. They contend that these indiscernible sounds are the “tongues of angels” (1 Cor. 13:1). This article demonstrates that there is no support for such a view in the Corinthian text.

“In one of your web site articles (Can Christians “Speak in Tongues” Today? Questions, March 18, 2003) you stated that when Christians of the early church spoke in ‘tongues,’ they only spoke in foreign languages that were native to certain nationalities. You suggested that the ‘tongue speaking’ of the Pentecostal movement, in which certain ‘sounds’ of no known language are spoken, is not in harmony with the Bible. I attend a Pentecostal church, and though I’ve never spoken in tongues, I am told that Paul’s statement about the ‘tongues of angels’ (1 Cor. 13:1) implies a heavenly language, distinct from the languages of men. Would you comment on this?”

With all due respect, Paul’s reference to the “tongues ... of angels” (1 Cor. 13:1) affords no evidence for the so-called “Pentecostal experience,” in which the uttering a series of rapidly-spoken, indiscernible syllables is alleged to reflect a “heavenly” tongue of an inexplicable variety. The following lines of evidence discredit the Pentecostal theory.

0. In an effort to exhort the Corinthian Christians toward a greater level of concern for one another in their use of “spiritual gifts,” Paul wrote this admonition. “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become a sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal” (1 Cor. 13:1).

If it can be established that the term “tongues,” when employed with reference to men, has to do with intelligent communication (and such can be demonstrated: see the article referenced above), then it must be conceded that the word “tongues,” when used of angels, similarly signifies an understandable language.

In order for the “Pentecostal” view to be valid, there would have to be some compelling contextual evidence to indicate that the term “tongues” is used in two different senses in this passage, and there simply is none.

0. In chapter 14 of the first Corinthian letter, one of Paul’s major points of emphasis is this. If one employs his gift of tongues before an audience that cannot understand the language spoken, and no interpreter is present to translate the message, such would be a violation of God’s will. In fact, it would be an act of vanity, and not a demonstration of love for the listener.

This is the precise point of 13:1 as well. To speak in a tongue, when no one can understand the words, is an act void of love. Such would be nothing more than a sound (an irritating noise); it would not be an instructive message.

The implication behind the argument is this. If the gift were exercised properly, i.e., in conjunction with an interpreter, the audience could understand the instruction, and such would evince the speaker's love. But the identical point is made whether the allusion is to "the tongues of men" or to the "tongues of angels." Even the tongues of angels, if it were possible to exercise such in an appropriate way, could be understood. There is nothing here suggesting a "gibberish" sort of utterance; just the opposite is the case.

0. There are numerous Bible examples of angels speaking to men. In not a single instance do they communicate in anything except in languages that are perfectly understandable – a communication that the recipient can process readily. There is not one shred of biblical evidence to suggest that angels speak in disjointed, incomprehensible sounds. As one scholar astutely observed:

With respect to the words of angels which are recorded in the Scriptures, nothing can be plainer, more direct, and, we may say, more unimpassioned. They seem to say with the utmost conceivable plainness what they have been commissioned to say, and nothing more. No words are less the words of ecstasy than theirs (M.F. Sadler, **The First & Second Epistles to the Corinthians**, London: George Bell & Sons, 1906, p. 217).

0. Paul's appeal to "angels" in 13:1 is a form of hyperbole (an exaggeration for emphasis' sake) that is designed to accentuate his argument.

Consider a similar use of this figurative expression in the apostle's letter to the Galatians. He wrote: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema" (Gal. 1:8; emp. added). The apostle is not suggesting that an angel actually is likely to proclaim a different gospel; the point is one of emphasis. Even if an angel were to preach a different gospel, there would be no validity in it, and he would fall victim to divine wrath.

So similarly, in 1 Corinthians 13:1, Paul is not indicating that some Christians speak an "angelic" (ecstatic) language. Rather, he is merely saying that even if one could ascend to a new height, and communicate on the level of angels, if he did not exercise love by speaking in an understandable fashion, he still would be nothing but a distracting noise. The apostle's argument does not hint of a mysterious, unintelligible utterance; in fact, it reflects just the opposite.

When all the data is considered, there is no basis in 1 Corinthians 13:1 for the notion that there is a heavenly, ecstatic glossolalia that some saints are able to access, whereby they speak to God alone.

What Are the So-called “Mystery” Tongues of 1 Corinthians 14?

by Wayne Jackson

Christian Courier: Questions

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In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul mentions those who, when speaking in tongues, utter "mysteries." Does this phraseology support the idea that these tongues are not human languages, but, instead, special "ecstatic" tongues?

“I’ve just read your article regarding ‘the tongues of angels’ phrase in 1st Corinthians 13:1. Your points are well made, but would you address 1st Corinthians 14:2 ‘For the one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands but in his spirit he speaks mysteries’? Would you also comment on 14:28: ‘but if there is no interpreter he must keep silent in the church and let him speak to himself and to God’?”

In order for the first question to be understood, the Bible student must get a picture of the overall context of 1 Corinthians 14, and the circumstances that prevailed in the assemblies of those Christians.

Information that is provided by several passages within the chapter reveals that some of the Corinthian saints, who possessed the divine gift of being able to speak in foreign languages [ordinary human tongues] in a supernatural manner, were abusing that gift. If, therefore, a person had the divinely bestowed gift of speaking in a “tongue,” he was to exercise that gift only in an assembly where the same language was known—unless there was an interpreter present.

Let us illustrate the matter more concretely. Suppose a brother had been granted the ability to speak the Punic language, as the people of Melita did (where Paul was shipwrecked – Acts 28:1). He could exercise that gift only in a setting where the people who spoke that tongue were present – unless there was another brother nearby who possessed the gift of interpretation. In such a case, the message could be conveyed intelligibly through the interpreter.

With this background in mind, consider now the fact that Paul, in 1 Corinthians 14:2, addresses an abuse of this procedure. If we may be permitted to expand and paraphrase the apostle’s admonition, this would be the sense of it.

For the one who speaks in a tongue [to an audience unfamiliar with his language], is not speaking to men [in any meaningful way], but to God [since only God would be able to know what was being said]; for no one [in this audience] would understand, but in his spirit he [the speaker] would be speaking mysteries [that which could not be understood due to the language barrier] to his alien audience.

In the circumstance just described, the group would hear a sound, but since they could not comprehend the message, nothing would be revealed; the message would remain a mystery (obscured).

The tongue thus contemplated was not some mysterious, ecstatic utterance by which the speaker personally communicated with God (as modern Pentecostals claim); instead, it was a language inaccessible to the audience by virtue of the circumstances, but one which the speaker might exercise in personally speaking to God in prayer.

Finally, verse 28 reiterates the same point. If the person who possesses the tongue gift is within an audience that is unacquainted with the language he is able to speak, and there is no interpreter available, he must keep silent. He may commune with God silently [i.e., mentally], but his speaking would be of no use to the congregation in such a situation as that contemplated above, and thus was prohibited.

These texts, then, properly understood, provide no support for the use of so-called ecstatic tongues.

If “Tongues” Have Ceased, Why Hasn’t “Knowledge”?

by Wayne Jackson

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A critic, who believes that “speaking in tongues” is a gift available in this age, believes he has detected a flaw in our position that the gift of tongues was restricted to the first century. Based upon his view of 1 Corinthians 13:8ff, he argues that if “tongues” are obsolete, then “knowledge” should be as well. Since we still have knowledge, it is claimed, tongues remain as well. Here is our response to the gentleman’s objection.

“In several of your articles you have stated that the ‘tongues,’ as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:8ff, ceased when the New Testament canon was completed. You overlook the fact that the same passage says that ‘knowledge’ will cease at the same time. Since ‘knowledge’ has not ceased, it should be apparent that the gift of ‘tongues’ has not ceased. How do you answer this problem?”

Let me respond to this sincere question in the following way.

First, if there is a “problem,” in this matter, it is as much a problem for our respondent as for anyone else. Elsewhere in his note to us, he alleged that the “coming” of “that which is perfect” will not be fulfilled until the event of the Lord’s return at the end of time. Tongues, therefore, will continue until then; only at that time will such be terminated, so he alleges.

Very well then, if our friend’s reasoning is valid, he must also argue that since “knowledge” and “tongues” are to cease simultaneously, when the Lord returns, “knowledge” will “cease,” as well. This implies that heaven will be a place void of all knowledge. This is the undeniable consequence of the gentleman’s logic.

Further, if “tongues” simply means the ability to communicate verbally, since tongues likewise are to vanish at the time of the second coming, the conclusion would be, there will be no communication in heaven. There is an old saying, “That which proves too much, proves nothing.” There is no better example of that maxim than in the argument constructed by our friend.

On the other hand, if one pursues a consistent interpretation of the Corinthian context, the problem vanishes. One must understand that the gift of “tongues” is the miraculous ability to speak in a foreign language, and similarly the “knowledge” of the same context is supernatural knowledge (cf. 1 Cor. 12:8b). The three “gifts” mentioned in 13:8-10 (prophecy, tongues, and knowledge) are but representative of the more complete list in 12:7-10. None of these supernatural gifts will abide after “that which is perfect” arrives.

Finally, as we have shown in previous articles, the expression, “that which is perfect,” literally means “the complete thing” (neuter gender) – in contrast to “that which is in part” (or incomplete). If it is the case, then, that “the perfect” is a reference to Christ, and further, that the term, “coming,” is an allusion to his final return, one would be forced to conclude that Christ himself was “incomplete” or “partial” in the era prior to the event of his second coming. This presents a huge problem for the modern charismatic.

We would urge our Pentecostal friends to restudy this matter in the light of the fuller New Testament context dealing with miraculous gifts.

CHURCH OF GOD HISTORY AND POLITY

Section One

HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH: A PENTECOSTAL PERSPECTIVE

*Written by
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The dictionary of Christianity in America says that Pentecostalism is perhaps the “single-most-significant development in twentieth-century Christianity.” The Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) began in 1886 as a pre-pentecostal holiness church. It was in 1896 at Schearer Schoolhouse in Cherokee County, North Carolina that the Church of God experienced people being filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. This event pre-dates the outpouring in Topeka, Kansas in 1901 and the 1906 Azusa Street Revival.

Pentecostalism has become the fastest growing family of world Christianity. It is growing at a rate of 13 million a year, or 35,000 a day. With nearly a half billion adherents, it is, after Roman Catholicism, the largest Christian tradition.

The Pentecostal movement had its beginnings in the United States but owes much of its theological foundation to the Methodist/Holiness movement, the British perfectionists movement, and the Keswick “Higher Life” movement. The Methodist/Holiness movement had the greatest impact on Pentecostalism. It was from John Wesley that the Holiness Movement developed the theology of a “second blessing.”

The holiness movement enjoyed the support of the denominational churches until about 1880 when developments disturbing to ecclesiastical leaders began to emerge. Holiness leaders became disillusioned with changing or bringing renewal within the church. Radical teachings such as “sinless perfection” and “fire-baptism,” etc., were being promoted.

The first Pentecostal churches began as new holiness groups prior to becoming Pentecostal. The Church of God (1886) is one of these groups. These “second blessing” holiness denominations, simply added the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues as the “initial evidence” of a “third blessing.”

Early Pentecostal leaders from non-Methodist backgrounds included: R.G. Spurling and R.G. Spurling, Jr. (Baptist), A.J. Tomlinson (Quaker), B.H. Irwin (Baptist), and C.H. Mason (Baptist).

Pentecostal leaders from Methodists backgrounds included: Charles Fox Parham, leader of the Topeka, Kansas Revival; William J. Seymour, pastor of the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles; J.H. King of the Pentecostal Holiness Church; and Thomas Ball Barratt, the father of European Pentecostalism.

The Azusa Street movement brought together white and black Christians and seemed to wash away color lines. William Joseph Seymour, the black pastor of the Azusa Street church, has been called by church historian Sidney Ahlstrom (Yale University) as “the most influential black leader in American religious history.”

The Church of God, as well as most of Pentecostalism in America, was born in a holiness cradle. The Church of God today is part of a global awakening, which started around the turn of the century (1900). This great spiritual phenomenon far exceeds the great awakenings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which were mostly confined to the United States. This present Pentecostal awakening has impacted much of the world. It should be noted that Charismatic Christianity is not just a twentieth century phenomenon. Pentecostals believe that Spirit-filled Christianity has been around ever since the early church. The Pentecostal movement today is part of a new great awakening that has placed more emphasis on the Holy Spirit than any other period of time since the first century.

Classical Pentecostals are committed to a restoration of true Biblical Christianity in the purity and power of the apostolic church. Pentecostals have sought to rediscover the power and anointing of the early church in order to be the instruments of God in reaching their own generation. The result is that Pentecostalism is reshaping religion in the twenty-first century. David Barrett, a leading expert in religious statistics, estimates that Pentecostalism in all of its various forms already exceeds 400 million people. It is by far the largest non-Catholic grouping, accounting for one in every four Christians. Pentecostalism is the fastest growing Christian movement on earth, increasing more rapidly than even Islam.

The Pentecostal movement erupted from among society’s disenfranchised and caused people to experience faith and hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Pentecostal awakening has not been the work of any one man, such as was the revivalism of Finney, Moody, Spurgeon, etc. The roots of the current Pentecostal movement go back to those holiness revivals especially among Baptist and Methodist believers. Men like John Wesley and others had been impacted by the Reforms of Anglicanism, Puritans, Pietists, Moravians, etc. All of these reform movements had placed great emphasis on holiness of life.

The Pentecostal movement came about during a time when liberal theologians were attacking the very existence of God. Men such as Newman, Kant, Voltaire, Schleiermacher used Biblical criticism and modernism to redirect Christian thought. Darwin’s theory of evolution further added to massive desertion of many Christians, to a loss of interest in religion, and to a lack of confidence in the Bible.

God brought forth the Pentecostal movement in a time of theological tempest in order to restore to the church a beautiful and simple Spirit-filled worship that would demonstrate the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit upon believers.

Pentecostals see themselves as true orthodox Christians who are not only Pneumatocentric but also Christocentric. Pentecostals accept Jesus Christ just as He is represented in the Word of God. He is Sovereign Lord, Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, Holy Ghost Baptizer, and Coming King.

The early church (first century) was a Spirit-filled (Pentecostal) church. Speaking in tongues and prophecy, healing, and miracles, etc. were a normal part of the life of the church (Acts 1:8; 10:19; 13:2). This Charismatic character continued to be the norm throughout the Greco-Roman world as the Gospel was carried beyond Jerusalem. Church leaders in the early church were characterized as being endowed with spiritual gifts. They looked to and depended entirely upon the anointing and presence of the Holy Spirit. The early church's expectation of ministry filled with the supernatural was based upon the very teaching of Jesus Christ. Jesus said that when the Spirit comes upon believers they will be enabled to do the same works He had done and even greater works (John 14:12).

Because of the creation, the incarnation, the resurrection, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the past has meaning for the present and future. The Christian church has and must continue to overcome heresies and divisions. In the past the church had to overcome Gnosticism, Arianism, Apollinarianism, Nestorianism, etc. Today we must overcome new forms of Gnosticism, racism, and secular godless philosophies.

With the anointing of the Holy Spirit, early Christianity was able to expand globally while overcoming intense persecution and internal heresies. God raised up giants of the faith who were willing to pay any price to obey God and advance the kingdom. These early leaders lived out personal holiness through an internalization of the Word of God.

Today we should see Pentecostalism as the Apostolic church in action. The Pentecostal movement is Biblical Christianity and not just some extreme pendulum swing in church history.

THE CHURCH IN ITS EARLY DEVELOPMENT

The main purpose for this section is to consider the issue of the cessation or continuation of spiritual gifts in the early church. The testimonies of the great leaders of the first three centuries demonstrate that the gifts, including speaking in tongues, continued to the beginning of the fourth century. Origen indicates their decline but not their cessation. Many have argued that speaking in tongues and many other spiritual gifts ended with the death of the first apostles. They have thus argued that speaking in tongues did not continue beyond AD 100.

Critics of Pentecostals in the twentieth century deny the recovery of the spiritual manifestations of the early church. In 1928, American Fundamentalists censured Pentecostals as "fanatical glossolatics." In England, Oswald Chambers referred to the tongues movement as a "satanic counterfeit."

If it is consistent with church history that speaking in tongues continued for the first three hundred years of the Christian church, it would be logical to seek to recover today the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit, which enabled the early Christians to overcome Roman persecution and

to spread the Gospel over the world. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the supernatural work of the Spirit is normal in the lives of the following leaders of the early church:

Justin Martyr (AD 100-165) This foremost apologist of the second century was familiar with the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. In Martyr's writings he said that the "prophetical gifts remain with us even to the present time" (*Dialogue with Trypho*, Volume 1). In his work called "The Second Apology of Justin," he speaks of the ability of Christians in his day to cast out demons and minister healing.

Irenaeus (AD 125-200) Irenaeus was the Bishop of Lyons and had been a disciple of the apostle John. In his *Against Heresies, Volume 1*, he describes true Christians as driving out devils, having visions, prophesying, laying hands on the sick, raising the dead. He also testifies that believers were still speaking in tongues. Irenaeus in no way indicates the expectation that the gifts of the Spirit will cease.

Tertullian (AD 160-240) Tertullian was one of the great writers and leaders in the history of the Christian church. His writings reveals a personal acquaintance with the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit, including speaking in tongues. In *A Treatise On the Soul* Tertullian says, "For seeing that we acknowledge the spiritual charismata, or gifts, we too have merited the attainment of the prophetic gift." In his *Against Marcion* Tertullian reveals both his acquaintance with speaking in tongues and his belief that the supernatural gifts of the Spirit were a sign of orthodoxy. Thus in the third century, spiritual gifts were still prominent in the church. It should also be noted that Tertullian does not predict any cessation of the gifts of the Spirit.

Origen (AD 185-284) Origen was the first systematic theologian in the church. In his work, *Against Celsus*, Origen speaks of many miracles being performed in Jesus' name. In this work he refers to Celsus' criticism of prophetic utterances and defends prophecy and speaking in tongues. Origen, in his commentary of Romans 8:26, links praying in the Spirit to praying in tongues. Origen was the first of the early church fathers to express concern that the supernatural ministries of the Spirit may be diminishing in the life of the church. He saw this as a result of the lack of holiness among the Christians and not the will of God.

Many other early Christian writings confirm the ongoing manifestation of spiritual gifts in the churches beyond the fourth century. The controversy surrounding Montanism led to the expansion of the institutionalization of the church. Bishops became more than a body of leaders; they became powerful leaders individually in control of the church. This institutionalization brought a sharp division between the clergy and laity.

The extreme beliefs of Montanism contributed to the disappearance of spiritual gifts in many churches. The Montanus were prophesying and announcing the soon end of the world. The Montanus called for people to be martyrs and never flee from persecution. People were often forbidden to marry and some were even encouraged to leave their unsaved spouse.

Most Christians rejected both Montanism and as Gnosticism. The rejection of Montanism contributed to the disappearance of spiritual gifts. Emphasis on the Spirit was being replaced

by ceremonial ritual and ecclesiastical order. The conversion of Constantine in AD 312 and the church's rise to earthly affluence and power marked the end of the Charismata as part of the character of the church.

The Monastic movement, which started around AD 300 and flourished during the Middle Ages, created centers of learning and devotion to God. The miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, which disappeared from the church, reappeared among the Monastics. Athanasius wrote about the life of Antony (AD 251-356) who was considered the father of Monasticism. Athanasius wrote that the ministry of Antony was filled with the supernatural. Many other great spiritual leaders followed the example of Antony; leaders such as, Athanasius, Hilarion, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory the Great, just to mention a few.

THE CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE AGES

In the early church, the gifts of the Spirit were normal for all believers. In the Middle Ages, the miraculous was common among those Monastic saints who had withdrawn from the world and secular society. In the Middle Ages, miracles were most associated with the missionary expansion of the church. The sick were healed, demons were cast out, and even the dead were raised. A significant jealousy arose during the Middle Ages between the church at Rome and the common people. Around AD 1000 the Roman church declared that speaking in tongues among the common people was to be considered evidence of demon possession. However, among the Monastics and the church hierarchy it could be considered evidence of sainthood. The church wanted to claim that miracles belonged only among the church hierarchy and that any occurrence of miracles among the common people was looked upon as sorcery or witchcraft. The common people were even discouraged from reading Scripture in their own language.

During the eleventh century, a spiritual renewal took place among various Monastic orders who went about preaching and ministering to people. Many great miracles took place around the world through men and women such as Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) and Hildegarde of Bingen (1098-1179). During this period, God raised up many ministers who were filled with the fervor of the Holy Spirit. One of these ministers was Francis of Assisi. As a young man, while praying in a church outside Assisi, Francis heard a voice say to him, "Go and repair My house which is fallen down." Francis of Assisi started the Franciscan order, which was a Monastic order dedicated to studying the Scriptures, preaching the Gospel, praying, and helping the poor. Francis and many others during this period were known to have spoken in tongues and to have had great faith in the power of God.

During the Middle Ages, there were those who were devoted to the Roman Catholic church and those who left the church to seek a closer walk with God. Those who sought a closer walk with God were called the Cathari, meaning "pure." They sought to be free from the political and moral corruption so prevalent in the institutional church. Also, there were various renewal movements within the Roman Catholic church, such as the Waldenses. This group existed from 1176 to beyond the sixteenth century. The Waldenses sought to find the Biblical pattern for a New Testament church. Divine healing, miracles, and all the gifts of the Spirit were a part of their ministry. The Waldenses were persecuted by the Roman Catholic church, yet they endured faithful and in the sixteenth century identified with the Protestant Reformation.

THE CHURCH IN THE REFORMATION

Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation brought a renewed commitment to the work of the Holy Spirit within the church. Stanley Frodsham's book, published in 1926, entitled *With Signs Following* (Springfield: Gospel Publishers, p. 329) quotes a work in German by Souer who describes Luther as "a prophet, evangelist, speaker in tongues and interpreter, in one person, endowed with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit." Luther's theology is certainly confusing at times, yet there is no evidence that Luther believed in the cessation of miracles or other spiritual gifts. There were other Reformers, such as the Anabaptists who felt that Luther did not go far enough in reforming the church. These radical reformers created a movement designed to reproduce as literally as possible the power and purity of the Apostolic church.

The Anabaptists insisted that baptism was for believers only and rejected infant baptism. They were persecuted by both Catholics and Protestants for this position. The Anabaptists also emphasized that ministry was the responsibility of the entire congregation, not just the clergy hierarchy. During the sixteenth century, there arose a renewed interest in both spiritual gifts and the return of Christ. The Anabaptists were truly a charismatic movement.

The Moravians (1700s) were another reform movement energized by the power of the Holy Spirit. Moravian missionaries touched the world and impacted many people, even John Wesley. The early Moravian church was a dynamic missionary and charismatic movement.

THE CHURCH IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

The Methodist revivals of John Wesley brought a profound move of the Holy Spirit to the United States. It was the Methodist charismatic movement that gave birth to the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement of the twentieth century.

The Holiness movement of the nineteenth century began as a renewal movement within the Methodist church. The nineteenth century was impacted by spiritual leaders such as Phoebe Palmer, Charles Finney, A.J. Gordon, D.L. Moody, and R.A. Torrey.

Speaking in tongues was not a normal characteristic of the nineteenth century Holiness Revival, but did occur occasionally. It was incidents such as the 1896 manifestation of speaking in tongues in Cherokee County, North Carolina, that ushered in the Pentecostal movement. This North Carolina group later became known as the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee).

The beginning of the twentieth century was marked with an unusual manifestation of the work of the Holy Spirit. People in many places were being filled with the Holy Spirit and were speaking in tongues. These early Pentecostals had reached the same conclusion as the Scottish pastor, Edward Irving, who in the 1830s had concluded that speaking in tongues was the evidence of Spirit baptism.

The "Pentecostal Explosion" was not at all an isolated event. Azusa Street, California, became a focal point in 1906 but it could not be contained in any one place. Sanctified believers were being filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. Ministers became passionately driven to preach the Gospel to the lost and to declare the soon return of Christ.

No one man or church or place was at the head of this new renewal movement. It was as if God Himself was speaking in the earth through a multitude of people. Never had Christianity seen such missionary zeal. Soon many reports poured in of other Pentecostal outpourings in Africa, Europe, Latin America, and around the world. By 1908, the movement was established in over fifty nations. The Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) is the oldest Pentecostal church in North America (and possibly the oldest in the world), pre-dating the Topeka and Azusa Street outpourings. The Church of God was not Pentecostal at its inception in 1886. Ten years later in 1896 at the "Shearer Schoolhouse Revival," God poured out His Spirit upon the Church of God as He had done over and over through the centuries upon people whose faith in God and commitment to holiness unlocked the doors of God's miracle working power.

Today the Pentecostal movement and Charismatic renewal has forever changed the face of Christianity in the world. Revival seems to be coming to the Christian church around the world and once again faith and expectancy fills the church as we move further into the twenty-first century.

THE BIBLE IN HISTORY

The Bible was originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek for the people to whom these languages were native languages used in everyday speech.

From its beginning, the church had the Old Testament and the oral teaching of the apostles for its guidance, but soon the message was written down in order to preserve it. The books of the New Testament were completed before the end of the first Christian century.

As the church in the second century emerged from the conflict with Marcion and with the Gnostics, evidence from Justin Martyr reveals that worship in the church reflected the writings of the apostles along with the writings of the prophets as though they were regarded as of equal authority.

In the third century BC, Jewish scholars in Alexandria began to translate the Old Testament Scriptures into the Greek language, which became known as the Septuagint. The Greek Bible was the Bible of the early church.

The entire Bible was translated into the Latin language, known as the Vulgate, by Jerome at Bethlehem. The Vulgate was completed about AD 400. For a thousand years, this was the standard Bible of the Catholic church.

During the Dark Ages, very little Bible translation was attempted. Therefore, common people were deprived of the Word of God because the Bible was limited to Latin and church services were conducted primarily in Latin.

In 1380, John Wycliff translated the first English New Testament. His associates completed the Old Testament translation shortly after Wycliff's death in 1384.

William Tyndale was the next English translator. He completed his New Testament in 1525. The Church of England identified Tyndale's writings with Lutheranism and vigorously opposed the circulation of his translations.

In 1535, the first complete English Bible was issued by Miles Coverdale. This Bible was circulated without hindrance but was never officially "authorized." In 1537, the second complete English Bible, the Matthew's Bible, was issued. The Matthew's Bible was the work of John Rogers, who compiled much of Tyndale's unpublished work on the Old Testament, and he used Tyndale's revision of 1535 in translating the New Testament.

A group of English exiles in Geneva prepared a new translation in 1560. The Geneva Bible was accompanied with copious notes, which were both anti-Catholic and pro-Calvinistic in nature. The Geneva Bible became the favorite of the Puritans and enjoyed a remarkable popularity with one hundred eighty editions.

Church officials called for a new translation because of their unhappiness with the notes of the Geneva Bible. In 1568, the Bishop's Bible was presented to Queen Elizabeth. The Bishop's Bible was ordered to be placed in every cathedral. Thus it became common that the Geneva Bible was used in homes and the Bishop's Bible was used in churches.

In 1604, King James was persuaded by John Reynolds to begin the process for a new translation. The translators of the King James Version anticipated that their efforts would be criticized, and they were right. The problems with the King James Version (KJV - 1611) were that it did not have notes such as the Geneva Bible and the alternate readings in the margins were upsetting to the Catholics.

Part of the success of the KJV was that the title page read, "Appointed to be read in Churches." Thus the King James Version took the place of the Bishop's Bible. Also, church authorities showed open hostility to the Geneva Bible and did not allow it to be printed in England after 1618. In time, the attacks of the KJV lessened and it was widely loved and read.

Through the centuries, people have attempted to produce a more readable translation than the King James Version. In 1885, the Revised Version came and was followed in the United States with the American Standard Version. More recent translations include the New English Bible (NEB), the New American Standard Bible, the Jerusalem Bible (JB), the Revised Standard Version (RSV), the New American Bible (NAB), the New International Version (NIV), and the New King James Version (NKJV) which was completed in 1982.

CHURCH OF GOD HISTORY AND POLITY

Section Two

A SUMMARY OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD 1886 - 2004

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This summary of the History of the Church of God is an overview of some significant events, denominational leaders, and accomplishments of the Church of God.

The beginning of the Church of God goes back to August 19, 1886, when a group known as the Christian Union was formed at Barney Creek in Monroe County, Tennessee. The group was led by R.G. Spurling, Sr., a Baptist, who was sincerely seeking a reformation in his church.

The new church was organized following a two-year period of preliminary study and efforts to reform the existing churches. In his book, *The Last Great Conflict*, A.J. Tomlinson in 1913 tells that “after two years or more of careful searching, praying and weeping, and pleading with his church for reform to no avail... (Richard G. Spurling, with others, began to arrange for a conference and more careful consideration of religious matters)... After having taken plenty of time for consideration, the time and place of the meeting was arranged and announced. That day is worthy of remembrance, Thursday, August 19, 1886. The small company of humble, faithful, conscientious pilgrims met at Barney Creek meeting house, Monroe County, Tennessee... Spurling’s arguments were full of force and effective, and were endorsed by the hearers, so that when the time came for action there was free and earnest response. The proposition and obligation were simple... As many Christians as are here present that are desirous to be free from all man-made creeds and traditions, and are willing to take the New Testament, or law of Christ, for your only rule of faith and practice; giving each other equal rights and privilege to read and interpret for yourselves as your conscience may dictate, and are willing to set together as the Church of God to transact business as the same, come forward.”

The ordination certificate of R.G. Spurling, Jr., dated September 2, 1886, shows the Christian Union (the earliest name of the Church of God) in operation as a separate organization, doing the work of an established church body.

On May 15, 1902, the Christian Union was reorganized and named “The Holiness Church at Camp Creek.” The name of the movement was changed in an attempt to eliminate fanaticism and false teachings that had negatively impacted the Christian Union. The records

make it clear that this involved a change in name, but not the creation of a new or different organization. The location and name were changed, but not the organization.

In 1903 there came along a traveling Bible salesman from Indiana by the name of Ambrose Jessup Tomlinson. He was in the holiness wing of the Quaker church and made his living selling Bibles and other religious materials to the pious mountain folk of eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina. On June 13, 1903, A.J. Tomlinson joined the Christian Union with the understanding that it was the true church of God of the Bible and was not man-made. With the winning of Tomlinson, the church gained one of the great organizing geniuses of modern American church history.

In a short time, Tomlinson had planted churches in Union Grove and Drygo, Tennessee, and a small congregation in Jones, Georgia. A mission was also established in nearby Cleveland, Tennessee, which became a center of activity for the group. By 1906, these churches were able to call the first general gathering to consider matters of common interest. Thus on January 26 and 27, 1906, the first Annual Assembly convened in the home of J.C. Murphy of Camp Creek, North Carolina. Since Tomlinson was serving as pastor of the local church, he was selected to serve as the moderator. The twenty-one delegates to this gathering wanted to be known simply as the Holiness Church. They adopted strict teachings of personal holiness, which forbade their members from using tobacco or alcohol. Foot washing was approved by the delegates as a valid sacrament. The new group also affirmed the need for Sunday schools.

The second Annual Assembly convened in Bradley County, Tennessee, in January 1907. At this meeting, the group chose the name Church of God since it was the name mentioned in the Bible. This new denomination was typical of the Holiness churches formed in America during this period. Sanctification as a second work of grace was sought and divine healing was strongly affirmed. Under Tomlinson's leadership, the young denomination planted churches throughout the mountains of Tennessee, Georgia, Kentucky, West Virginia, and North Carolina.

Some of the leaders in the church in its early days were men like R.G. Spurling, Jr., M.S. Lemons, W.F. Bryant, and Henry McNabb. These men had emphasized the Baptism in the Holy Ghost since 1896, and most of the ministers had received the Holy Ghost during that time. In 1907, Tomlinson said that he was seriously seeking the Baptism in every altar service.

The news of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost at the Azusa Street Mission in California was welcomed among these Holiness people who were also experiencing the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. At the 1908 Annual Assembly in Cleveland, Tennessee, many pastors and laity received the Baptism and spake with other tongues. The Annual Assembly delegates continued to pray for their moderator, A.J. Tomlinson, that he would receive the Baptism with the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. On January 10, 1908, A.J. Tomlinson received the Baptism with the Holy Spirit after a powerful message by G.B. Cashwell. This meant that now all of the Church of God ministers had received the experience, some as much as twelve years earlier.

A young man of thirty-three by the name of F.J. Lee, who was choir director at the First Baptist Church in Cleveland, Tennessee, also received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. He was to prove to be one of the great new leaders in the Church of God. When he received the Holy Spirit, he was regarded as "the best man in town," a Christian whose character was impeccable, a skilled craftsman, and a great singer.

At the fourth Annual Assembly on January 9, 1909, once again R.G. Spurling preached the opening sermon and A.J. Tomlinson was host pastor and moderator. The primary action of this Annual Assembly was the decision to have a general moderator who would serve full-time instead of only at the Annual Assembly. On this day, A.J. Tomlinson was elected to serve as the first general moderator of the Church of God, or general overseer as the office would be renamed a year later. Tomlinson had good helpers in his church in Cleveland and was able to travel and minister in various places.

Tomlinson started churches in other states, such as Alabama and Florida. The first Church of God missionaries were R.M. & Ida Evans, along with (native Bahamians) Edmond S. and Rebecca Barr. In 1910, they started the Church of God in the Bahama Islands.

By the Annual Assembly of 1910, which convened in Cleveland, Tennessee, there were twenty-two ordained ministers and thirty-one churches with 1,005 members. The name moderator was changed at this Annual Assembly to general overseer and Tomlinson was given the right to appoint pastors. The church had phenomenal growth in 1910 with an increase of almost eighty-five percent. By the end of 1910, there were fifty-eight churches and 1,855 members.

In 1910, the *Church of God Evangel* was published and became the official journal of the church. In August 1910, the proposed list of Teachings was printed in the *Evangel* and later adopted in 1911. These teachings remained almost unchanged for sixty-one years. In 1911, the Annual Assembly took a significant step of administration by creating the office of state overseer. At this time, there were seven state overseers appointed. Organizationally, the Annual Assembly of 1911 was the most successful that had convened up to that time.

From 1911 to 1920 the Church of God enjoyed a period of revival and prosperity. In 1913 and 1914, Tomlinson was at the height of his popularity. In 1914, the church adopted a new constitution that gave him the general overseer's position for life.

In 1916 the Annual Assembly called for the creation of a Council of Elders that would consist of twelve ordained ministers appointed by Tomlinson. The primary responsibilities of this Council (later called the Council of Twelve) were to prepare the agenda for the annual assemblies and to provide oversight of church funds.

In 1918, the Annual Assembly was canceled due to an influenza epidemic. The Church of God established the Bible Training School (BTS) in 1918 on the Seville, Tennessee, campus.

The Orphanage and Children's Home was started in 1920. It was based in Cleveland, Tennessee, and had a 119 acre farm eight miles from the city.

In 1921, the Council of Seventy was created in addition to the Council of Twelve to give greater representation in leadership and decision making. The Council of Seventy was elected by the Council of Bishops with a rotating tenure.

At the 1922 Annual Assembly, a General Executive Committee was created. It consisted of the general overseer, the editor and publisher, and the superintendent of education. The purpose of the General Executive Committee was to manage and appropriate general church funds, appoint all state overseers, and plan for the assemblies. A Supreme Council was also established. It consisted of the newly formed Executive Committee and the Council of Elders.

By 1922, Tomlinson faced insurmountable problems. Dissatisfaction arose over the alleged mishandling of monies. A struggle ensued in the following months between Tomlinson and the Council of Elders (Council of Twelve) led by F.J. Lee and J.S. Llewellyn.

In a church trial that took place in Cleveland, Tennessee, in 1923, the Council of Elders removed Tomlinson from his office, and he withdrew from the church. He and his followers then organized another denomination as the Church of God. The Supreme Court of Tennessee in a lawsuit decided against Tomlinson and he was forced to change the name of his church or add to the end of it. He called it the Tomlinson Church of God until 1952 when it was renamed the Church of God of Prophecy. A.J. Tomlinson died in 1943 and his son Milton was installed as general overseer of that group.

F.J. Lee was elected as general overseer in 1923 and did a great job bringing the church together following the division and crisis. In 1923, there were 23,008 members in the church and when Lee died in 1928 there were 24,902. The church had been hindered by the crisis, but its confidence was restored and growth returned.

At the Annual Assembly of 1924, the position of general secretary-treasurer was created to assist with the disbursement and accountability of church funds. The Annual Assembly also encouraged states to start state camp meetings.

At the 1925 Annual Assembly, the ministerial rank of exhorter was created as the first level of ministerial licensure.

S.W. Latimer followed Lee as general overseer. Under his leadership, the Church of God survived the Great Depression in fine fashion and grew marvelously. Six hundred twenty-four churches were organized within the United States between 1928 and 1935. In the 1930s, the church expanded into other countries such as Mexico, Haiti, Guatemala, and other parts of Central and South America.

The Annual Assembly of 1929 dissolved the Council of Seventy because the financial cost to the church was too great for the benefit received by this Council. The Annual Assembly also created a youth program for local churches called the Young People's Endeavor (YPE) along with *Lighted Pathway*, a monthly magazine for the youth of the Church of God.

Until 1929, ordained ministers had commonly been known as "bishops." After the 1929 Annual Assembly, the official title of the position became ordained minister. All of the ordained ministers who attended the annual assemblies constituted the Council of Ordained Ministers.

In 1930, there were approximately 1,000 members of the Church of God outside the United States. Within five years, that number had grown to 3,629.

In 1934, the Annual Assembly outgrew the limited facilities of Cleveland, Tennessee. The 4,000 seat auditorium had been adequate for several years, but now the church needed more room. The 1934 Annual Assembly was held in the Memorial Auditorium in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where 5,500 could be seated in the main hall and 1,300 in the community hall. The Annual Assembly never returned to Cleveland.

S.W. Latimer resigned as general overseer at the 1935 Annual Assembly when many delegates felt that the vote he received, although a majority, was too narrow for the best interest of the church. Latimer's successor was J.H. Walker, Sr., the youthful superintendent of education. Walker was only thirty-five years old and brought the church a new vision and vigor needed to get beyond the Depression years. Walker was a strong advocate of foreign missions, and his overseership saw remarkable missionary expansion.

Zeno C. Tharp was selected to leave his pastorate in Greenville, South Carolina, and serve as Walker's successor at the Bible Training School.

The Church of God was fifty years old in 1936. The two dominant leaders in this time of growth and expansion were J.H. Walker, Sr., general overseer and J.H. Ingram, the church's missionary extraordinaire. During this fiftieth anniversary year, Ingram made a tour around the world and termed it the "Golden Jubilee Tour." Church of God missions continued to grow with the help of people such as Robert F. Cook in India; Herman Lauster in Germany; Paul C. Pitt in China; Edmond and Pearl Stark in Angola, Africa.

At the 31st Annual Assembly (1936), the national Ladies Auxiliary was established and named "Ladies Willing Workers Band." In 1937, the Bible Training School (started in 1918) was moved from Cleveland, Tennessee, to Sevierville, Tennessee, where the church purchased Murphy Collegiate Institute. This property today is used for the Church of God Home for Children.

In 1940, the Church of God expanded into South America, starting in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

In 1941, only male ministers were permitted to attend the Annual Assembly because of a polio epidemic.

In 1942, the Church of God became a member of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). Since then the Church of God has played a great role in its formation. Church of God ministers have served NAE in key positions such as president, chairman, and commission leaders.

The nine year tenure of J.H. Walker, Sr., came to an end in 1944. Even though he had been an outstanding leader, he was the victim of a growing sentiment that no man should retain the position of general overseer too long. Walker received a majority vote, but felt that he should not accept the nomination. Thus, Walker stepped down just as S.W. Latimer had done when Walker was elected.

John C. Jernigan was elected general overseer when Walker declined the nomination. Jernigan had been a state overseer for many years, having served in Virginia, Kentucky, Georgia, Florida, and Tennessee. Walker returned as president of BTS upon Zeno C. Tharp's resignation. Tharp was appointed to South Carolina as the state overseer.

The "Great Experiment" of 1944 was to elect six assistant general overseers to reside in different sections of the United States and to have general oversight of the states in their region. The Supreme Council then divided the nation into six districts. It was a great experiment that did not work well and caused feelings of fragmentation. At the Annual Assembly in 1945, dissatisfaction was so keen that the whole idea of the "Great Experiment" was dropped and only one assistant general overseer was retained. H.L. Chesser was elected as the only assistant general overseer.

One of the cohesive forces of the Church of God since 1906 had been its annual Assemblies. However cohesive the assemblies had become, due to the cost of these meetings it was decided at the 1946 Annual Assembly to change to a biennial General Assembly. The 1946 Annual Assembly also created the office of national Sunday school and youth director. Ralph E. Williams was the first appointee.

In 1947, the Bible Training School moved from Sevierville, Tennessee, back to Cleveland, Tennessee, on the former campus of BTS. The name of the institution was changed to Lee College.

In 1948, executive tenures were established with the urging of John C. Jernigan, who was completing his four years as general overseer. He was replaced by his assistant, H.L. Chesser. Zeno C. Tharp was elected assistant general overseer. Also at the 1948 General Assembly, the title of bishop was changed to ordained minister, and the title of evangelist was changed to licensed minister. The Council of Ordained Ministers was changed to the General Council. The 8,000 delegates at this General Assembly in 1948 also adopted the Fourteen Articles of the Declaration of Faith, which have not been changed to this day.

In 1949, West Coast Bible College was started in Pasadena, California.

In 1951, the Full Gospel Church of the Union of Southern Africa merged with the Church of God.

At the General Assembly in 1952, Zeno C. Tharp was elected as general overseer. Two assistants were elected at this time. They were Houston R. Morehead and John C. Jernigan. H.L. Chesser was retained on the Committee as the general secretary-treasurer. Charles W. Conn was added to the General Executive Committee as the editor-in-chief. At this General Assembly, Ray H. Hughes, Sr. was elected to replace Lewis Willis as the Sunday school and

youth director. Hughes was destined by God to serve in the leadership of the church, for he would go on to serve a total of thirty years on the Supreme Council, twenty-two years on the General Executive Committee, and six years as general overseer (1972-74 and 1978-82).

In 1953, James A. Cross came to the office of assistant general overseer when John C. Jernigan was forced to retire due to injuries in an automobile accident.

At the General Assembly of 1954, H.D. Williams replaced H.L. Chesser as general secretary-treasurer. At this General Assembly, it was decided that in 1956 the office of editor-in-chief would be separated from the General Executive Committee. In 1954, the new General Headquarters and Publishing House were erected.

In 1956, at the General Assembly, Houston R. Morehead replaced Zeno C. Tharp as general overseer. Morehead was only eligible to serve for two years since he already had six years on the Committee. Chosen to serve with General Overseer Morehead were James A. Cross, first assistant general overseer; Earl P. Paulk, Sr., second assistant general overseer; and H.D. Williams, general secretary-treasurer.

The dream of a national radio program became a reality when the first program, named "Forward in Faith," was broadcast on December 7, 1958. The radio speaker was Earl P. Paulk, Jr., a popular pastor from Atlanta, Georgia. Bennie S. Triplett was chosen as the program announcer and director. Triplett, who would go on to serve as the radio speaker and department director (1984-88) and as a popular state overseer, composer, and singer, was known as a son of the Home for Children.

In 1958, James A. Cross was elected to succeed Houston R. Morehead as general overseer. Cross served at a very tense time in the church over issues related to holiness. He did a great job and was re-elected in 1960. This great preacher and respected leader served on the General Executive Committee for eight years and a total of twenty-eight years on the Supreme Council until his death on March 10, 1990. Also at the General Assembly in 1958, Wade H. Horton, overseer of Mississippi and former World Missions field representative, was elected as first assistant general overseer. Horton was a very popular minister who was to make a great mark on the Church of God. He had the honor of being the first ordained minister in the Church of God to serve as general overseer on two occasions (1962-66 and 1974-76). He served fourteen years on the General Executive Committee and a total of thirty years on the Supreme Council.

Charles W. Conn wrote, "The Church of God got its second wind in 1962. A new burst of energy touched almost every area of church ministries, and there was a general surge forward. Ever since the outstanding General Assembly of 1960, the Church had been filled with a deep sense of blessing and responsibility..." (*Like a Mighty Army*).

As was expected in 1962, Wade H. Horton was elected general overseer. A.M. Phillips was elevated to the office of first assistant general overseer. The next General Executive Committee members were not chosen from among state overseers as had become customary (according to *Like a Mighty Army*), but two department heads were chosen to fill the remaining posts. Charles W. Conn, who had been editor-in-chief for ten years, was elected as second assistant general overseer. Charles W. Conn served as general overseer for four years, assistant

general overseer for four years, and on the Executive Council for a total of thirty years. C. Raymond Spain, the missions field representative for the previous four years, was elected as general secretary-treasurer. C. Raymond Spain was a great and popular revival and camp meeting speaker who served the Church of God with great faithfulness and distinction until his death in 1995. He served a total of eighteen years on the Supreme Council.

While serving as first assistant general overseer, A.M. Phillips became terminally ill and died on Christmas Eve, 1962. Due to a lack of provisions for selection of a successor, the General Executive Committee continued with only three members for the next two years.

The Evangelism and Home Missions Department was created in 1963. Walter R. Pettitt was selected to serve as the first director.

The 1964 General Assembly was the first General Assembly to take place west of the Mississippi River. It took place in Dallas, Texas. The 1964 General Assembly increased the General Executive Committee to six members and a procedure of succession was adopted in the event death should again occur on the Executive Committee. Horton, Conn, and Spain were re-elected and R. Leonard Carroll was elected as third assistant general overseer. Ralph E. Williams was elected general secretary-treasurer. The office of director of World Missions was added to the General Executive Committee. Vessie D. Hargrave, superintendent of Europe, was elected to fill this position.

As recorded by Charles W. Conn in *Like a Mighty Army*, what J.H. Ingram did for the initial missions endeavor of the Church of God, Vessie D. Hargrave also did for Latin America. Hargrave, in addition to his great work on the field as a missionary, served as the director of the World Missions Department from 1964-68.

At the General Assembly in 1964, the name Supreme Council was changed to Executive Council, which remains today. (The Executive Council currently consists of members of the General Executive Committee and the Council of Eighteen.) A National Laymen's Board was also created.

An "Advisory Council" to the General Executive Committee was established and held their first meeting on December 14, 1965. The Advisory Council is made up of all surviving former members of the General Executive Committee. The purpose of the Advisory Council is to share their insights and experiences with the present leadership in handling the affairs of the church. It is not an executive body, but advisory and honorary. This group meets annually with the General Executive Committee.

In 1966 at the General Assembly, Wade H. Horton's tenure as general overseer ended and first assistant Charles W. Conn was elected as general overseer; R. Leonard Carroll was elected as first assistant; C. Raymond Spain was elected as second assistant; Ray H. Hughes, Sr. was elected as third assistant. Ralph Williams was re-elected as general secretary-treasurer and Vessie Hargrave as director of World Missions. Hughes' election ended his distinguished presidency at Lee College, where he was succeeded by James A. Cross.

This General Assembly in 1966 made great progress in eliminating any racial discrimination between black and white constituency. Resolutions were passed and changes enacted that brought a new era of respect and cooperation. Much emphasis was placed under Conn’s administration to insure the perpetuation of Pentecostal doctrine and experience.

Dr. Conn was successful in bringing a dream to pass with the amalgamation of the Bethel Full Gospel Church in Indonesia in 1967. This brought a reported 71,127 members and 431 local churches on seven islands into the Church of God.

On May 22, 1968, a new General Office building in Cleveland was dedicated. “The quiet serenity of the four story building with its sculpted fountain and spacious grounds was carried over into the two-story lobby, which featured a Byzantine mosaic mural depicting the Day of Pentecost. An adjoining rotunda continued the vast mural of vignettes from a history of the Church of God” (*Like a Mighty Army*). This gleaming structure sits on 22 acres of land at the corner of 25th and Keith Streets on the north side of town. The total project cost 2.3 million dollars.

At the 1968 General Assembly, Charles W. Conn was re-elected as general overseer. The General Assembly removed the office of director of World Missions from the General Executive Committee and restored its former title and role as executive secretary of World Missions. This change established five positions on the General Executive Committee, which continues to the present.

In 1968, the General Assembly elected the following General Executive Committee:

- General Overseer Charles W. Conn
- First Assistant General Overseer R. Leonard Carroll
- Second Assistant General Overseer Ray H. Hughes, Sr.
- Third Assistant General Overseer Wade H. Horton
- General Secretary-Treasurer C. Raymond Spain

In 1968, a General Board of Education was established to meet the needs for attention to the church’s wide-ranging and growing interest in education. Dr. R. Leonard Carroll was named the executive director of the general education program in connection with his duties as first assistant general overseer.

At the 1970 General Assembly the following General Executive Committee was elected:

- General Overseer R. Leonard Carroll
- First Assistant General Overseer Ray H. Hughes, Sr.
- Second Assistant General Overseer Wade H. Horton
- Third Assistant General Overseer Cecil B. Knight
- General Secretary-Treasurer G.W. Lane

Charles W. Conn went to Lee College as its fourteenth president. C. Raymond Spain was elected director of Evangelism and Home Missions.

On January 2, 1972, R. Leonard Carroll died suddenly from a massive heart attack. For the second time, the church had lost its general overseer by death -- F.J. Lee in 1928 and R. Leonard Carroll in 1972. Ray H. Hughes, Sr. was elevated to the office of general overseer on January 31, 1972. W.C. Byrd was elected by a mail ballot to fill the vacancy as general secretary-treasurer.

At the 1972 General Assembly in Dallas, Texas, the following General Executive Committee was elected:

General Overseer Ray H. Hughes, Sr.
First Assistant General Overseer Wade H. Horton
Second Assistant General Overseer Cecil B. Knight
Third Assistant General Overseer W.C. Byrd
General Secretary-Treasurer G.W. Lane

Hughes, an evangelist at heart, led the church in a great program of "Total Evangelism" and set an ambitious program of a "New Church a Day" for the next two years.

In 1974, the General Assembly returned to Dallas, Texas. Wade H. Horton, who had been general overseer from 1962-66, was elected for a second tenure. The members of the General Executive Committee elected at the 1974 General Assembly were:

General Overseer Wade H. Horton
First Assistant General Overseer Cecil B. Knight
Second Assistant General Overseer T.L. Lowery
Third Assistant General Overseer J. Frank Culpepper
General Secretary-Treasurer Floyd J. Timmerman

A great step forward for the church came in 1975 when the Church of God Graduate School of Christian Ministries opened in Cleveland, Tennessee. The name was later changed to the Church of God School of Theology. An education explosion was taking place in the Church of God and the Graduate Seminary was a part of this explosion.

At the 1976 General Assembly in Dallas, Texas, Cecil B. Knight was elected general overseer. He came to office with six years experience on the General Executive Committee. He served as general overseer for two years and a total of thirteen years on the General Executive Committee and twenty-one years on the Executive Council.

In 1976, the General Assembly elected the following General Executive Committee:

General Overseer Cecil B. Knight
First Assistant General Overseer Ray H. Hughes, Sr.
Second Assistant General Overseer J. Frank Culpepper
Third Assistant General Overseer T.L. Lowery
General Secretary-Treasurer Floyd J. Timmerman

Ray H. Hughes, Sr., who returned to the General Executive Committee in 1976 as first assistant, was elected general overseer for a second tenure in 1978. Dr. Hughes served as general overseer from 1978 to 1982. He worked toward the internationalization of the church and became a strong voice for the Church of God through interdenominational circles. He served as chairman of the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America, and as second vice-president of the National Association of Evangelicals. Later, he served as the president of NAE. Dr. Hughes proved to be an exceptional and progressive leader and remains today one of the most respected and admired preachers in the Church of God. Dr. Hughes has served twenty-two years on the General Executive Committee and a total of thirty-two years on the Executive Council.

At the 1978 General Assembly in Kansas City, Missouri, the following General Executive Committee was elected:

General Overseer	Ray H. Hughes, Sr.
First Assistant General Overseer	J. Frank Culpepper
Second Assistant General Overseer	T.L. Lowery
Third Assistant General Overseer	Floyd J. Timmerman
General Secretary-Treasurer	E.C. Thomas

The 1978 General Assembly approved the Ministerial Internship Program, started by Dr. Robert E. Fisher in Hawaii, for general ministerial training. This General Assembly also established state boards of education.

At the 1980 General Assembly in Dallas, Texas, the following General Executive Committee was elected:

General Overseer	Ray H. Hughes, Sr.
First Assistant General Overseer	J. Frank Culpepper
Second Assistant General Overseer	T.L. Lowery
Third Assistant General Overseer	Floyd J. Timmerman
General Secretary-Treasurer	E.C. Thomas

During 1980, the Romainian Pentecostal Church became the Church of God of Romania.

At the 1982 General Assembly in Kansas City, Missouri, the General Assembly elected the following General Executive Committee:

General Overseer	E.C. Thomas
First Assistant General Overseer	Raymond E. Crowley
Second Assistant General Overseer	Robert White
Third Assistant General Overseer	Cecil B. Knight
General Secretary-Treasurer	Robert J. Hart

The 1982 General Assembly made the decision that no appointed or elected department head or associate department head be eligible for election to the Council of Twelve. This General Assembly also established the Office of Ministerial Care, an International Advisory Council, and required the completion of the Ministerial Internship Program before promotion from exhorter to the second rank of ministry.

In 1984, the General Assembly re-elected the entire General Executive Committee:

General Overseer	E.C. Thomas
First Assistant General Overseer	Raymond E. Crowley
Second Assistant General Overseer	Robert White
Third Assistant General Overseer	Cecil B. Knight
General Secretary-Treasurer	Robert J. Hart

In 1985, a Pentecostal Resource Center was constructed to serve Lee College and the Church of God School of Theology. It houses the William G. Squires Library and the Dixon Pentecostal Research Center, which comprises a comprehensive collection of materials pertaining to the Church of God and the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement.

Dr. E.C. Thomas had the honor of leading the Church of God in its Centennial Celebration at the 61st General Assembly (1986) in Atlanta, Georgia, from July 29 to August 3. In 1986, the Church of God had a world membership of 1,652,089 in 107 countries. After his term as general overseer, Dr. Thomas continued to serve the church as chairman of the Board of Directors of the Department of Benevolence. E.C. Thomas died on September 22, 1989, after a great ministry with eight years on the General Executive Committee, four years as general overseer, and twelve years on the Executive Council.

The Centennial General Assembly (1986) elected the following General Executive Committee:

General Overseer	Raymond E. Crowley
First Assistant General Overseer	Ray H. Hughes, Sr.
Second Assistant General Overseer	Cecil B. Knight
Third Assistant General Overseer	R. Lamar Vest
General Secretary-Treasurer	John D. Nichols

Dr. Crowley had already served on the General Executive Committee since 1982 and brought to the position the heart of a pastor and a great man of prayer and compassion. Dr. Crowley had two terms, four great years, as general overseer. He brought great unity and hope for the future to the Church of God. He emphasized and supported a rebirth of benevolent ministries with expansion into areas such as a Center for Abused Children, Covenant Place, New River Ranch, etc. He brought to the church a complete ten year decadal emphasis for the 90s with the theme "Into the Harvest." Dr. Crowley ended his tenure as general overseer and his eight years on the General Executive Committee and in 1990 was appointed as state overseer of Florida-Tampa.

In 1986, the General Assembly increased the Council of Twelve to eighteen ordained ministers elected by the General Council. Also during this General Assembly, Dr. Paul Conn became the president of Lee University.

In 1987, the Church of God School of Theology was granted associate membership status with the Association of Theological Schools of North America.

At the 62nd General Assembly (1988) in Fort Worth, Texas, the following General Executive Committee was elected:

- General OverseerRaymond E. Crowley
- First Assistant General OverseerRay H. Hughes, Sr.
- Second Assistant General OverseerR. Lamar Vest
- Third Assistant General OverseerCecil B. Knight
- General Secretary-TreasurerJohn D. Nichols

At the 1988 General Assembly, a new statement of "Practical Commitments" was adopted. The General Assembly also passed measures changing the Radio and Television Department to the Department of Media Ministries and established that no less than nine members of the Council of Eighteen be pastors at the time of their election.

In December 1988, Dr. J. Herbert Walker, president of the School of Theology died. In January of 1989, Dr. Cecil B. Knight resigned the General Executive Committee as third assistant to assume the position of president of the School of Theology. Dr. John D. Nichols moved up to third assistant general overseer, leaving vacant general secretary-treasurer. A mail ballot was conducted of the General Council (ordained ministers) and Dr. Robert E. Fisher was elected as general secretary-treasurer.

Lee College continued to set new enrollment records for the past several years with an on-campus enrollment for the fall of 1990 of 1,739, up from barely 1,000 students six years ago. The enrollment for the fall of 1991 was 1,827 students. In the fall of 1992, the enrollment was 1,887 students. The president of Lee College, Dr. Paul Conn, has been noted for his exceptional vision and leadership. He has been cited for the growth and vitality of this expanding and exciting college campus. In September 1990, Lee College dedicated the new Davis-Sharp Complex (dormitory). Lee launched a new five million dollar expansion project called "Higher Ground" Campaign. As a result of this campaign, Lee College completed three new buildings -- the Dixon Center, the Watkins Building, and the Devos Recreation Center.

At the 63rd General Assembly (1990) in San Antonio, Texas from August 7-12, the following General Executive Committee was elected:

- General OverseerR. Lamar Vest
- First Assistant General OverseerRobert White
- Second Assistant General OverseerJohn D. Nichols
- Third Assistant General OverseerRobert E. Fisher
- General Secretary-TreasurerGene D. Rice

Dr. Vest had served the church as a member of the General Executive Committee, the former general director of the Department of Youth and Christian Education, and the president of Lee College (1984-1986). He was elected to the General Executive Committee in 1986, as the third assistant general overseer and again in 1988 as second assistant general overseer. One of the highlights of the 1990 General Assembly was the Inaugural Address given by General Overseer Vest on the theme "The Kind of Church I Need."

In 1990, the church was committed to a ten year emphasis built on the general theme "Into The Harvest" as a way of reaching the ten goals of Project 2000. The focus for each General Assembly period was as follows: 1990-92 -- "Behold the Harvest"; 1992-94 -- "Laborers for the Harvest"; 1994-96 -- "Reaping the Harvest"; 1996-98 -- "Caring for the Harvest"; and 1998-2000 -- "The Spirit of the Harvest." The passion of Project 2000 was expressed in the following quote: "The driving force of the church has been and must remain godly compassion for the untiring efforts to win the lost of our world. With this emphasis, we make no attempt to glamorize the year 2000, nor would we intend even to hint that the year 2000 has any scriptural significance. We wish to highlight the urgency of the hour, to capitalize on the present moment, to make use of our opportunity for reaching this generation with the gospel" (*Behold the Harvest*, A Guide for Laity, 1990).

The 1990 General Assembly expanded the ministerial authority of lady ministers, granting them the same authorities as male ministers at the exhorter and licensed ranks. This gave the female licensed minister the authority to perform pastoral duties such as baptize converts, receive members into local church membership, administer communion, and solemnize marriages.

The 1990 General Assembly lengthened the term of office for state overseers from a maximum four years in one state to a possible six years, provided the state overseer receives a seventy-five percent vote by the ministers of that state and provided that the General Executive Committee deems the extension of another two year term to be advisable. The 1992 General Assembly extended the tenure of a state overseer to a maximum of twelve years in non-mission states. The Minutes further state that the state overseer may serve all or part of his tenure in any state or number of states. He may be eligible for reappointment as a state overseer after serving in some other capacity for at least two years.

In the fall of 1990, the Church of God Department of Benevolence acquired a new facility, located near Ocala, Florida, to care for homeless and troubled children. The facility was named the "Heart of Florida Youth Ranch."

Winterfest 1991 saw 14,485 Church of God youths gathered at five sites across the United States for a weekend of spiritual enrichment and fellowship. Winterfest 1992 reached over 17,000 youths from seven regions across the United States. Winterfest 1993 attracted over 19,000 youth and sponsors.

In 1991 and 1992, new religious freedom came to the former communist countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The Church of God moved quickly into these new areas of harvest.

In March 1991, *Christianity Today* magazine featured an article which listed the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) as the fastest growing denomination in the world. This was based on percentage of growth world-wide between 1965 and 1985.

In March 1992, the General Executive Committee announced the formation of the first Department of Music Ministries, with Dr. Delton Alford as the first director. The Church of God School of Theology set a record enrollment in the Spring of 1992 with 268 students. In July 1992, the membership of the Church of God outside the United States and Canada went over the two million mark with a total of 2,079,495 members.

In 1992, the Western School of Christian Ministries replaced West Coast Christian College. This was seen at the time as a great move for the west in development of a college without walls. In addition to the on-campus programs in Fresno, California, the school conducted extension classes in many major cities in the west. The Reverend W.A. Davis was appointed as the director of the Western School of Christian Ministries. In 2000, the Western School of Christian Ministries was merged into the School of Ministry.

At the 64th General Assembly (1992) in New Orleans, Louisiana the following General Executive Committee members were elected:

General Overseer	R. Lamar Vest
First Assistant General Overseer	Robert White
Second Assistant General Overseer	John D. Nichols
Third Assistant General Overseer	Ray H. Hughes, Sr.
General Secretary-Treasurer	Robert E. Fisher

The 64th General Assembly (1992) of the Church of God convened in New Orleans, Louisiana. Over 15,000 delegates registered. Two measures passed during the General Assembly were of historic proportion. One measure allowed women the voting and speaking privileges in the General Assembly business sessions, making the first vote cast in which women took part the re-election of Dr. R. Lamar Vest as general overseer. Women had been silenced from voting since 1920. The other measure of historic significance was the approval under certain conditions to ordain men who have been divorced and remarried, if otherwise qualified.

The 1992 General Assembly was historic with the gathering of Church of God educators from all over the world in a unique International Conference of Educators. The conference focused on reports from every part of the world. The reports were written in English and Spanish and verbally translated utilizing headsets as the reports were presented.

As part of the conference, the General Board of Education presented to Dr. James M. Beaty, dean of the School of Theology, the 1992 Distinguished Educator Award. The recipient of this award is selected from a list of nominees submitted by church officials, national and territorial leaders from around the world, faculty and administration from all educational institutions internationally, missionary educators, and ministerial development board members internationally. In 1992, this award became the first general Church of God honor to be selected in such a truly international way. The Distinguished Educator Award had been

previously awarded since 1976 to the following recipients:

Dr. Charles R. Beach	Professor, Lee College	1976
Dr. H.D. Williams	Chairman, General Board of Education	1976
Dr. Laud O. Vaught	President, Northwest Bible College	1978
Dr. R. Hollis Gause	Dean, School of Theology	1980
Dr. R.B. Thomas	Dean, Northwest Bible College	1982
Dr. Robert E. Fisher	Director, General Education Department	1984
Dr. Yung-Chul Han	President, Korean Theological Seminary	1986
Dr. Ray H. Hughes, Sr.	Assistant General Overseer	1988

The General Board of Education also presented a certificate of recognition to Dr. Robert E. Fisher; this award was in recognition of his forty-one years in the ministry and for his outstanding leadership in the field of education and ministerial development.

The 64th General Assembly (1992) focused around the theme "Laborers for the Harvest." This General Assembly placed great emphasis on internationalization and world evangelization. An aggressive urban ministry to world-class cities was adopted. A battle theme called "MISSION AMERICA" was announced by the general overseer as the theme for new efforts to reach the sprawling urban cities in the United States.

The title of the general overseer's opening address was "Beyond the Open Door." Dr. Vest shared how God has placed before the church, since the last General Assembly, an open door. He said, "Beyond the open door we have found an unbelievable challenge, potential, opportunity, and anointing to reach this world. The Church of God will go, like a mighty army, beyond the open doors to the urban cities of the world, to the great cities of America, to China, Russia, and beyond!"

One example of the celebration of global evangelism by the Church of God was the 70th anniversary of the Church of God in Romania.

The "Mission America" Disaster Relief program was actively involved in several crisis in 1992. During 1993 and the first quarter of 1994, the United States, as well as other countries, experienced one disaster after another. Floods, fires, mudslides, earthquakes, record cold and snow, tornados, etc. had devastated many lives. The Mission America program and the Church of God Men of Action were recognized by the news media for bringing relief to many hurting people.

The Church of God declared 1993 as the year of the Lay Minister. The Office of Ministerial Development announced the launching of a new program entitled Lay Leadership Development. This program was designed to assist pastors in motivating and training lay leaders. The program is divided into two levels with each level lasting six months. LLD levels one and two are required for certification as a lay minister representing a local church.

The April 5, 1993, issue of *Time* magazine put together a graph which showed the Church of God as the fastest growing denomination in America from 1965-1989, with a growth of 183 percent.

Lydia Lauster, the wife of Herman Lauster, who was the matriarch of the Church of God in Germany and had been a faithful servant in the world evangelism effort died on March 19, 1993 at the age of ninety-one.

The Ministry to the Military celebrated its thirtieth anniversary at the November 1993 European Retreat.

In 1993, Ellis Hall, one of Lee College's dormitories for men, was torched by arsonists. Miraculously, all seventy-two residents escaped without the loss of life to anyone. A new dorm, named Atkins-Ellis Hall, was built on the Lee college campus to replace Ellis Hall.

During the winter of 1994, over 22,000 Church of God young people gathered at nine Winterfest sites across the United States for a special time of worship and praise.

General Overseer R. Lamar Vest was elected second vice-chairman of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) at their annual convention, March 6-8, 1994, in Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas. In March of 1996, he was elected as first vice-chairman of NAE.

The Ministerial Internship Program (founded by Dr. Robert E. Fisher in 1978) graduated its 10,000th intern at the end of the 1993-94 term.

The 65th General Assembly (1994) was in San Antonio, Texas. The following General Executive Committee was elected by the General Assembly:

- General Overseer Robert White
- First Assistant General Overseer Ray H. Hughes, Sr.
- Second Assistant General Overseer G. Dennis McGuire
- Third Assistant General Overseer Robert E. Fisher
- General Secretary-Treasurer Walter P. Atkinson

The theme of the 1994 General Assembly was "Reaping the Harvest." During the General Assembly, the International Conference of Educators presented the Distinguished Educator Award to Dr. Paul Conn, president of Lee College.

The year 1995 became marked by an emphasis on a "solemn General Assembly." The church was called to repentance, prayer, and fasting. The response was a powerful emphasis on personal holiness and renewal.

On October 6, 1995, the Gereja Bethel Church of God in Indonesia celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. In 1997, the Gereja Bethel Church reported a membership of approximately 1.5 million members. Bishop (Pdt.) A. Soerjadi served as the national overseer. In 1998, Soehandoko Wirhaspati was elected national overseer of Indonesia.

In the spring and summer of 1996, the Church of God faced a crisis in leadership resulting in the removal of Robert White as general overseer. Ray H. Hughes, Sr. filled the vacancy of general overseer for the remaining time until the 1996 General Assembly.

The theme for the 66th General Assembly (1996) in Indianapolis, Indiana, was “Celebrating Our Heritage: A Century of Holy Spirit Revival.” The following General Executive Committee was elected:

- General Overseer Paul L. Walker
- First Assistant General Overseer R. Lamar Vest
- Second Assistant General Overseer G. Dennis McGuire
- Third Assistant General Overseer T.L. Lowery
- General Secretary-Treasurer Bill F. Sheeks

At the General Assembly in 1996, the General Board of Education expanded the Distinguished Educator Award to two recipients. One award is presented to a faculty educator and the other is designated as a leadership administration award. Dr. Esdras Betancourt, the director of Hispanic Ministries, was presented the Leadership Award, and Dr. Hector Camacho, associate professor at Lee College, was presented the Faculty Award.

In October 1996, the Church of God Theological Seminary in Romania celebrated its twentieth anniversary and moved into a new building, which was the 1996 YWEA project.

During 1997, the Church of God educational institutions had several major accomplishments, the Ministerial Internship Program was operating in 42 countries and ten languages. In March, Han Young Theological University in Seoul, Korea, became the first accredited university in the Church of God with Dr. Yung-Chul Han continuing as president. In May, Lee College became Lee University now offering master’s degrees in several areas. Also, the Church of God School of Theology changed its name to the Church of God Theological Seminary.

In the fall of 1997, the United Assemblies and the Irene Conference of the Full Gospel Church of God in South Africa were reunified into one organization. This was a great answer to prayer and a further step in the racial reconciliation of South Africa. R. Lamar Vest, first assistant general overseer, led in the negotiations for reunification and moderated the special reconciliation conference in October, 1997.

In August, 1997, the Church of God World Missions Department, in cooperation with the Board of Church Ministries, hosted a historical “Congress on World Evangelization.” Delegates from around the world gathered in Cleveland, Tennessee, for three powerful days of worship, prayer, and dialogue focusing on the theme “Declare His Glory Among the Nations.” World Missions Director Gene D. Rice described this gathering as one of the most effective united efforts ever undertaken by the various departments of the International Offices of the Church of God.

NOTE: From the 67th General Assembly (1998) forward, this historical summary will include a more detailed listing of elected leaders in order to provide a more contemporary understanding of who are current leaders in the Church of God.

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT FROM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

by Al Behel

The modern day charismatic movement, with its accompanying "tongue-speaking" and "miracle-working," has produced a variety of emotions and reactions on the part of religious people around the world. Some view the movement with excitement, hope, and anticipation, while others view it with concern, fear and doubt. The movement is no longer confined to lower socio-economic groups, but penetrates every level of society. Although from a historical standpoint, it was found primarily among fundamentalist groups who were basically illiterate, there are few churches today, either Catholic or Protestant, that have escaped the influence of the movement. Since the movement has become a matter of concern to countless religious people and presently a matter of concern to the body of Christ itself, this paper is an attempt to examine the practice and teaching of modern charismatic advocates in the light of the Scriptures.

Is the modern charismatic movement from God? or, is it merely the product of the mind (conscious or unconscious) and emotion of man? These questions can only be answered by a careful examination of Biblical teaching. This paper has three purposes: (1) to present the claims of modern day charismatics; (2) to consider these claims in the light of the New Testament; and (3) to suggest an appropriate attitude for the church toward this movement.

What Do Charismatics Believe and Practice?

Although there may exist some minor differences in practices, most charismatics believe that they possess spiritual gifts which have been provided to them by the Holy Spirit. The most prominent gift which seems to accompany this "baptism of the Holy Spirit" is the gift of tongues, or "glossalalia." Some advocates claim to possess only the gift of tongues while others claim the gift of healing and the power to perform other miracles. According to those who practice glossalalia today as well as those who have objectively studied the phenomenon, three characteristics are present in tongue-speaking: (1) the speech is uncontrolled or spontaneous--not consciously produced by the speaker; (2) the speaker does not understand the "language," and with the exception of some phrases, it is unintelligible to the listeners; and (3) the speech has some characteristics of a foreign language.

Some glossalalists claim to speak in "unknown tongues" or through "ecstatic utterances." Others claim only to possess a special "prayer language" through which they are enabled to commune more deeply with God. Although the advocates usually admit that the gift of tongues is not "necessary" to being a Christian, most become evangelistic on behalf of the phenomenon. There are some advocates who believe that one must have received the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" with its accompanying gift of tongues if he is to be a Christian. Tongues are considered the "evidence" of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Since tongue-speaking is so closely identified with the Charismatic movement, it is often referred to as "the tongue-speaking movement." Another term used to identify the movement is "Neo-Pentecostal." A distinction should be made in the "Pentecostal" and "Neo-Pentecostal" movements. The Pentecostal movement takes its beginning from the Holiness movement in the latter part of the nineteenth century, finally solidifying into a distinct, separate movement around 1900 under the influence of Charles F. Parham. In late 1900 Mr. Parham led a group of some 40 students in a search for the baptism in the Holy Spirit with tongue-speaking as its evidence. Following many weeks of intense search for the baptism, Agnes Ozman, a former Methodist student associated with the Holiness movement, began to speak in syllables no one could understand in January, 1901, following the laying on of hands. From that time on the movement began to grow and spread throughout the world. The "Neo-Pentecostal" movement is so labeled because of its similarity to the former movement in the early part of this century. It is not associated with Pentecostal denominations, but encompasses a much broader segment of the religious community, crossing both denominational and cultural lines. Included in the Neo-Pentecostal movement are "mainline" Protestant denominations, Roman Catholics, and even Jews. The present movement is generally traced for its beginning to Demas Shakarian, a wealthy businessman, who founded the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI) in 1953 in Los Angeles. This organization was founded for the purpose of spreading the charismatic doctrine of spiritual gifts, especially the gift of tongues as the evidence of Holy Spirit baptism. Since that time many other groups have become involved in propagating charismatic doctrines, with some minor variations in their beliefs. Nevertheless, most present day charismatics generally accept (1) tongue-speaking as both possible and desirable today, (2) the baptism in the Holy Spirit for our age, (3) other gifts such as interpretation of tongues, healings, etc., and (4) fellowship with other charismatics regardless of official church membership.

What Does The Bible Say About Miracles and Spiritual Gifts?

In the New Testament one finds, not only several verses teaching about spiritual gifts, but at least three complete chapters as well (cf. I Corinthians 12, 13, 14). This part of our discussion will be divided into three sections: (1) the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, (2) the method of receiving miraculous gifts, and (3) an examination of scriptures relating to the subject of spiritual gifts.

1. The Baptism In The Holy Spirit. Several baptisms are mentioned in the New Testament, i.e., the baptism of John (John 1:33); the baptism of suffering to which Christ referred (Luke 12:50); the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5,8); and baptism into Christ (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:26,27). Paul told the Ephesians several years after the advent of Christianity, "there is ...one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5). Did the Ephesians understand this as being the baptism in the Holy Spirit?, or some other baptism? When Paul first met with the Ephesian Christians (Acts 19) he inquired if they had received the Holy Spirit when they believed. They responded that they "did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given." Then Paul asked, "Into what then were you baptized? And they said, "Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the

people that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 19:2-5). After their baptism, Paul laid his hands upon them, and they received miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. Their baptism was the same baptism taught by Peter on Pentecost (Acts 2:38) and administered to the Samaritans by the evangelist Philip (Acts 8). In all of these cases their baptism was a baptism in water in the name of Jesus Christ "for the remission of sins." This is the one baptism recognized by Paul in Ephesians 4.

Following his resurrection from the dead and the giving of the Great Commission, Jesus told his eleven disciples, "You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:48-49). Earlier he had given them the promise of the Father: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me: and ye also bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning...Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come" (John 14:26; 16:13). In Acts 1, still on Mount Olivet just before his ascension into heaven, Luke describes the conversation between Jesus and the eleven in greater detail. In the following passage Luke continues the narrative which he began in the 24th chapter of his gospel.

"The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the APOSTLES whom he had chosen: to whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God: and, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the PROMISE OF THE FATHER, which, said he, ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but YE shall be BAPTIZED in the HOLY SPIRIT not many days hence...But YE shall receive POWER when the HOLY SPIRIT is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:1-5, 8 - emphasis mine, AB).

In the latter part of Acts 1, after Jesus had ascended to the Father, the eleven selected two men and put them before God for his appointment of one to apostleship. After praying and casting lots, Matthias was selected to fill Judas' place, and the last verse of Acts 1 says "...and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." The next verse (Acts 2:1) continues, "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, THEY were all together in one place. And suddenly there came FROM HEAVEN a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where THEY were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting

asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each of them. And THEY were all filled with the HOLY SPIRIT, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:1-5 - emphasis mine, AB).

From these passages note: (1) the promise of the Father was made to the apostles; (2) the promise involved the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit; (3) the apostles would receive power when the Holy Spirit comes; (4) the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost in Acts 2, thus fulfilling the promise of the Father to the apostles; (5) this was the baptism in the Holy Spirit promised in Acts 1:5.

Charismatics generally believe that Holy Spirit baptism is both possible and necessary for our day. As evidence that others could receive this baptism they usually insist that the baptism in Acts 2 not only included the apostles as subjects, but also the 120 persons assembled together in Acts 1:15, and that Cornelius and his household received Holy Spirit baptism. Both of these thoughts should be explored in this discussion.

How many persons received the baptism in the Holy Spirit on Pentecost? In Acts 2:1 Luke records, "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, THEY were all together in one place." Does the pronoun "they" refer to the twelve apostles only, or does it include the 120 mentioned in Acts 1:15? The preceding verse says "...and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." In both Greek and English, a personal pronoun takes as its antecedent the preceding personal noun or subject, either specified or understood. It is poor exegesis, either in Greek or English, to skip eleven verses to find the antecedent if an acceptable (proper gender, number, etc.) antecedent is available in the immediate context. In Acts 1:26 the noun "apostles" agrees with the pronoun "they" in both number and gender, and, consequently, is an acceptable antecedent. Hence, those referred to in Acts 2 as the recipients of Holy Spirit baptism must be the "apostles." This agrees grammatically as well as contextually.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit of Cornelius and his household is a more legitimate question regarding the possibility of persons other than the apostles receiving Holy Spirit baptism. But let us consider the case in detail. Luke describes Cornelius as a "devout man who feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." (Acts 10:2). Cornelius was instructed by an angel of God to send for Peter "who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shall be saved, thou and thy house" (Acts 11:14). In compliance with the angel's direction, Cornelius sent servants to Joppa to bring Peter. Just before the servants arrived in Joppa, Peter was on the house top in prayer, during which time he fell into a trance. The Lord showed Peter through the vision that, whereas it had been considered unlawful for a Jew to go to the Gentiles, that he was to no longer "call any man common or unclean." The purpose of Peter's vision was to show to Peter that God had accepted the Gentiles on the same basis as the Jews, and in "every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:35). As Peter "began to speak" (Acts 11:15), the Holy Spirit "fell on them that heard the word. And they of the circumcision that believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 10:44-45)

Peter later used this incident to prove to his fellow Jews that God had accepted the Gentiles into the church (Acts 11:1-3, 16-18). At the Jerusalem conference in Acts 15 Peter used this same incident again to prove that God had accepted the Gentiles into Christ without circumcision. Peter said, "Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, who knoweth the heart, bear them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as He did unto us; and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:7-9). The purpose of Holy Spirit baptism on Cornelius and his household was to give divine evidence to those of the circumcision (Acts 11:2-3, 17) that God had accepted the Gentiles into His family on the same basis as He had accepted the Jews. The reason the Gentiles received the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" instead of the laying on of Peter's hands becomes evident in reading Acts 10 and 11. If Peter had imparted to them miraculous gifts of the Spirit through laying his hand upon them, as he had done in Samaria (Acts 8), the Christian Jews would have accused him of abusing his power by transmitting gifts to unworthy candidates. But, when they were convinced that God had given the Gentiles the Holy Spirit "even as he did unto us (apostles)," they glorified God (Acts 11:18). Peter told the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem that "...as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15), that is, directly from heaven without the laying on of apostolic hands. This case of Holy Spirit baptism was designed for a special purpose and does not serve as evidence for a general Holy Spirit baptism of all Christians today. No one in the New Testament, except the apostles and Cornelius' household, is ever described as having received baptism in the Holy Spirit.

2. The Method Of Imparting Miraculous Gifts. How did the early Christians receive their miraculous gifts? As we have observed, Cornelius' household cannot be considered the model for the reception of miraculous powers. How, then, did other Christians receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

In Acts 8 we are told of the persecution that came upon the Church following the death of Stephen which resulted in the dispersion of Christians throughout the inhabited world. We are also told that Philip went to the city of Samaria where he taught the gospel of Christ, healed the sick, and cast out demons. After a large number of the Samaritans were baptized into Christ for the remission of their sins, Peter and John came down from Jerusalem, and laid their hands upon the new converts in order that they might receive the Holy Spirit. When Simon, one of the new Christians, saw "that through the laying on of the apostles hands the Holy Spirit was given," he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:17-18). Although Philip was described earlier as being "full of the Spirit" (Acts 6:3) and had performed miracles among the Samaritans, it was necessary for apostles to come and impart the miraculous gifts. The power Simon sought to buy was not a gift of the Spirit like tongues or prophecy, but the power which the apostles possessed, so he would be able, through the laying on of his hands, to transmit the Holy Spirit.

Another case frequently misunderstood by Charismatics is recorded in Acts 19:1-7. Paul came to Ephesus and found certain disciples whom he asked, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They responded, "No, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given." Paul then asked, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." These believers had been taught and baptized by Apollos (Acts 18: 24-28) who was still teaching the baptism of John even though Christ had been crucified long before. "And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them; and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied." They did not receive the miraculous gifts of the Spirit until Paul, an apostle, had laid his hands upon them for the specific purpose of imparting to them the Holy Spirit.

Nowhere does the New Testament ever report one case of a Christian receiving the Holy Spirit without the laying on of the apostles' hands (except, of course, the apostles and those at Cornelius' house). The silence of the Scriptures on this point and the emphasis placed on the power which the apostles possessed leads one to the conclusion that only the apostles could transmit these gifts in the early church. Not only was Cornelius and his household a special case for a special purpose, they were not even Christians at the time they received the Holy Spirit, but were baptized in water for the remission of sins after their baptism in the Holy Spirit.

If this conclusion be true, i.e., that the apostles were the only ones possessing the power to transmit spiritual gifts, then with the death of the last person who had received a gift from an apostle's hand the miraculous gifts also ceased to exist.

3. Related Scriptures. To properly evaluate the Charismatic movement in our day we should not begin by looking at the claims of the movement and trying to fit them into biblical situations, but rather, we should look first at the Scriptures for an objective analysis of the practice and claims of those who possessed the gifts in the early church. When we have critically evaluated biblical teaching about spiritual gifts, then we can compare the present phenomenon with the Scriptures and not the Scriptures with the present phenomenon.

The most detailed teaching regarding spiritual gifts in the early church is that recorded in I Corinthians 12, 13, and 14. It is important that these passages be considered together as a complete unit if a proper understanding is to develop. Each reader is encouraged at this point to take a few minutes to read carefully these three chapters. This will be essential to the discussion which follows.

I Corinthians 12 deals with the problem of division which had arisen in the church over which gift was to be considered greatest among the gifts. Those who possessed the gift of tongues possessed a showy gift which could be easily displayed, thus causing the possessor to think of himself as more spiritual than those who did not have the gift of tongues. It is to this

problem that Paul addresses the 12th chapter. He also teaches in this chapter that the possession of spiritual gifts, even the gift of tongues, does not make one better than other members of the body who did not have spiritual gifts. Let us consider some key verses in this chapter.

Paul begins his discussion of spiritual gifts by reminding the Corinthians that "when you were Gentiles you were led away unto those dumb idols..." (I Cor. 12:2). This is an important fact for the proper consideration of the teaching that follows. As idol worshippers, the Corinthians had previously taken part in the pagan ceremonies in which the participants were emotionally stimulated to the point of ecstasy. According to Dodds in his book, The Greeks and the Irrational, ecstatic utterance often took place in the mystery rites of pagan worship. Paul wanted to make clear to the Corinthians that emotion or feeling cannot be trusted as a valid criterion for religious experience. Then Paul suggested that the true test of validity centers around the confession of Lordship: "...no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith, Jesus is anathema; and no man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (vs. 3). This confession would differentiate between those speaking in the Holy Spirit and those speaking through pagan enthusiasm. Obviously Paul did not mean this as the only test of validity, but, for the immediate situation in Corinth, it was the important criterion. If one spoke in a tongue which he did not understand and no interpreter was present, how could he know if he was praising the Lord or cursing him? This point is significant to Paul's discussion. These three chapters strongly emphasize that an interpreter must be present for the gift of tongues to be used.

A second fact which Paul emphasized in chapter 12 is that every gift is given by the same Spirit for the mutual "profit" or benefit of the body (I Cor. 12:7). Each gift had a specific function in the body and should only be used for the good of the whole body (12:12-30). If the Holy Spirit is the source of all the gifts, then there is no basis for human pride in the person possessing the gifts.

Although the possession of spiritual gifts was not evidence of spirituality in the Corinthian church (cf. I Cor. 3:1-3), Paul readily admits that there were "greater gifts" than tongues (12:31). Later he said, "Greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues (14:5). The real value of a tongue was to enable the speaker to instruct others of a different language about Christ (14:5).

Before proceeding to Chapter 13, two words are in need of definition. Both of these words occur in Chapter 12. The first word is "glossa," or "tongue." "Glossa" can refer to the tongue as an organ of speech, a language, or to indistinguishable sounds uttered with the tongue (see Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon). The most common usage would be either the tongue as an organ or a language. In reference to the "glossa" gift, we should consider the meaning as defined by those who are familiar with its use in the New Testament. Was the "glossa" gift a spoken language or did it refer to ecstatic utterances and prayer languages? In Acts 2 the apostles spoke with "other tongues" as the Spirit gave them utterance" (2:4). Those who heard them speak were startled at the phenomenon saying "Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? And how hear we, every man in our own language

(dialectō) wherein we were born?" (2:7-8). "Dialectō" is defined as the "language of a nation or a region" (Arndt and Gingrich). This was the understanding of those who first witnessed the exercise of the "glossa" gift. There is no indication that the gift was ever given a different meaning by Paul or any other New Testament writer. This was the real significance of "glossa" as a "sign." If the tongue speaking of the early church were nothing more than ecstatic utterances, then it was no different from the same phenomenon found among pagan worshippers. Its distinctiveness as a sign lies in the fact that persons who had never studied a given language could both speak in that language and be understood by those whose language they spoke.

Another word which should be noted is the Greek word "charisma," which means "gift." While the word "charismatic" does not appear in the New Testament, it does originate from the word "charisma." To refer to spiritual gifts as "charismatic gifts" is redundant since it means simply "gifted gifts."

Continuing with Paul's discussion of spiritual gifts in I Corinthians 13, we should observe that Chapter 12 closes with these words, "And moreover a more excellent way I show unto you" (12:31). Immediately he begins discussing the importance of love in both the exercise of the spiritual gifts and in Christian living. Paul upholds love as superior to the spiritual gifts since no gift is profitable apart from love.

Several verses in Chapter 13 need careful consideration. The first problem of interpretation arises in verse 1 in which Paul speaks of "the tongues of men and of angels." Some charismatics today interpret the ecstatic utterances as "the tongue of angels." In support of this contention they usually refer to Paul's experience of being "caught up to the third heaven" and hearing "unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (II Cor. 12:2-4). A careful consideration of this passage shows that such an interpretation is impossible. The words which Paul indicated he heard in the "third heaven" were considered "unspeakable," while the tongues of I Corinthians 13:1 are speakable. It is rather difficult to speak with certainty as to Paul's meaning in the phrase "the tongues of angels," but it is very unlikely that he was referring to an ecstatic utterance. As Dawson Walker suggests in his book The Gift of Tongues, this phrase can "best be regarded as the rhetorical amplification of the simpler genē glōssōn (tongues of men)."

Another difficult part of the passage is I Corinthians 13:8-13. In verse 8 Paul makes an inspired prediction regarding tongues, supernatural knowledge, and prophecy. He said "Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away." Note that Paul says prophecy and knowledge "shall be done away." In verses 9 and 10, he continues, "for we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." In these two verses Paul states that supernatural knowledge and prophecy will be done away when the "perfect is come." Nothing is said in these verses about tongues. Verse 8 has pointedly declared "tongues shall cease." Paul indicates that the knowledge and prophecy are "in part," and that "that which is in part shall be done away" when the "perfect is come." Most charismatics and non-charismatics agree that knowledge and prophecy as well as other miraculous gifts were intended to cease when the "perfect" comes. The disagreement centers primarily around what is meant by "when that which is perfect is come." Several theories have been advanced as possible interpretations of

"the perfect." These interpretations include (1) the second coming of Christ at the day of judgment, (2) heaven, (3) love, (4) the body of Christ, the Church, and (5) the complete revelation of God's Word, or the Bible.

The word "perfect" is the Greek word "teleion." It is an adjective in the nominative case, singular number, and in the neuter gender. What does "teleion" mean? The following definitions are acceptable from New Testament Greek: "perfect, complete, having attained the end of purpose, fullgrown, fully developed, or mature" (See Arndt-Gingrich and Thayer). Before trying to determine the best translation of the word in this passage, let us first consider the theories mentioned above.

(1) The second coming of Christ at the day of judgment. Those who hold this position generally contend that since Christ is the only perfect one, this passage refers to his return. The word for "Christ" in Greek is "Christos" and is masculine in gender. The word "teleion" (perfect) is in the neuter gender. R. L. Roberts states, "The fact that it is in the neuter gender makes it clear that it could not possibly be in reference to Christ, for it would then have to be masculine in gender." (See R. L. Roberts, "That Which Is Perfect -- I Corinthians 13:10, Restoration Quarterly, 1959, pp. 201-202). In Matthew 5:48 Jesus said, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly father is perfect." Here Jesus used the same word (teleioi, masculine form) to refer to men, indicating that it is possible for man to be "perfect" in some sense.

(2) Heaven. Is it possible that Paul had in mind the perfect state of heaven when he referred to the coming of the "perfect?" As we continue reading to the 13th verse, we notice faith, hope, and love will remain ever after the "in part" things have passed away. But faith and hope will not "abide" in heaven since faith will become sight and hope will become reality. Love continues to be love, but faith and hope will cease to exist. Yet Paul says faith and hope will remain after the passing of the spiritual gifts. If the "perfect" refers to the state of heaven, then Paul obviously did not understand that faith and hope will not exist in heaven.

(3) Could the "perfect" refer to love? Again we are faced with the same problem of gender since "love (agape) is feminine in gender and "teleion" is neuter.

(4) The body of Christ, the church. Some believe "the perfect" refers to the "body" of Christ since "body (soma) and "perfect" (teleion) agree in gender. Paul used the metaphor of the "body" (soma) in Chapter 12 in the context of spiritual gifts. Those who hold this position usually contend that Paul is teaching that spiritual gifts will cease when the church reaches a state of perfection, that is, maturity or completeness. This emphasis would agree with Paul's previous statements regarding the infancy state presently existing in the Corinthian church (I Cor. 3:1-3). It would also agree with Ephesians 4:11-16 where Paul lists several gifts (cf. I Cor. 12:28,29) of the Spirit and states that these gifts were given "for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown (teleion) man, unto the

measure of the stature of Christ; that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine..." (Eph. 4:12-14). Here Paul uses the same word (teleion) to refer to the "fullgrown" manhood which was expected of the body of Christ. This interpretation gives meaning to Paul's illustration: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child; now that I have become a man, I have put away childish things." (I Cor. 13:11) In I Corinthians 14:20, Paul again uses the masculine form of "teleion" in reference to maturity, "Brethren, be not children in mind: yet in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men (teleioi)." The word "men" does not appear in the Greek text but is understood in "teleioi," which literally means in this context, "fullgrown men." The "men" is inherent in the masculine gender. While this interpretation is very plausible, it seems to leave a few things to be desired in the exegesis.

(5) Could Paul be referring to the completed revelation of God, the Bible? Many non-charismatics have long held to this position. These individuals contend that when the Word of God was fully revealed, there would be no need for super-natural knowledge and prophecy to continue. This interpretation is feasible and possible but contains a few problems. If "the perfect" is the Bible and all spiritual gifts are to cease when the Bible is come, at what point in time was this to take place? Assuming the 96 A.D. date for the writing of the Revelation, did all gifts cease when John completed the last verse of that book? Or, did Paul have reference to the formation of the biblical canon which was not accomplished for some centuries to come? This interpretation seems ambiguous if viewed as the sole meaning of "the perfect."

This writer feels that a more defensible position is to be found in a combination of numbers 4 and 5 above, namely that the (teleion) includes both the completed revelation of God and the maturing of the body of Christ. While there were "diversities of gifts" (12:4), it was intended that these gifts be used, not for personal gain or benefit, but for the mutual benefit of the church (12:7; 14:5,26). As the church grew from infancy (as Paul did) to adulthood, the church was expected to "Put away childish things" (13:11; 14:20). During this time of growth, the Word of God was being revealed. The Word was essential to the maturing process, but a state of maturity needed to be reached in order for the church to continue growing and spreading without direct feeding from the hands of inspired teachers. The "perfect" obviously embraced more than the fragmentary knowledge and prophecy which were described as "in part." While "knowledge" and "prophecy" do not agree in gender with "perfect" (teleion), they are not required to agree since they are not equivalent to the "perfect." Paul's statement, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part" seems to imply that knowledge and prophecy (teaching) are only "part" of the complete or fullgrown state which was yet to come. Knowledge and prophecy could be considered "in part" in relation to the whole. When the church reached "adulthood," or became the "fullgrown (teleion) man" (Eph. 4:13), the Word had been revealed and the church had reached the level of growth necessary for continuing its ministry without direct dependence upon inspired teachers and apostles. Miracles were no longer necessary for the confirmation of the Word, since the Word had already been confirmed. Christianity made its advent into a world which had accepted the Old Testament

Scriptures as the full revelation of God. It was essential for the doctrine of Christ to be confirmed when it was initially given. After it was confirmed and fully established as God's Word for all men of all times, the need for confirmation no longer existed. The church was no longer dependent upon the fragmentary revelations and teachings provided through many different inspired teachers. As noted earlier in this paper, the apostles were the only ones who had the power to transmit spiritual gifts, and this was done through laying their hands upon those receiving the gifts. When the last person died who had received a spiritual gift through an apostle, then the gifts ceased to exist. This probably occurred early in the second century. At that time the Word of God had been revealed and the church had moved from infancy to adulthood.

I Corinthians 14 is of particular importance to a discussion of the modern charismatic movement. In this chapter Paul deals with the confusion created in the Corinthian church by those possessing the "glossa" gift. The chapter can be divided into four parts according to subject matter:

- (1) The gift of prophecy is greater than the gift of tongues (vss. 1-12)
- (2) The importance of interpretation in tongue-speaking (vss. 13-19)
- (3) Tongues are a sign to the unbelievers, not the believers (vss. 20-25)
- (4) Instructions for keeping down confusion in the assembly while the gift of tongues and prophecy are being used (vss. 26-40)

In verses 1-12 Paul clearly emphasized the superiority of prophecy over tongues. He shows that prophecy (teaching) edifies the church while tongues (without prophecy understood) edifies only the speaker (vss. 3-4). In verse 5 Paul said, "Now I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that you should prophecy." The word translated "that" is the Greek "hēna," which means "in order that." Hence, Paul is really saying, "The reason I would have you speak in tongues is in order that you may prophesy." There is no indication in this text that the tongues were considered by Paul as ecstatic utterances. The King James Version of the Bible has contributed to the confusion over this passage by inserting the word "unknown" in verse 2 with reference to tongues. The word "unknown" does not appear in the Greek text. The verse should read, "For the one speaking in a tongue speaks not to men, but to God; for no one hears (with understanding, AB), but in the spirit he speaks mysteries." It seems that the gift of tongues was being abused and perhaps even counterfeited by those in the Corinthian church. At least some were exercising the gift of tongues without an interpreter. Paul totally rejects this kind of use. Anyone speaking in a tongue without an interpreter speaks "not to men but to God," for no one understands him since he speaks "mysteries." "Mysteries" are nothing more than things not understood by the hearer. Contrary to the claims of modern charismatics, Paul is not encouraging the use of tongues for any reason other than teaching. Verse 9 says, "...unless you give by the tongue speech easy to be understood (literally, 'a clear word'), how shall it be known what is spoken? for you will be speaking into the air." He continues in verse 11, "If then I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be to him that speaks a barbarian (barbaros), and he that speaks will be a barbarian (barbaros) unto me." The term "barbaros" (barbarian) was commonly understood as one who spoke a foreign language (see Thayer and Arndt-Gingrich). Verse 12 re-emphasizes that all spiritual gifts are to be used for mutual edification and not for the person's own assurance.

The next section of chapter 14 (vss. 13-19) shows that tongues should not be used without an interpreter. The speaker is instructed to pray that he may interpret (vs. 13). Modern charismatics usually quote verse 14 in support of their private "prayer language," but a careful evaluation of the context will show this interpretation to be the exact opposite of Paul's meaning. He says that praying in a tongue (without an interpreter) causes the mind to be "unfruitful" (vs. 14). Then he continues, "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray also with the mind (noi)..." "Noi" (mind) literally refers to the perceptual or understanding aspect of the mind. Paul is emphasizing that in prayer, as in teaching, one should use only words which are "clear" (eusemon, verse 9).

Then Paul stresses the fact that tongues are a sign to the unbeliever while prophecy is a sign to the believer (14:20-25). Most modern day charismatics claim that their "prayer language" is for their own benefit, but Paul says tongues are for the "unbelievers." Why? An unbeliever who speaks a different tongue would be convinced that the message was from God if one who had never studied his language should suddenly speak fluently in his tongue (language).

The remainder of the chapter (26-40) merely sets forth some guidelines for the use of gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy in the church. The major point is that everything should be done unto "edifying" (vs. 28). A key verse in this discussion is verse 32, "...the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." There is no evidence in the New Testament which should lead us to conclude that a person having a spiritual gift had no power over the exercise of that gift. A person having a tongue could control the exercise of that tongue, contrary to the belief of some modern day charismatics who claim no control over their "prayer language."

What Attitude Should the Church Have Toward Modern Charismatics

How should the church deal with those involved in the charismatic movement today? Should they be extended fellowship or should fellowship be withheld?

It is the conviction of this writer that every person studying the question of spiritual gifts should not immediately be categorized as "charismatic." The Scriptures nowhere suggest that a brother be disfellowshipped for not understanding. That brother is to be studied with and taught. There is considerable difference in the person who does not fully understand and the one who is committed to an erroneous position. When an individual becomes an avowed advocate of a charismatic doctrine, then he cannot be dealt with as a weak brother, but must be dealt with as a false teacher.

The Bible teaches that an individual may have differing beliefs about matters of opinion (Romans 14) and still be in fellowship. The Scriptures also teach that we should be tolerant with those who are weak in faith (Rom 14:1). But when a person teaches a doctrine not supported by the Scriptures, he cannot be encouraged or fellowshipped in his error.

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THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT FROM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

by Al Behel

The modern day charismatic movement, with its accompanying "tongue-speaking" and "miracle-working," has produced a variety of emotions and reactions on the part of religious people around the world. Some view the movement with excitement, hope, and anticipation, while others view it with concern, fear and doubt. The movement is no longer confined to lower socio-economic groups, but penetrates every level of society. Although from a historical standpoint, it was found primarily among fundamentalist groups who were basically illiterate, there are few churches today, either Catholic or Protestant, that have escaped the influence of the movement. Since the movement has become a matter of concern to countless religious people and presently a matter of concern to the body of Christ itself, this paper is an attempt to examine the practice and teaching of modern charismatic advocates in the light of the Scriptures.

Is the modern charismatic movement from God? or, is it merely the product of the mind (conscious or unconscious) and emotion of man? These questions can only be answered by a careful examination of Biblical teaching. This paper has three purposes: (1) to present the claims of modern day charismatics; (2) to consider these claims in the light of the New Testament; and (3) to suggest an appropriate attitude for the church toward this movement.

What Do Charismatics Believe and Practice?

Although there may exist some minor differences in practices, most charismatics believe that they possess spiritual gifts which have been provided to them by the Holy Spirit. The most prominent gift which seems to accompany this "baptism of the Holy Spirit" is the gift of tongues, or "glossalalia." Some advocates claim to possess only the gift of tongues while others claim the gift of healing and the power to perform other miracles. According to those who practice glossalalia today as well as those who have objectively studied the phenomenon, three characteristics are present in tongue-speaking: (1) the speech is uncontrolled or spontaneous--not consciously produced by the speaker; (2) the speaker does not understand the "language," and with the exception of some phrases, it is unintelligible to the listeners; and (3) the speech has some characteristics of a foreign language.

Some glossalalists claim to speak in "unknown tongues" or through "ecstatic utterances." Others claim only to possess a special "prayer language" through which they are enabled to commune more deeply with God. Although the advocates usually admit that the gift of tongues is not "necessary" to being a Christian, most become evangelistic on behalf of the phenomenon. There are some advocates who believe that one must have received the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" with its accompanying gift of tongues if he is to be a Christian. Tongues are considered the "evidence" of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Since tongue-speaking is so closely identified with the Charismatic movement, it is often referred to as "the tongue-speaking movement." Another term used to identify the movement is "Neo-Pentecostal." A distinction should be made in the "Pentecostal" and "Neo-Pentecostal" movements. The Pentecostal movement takes its beginning from the Holiness movement in the latter part of the nineteenth century, finally solidifying into a distinct, separate movement around 1900 under the influence of Charles F. Parham. In late 1900 Mr. Parham led a group of some 40 students in a search for the baptism in the Holy Spirit with tongue-speaking as its evidence. Following many weeks of intense search for the baptism, Agnes Ozman, a former Methodist student associated with the Holiness movement, began to speak in syllables no one could understand in January, 1901, following the laying on of hands. From that time on the movement began to grow and spread throughout the world. The "Neo-Pentecostal" movement is so labeled because of its similarity to the former movement in the early part of this century. It is not associated with Pentecostal denominations, but encompasses a much broader segment of the religious community, crossing both denominational and cultural lines. Included in the Neo-Pentecostal movement are "mainline" Protestant denominations, Roman Catholics, and even Jews. The present movement is generally traced for its beginning to Demas Shakarian, a wealthy businessman, who founded the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI) in 1953 in Los Angeles. This organization was founded for the purpose of spreading the charismatic doctrine of spiritual gifts, especially the gift of tongues as the evidence of Holy Spirit baptism. Since that time many other groups have become involved in propagating charismatic doctrines, with some minor variations in their beliefs. Nevertheless, most present day charismatics generally accept (1) tongue-speaking as both possible and desirable today, (2) the baptism in the Holy Spirit for our age, (3) other gifts such as interpretation of tongues, healings, etc., and (4) fellowship with other charismatics regardless of official church membership.

What Does The Bible Say About Miracles and Spiritual Gifts?

In the New Testament one finds, not only several verses teaching about spiritual gifts, but at least three complete chapters as well (cf. I Corinthians 12, 13, 14). This part of our discussion will be divided into three sections: (1) the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, (2) the method of receiving miraculous gifts, and (3) an examination of scriptures relating to the subject of spiritual gifts.

1. The Baptism In The Holy Spirit. Several baptisms are mentioned in the New Testament, i.e., the baptism of John (John 1:33); the baptism of suffering to which Christ referred (Luke 12:50); the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5,8); and baptism into Christ (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; Galations 3:26,27). Paul told the Ephesians several years after the advent of Christianity, "there is ...one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5). Did the Ephesians understand this as being the baptism in the Holy Spirit?, or some other baptism? When Paul first met with the Ephesian Christians (Acts 19) he inquired if they had received the Holy Spirit when they believed. They responded that they "did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given." Then Paul asked, "Into what then were you baptized? And they said, "Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the

people that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 19:2-5). After their baptism, Paul laid his hands upon them, and they received miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. Their baptism was the same baptism taught by Peter on Pentecost (Acts 2:38) and administered to the Samaritans by the evangelist Philip (Acts 8). In all of these cases their baptism was a baptism in water in the name of Jesus Christ "for the remission of sins." This is the one baptism recognized by Paul in Ephesians 4.

Following his resurrection from the dead and the giving of the Great Commission, Jesus told his eleven disciples, "You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:48-49). Earlier he had given them the promise of the Father: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me: and ye also bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning...Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come" (John 14:26; 16:13). In Acts 1, still on Mount Olivet just before his ascension into heaven, Luke describes the conversation between Jesus and the eleven in greater detail. In the following passage Luke continues the narrative which he began in the 24th chapter of his gospel.

"The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the APOSTLES whom he had chosen: to whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God: and, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the PROMISE OF THE FATHER, which, said he, ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but YE shall be BAPTIZED in the HOLY SPIRIT not many days hence....But YE shall receive POWER when the HOLY SPIRIT is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:1-5, 8 - emphasis mine, AB).

In the latter part of Acts 1, after Jesus had ascended to the Father, the eleven selected two men and put them before God for his appointment of one to apostleship. After praying and casting lots, Matthias was selected to fill Judas' place, and the last verse of Acts 1 says "...and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." The next verse (Acts 2:1) continues, "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, THEY were all together in one place. And suddenly there came FROM HEAVEN a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where THEY were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting

asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each of them. And THEY were all filled with the HOLY SPIRIT, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:1-5 - emphasis mine, AB).

From these passages note: (1) the promise of the Father was made to the apostles; (2) the promise involved the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit; (3) the apostles would receive power when the Holy Spirit comes; (4) the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost in Acts 2, thus fulfilling the promise of the Father to the apostles; (5) this was the baptism in the Holy Spirit promised in Acts 1:5.

Charismatics generally believe that Holy Spirit baptism is both possible and necessary for our day. As evidence that others could receive this baptism they usually insist that the baptism in Acts 2 not only included the apostles as subjects, but also the 120 persons assembled together in Acts 1:15, and that Cornelius and his household received Holy Spirit baptism. Both of these thoughts should be explored in this discussion.

How many persons received the baptism in the Holy Spirit on Pentecost? In Acts 2:1 Luke records, "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, THEY were all together in one place." Does the pronoun "they" refer to the twelve apostles only, or does it include the 120 mentioned in Acts 1:15? The preceding verse says "...and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." In both Greek and English, a personal pronoun takes as its antecedent the preceding personal noun or subject, either specified or understood. It is poor exegesis, either in Greek or English, to skip eleven verses to find the antecedent if an acceptable (proper gender, number, etc.) antecedent is available in the immediate context. In Acts 1:26 the noun "apostles" agrees with the pronoun "they" in both number and gender, and, consequently, is an acceptable antecedent. Hence, those referred to in Acts 2 as the recipients of Holy Spirit baptism must be the "apostles." This agrees grammatically as well as contextually.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit of Cornelius and his household is a more legitimate question regarding the possibility of persons other than the apostles receiving Holy Spirit baptism. But let us consider the case in detail. Luke describes Cornelius as a "devout man who feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." (Acts 10:2). Cornelius was instructed by an angel of God to send for Peter "who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shall be saved, thou and thy house" (Acts 11:14). In compliance with the angel's direction, Cornelius sent servants to Joppa to bring Peter. Just before the servants arrived in Joppa, Peter was on the house top in prayer, during which time he fell into a trance. The Lord showed Peter through the vision that, whereas it had been considered unlawful for a Jew to go to the Gentiles, that he was to no longer "call any man common or unclean." The purpose of Peter's vision was to show to Peter that God had accepted the Gentiles on the same basis as the Jews, and in "every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:35). As Peter "began to speak" (Acts 11:15), the Holy Spirit "fell on them that heard the word. And they of the circumcision that believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 10:44-45)

Peter later used this incident to prove to his fellow Jews that God had accepted the Gentiles into the church (Acts 11:1-3, 16-18). At the Jerusalem conference in Acts 15 Peter used this same incident again to prove that God had accepted the Gentiles into Christ without circumcision. Peter said, "Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, who knoweth the heart, bear them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as He did unto us; and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:7-9). The purpose of Holy Spirit baptism on Cornelius and his household was to give divine evidence to those of the circumcision (Acts 11:2-3, 17) that God had accepted the Gentiles into His family on the same basis as He had accepted the Jews. The reason the Gentiles received the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" instead of the laying on of Peter's hands becomes evident in reading Acts 10 and 11. If Peter had imparted to them miraculous gifts of the Spirit through laying his hand upon them, as he had done in Samaria (Acts 8), the Christian Jews would have accused him of abusing his power by transmitting gifts to unworthy candidates. But, when they were convinced that God had given the Gentiles the Holy Spirit "even as he did unto us (apostles)," they glorified God (Acts 11:18). Peter told the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem that "...as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15), that is, directly from heaven without the laying on of apostolic hands. This case of Holy Spirit baptism was designed for a special purpose and does not serve as evidence for a general Holy Spirit baptism of all Christians today. No one in the New Testament, except the apostles and Cornelius' household, is ever described as having received baptism in the Holy Spirit.

2. The Method Of Imparting Miraculous Gifts. How did the early Christians receive their miraculous gifts? As we have observed, Cornelius' household cannot be considered the model for the reception of miraculous powers. How, then, did other Christians receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

In Acts 8 we are told of the persecution that came upon the Church following the death of Stephen which resulted in the dispersion of Christians throughout the inhabited world. We are also told that Philip went to the city of Samaria where he taught the gospel of Christ, healed the sick, and cast out demons. After a large number of the Samaritans were baptized into Christ for the remission of their sins, Peter and John came down from Jerusalem, and laid their hands upon the new converts in order that they might receive the Holy Spirit. When Simon, one of the new Christians, saw "that through the laying on of the apostles hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:17-18). Although Philip was described earlier as being "full of the Spirit" (Acts 6:3) and had performed miracles among the Samaritans, it was necessary for apostles to come and impart the miraculous gifts. The power Simon sought to buy was not a gift of the Spirit like tongues or prophecy, but the power which the apostles possessed, so he would be able, through the laying on of his hands, to transmit the Holy Spirit.

Another case frequently misunderstood by Charismatics is recorded in Acts 19:1-7. Paul came to Ephesus and found certain disciples whom he asked, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They responded, "No, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given." Paul then asked, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." These believers had been taught and baptized by Apollos (Acts 18: 24-28) who was still teaching the baptism of John even though Christ had been crucified long before. "And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them; and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied." They did not receive the miraculous gifts of the Spirit until Paul, an apostle, had laid his hands upon them for the specific purpose of imparting to them the Holy Spirit.

Nowhere does the New Testament ever report one case of a Christian receiving the Holy Spirit without the laying on of the apostles' hands (except, of course, the apostles and those at Cornelius' house). The silence of the Scriptures on this point and the emphasis placed on the power which the apostles possessed leads one to the conclusion that only the apostles could transmit these gifts in the early church. Not only was Cornelius and his household a special case for a special purpose, they were not even Christians at the time they received the Holy Spirit, but were baptized in water for the remission of sins after their baptism in the Holy Spirit.

If this conclusion be true, i.e., that the apostles were the only ones possessing the power to transmit spiritual gifts, then with the death of the last person who had received a gift from an apostle's hand the miraculous gifts also ceased to exist.

3. Related Scriptures. To properly evaluate the Charismatic movement in our day we should not begin by looking at the claims of the movement and trying to fit them into biblical situations, but rather, we should look first at the Scriptures for an objective analysis of the practice and claims of those who possessed the gifts in the early church. When we have critically evaluated biblical teaching about spiritual gifts, then we can compare the present phenomenon with the Scriptures and not the Scriptures with the present phenomenon.

The most detailed teaching regarding spiritual gifts in the early church is that recorded in I Corinthians 12, 13, and 14. It is important that these passages be considered together as a complete unit if a proper understanding is to develop. Each reader is encouraged at this point to take a few minutes to read carefully these three chapters. This will be essential to the discussion which follows.

I Corinthians 12 deals with the problem of division which had arisen in the church over which gift was to be considered greatest among the gifts. Those who possessed the gift of tongues possessed a showy gift which could be easily displayed, thus causing the possessor to think of himself as more spiritual than those who did not have the gift of tongues. It is to this

problem that Paul addresses the 12th chapter. He also teaches in this chapter that the possession of spiritual gifts, even the gift of tongues, does not make one better than other members of the body who did not have spiritual gifts. Let us consider some key verses in this chapter.

Paul begins his discussion of spiritual gifts by reminding the Corinthians that "when you were Gentiles you were led away unto those dumb idols..." (I Cor. 12:2). This is an important fact for the proper consideration of the teaching that follows. As idol worshippers, the Corinthians had previously taken part in the pagan ceremonies in which the participants were emotionally stimulated to the point of ecstasy. According to Dodds in his book, The Greeks and the Irrational, ecstatic utterance often took place in the mystery rites of pagan worship. Paul wanted to make clear to the Corinthians that emotion or feeling cannot be trusted as a valid criterion for religious experience. Then Paul suggested that the true test of validity centers around the confession of Lordship: "...no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith, Jesus is anathema; and no man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (vs. 3). This confession would differentiate between those speaking in the Holy Spirit and those speaking through pagan enthusiasm. Obviously Paul did not mean this as the only test of validity, but, for the immediate situation in Corinth, it was the important criterion. If one spoke in a tongue which he did not understand and no interpreter was present, how could he know if he was praising the Lord or cursing him? This point is significant to Paul's discussion. These three chapters strongly emphasize that an interpreter must be present for the gift of tongues to be used.

A second fact which Paul emphasized in chapter 12 is that every gift is given by the same Spirit for the mutual "profit" or benefit of the body (I Cor. 12:7). Each gift had a specific function in the body and should only be used for the good of the whole body (12:12-30). If the Holy Spirit is the source of all the gifts, then there is no basis for human pride in the person possessing the gifts.

Although the possession of spiritual gifts was not evidence of spirituality in the Corinthian church (cf. I Cor. 3:1-3), Paul readily admits that there were "greater gifts" than tongues (12:31). Later he said, "Greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues (14:5). The real value of a tongue was to enable the speaker to instruct others of a different language about Christ (14:5).

Before proceeding to Chapter 13, two words are in need of definition. Both of these words occur in Chapter 12. The first word is "glossa," or "tongue." "Glossa" can refer to the tongue as an organ of speech, a language, or to indistinguishable sounds uttered with the tongue (see Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon). The most common usage would be either the tongue as an organ or a language. In reference to the "glossa" gift, we should consider the meaning as defined by those who are familiar with its use in the New Testament. Was the "glossa" gift a spoken language or did it refer to ecstatic utterances and prayer languages? In Acts 2 the apostles spoke with "other tongues" as the Spirit gave them utterance" (2:4). Those who heard them speak were startled at the phenomenon saying "Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? And how hear we, every man in our own language

(dialectō) wherein we were born?" (2:7-8). "Dialectō" is defined as the "language of a nation or a region" (Arndt and Gingrich). This was the understanding of those who first witnessed the exercise of the "glossa" gift. There is no indication that the gift was ever given a different meaning by Paul or any other New Testament writer. This was the real significance of "glossa" as a "sign." If the tongue speaking of the early church were nothing more than ecstatic utterances, then it was no different from the same phenomenon found among pagan worshippers. Its distinctiveness as a sign lies in the fact that persons who had never studied a given language could both speak in that language and be understood by those whose language they spoke.

Another word which should be noted is the Greek word "charisma," which means "gift." While the word "charismatic" does not appear in the New Testament, it does originate from the word "charisma." To refer to spiritual gifts as "charismatic gifts" is redundant since it means simply "gifted gifts."

Continuing with Paul's discussion of spiritual gifts in I Corinthians 13, we should observe that Chapter 12 closes with these words, "And moreover a more excellent way I show unto you" (12:31). Immediately he begins discussing the importance of love in both the exercise of the spiritual gifts and in Christian living. Paul upholds love as superior to the spiritual gifts since no gift is profitable apart from love.

Several verses in Chapter 13 need careful consideration. The first problem of interpretation arises in verse 1 in which Paul speaks of "the tongues of men and of angels." Some charismatics today interpret the ecstatic utterances as "the tongue of angels." In support of this contention they usually refer to Paul's experience of being "caught up to the third heaven" and hearing "unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (II Cor. 12:2-4). A careful consideration of this passage shows that such an interpretation is impossible. The words which Paul indicated he heard in the "third heaven" were considered "unspeakable," while the tongues of I Corinthians 13:1 are speakable. It is rather difficult to speak with certainty as to Paul's meaning in the phrase "the tongues of angels," but it is very unlikely that he was referring to an ecstatic utterance. As Dawson Walker suggests in his book The Gift of Tongues, this phrase can "best be regarded as the rhetorical amplification of the simpler genē glōssōn (tongues of men)."

Another difficult part of the passage is I Corinthians 13:8-13. In verse 8 Paul makes an inspired prediction regarding tongues, supernatural knowledge, and prophecy. He said "Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away." Note that Paul says prophecy and knowledge "shall be done away." In verses 9 and 10, he continues, "for we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." In these two verses Paul states that supernatural knowledge and prophecy will be done away when the "perfect is come." Nothing is said in these verses about tongues. Verse 8 has pointedly declared "tongues shall cease." Paul indicates that the knowledge and prophecy are "in part," and that "that which is in part shall be done away" when the "perfect is come." Most charismatics and non-charismatics agree that knowledge and prophecy as well as other miraculous gifts were intended to cease when the "perfect" comes. The disagreement centers primarily around what is meant by "when that which is perfect is come." Several theories have been advanced as possible interpretations of

"the perfect." These interpretations include (1) the second coming of Christ at the day of judgment, (2) heaven, (3) love, (4) the body of Christ, the Church, and (5) the complete revelation of God's Word, or the Bible.

The word "perfect" is the Greek word "teleion." It is an adjective in the nominative case, singular number, and in the neuter gender. What does "teleion" mean? The following definitions are acceptable from New Testament Greek: "perfect, complete, having attained the end of purpose, fullgrown, fully developed, or mature" (See Arndt-Gingrich and Thayer). Before trying to determine the best translation of the word in this passage, let us first consider the theories mentioned above.

(1) The second coming of Christ at the day of judgment. Those who hold this position generally contend that since Christ is the only perfect one, this passage refers to his return. The word for "Christ" in Greek is "Christos" and is masculine in gender. The word "teleion" (perfect) is in the neuter gender. R. L. Roberts states, "The fact that it is in the neuter gender makes it clear that it could not possibly be in reference to Christ, for it would then have to be masculine in gender." (See R. L. Roberts, "That Which Is Perfect -- I Corinthians 13:10, Restoration Quarterly, 1959, pp. 201-202). In Matthew 5:48 Jesus said, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly father is perfect." Here Jesus used the same word (teleioi, masculine form) to refer to men, indicating that it is possible for man to be "perfect" in some sense.

(2) Heaven. Is it possible that Paul had in mind the perfect state of heaven when he referred to the coming of the "perfect?" As we continue reading to the 13th verse, we notice faith, hope, and love will remain ever after the "in part" things have passed away. But faith and hope will not "abide" in heaven since faith will become sight and hope will become reality. Love continues to be love, but faith and hope will cease to exist. Yet Paul says faith and hope will remain after the passing of the spiritual gifts. If the "perfect" refers to the state of heaven, then Paul obviously did not understand that faith and hope will not exist in heaven.

(3) Could the "perfect" refer to love? Again we are faced with the same problem of gender since "love (agape) is feminine in gender and "teleion" is neuter.

(4) The body of Christ, the church. Some believe "the perfect" refers to the "body" of Christ since "body (soma) and "perfect" (teleion) agree in gender. Paul used the metaphor of the "body" (soma) in Chapter 12 in the context of spiritual gifts. Those who hold this position usually contend that Paul is teaching that spiritual gifts will cease when the church reaches a state of perfection, that is, maturity or completeness. This emphasis would agree with Paul's previous statements regarding the infancy state presently existing in the Corinthian church (I Cor. 3:1-3). It would also agree with Ephesians 4:11-16 where Paul lists several gifts (cf. I Cor. 12:28,29) of the Spirit and states that these gifts were given "for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown (teleion) man, unto the

measure of the stature of Christ; that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine..." (Eph. 4:12-14). Here Paul uses the same word (teleion) to refer to the "fullgrown" manhood which was expected of the body of Christ. This interpretation gives meaning to Paul's illustration: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child; now that I have become a man, I have put away childish things." (I Cor. 13:11) In I Corinthians 14:20, Paul again uses the masculine form of "teleion" in reference to maturity, "Brethren, be not children in mind: yet in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men (teleioi)." The word "men" does not appear in the Greek text but is understood in "teleioi," which literally means in this context, "fullgrown men." The "men" is inherent in the masculine gender. While this interpretation is very plausible, it seems to leave a few things to be desired in the exegesis.

(5) Could Paul be referring to the completed revelation of God, the Bible? Many non-charismatics have long held to this position. These individuals contend that when the Word of God was fully revealed, there would be no need for super-natural knowledge and prophecy to continue. This interpretation is feasible and possible but contains a few problems. If "the perfect" is the Bible and all spiritual gifts are to cease when the Bible is come, at what point in time was this to take place? Assuming the 96 A.D. date for the writing of the Revelation, did all gifts cease when John completed the last verse of that book? Or, did Paul have reference to the formation of the biblical canon which was not accomplished for some centuries to come? This interpretation seems ambiguous if viewed as the sole meaning of "the perfect."

This writer feels that a more defensible position is to be found in a combination of numbers 4 and 5 above, namely that the (teleion) includes both the completed revelation of God and the maturing of the body of Christ. While there were "diversities of gifts" (12:4), it was intended that these gifts be used, not for personal gain or benefit, but for the mutual benefit of the church (12:7; 14:5,26). As the church grew from infancy (as Paul did) to adulthood, the church was expected to "Put away childish things" (13:11; 14:20). During this time of growth, the Word of God was being revealed. The Word was essential to the maturing process, but a state of maturity needed to be reached in order for the church to continue growing and spreading without direct feeding from the hands of inspired teachers. The "perfect" obviously embraced more than the fragmentary knowledge and prophecy which were described as "in part." While "knowledge" and "prophecy" do not agree in gender with "perfect" (teleion), they are not required to agree since they are not equivalent to the "perfect." Paul's statement, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part" seems to imply that knowledge and prophecy (teaching) are only "part" of the complete or fullgrown state which was yet to come. Knowledge and prophecy could be considered "in part" in relation to the whole. When the church reached "adulthood," or became the "fullgrown (teleion) man" (Eph. 4:13), the Word had been revealed and the church had reached the level of growth necessary for continuing its ministry without direct dependence upon inspired teachers and apostles. Miracles were no longer necessary for the confirmation of the Word, since the Word had already been confirmed. Christianity made its advent into a world which had accepted the Old Testament

Scriptures as the full revelation of God. It was essential for the doctrine of Christ to be confirmed when it was initially given. After it was confirmed and fully established as God's Word for all men of all times, the need for confirmation no longer existed. The church was no longer dependent upon the fragmentary revelations and teachings provided through many different inspired teachers. As noted earlier in this paper, the apostles were the only ones who had the power to transmit spiritual gifts, and this was done through laying their hands upon those receiving the gifts. When the last person died who had received a spiritual gift through an apostle, then the gifts ceased to exist. This probably occurred early in the second century. At that time the Word of God had been revealed and the church had moved from infancy to adulthood.

I Corinthians 14 is of particular importance to a discussion of the modern charismatic movement. In this chapter Paul deals with the confusion created in the Corinthian church by those possessing the "glossa" gift. The chapter can be divided into four parts according to subject matter:

- (1) The gift of prophecy is greater than the gift of tongues (vss. 1-12)
- (2) The importance of interpretation in tongue-speaking (vss. 13-19)
- (3) Tongues are a sign to the unbelievers, not the believers (vss. 20-25)
- (4) Instructions for keeping down confusion in the assembly while the gift of tongues and prophecy are being used (vss. 26-40)

In verses 1-12 Paul clearly emphasized the superiority of prophecy over tongues. He shows that prophecy (teaching) edifies the church while tongues (without prophecy understood) edifies only the speaker (vss. 3-4). In verse 5 Paul said, "Now I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that you should prophecy." The word translated "that" is the Greek "hēna," which means "in order that." Hence, Paul is really saying, "The reason I would have you speak in tongues is in order that you may prophesy." There is no indication in this text that the tongues were considered by Paul as ecstatic utterances. The King James Version of the Bible has contributed to the confusion over this passage by inserting the word "unknown" in verse 2 with reference to tongues. The word "unknown" does not appear in the Greek text. The verse should read, "For the one speaking in a tongue speaks not to men, but to God; for no one hears (with understanding, AB), but in the spirit he speaks mysteries." It seems that the gift of tongues was being abused and perhaps even counterfeited by those in the Corinthian church. At least some were exercising the gift of tongues without an interpreter. Paul totally rejects this kind of use. Anyone speaking in a tongue without an interpreter speaks "not to men but to God," for no one understands him since he speaks "mysteries." "Mysteries" are nothing more than things not understood by the hearer. Contrary to the claims of modern charismatics, Paul is not encouraging the use of tongues for any reason other than teaching. Verse 9 says, "...unless you give by the tongue speech easy to be understood (literally, 'a clear word'), how shall it be known what is spoken? for you will be speaking into the air." He continues in verse 11, "If then I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be to him that speaks a barbarian (barbaros), and he that speaks will be a barbarian (barbaros) unto me." The term "barbaros" (barbarian) was commonly understood as one who spoke a foreign language (see Thayer and Arndt-Gingrich). Verse 12 re-emphasizes that all spiritual gifts are to be used for mutual edification and not for the person's own assurance.

The next section of chapter 14 (vss. 13-19) shows that tongues should not be used without an interpreter. The speaker is instructed to pray that he may interpret (vs. 13). Modern charismatics usually quote verse 14 in support of their private "prayer language," but a careful evaluation of the context will show this interpretation to be the exact opposite of Paul's meaning. He says that praying in a tongue (without an interpreter) causes the mind to be "unfruitful" (vs. 14). Then he continues, "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray also with the mind (noi)..." "Noi" (mind) literally refers to the perceptual or understanding aspect of the mind. Paul is emphasizing that in prayer, as in teaching, one should use only words which are "clear" (eusemon, verse 9).

Then Paul stresses the fact that tongues are a sign to the unbeliever while prophecy is a sign to the believer (14:20-25). Most modern day charismatics claim that their "prayer language" is for their own benefit, but Paul says tongues are for the "unbelievers." Why? An unbeliever who speaks a different tongue would be convinced that the message was from God if one who had never studied his language should suddenly speak fluently in his tongue (language).

The remainder of the chapter (26-40) merely sets forth some guidelines for the use of gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy in the church. The major point is that everything should be done unto "edifying" (vs. 28). A key verse in this discussion is verse 32, "...the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." There is no evidence in the New Testament which should lead us to conclude that a person having a spiritual gift had no power over the exercise of that gift. A person having a tongue could control the exercise of that tongue, contrary to the belief of some modern day charismatics who claim no control over their "prayer language."

What Attitude Should the Church Have Toward Modern Charismatics

How should the church deal with those involved in the charismatic movement today? Should they be extended fellowship or should fellowship be withheld?

It is the conviction of this writer that every person studying the question of spiritual gifts should not immediately be categorized as "charismatic." The Scriptures nowhere suggest that a brother be disfellowshipped for not understanding. That brother is to be studied with and taught. There is considerable difference in the person who does not fully understand and the one who is committed to an erroneous position. When an individual becomes an avowed advocate of a charismatic doctrine, then he cannot be dealt with as a weak brother, but must be dealt with as a false teacher.

The Bible teaches that an individual may have differing beliefs about matters of opinion (Romans 14) and still be in fellowship. The Scriptures also teach that we should be tolerant with those who are weak in faith (Rom 14:1). But when a person teaches a doctrine not supported by the Scriptures, he cannot be encouraged or fellowshiped in his error.

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say?

15. What is Purgatory? Is it taught in the Bible?

Chapter Twelve
Red Ruthenford
The Lutheran Church

Introduction:

1. The Lutherans are an old historic Protestant group.
2. There is not one Lutheran Church, but several different Lutheran denominations.
 - a. The state churches of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland are all Lutheran bodies.
 - b. At one time there were about 150 Lutheran bodies in America; today there are approximately 12.
3. Lutherans are found mainly in the northern and midwestern United States.

Discussion:

- I. **Origin and History of the Lutherans:**
 - A. Martin Luther is the founder of the Lutheran Movement.
 1. He was born in Germany in 1483.
 2. He became an Augustinian monk and sought salvation through works of human merit.
 3. He began reading the Bible and learned of justification by faith.
 4. He became a university professor, a parish priest, and an official in his order.
 5. In 1517, he opposed the sale of indulgences by nailing 95 propositions for debate to the church-house door in Wittenburg.
 6. He refused to recant at the Diet of Worms in 1521 and was excommunicated by the pope.
 - B. Luther became the acknowledged leader of the German Reformation.
 1. He translated the Bible into German.
 2. He emphasized the priesthood of believers, justification by faith

alone, the Scriptures alone as the authority in religion, and the right of everyone to interpret the Bible for himself.

3. He erroneously believed that whatever was not forbidden by the Bible could be practiced.
- C. In 1530, the Augsburg Confession was adopted as the Lutheran creed and Lutherans became a full fledged denomination.
- D. The first permanent Lutheran settlers in America arrived in 1623; a Lutheran congregation met in New York in 1649.
- E. For the next 250 years, thousands of Lutherans from Europe settled in North America.
1. By 1870, Lutherans were the fourth largest religious group in the United States.
 2. There are millions of Lutherans in America today in some twelve different denominations.
- F. The Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) is one of the largest of these denominations.
1. They sponsor a radio program called "The Lutheran Hour."
 2. In the 1960's they were engaged in a battle with evolution and theological modernism in their pulpits, colleges, and seminaries.
 3. They lost about 100,000 members as a result.
 4. "Church observers and historians maintain that it was the first time a denomination turned back a liberal trend and retained its founding doctrine." (Mead, p. 152).

II. Lutherans Teach Some Truth:

- A. Traditionally, they have taught the truth on the Godhead.
- B. Most believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scripture.
- C. They teach the priesthood of all believers, but have a clergy system.
- D. They teach that the Bible is the sole authority in Christianity, but have several creeds they follow.

III. Lutherans Teach Many Things Contrary to the Bible:

- A. They have a human founder, Martin Luther, instead of Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:18).
- B. They began at the wrong time and place to be the church of Christ (Acts 2).

- C. They follow the Augsburg Confession, the Nicene Creed, the Apostles' Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Smalcald Articles of Faith, and the Formula of Concord instead of just the Bible alone (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).
- D. They call themselves "Lutheran" rather than simply Christians (Acts 4:12; 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16).
1. Luther himself pleaded: "I pray you leave my name alone and do not call yourselves Lutherans, but Christians" (Michelle, Life of Luther, p. 262).
 2. They have the wrong name for the church as well (Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; Jno. 10:30).
- E. They hold the Ten Commandments are binding today, but the Bible says the Ten Commandments were "nailed to the cross" (Col. 2:14-17; 2 Cor. 3:7-11; Gal. 5:1-4; Rom. 7:1-7).
- F. They teach that Sunday is the "Christian sabbath" and observe numerous "holy days" such as "Lent, Easter, Christmas," etc. (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 22:18,19; Exod. 10:8-11).
- G. They teach that the Lord's supper is a sacrament through which forgiveness of sins can be received, (Lutheran Catechism, p. 159), but the Bible says it is a "memorial" (1 Cor. 11:24-26).
- H. They teach that the bread and fruit of the vine contain the **real presence** of Jesus (Matt. 26:26-28).
- I. They teach justification by faith alone without any acts of obedience (Catechism, p. 104).
1. Luther added "alone" to Romans 3:28 in his translation of the New Testament (cf. Rev. 22:18, 19).
 2. He called the book of James "a right strawy epistle" because of its emphasis on justification by works (Jas 2:14-26; Gal. 5:6; Jno 6:29).
- J. Lutherans practice infant baptism.
1. "They have inherited a sinful heart, and the germ of sin in them will soon grow." (Lutheran Catechism by Stump, p. 146).
 2. "Christ has commanded that little children should be brought to him and we obey this command by baptizing them and teaching them" (Stump, Catechism, p. 146).
 3. What is wrong with infant baptism?
 - a. Little children are innocent; therefore they are safe since they have never sinned (Ezek. 18:20; 1 Jno. 3:4; Mark 10:14).
 - b. Baptism must be preceded by hearing and believing the

EDWIN JONES

What do Lutherans Believe?

A Summary Statement of Belief

Lutherans confess (to declare faith in, or adherence to) the faith of the apostolic Christian Church as it is taught in the three Ecumenical (Universal) Creeds, Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian. Namely, that there is only one true God, and yet in this one God there are three persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit.

Where is the 'Trinity' found in the Bible?

- Lutherans confess that all are conceived and born sinful, standing under God's wrath and are unable to save themselves.
- Lutherans confess that God the Son was born of the virgin Mary. This Jesus Christ, who is true God and true man, died on the cross and rose to life again in order to save the world from God's wrath. He ascended into heaven and we now wait for Him to return on the Last Day to judge both the living and the dead.
- Lutherans confess that we are saved by God's grace, for Christ's sake, through faith alone.
- Lutherans confess that this saving faith comes to us as God's free gift through the work of the Holy Spirit as Christ's Church proclaims the Gospel and administers the Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper).

Why do Lutherans baptize babies?

- Lutherans confess that the only authority for Christian teaching and life which is never in error, and never leads us astray is God's Holy Word, which He has given to us in the Old and New Testaments. For Lutherans Scripture (The Holy Bible) is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice.

Lutherans and the Holy Bible

Confessional Lutherans believe that the Bible is inspired.

That is, "men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." 2 Peter 1:21 NIV

- "We believe, teach and confess that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God the Holy Spirit and that God is therefore the true Author of every word of Scripture." ("A

Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles" adopted by The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 50th Regular Convention, July 6-12, 1973, adopted by LC-C at the founding convention.)

"This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words." 1 Corinthians 2:13 NIV

"I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ." Galatians 1:11-12 NIV

o Luther writes:

- **"The Holy Spirit Himself and God, the Creator of all things, is the Author of this book." (168)**

- **"One should have a pure faith, one that believes nothing that is not grounded in Scripture. All that we are to believe, aye, more than enough, is in Scripture." (260)**

Confessional Lutherans believe that the Bible is inerrant, or infallible (without error.)

- **"With Luther, we confess that "God's Word cannot err" (LC, IV, 57). We therefore believe, teach, and confess that since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, they contain no errors or contradictions but that are in all their parts and words the infallible truth. We hold that the opinion that Scripture contains errors is a violation of the "sola scriptura"-principle, for it rests upon the acceptance of some norm or criterion of truth above the Scriptures. We recognize that there are apparent contradictions or discrepancies and problems which arise because of uncertainty over the original text." ("A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles" adopted by The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 50th Regular Convention, July 6-12, 1973, adopted by LC-C at the founding convention.)**

"Praise be to the Lord, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses." 1 Kings 8:56 NIV

"Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth." John 17:17 NIV

" . . . Scripture cannot be broken." John 10:35 NIV

o Luther writes:

- **"Scripture has never erred."** ([geirret] LW 32 II, AE Vol. 32. p. 11, SI 15, 1481)
- **"Scripture will not contradict itself on any one article of faith, even though to your mind a contradiction and an irreconcilability exist."** (219)
- **"The word is so completely above criticism that there is not one iota of a mistake in the Law and the divine promises. Therefore we are to yield to no sect; nor are we to yield in any point of Scripture, however much men clamor and slander, saying that we are violating love by adhering so strictly to the words"** (4415)

Confessional Lutherans, with Luther, place themselves under Scripture to be judged by it, not over it to judge it!

"We are to search says He, not to sit in judgment; not to be masters, but pupils; not to inject our notions into Scripture, but get Christ's testimony out of it; and as long as Christ is not found aright in it, it is also not being searched aright."
(241)

Confessional Lutherans pray with the Church through the ages:

- Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of Thy holy Word we may embrace and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God world without end. AMEN.

The Ecumenical Creeds

- The word 'creed' comes from the Latin Word credo, which simply means "I believe." Thus a creed is a statement, or confession (declaring faith in, or adherence to

something), of what one believes.

- There are three Ecumenical (or universal) Creeds which all Christians accept (if not the creed itself, certainly the teachings they contain), the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian. They clearly define for us what constitutes Christianity. These Creeds form the core teachings or confessions of the Christian Church. These Creeds form the one area where all Christians agree.
- For Lutherans these Creeds form a part of our basic confession of faith which is found in the Book of Concord.

(To the best of my knowledge the translations of the Creeds

which follow are in the public domain.)

The Apostle's Creed

The Apostles Creed - the Holy Apostles did not write this creed but it does contain their teachings. It is the earliest of the three creeds and is a basic summary of our Christian faith. We find this creed being used in the early Church in both the baptismal and worship services. The Apostles Creed does three things for us. First, it gives us a simple way of telling others what we believe. Secondly, it gives Christians a basic statement of faith in which we celebrate our oneness in Christ. Thirdly, it gives us a handy tape measure to see if certain teachings are Christian or not.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the quick and dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of sins, the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life everlasting. Amen

The Nicene Creed

Nicene Creed - This creed seems to have been developed out of the early baptismal statement of the Church and was written in particular to safeguard the deity of Jesus Christ. Namely, the fact that Jesus is true God as well as true man. There were some people in those days (the early 300's) who thought that physical things were evil. Since they knew Jesus was true man they reasoned that there was no way that he could also be true God. They taught that Jesus was mere man. Still others went the other direction and taught that Jesus not man and only God. So it was in the year 325 A.D. that the Roman Emperor called together a Church Council to settle the dispute. One of the prominent leaders was a man by the name Athanasius. Eventually, after

much study the majority of the pastors agreed on the teachings contained in what we now call the Nicene Creed. This creed clearly states that Jesus is both True God as well as True Man. Eight years after Athanasius died (fifty-six years after the previous council) all Christians re-affirmed this creed.

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary And was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick (living) and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one holy Christian and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. AMEN.

Athanasian Creed

This creed was written to safeguard the Biblical teaching concerning the Holy Trinity. It contains the essence of the first four Church Councils (meetings at which all of the early Christian churches were represented) and is a summary of what the Bible teaches concerning God. At the time this creed was written Athanasius had been dead a long time. Yet, people were still trying to convince others that Jesus was not God. So, based on the clear teachings of Scripture this creed was written to affirm that Jesus was true God as well as true Man.

● Where is the 'Trinity' found in the Bible?

**Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic (i.e., universal, Christian) faith.
Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.
And the catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, Neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance.
For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost.
But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.**

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost.
 The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate,
 The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible,
 and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible.
 The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal.
 And yet they are not three Eternal, but one Eternal.
 As there are not three Uncreated nor three Incomprehensibles,
 but one Uncreated and one Incomprehensible.
 So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty,
 and the Holy Ghost almighty.
 And yet they are not three Almighty, but one Almighty.
 So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God.
 And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.
 So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord.
 And yet not three Lords, but one Lord.
 For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge
 every Person by Himself to be God and Lord,
 So are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say,
 There be three Gods or three Lords.
 The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.
 The Son is of the Father alone, not made nor created, but begotten,
 The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son,
 neither made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding.
 So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons;
 one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.
 An in this Trinity none is before or after other;
 none is greater or less than another;
 But the whole three Persons are coeternal together and coequal,
 so that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity
 and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshiped.
 He therefore, that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity,
 Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe
 faithfully
 the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ,
 the Son of God, is God and Man;
 God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds;
 and Man of the substance of His mother, born in the world;
 Perfect God and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.
 Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead
 and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood;
 Who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ:
 One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh,
 but by taking the manhood into God;
 One altogether; not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person.
 For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one
 Christ;
 Who suffered for our salvation; descended into hell;
 rose again the third day from the dead; He ascended into heaven;
 He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty;
 from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

**At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies
and shall give an account of their own works.
And they that have done good shall go onto life everlasting;
and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire.
This is the catholic faith;
which except a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.**

The Lutheran Confessions

- All Lutheran doctrine (teaching) is to be taken from Holy Scripture. Our Lutheran Confessions are very explicit on this point. ". . . **the Word of God shall establish articles of faith and no one else, not even an angel.**" (S.A. Part II, The Mass, 15, Tappert page 295.) **"We receive and embrace with our whole heart the Prophetic and Apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the pure, clear fountain of Israel, which is the only true standard by which teachers and doctrines are to be judged."** (F.C., Th. D., sum., 3, Triglot, p. 851) Holy Scripture is the only source and the absolute norm of our faith.
- The Lutheran Confessions, or Symbols are seen as secondary norms, or as true declarations of the doctrines of Holy Scripture, which all who would call themselves Lutheran must confess and teach. For this reason the confessional Lutheran Church demands of all its public teachers and ministers a bona-fide subscription to all its Confessions as the pure and unadulterated declarations of God's Word. (We call this a "quia" subscription – that is we subscribe to the Confessions "because" they are truly scriptural.) To put it another way. Holy Scripture is the deciding norm, it is absolutely necessary. The Bible decides what is true or false doctrine. The Confessions are the distinguishing norm, they are only relatively necessary. They determine whether or not a person has correctly understood the true doctrines of Scripture.
- The Lutheran Confessions are that which make Lutherans Lutheran! They are:
 - The Ecumenical Creeds,
 - The Small and Large Catechisms of Dr. Martin Luther
 - The Smalcald Articles (Luther)
 - The Augsburg Confession and its Apology (Defense) written by Dr. Philip Melancthon
 - The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope (Melancthon)
 - The Formula of Concord with the primary authors being Jacob Andreae, Martin Chemnitz, Nicolaus Selnecker, David Chytraeus, Christoph Koerner, Andreas Musculus.
 - These writings are contained the The Book of Concord.
 - Project Wittenberg — This site contains many source documents, including the Augsburg Confession (entire), the Roman Catholic response to the Augsburg Confession – The Confutation (Confutatio Pontificia), Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, The Smalcald Articles, and the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope . . . as well as many other documents of interest.

- **A Summary of the Augsburg Confession**

What Evangelical Lutherans Believe, Teach and Confess

The purpose of this summary is to introduce you or to reacquaint you with the teachings of the Church of the Augsburg Confession, more commonly known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

As a result of the writings of the Augustinian monk Dr. Martin Luther in the early 1500's, the Reformation of the Christian Church spread throughout Europe and England. In the face of great opposition, the early Lutheran reformers boldly proclaimed that all church teachings and doctrines must come from Scripture alone. In harmony with the Apostolic teachings, these Confessions are in agreement with that which was proclaimed by the ancient Church.

Article 1 - On God

- We believe, teach and confess there is one divine essence who is called and is truly God (Deut. 6:4) and that there are three persons in this one divine essence (1 John 5:7) equal in power and alike eternal. God the Father (2 Peter 1:17), God the Son (Heb. 1:8), God the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4).

Article 2 - On Original Sin

- We believe, teach and confess that since the fall of Adam all people who are born according to the course of nature are conceived and born in sin. By that we teach that inherent in all people since conception (Ps. 51:5) we are full of evil lusts and inclinations and are unable by nature to have a true fear or true faith of God. Moreover this inborn sickness and hereditary sin condemns all those who are not born again to the eternal wrath of God (Rom. 5:12-21; Rom. 7:8; John 3:6).

Article 3 - The Son of God

- We believe, teach and confess that God the Son became man (John 1:1,14), was born of the Virgin Mary (Is. 7:14) and that the two natures, divine and human are inseparable united in the one person of Christ, true God and true man (1 Tim. 2:5), who was truly born, suffered, was crucified, died and was buried to be a sacrifice not only for original sin but also for all other sins and to satisfy God's wrath (1 Pet. 3:18; Gal. 3:13). The same Christ also descended into hell (1 Pet. 3:19-20), truly rose bodily from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God (Luke 24:39; Mark 16:19).
- The same Christ eternally rules and has dominion over all creation (Phil. 2:9-12) and through the Holy Spirit the sanctifies, purifies, strengthens and give comfort to all who believe in Him in order that He may give to them eternal life and every grace and blessing both in this life and the next (1 Thes. 5:23). The same Lord Christ will return for all the world to see to judge the living and the dead (Matt. 25:31-32).

Article 4 - On Justification (Christian renewal)

- We believe, teach and confess that no person anywhere can be forgiven, made righteous or acceptable before God by his or her own inward qualities, outward works or satisfactions. We can only receive forgiveness of sin before God by grace (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 2:11) for Christ's sake, through faith in Christ suffered for the sins of the whole world and for us, for His sake our sin is forgiven and true righteous and eternal life are given to us (Rom. 2:23-28; Rom. 4:5).

Article 5 - The Ministry of the Church [The Office of the Ministry]

- We believe, teach and confess that God instituted the office of the ministry for the purpose of bringing the Word and the Sacraments to His people in order that they may come to saving faith (Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:23-25; 2 Cor. 5:18; Acts 20:28). It is only through these two means that the Holy Spirit works faith where and when He pleases in only those who hear and do not reject the Gospel (John 5:52; Rom. 10:17; 1 Thess. 1:5).
- We also believe, teach and confess that the Holy Spirit does not come to us through our own preparations, imaginations, enthusiasms or works but only through the preached or taught Word of Holy Scripture and Sacraments (John 17:17; John 5:52; Eph 1:17; Titus 3:5).

Article 6 - The Necessity of Good Works

- We believe, teach and confess that true Christian faith should produce good works and that we must do good works because God has commanded them, however we should do them for Christ's sake and never place our trust in them in order to obtain favour before God. Christ says **"When you have done all that is commanded of us, say, We are still unworthy servants"** (Luke 17:10).

Articles 7 and 8 - The Church

- We believe, teach and confess that the one Holy Christian Church will be and remain forever (Matt. 16:18). The Church is the gathering or assembly of all believers wherever the Gospel is preached in its purity and the Holy Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper) are administered according to the Gospel (Matt. 28:20; Luke 22:19, Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:5-6).
- True unity of the Christian Church exists where the preaching of the Gospel conforms with a pure understanding of it and where the Sacraments are administered in accord with God's Holy Word (John 8:31; Acts 16:4). However it is not necessary for the true unity of the Christian Church that ceremonies or rites created by men must be uniformly observed in all local gatherings.
- We also sadly admit that in this life there are many false Christians, hypocrites and even open sinners among the godly but that in no way inhibits or negates the

effectiveness of God's Word and Sacraments even if a wicked pastor or minister administers them, for as Christ Himself says, **"The Pharisees sit on Moses seat"** (Matt. 23:2).

Article 9 - Baptism

- We believe, teach and confess that Baptism with water in the name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit is necessary because Christ commanded it so and that the grace of God (forgiveness and renewal) is offered through it (Matt. 28:29; John 3:5; Eph 5:26; 1 Pet. 3:21). Children should also be baptized, for in their being offered to God through Baptism the too are received into His grace (Mark 10:14; Acts 2:38-39).

Article 10 - The Holy Supper of Our Lord

- We believe, teach and confess that bread and wine distributed and received in the Holy Supper (for the forgiveness of sins and for eternal life) are truly the body and blood of Christ (Matt. 26:26-28, ; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 10:16; John 6:48-58).

Article 11 - Confession of Sins

- We believe, teach and confess that private absolution has a rightful place in the Church and should be retained and not be allowed to fall into disuse (Matt. 16:19 18:18, John 20:21- 23). However, in confession it is not necessary to remember all trespasses and sins for this is impossible, **"Who can discern his errors?"** (Ps. 19:12).

Article 12 - Repentance

- We believe, teach and confess that all those who sin after their Baptism receive forgiveness of sin whenever they truly repent of their sins (Matt 11:28; Mark 1:15; 2 Sam. 12:13). Properly speaking, true repentance is nothing else than shame , sorrow and fear of God's wrath on account of sin, and yet at the same time to believe and trust in our being absolved of our sins on account of Christ.
- The changing and correcting of our sinful ways should follow. This amendment of life must produce the fruits that correspond with our repentance (Matt 3:8; 1 John 2:3.4). Therefore we also believe, teach and confess that those who once were godly can fall from God's grace again (Gal. 5:4; 1 Cor. 10:12; Matt 26:41; 1 Pet.5:8).

Article 13 - The Use of the Sacraments

- We believe, teach and confess that the Sacraments were instituted by Christ not only to be the signs by which people might be identified outwardly as Christians, but that they are signs and testimonies of God's will toward us for the purpose of awakening

and strengthening our faith (Matt. 28:19,20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

- Baptism and the Lord's Supper have the command of God to which the promise of grace has been added. When we are baptized and when we eat the Lord's Body, we are absolved and our hearts should firmly believe that we are truly forgiven for Christ's sake. Through the Word and the rite, God simultaneously moves the heart to believe and to take hold of faith, as Paul says, **"So faith come from hearing and hearing by the word of God."** (Rom. 10:17)

Article 14 - Order in the Church

- We believe, teach and confess that no person should publicly teach or preach or administer the Sacraments without a regular call (Rom. 10:14-17; 1 Cor. 12:28; Titus 1:5; Acts 21:28).

Article 15 - Church Rites

- We believe, teach and confess that rites or customs may be used which can be used without entering into sin and which contribute to the peace and good order to the Church. However any observances of human tradition that burdens the consciences which are instituted to appease God, earn grace and make satisfaction for sins are opposed to the Gospel and the teaching about faith (Gal. 1:9; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Gal. 5:9).

Article 16 - Order in the World

- We believe, teach and confess that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God instituted for the sake of good order (Rom. 13:1-6). The Gospel teaches an inward and eternal righteousness of the heart and does not destroy the state or the family. On the contrary, the Gospel requires the preservation of the state and family as ordinances of God and the exercise of love in those who live under authority (Rom. 12:1-2). Therefore Christians are bound to obey the laws of the land and those in authority except when commanded to sin, for then Christians are obliged to obey God (Acts 3:29).

Article 17 - The Return of Christ of Judgment

- We believe, teach and confess that on the last day Christ will appear for judgment (Matt. 24:30-31; John 5:22-23; Acts 17:31) and raise up all the dead (John 5:27-29; John 6:39-40). To those who are saved He will give eternal life and endless joy (John 3:18; 1 Pet. 1:9).
- To the unsaved and evil demons He will condemn to be tormented without end (Matt. 25:31-41,46).
- Scripture teaches nothing regarding the opinions of those who say that before the resurrection of the dead the godly will take possession of the kingdom of the world

and that the ungodly will be suppressed everywhere (Matt. 25:31-46; James 5:9; 1 Pet. 4:7; Mark 13:35ff).

Article 18 - Freedom of the Will

- We believe, teach and confess that we possess some measure of freedom of the will which enables us to live an outwardly honourable life and to make choices based on reason. However, our wills do not have the power, without the Holy Spirit, to make unacceptable to God, that is, spiritual righteousness, because in our natural sinful state we habitually reject the gifts of God (1 Cor. 2:14).
- Without the Holy Spirit we cannot produce the inward affections such as fear or love of God or trust in God, **"Without faith it is impossible to please God"** (Heb. 11:6). Although our human nature is in some measure able to perform outward acts of goodness (we can refrain from theft and murder), on the other hand our nature is capable of the will to worship idols and the will to commit murder.

Article 19 - The Cause of Sin

- We believe, teach and confess that although God created and preserves nature (Heb. 1:3), the cause of sin in the world is the will of the wicked (Jer. 17:9), that is, the devil and ungodly people (John 8:44). The will that, outside of God turns itself even further away from God to evil. It is as Christ says, **"When the devil lies, he speaks according to his own nature."**

Article 20 - Faith and Good Works

- We believe, teach and confess that the term faith does not mean merely knowledge of Christ's suffering and resurrection. True faith is belief not only in the history of Jesus Christ but also in the trust and belief that we have grace, righteousness and forgiveness of sins only through Christ (Rom. 5:1).
- We also believe, teach and confess that good works should and must be done, not that they earn us God's grace but that we may do God's will and glorify Him. When faith is given by the Holy Spirit, the heart is moved to do good works (1 John 4:7; Eph. 2:8-10; 1 Thess. 4:3; Luke 17:10).
- Without faith and Christ our human nature cannot possibly do works pleasing to God, or to love one's neighbour or to avoid evil lusts. Genuine works of faith can only be done with the help of Christ as He Himself says, **"Apart from Me you can do nothing"** (John 15:5).

Article 21 - On Saints

- We believe, teach and confess that the remembrance of faithful Christians may serve as an example so that we may imitate their faith and good works insofar as our own

particular calling is concerned. However, regardless of how saintly anyone is, Scriptures do not teach us to pray to the saints or to seek their help, for the only mediator whom the Scriptures set before us is Jesus Christ.

- According to Scriptures, the highest form of divine service is sincerely to seek and call upon the name of Jesus in every time of need. **"If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"** (1 John 2:1).

This is the sum of our teaching and there is nothing here that departs from the Scriptures from which pure doctrines and profession of faith may be preserved by the power of the Holy Spirit until the glorious coming of Jesus Christ, our only Redeemer and Saviour.

Note on Article 5: The Office of the Ministry is an alternate title given this article. A footnote in Tappert's translation of the Confessions points out concerning this Title: **"This title would be misleading if it were not observed (as the text of the article makes clear) that the Reformers thought of "the office of the ministry" in other than clerical [Pastoral, Office of the Holy Ministry] terms."** ("The Book of Concord," Fortress Press:Philadelphia, ©1959 page 31)

The official doctrinal statement of our Synod (L-CC/LCMS) tells us concerning Article 5, **"This statement, of course, does not speak of the ministry of the Word 'in concreto' or of the pastoral office but only of the ministry of the Word 'in abstracto,' of which Ludwig Hartmann, among others, rightly reminds us in his pastoral theology: "The ministry of the Word may be treated in two ways: first, in an abstract way when the state or office itself is being considered, as Art. V of the Augsburg Confession treats it; second, in a concrete way, when the persons are considered who minister in this holy office, as Art. XIV of the Augsburg Confession treats it."** Luther puts it this way in his Schwabach Articles, from which Article 5 of the Augsburg Confession is taken. **"In order that we may obtain such faith or to grant it to us men, God has instituted the ministry or the oral Word, namely, the Gospel, through which He causes such faith with its power, benefit, and fruit to be proclaimed, and through it, as through His means, He also grants faith together with His Holy Spirit how and where He wills."** (Walther, C.F.W., **Church and Ministry**, CPH:St. Louis ©1987 original German version 1875.) [return to Article 5](#)

- The Rev. Larry Labatt (All Hallows Church, 139 Grovely Rd., Sunbury on Thames, Middlesex, England, TW167JT) is the author of this summary. Minor editorial changes, and a substance change to his summary of Article 5 have been made to clear up possible misunderstandings. Namely, the principle title of Article 5 has been changed and the word Holy deleted before the word Ministry (a word which does not appear in Article V in this manner).

junior ministers be qualified to undertake such sacred rites?

❖ If I can gain my senior minister status would I have more time for golf and fishing? Would I be free of such tiresome things as soul-winning, reclaiming the fallen, counseling, visiting the sick and suffering?

❖ Does the office of senior minister offer tenure or job protection for those who attain it? Such does go with high office in the world of academia.

❖ Should I attain to the status of senior minister, what can I hope for in terms of future advancement? Could I hope for elevation to the bishop's chair of my church?

❖ Do degrees from some universities of high aca-

demical standing offer better hope for senior status than some of the lesser colleges and schools of preaching?

❖ Is there any advantage to the aspirant for senior status if he can claim kindred to notable preachers of the past?

❖ Should I find a larger church with a more interesting salary package, can I take my senior status with me?

If any of my readers can help Bro. Young with answers to these questions both he and I will be most grateful as will many of our readers.

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Lutheran Church

Compiled and written by H. A. (Buster) Dobbs

The Lutheran Church came into existence as a result of the efforts of Martin Luther (1483-1546) to reform the Roman Catholic Church. Luther was an exceptional student and had earned a Masters degree by the time he was 21, and intended to take up the study of law. He suddenly abandoned his studies, sold his books, and entered the Augustinian monastery in Erfurt, Germany. The decision surprised his father and friends. Luther was to later say that the decision was made because he had "several brushes with death ...," making him aware of the fleeting character of life.

In the monastery, Luther became steeped in the theology of Augustine of Hippo.

Ordained in 1507, Luther was asked to study theology to become a professor at one of the many new German universities staffed by monks. In November 1510, on behalf of seven Augustinian monasteries, he made a visit to Rome, where he was shocked by the worldliness of the Roman clergy. In 1512 he received his doctorate and took over the chair of biblical theology at the University of Wittenberg, which he held until his death.

Though uncertain of God's love and his own salvation, Luther was active as a teacher. Sometime during his study of the New Testament in preparation for his lectures, he came to believe that Christians

are saved not through their own efforts but by the gift of God's grace, which they accept by faith only. The event was crucial in Luther's life, because it turned him decisively against some of the major tenets of the Roman Catholic Church, especially the emphasis on good works.

Luther became a controversial figure when he published (Oct. 31, 1517) his *Ninety-Five Theses*, opposing the manner in which indulgences (release from the temporal penalties for sin through the payment of money) were being sold to raise money for the building of Saint Peter's Cathedral in Rome. Luther's spirited defense and further development of his position through public university debates in Wittenberg and other cities resulted in an investigation by the Roman Curia that led to the condemnation of his teachings, June 15, 1520, and his excommunication, January 1521.

Summoned to appear before Emperor Charles V at the Diet (legislative assembly) of Worms (city in southwestern Germany) in April 1521, he was asked before the assembled secular and ecclesiastical rulers to recant. He refused firmly, asserting that he would have to be convinced by Scripture and clear reason to do so and that going against conscience is not safe for anyone.

Condemned by the emperor, Luther was taken

Questionnaire on Office of Senior Minister

By A B. Gregoreo

I recently received a letter from Brother I.A. Young asking a series of questions about senior ministers and churches of Christ. Having preached for only 49 years, and having attained only a bachelors' degree, I find myself unable to supply the answers for his questions. I have searched through several hundred books and was not able to find anything respecting this high office and churches of Christ. I am including herewith his questions. Perhaps some good brother who has attained this exalted position can help supply the information he desires. From letters and emails I receive I see that in the last 10 years, a number of our churches have secured such illustrious men. Unfortunately I have never personally met any of them. Now to Bro. Young's questions:

❖ Must I be aged or a senior saint before I can be named a senior minister? Some of the senior ministers I have met seem quite young.

❖ Must I have at least five years of schooling or experience to be classified as a senior minister?

❖ Is there a required number of years of experience in preaching before being qualified for the office?

❖ Must I have superior knowledge to my fellow-preachers to acquire senior status?

❖ Is this a title of distinction and honor such as Jesus had in mind in Matthew 23:8-10?

❖ Must I have received special recognition in the world of ministerial or theological attainments? For example, must I hold the Doctorate, or a Masters in Pastoral Care to become a senior minister?

❖ Would it be to my advantage to secure my advance degrees from a respected denominational seminary?

❖ Is this in someway similar to being a Senior Pastor like my Lutheran friend, or perhaps a Eucharistic Minister who is licensed to dispense the communion?

❖ Could you please refer me to the Biblical references that mention this high office so I could research the subject and aspire for it?

❖ Would my wife automatically become a senior minister's wife, or does it take a special dispensation and appointment for that to occur?

❖ If I get to be senior minister, will all my co-workers automatically become junior ministers, or do they have to meet certain standards to be so honored?

❖ How will my congregants and junior ministers address me when I become a senior minister?

❖ Does a senior minister command a higher salary as recognition for his attainment?

❖ Would I get an appropriate plaque for my office door that would remind everyone entering that I am indeed their senior minister?

❖ Should I be elevated to senior minister status will I get a suitable document to frame and hang on the wall of my office, so folks will know my position and show proper respect when consulting me?

❖ If I should finally get my appointment as a senior minister, can I expect some kind of tag for my car that will identify me and my position, "clergy" or some other appropriate title that will benefit a man of such important position?

❖ What perks and privileges go with this special appointment? Do I get a reserved parking place? How about a special padded chair in a prominent place in the church auditorium? Would I be expected to dress differently to reflect my high office?

❖ Do I get a special ring, a lapel pin, a staff or a seal to wear about my neck like some of my fellow senior ministers in neighboring denominations?

❖ When I finally make senior status, can I expect anything like a larger office, a new desk and chair, my own private phone line or a church credit card?

❖ As senior minister, will all baptisms, weddings and funerals be reserved for me to perform? Would

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away by his prince, the elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony, and kept in hiding at Wartburg Castle. There he began his translation of the New Testament from the original Greek into German. Disorders in Wittenberg caused by some of Luther's more extreme followers forced his return to the city in March 1521, and he restored peace through a series of sermons.

As Luther's health began to deteriorate, he was unhappy because of the resurgence of the papacy and by what he perceived to be an attempt by Jews to take advantage of the confusion among Christians and reopen the question whether Jesus was messiah. He wrote a strongly worded argument against the Jews, and polemics against the papacy, and one wing of the reformers, the Anabaptists (those who baptize adults, especially adults who were sprinkled in infancy). Luther died on Feb. 18, 1546, at age 63.

In the 19th century Luther's reformation lived on in more romantic forms that gave a greater place to emotions. At least two schools should be singled out. One, in the tradition of G.W.F. Hegel, saw Christian development against a huge screen of "thesis" and "antithesis," and under the historian F.C. Baur at Tübingen posed Hebraic versus Hellenic, Catholic versus Protestant themes and movements. This school began to cast doubt on fact and event in history and soon began to speak in terms of biblical myth.

Lutherans, propelled by a variety of motives, were guided by leaders either unaware of or competitive with one another (as, for instance, "Pietists" versus "Confessionalists"), and they tended to be isolated. As they became aware of one another, they became contentious. In the mid-19th century, for instance, a shaping influence was Samuel S. Schmucker, a Gettysburg (Pennsylvania) Seminary professor, who advocated Americanization and cooperation with the Reformed evangelical churches. Partly in reaction, the more Lutheran Confessional-minded Charles Porterfield Krauth, also at Gettysburg, stressed Lutheran distinctiveness. More militant in his defense of 17th-century orthodoxy was the shaper of the Missouri Synod, Carl F.W. Walther, who was president of both the synod and its principal seminary, Concordia, at St. Louis. Walther advocated a policy that forbade Lutherans from communing or praying together if their synods were not in complete doctrinal agreement with one another (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Luther was not a systematic theologian, but his work was subtle, complex, and immensely influ-



ential. It was inspired by his careful study of the New Testament, but it was also influenced in important respects by the 4th-century theologian Augustine.

Lutheran Doctrine

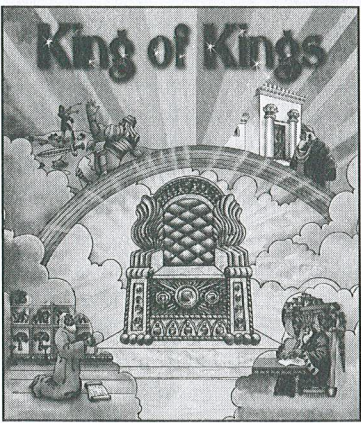
The moral precepts of the Lutheran Church set a high tone based on the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles Creed. Luther's Small Catechism (LSC) emphatically condemns murder, abortion, euthanasia, and suicide (LSC, #52); special creation is approved and evolutionism condemned as not "scientifically verifiable" (LSC, #97, 103, 105).

The fundamental doctrine of the Lutheran Church is based on (1) the Bible, (2) the Augsburg Confession (AC) and the Apology of the Augsburg Confession (AP), and (3) Luther's Catechism (LC), and the Formula of Concord (FC). The Bible is filtered through the creed books. LC says that humans can understand the Bible by applying rules of language, such as grammar and logic, but, inconsistently, says humans must have the guidance of the Holy Spirit to have a proper understanding of scriptures (Question #5).


The Lutheran Church in America has split into two major groups, each group having many subdivi-

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sions ... one is called *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)* and the other is called *Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS)*.

The ELCA is liberal and appears to have accepted the *Wellhausen Documentary Hypothesis* and other aspects of German religious-rationalism. The ELCA is unsure of Bible miracles, including fulfilled prophecy, and is not firm on any point of doctrine, including homosexuality. It is oriented in the social gospel, which they call "social justice" and is more concerned about the quality of life on earth than about the life to come. Still, if they comment on a point of Lutheran teaching, they generally conform to the Augsburg Confession (See <http://www.elca.org>).

The LCMS group is strong on verbal inspiration and the inerrancy of the original manuscripts of the Bible (See <http://www.lcms.org>).

The Basic teaching of Lutheranism includes:

(1) Babies are born totally depraved (corrupt), having inherited the guilt of the original sin of Adam and Eve;

(2) Babies must be sprinkled as a form of baptism to receive remission of sins (LSC #245B, 247). Infants who are sprinkled must have sponsors (LSC #247). The *Christian (Lutheran) Cyclopedia*, infants, says:

M. Luther fostered instruction and tried to involve infants and other children in the life of the church. He advocated baptism for infants and other children because it is God's will. He granted that Scripture does not explicitly command infant baptism, but pointed out (1) that Scripture does not say "You are to baptize adults and not children" and (2) that "nations" (Mt 28:19) includes infants (WA 26, 158 and 166). LC IV 57 holds that infants should be baptized because of God's general command. Later catechisms hold that infants should be baptized because they can believe (Mt 18:6; Mk 10:13-16) and because Baptism is the only means whereby they can ordinarily be regenerated. Apology of Augsburg Confession (AP) IX 1 states that Baptism is necessary for salvation, but the Lutheran Confessions and Luther do not say that the unbaptized are damned. In Baptism children are committed to God and become acceptable to Him (Augsburg Confession [AC]) - IX. Ap IX 2: "It is most certain that the promise of salvation also applies to little children.... Therefore it is necessary to baptize children, so that the promise of salvation might be applied to

them according to Christ's command (Mt 28:19)." Smalcald Articles (SA) - III V 4: "children should be baptized, for they, too, are included in the promise of redemption which Christ made...." Infants are in need of regeneration because they are born in sin (AC II; Ap II; Formula of Concord (FC) - C I). By Baptism a child is received into the Christian community, receives the promise, and enters Christ's kingdom (LC IV 2, 39, 67);

(3) God wants all humans to keep all of his commands (LSC #74), but humans cannot keep all of the commands of God because of inherited sinful nature (LSC #75). Humans cannot be saved by law because it is the function of law to condemn (LSC #76);

(4) God predestines who will be saved, but not who will be lost (Christian [Lutheran] Cyclopedia, predestination). LCMS vigorously condemns "double predestination," that is, that God predestined those who would be saved and also those who would be lost — sometimes called "the doctrine of election and reprobation";

(5) The Holy Spirit comes directly and immediately into the life of those who are predestined to salvation, granting the grace of salvation by faith only — if not sprinkled in infancy, the adult is then to be instructed and sprinkled (LSC #246). The *Christian (Lutheran) Cyclopedia* says:

In one sense the Holy Spirit is wholly beyond reach of man; man makes no contribution to Him or to his grasp of Him (*Jn 3:8*). But the Christian has received the Holy Spirit and His power through Baptism (*Tis 3:5*) and can continually reinforce His presence through the Word of the Gospel (*1 Ptr 1:22-25*). Man is equipped with the Holy Spirit to communicate the grace of God in Christ Jesus, the forgiveness of sins, and the life of the Spirit to others (*Mt. 28:19-20; Lk 24:45-49; Jn 20:21-23*);

(6) A saved person is to maintain purity through confession and pastoral absolution (LSC #261, 262, 263, 266, 268). The pastor (preacher) has power to arbitrarily forgive and retain sins (based on John 20:23);

(7) Salvation is by grace only, which brings the gift of faith and forgiveness (LSC #184, 186);

(8) Good works are fine, but have nothing to do with forgiveness and salvation;

(9) Second coming of Jesus and destruction of the earth is affirmed, but premillennialism is rejected (LSC #147);

(10) Human sins are imputed to Jesus, and his righ-

teousness is imputed to those predestined to be saved (LSC #182);

(11) God gives eternal life to all believers in Christ — eternal life is a present possession and cannot be lost, which is the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy (LSC #190, 191);

(12) The actual body and blood of Jesus are literally present in the unleavened bread and wine on the Lord's table, but the bread and wine are unchanged (LSC #287, 288), by which he taught that the literal body and blood of Jesus are "in, with, and through" the bread and the wine.

In addition Luther condemned praying to idols or saints (LSC #195); He denied the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory; And taught there are only two sacraments¹ — baptism and the Lord's Supper (LSC #237).

Corrections and Observations

We will follow the numbers as used above in presenting Lutheran Doctrine:

(1) Babies are not born corrupt and sinful, but come into the world pure and holy. God gives the human spirit at the time of conception (Eccl. 12:7). Jehovah is the father of every human spirit (Heb. 12:9). Notice: there is one father of all spirits, but many fathers of the flesh. Jehovah in his very nature could not give nor father some that is less than very good.

(2) The Bible teaches that Baptism involves dipping (burial and resurrection) for the purpose of receiving remission of sin (Matt. 3:16; Acts 8:38; John 3:23; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12). Luther said, "Baptism means washing, immersing, pouring, and the like" (LSC #239). Infant baptism is not mentioned in the Bible. He also understood that sins are forgiven in the water of baptism to a properly prepared candidate (LSC #247).

(3) It is true that all sin and fall short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23), but it is not true that man has an inherited sinful nature (see (1) above). There is a law that makes sinful man free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:1-2). Luther fails to distinguish between the various laws mentioned in the Bible, i.e., moral law, law of the mother, law of the father, Law of Moses (also called Law of God), perfect law (James 1:25), law of liberty (James 1:25), Law of the Spirit of life in Christ (Rom. 8:1-2), the royal law

that requires loving neighbor, therefore is also called "the law of love" (James 2:8; Rom. 13:8, 10; Gal. 5:14).

(4) God does not predestine who shall be saved. If God decided before creation all that would live and selected which would be saved, the omission of some is tantamount to deciding who would be lost. This doctrine makes God a flagrant respecter of persons (See Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 2:11; Col. 4:24-25; Rom. 10:12). God did predestine the plan of salvation and the coming of his Son, and all — without respect of persons — that will to obey the conditions of the plan (believe, repent, confess, and be baptized) receive forgiveness. Human will enters into the matter. Anyone can will to do the will of God (John 7:17). Salvation is for "he that will" (Rev. 22:17).

(5) The Holy Spirit is active, but there are some things he does not do. He dwells in the saved (1 Cor. 6:19-20) but uses the medium of the revealed word, which he brought into the world (John 16:13; Gal. 3:2; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Tim. 3:16-17), as the vehicle or medium of that indwelling. If the Holy Spirit came directly and immediately, man would not be able to resist his influence. The fact that saints are

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¹ A sacrament under Catholic and Lutheran usage is "a mysterious rite that causes Jesus to grant remission of sins"

told to “quench not the Spirit” (1 Thess- 5:19) requires the conclusion that the Holy Spirit works on man through a medium — the God-breathed word. It is the gospel that is the power of God to save (Rom 1:16). The Lutheran teaching that one must have the Holy Spirit working directly in his life to understand the Bible and obey its commands is not supported in sacred literature. When Jesus was on earth in a human body and spoke to people, could they understand what he told them? Could the apostles understand him when he told them to remain in Jerusalem until the “power from on high” (the Holy Spirit) came upon them, did they know what he wanted them to do and did they have the power to do it. Can one understand Luther’s Catechisms, the Book of Concord, and the Augsburg Confession prior to being baptized (Luther taught that the Holy Spirit came as a result of water baptism). If we can understand the writings and speech of men without having the immediate influence of the Spirit, how is it that we cannot understand and obey a word from God without having extra-biblical enlightenment?

(6) The idea of confessing one’s sins to a third human and then relying on that third person to absolve the sins is not taught anywhere in the Bible. The apostles did forgive and retain sins (John 20:23). The book of Acts details how they retained and forgave sins. The saving gospel was preached (Acts 2:14-36); the convicted people who now believed (to know assuredly is to believe confidently v. 36) wanted to know what to do (“what must we do?”), notice that the salvation process involves doing something (Acts 2:37); these believers were told to “repent and be baptized ... unto the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). All who did what they were told to do — repent and be baptized — received forgive-

ness; those who did not obey because they did not will to do the will of God had their sins retained. That is how sins were remitted and retained by the apostles. Sins are washed away (Acts 22:16) today by the same procedure. If one does not obey, his sins remain. But no mortal has the power to arbitrarily declare that he forgives the sins of other mortals.

(7) The New Testament teaches that saving grace has appeared to “all” men, teaching them to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and live righteously and soberly in this present world (Titus 2:11). Grace (favor of God) has given to the human race instructions about how to live, what to do, the importance of obedience. That is not grace alone. The only time “faith only” is found in the new covenant is when James tells us that we are not justified by faith only (James 2:24). Incidentally James 2:14-26 is a refutation of the Lutheran teaching on faith and works.

(8) See comments on (7) above

(9) Lutherans are right on both points

(10) The gospel does not teach imputed righteousness or imputed sin, if the word “imputed” is used to mean “to regard a quality such as righteousness that applies to somebody as also applying to another person associated with him or her.”

(11) The Bible teaches that it is possible for one who has been washed and made clean by the blood of Jesus to sin and so sin as to be eternally lost (2 Pet. 2:20-22, Heb. 6:4-8, Gal. 4:5 [“law” in this passage is the Law of Moses], Acts 8:22-23, Rev. 2:4-5).

(12) It is distasteful to say that the literal body of Jesus and his actual blood can today be taken into the mouth to be chewed, swallowed, and disposed of. When Jesus said you must eat my flesh and drink my blood (John 6:53) he was speaking figuratively — not literally, as John 6:63 shows. We consume Jesus by feasting on his word, which is spirit and life. This is a figurative eating of Jesus’ flesh, and drinking his blood. When Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper, he was in his physical body with its blood flowing through veins and arteries. He said of the bread “this is my body,” and of the wine “this is my blood,” while he was yet alive and in the flesh. The bread of the communion and its cup represent the flesh and blood of Jesus.

(Sources: *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *Encarta Reference Library*, *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, *Christian [Lutheran] Encyclopedia*, and various Internet Web Sites.)

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Marvin L. Weir

The name *Christian* is either abused or misused by most people today. According to man's wisdom, there are many different types or kinds of Christians. Years ago Leroy Brownlow made reference to what he called "hyphenated Christians."

In his excellent book, *Why I Am a Member of the Church of Christ*, is this statement:

I am sure that method and system should be used in the Lord's work, but I am not a Methodist; that we should have bishops (the Greek word being *episcopos*) to oversee the work in a congregation, but I am not Episcopalian; that we should have elders (the Greek word being *presbuteros*) who are bishops to rule and oversee in the congregation, but I am not a Presbyterian; that each congregation is independent, but I am not a Congregationalist; that it takes immersion to constitute the act of baptism, but I am not a Baptist; that Christians should be holy but I am not a Holiness; that Christ will come again, but I am not an Adventist; that the church is universal or catholic, but I am not a Catholic. According to some good folk, since I believe in the above facts, I should call myself a *Methodist – Episcopalian – Presbyterian – Congregationalist – Baptist – Holiness – Catholic – Christian*, which is a monstrous hyphenation and a rather long name! It is unnecessary, too. We find in the Bible that the disciples were called Christians, but we never read of any person being called some hyphenated Christian. Regardless of what names others wear, I prefer to stick to the Bible and be a Christian only (32-33).

Isn't it amazing that some folks will become "fighting mad" when you explain to them that denominational names are man-made and unscriptural? They have no God-given right to exist and thus cannot be found in the Bible (John the Baptist will not do as he did not die for the church). On the other hand, Christ promised to build His church (Matt. 16:18), purchased it with His blood (Acts 20:28), promised to save it (the one body – Eph. 4:4; 5:23), and through an inspired writer mentioned "churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16). Such simply shows ownership, and rightly so, since Christ is the head of the body which is the church (Eph. 1:22-23).

It will surprise some to learn that certain individuals in the past had no desire for a "church" to be named in their honor. These men knew that man-made names made mockery of Christ and His Word, and their comments will forever haunt those who choose to give "churches" man-made names. Listen to the words of Charles Spurgeon, the most famous and talented Baptist preacher ever: "I say of the Baptist name, let it perish, but let Christ's name last forever. I look forward

with pleasure, to the day when there will not be a Baptist living. I hope they will soon be gone. I hope the Baptist name will soon perish; but let Christ's name endure forever" (*Spurgeon Memorial Library* 1:168, as noted by Brownlow).

Can you imagine the outcry against me if I were to say today that I look forward to the day when there would not be a Baptist living? Well, Spurgeon's sentiments are mine, but don't hold your breath waiting on Baptist churches to inform their members of Spurgeon's comments!

Now hear the words of Martin Luther who was a most influential reformer and scholar of his day:

I pray you to leave my name alone, and call not yourselves Lutherans, but Christians. Who is Luther? My doctrine is not mine. I have not been crucified for anyone. St. Paul would not let any call themselves after Paul, nor of Peter, but of Christ. How then, does it befit me, a miserable bag of dust and ashes, to give my name to the children of God? Cease, my dear friends, to cling to these party names and distinctions: away with all; and let us call ourselves only Christians after him from whom our doctrine comes (*The Life of Luther* 289, as quoted by Brownlow).

Most of the above statement Luther made is correct, but Luther fell far short of fully aligning himself with Bible doctrine. Let all Baptists, Lutherans, and members of other denominational churches hear the words that give them no right to exist:

Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

...each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos: and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul? (1 Cor. 1:10, 12-13, ASV).

Christ spoke of those who "seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand..." (Matt. 13:13-15). Yes, different **kinds** of Christians exist in the mind of men today, but people must be spiritually deaf and blind to believe such is true. Study the Word of God, and do not allow yourself to be blinded to God's glorious truths that are clearly set forth in Holy Writ.

[This article appeared in the Bonham St. *Beacon* published by the church in Paris, Texas, on April 25, 2010. This information from Brownlow's book is timeless.]

Announcements

11 contacts were made by our members last week.

The Youth Meeting will be at the building this Saturday at 6:30. Judy Haley is in charge of refreshments.

The Men's Meeting will be rescheduled for next Sunday afternoon at 4:30 because of Mother's Day.

Geoff's group meets tonight in the Library.

Thanks to Jim Correll, Rick Huff, Faye Johnson, Arlene Mamber, and Barb Summers for helping with the bulletin mail-out last Thursday; also a BIG thank you to Paul Crumrine for folding and gathering them beforehand.

For your information! Brother Tom Leavins will be hosting a meeting in the Fellowship Hall this Tuesday at 7:30 to discuss the new work he is planning.

Happy Mother's Day!
To honor all those mothers in our congregation, Jim Correll is handing out a carnation to each mother. Be sure to get yours before you leave.



In Our Prayers...

Please remember: Rachel Brown, David Carter, Amie Dumford, Sandi Greene, Jack Johnson, Amber Kenyon, Billy Lemus, Joan Pryor, Johnny Rouse, Hilda Ruben, Mae Smith, and Gyle Workman.

Special Requests

- J.H. & Lucy Blackman (from N. Lakeland)—ill health
- Jason Rucker—permanent employment
- Janet Myers—employment
- Betsy Stewart—as she cares for her mother
- David Carter—Surgery scheduled for June 2 in Atlanta
- Nathaniel Lester—death in the family
- Larry Miller—Winter Park Hospital, room 2207

Those Traveling: Anton is in Brazil, Kendra Brown is in Miami this week, Jane Hardwick will be in Indiana to celebrate her daughter's graduation from nursing school, and Jessica Dawson is in Jacksonville for two weeks.

ATTENDANCE FIGURES FOR WEEK OF 05/02/10
SMBS—50 SMW—69 SEW—52 WEBS—42
Offering: \$3246.00

If you need a camp registration form, let Barbara Summers know so you can send it in early—you save \$20.

WORD SCRAMBLE

Last week's answers: REFINED, THROUGH, RESTRAIN, ASSEMBLE.

Although His people made mention of God, it was not in RIGHTEOUSNESS (Isa. 48).

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Worship & Bible Classes

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- Sunday Morning Worship 10:00 A.M.
- Sunday Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.
- Wednesday Evening Bible Classes..... 7:15 P.M.

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The Lutheran Church

Liz Fisher

This is the oldest and largest Protestant church. Martin Luther, the leader of the Reformation in Germany, began organizing the church in 1522. Luther taught his followers that the Bible, rather than a church, council, or pope, is the only authority for Christian faith and life. (8)

Thirteen centuries after Christ died the historical church had gradually changed into something radically different from that which had been founded when He came to the earth. Luther's open protest began when he nailed the Ninety-Five Theses to the church door in the little university town of Wittenberg, Germany, on October 31, 1517. (1) Luther made the people realize in these that money offered for indulgences went outside Germany. Luther did not intend to revolt against the Roman Catholic Church, but his action began the Protestant Reformation. Soon Luther was a center of dispute within the church. His study of the Bible and of church history and law carried him further and further from belief in the accepted Roman Catholic doctrine. By 1519 he denied the supreme power of the pope in a public debate with Johann Ech at Leipzig. The next year, Luther made known his beliefs in three pamphlets. As a result, the pope excommunicated Luther from the church. When he received a copy of the papal bull excommunicating him, Luther burned it in public. Luther was a prisoner for ten months at the Castle of Wortburg, where he translated the New Testament from the original Greek into German. In March, 1522, Luther returned to Wittenburg to begin organizing the new church. (8)

Fifty years after the Ninety-Five Theses were written, this Lutheran discovery had touched the whole western world and was flourishing across most of northern Europe. Today, there are from seventy to ninety million Lutherans, one-third of all the Protestants in the world. Its headquarters are located at 231 Madison Avenue, New York 16, New York. (1)

About one-half of the church's sixty-eight million members are in Germany. The church of Sweden numbers about six and one-half million, the church of Norway three million, the church of Denmark and Finland about four million each. The church has about 8,250,000 members in North America, with about 250,000 of them in Canada. (2)

	<u>Churches</u>	<u>Members</u>
Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod	5,109	2,304,962
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod	841	342,993
Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod	77	14,302
Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Church	59	19,931
Negro Mission of the Synodical Conference	53	7,999 (9)

The remaining ten million are found mainly in Austria, Brazil, Slovenia, France, Holland, Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia, Rumania, South Africa, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. (2)

The Missouri Synod's total contribution is \$132,586,532, \$89.74 per member and \$1.77 per member for foreign missions. (9)

American Lutherans support nearly fifty colleges and theological seminaries. (8) Some colleges which are supported by the United Lutheran church are Witten-

They could see that forgiveness of sins is through Christ (Col. 1:13-14; Eph. 1:5-7; John 1:29; Romans 5:17 ff; I Peter 2:24; I John 2:1-2; I Cor. 15:3 and many others). If we could show them how repentance plays a great part in salvation (Acts 2:38; II Peter 3:9), but is not all that the Lord requires (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3,4; baptism: Acts 16:30-31; Acts 10:43; belief: Matt. 10:32,33; Romans 10:9,10; confession).

They could also see that the Sabbath day had been done away with and under the new covenant we should meet on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). The church, as Christ established it, was begun on the first day of the week. It was started on Pentecost, fifty days after the Passover, which is Sunday (Acts 1-2).

They would also learn to observe the Lord's Supper as instituted in Matt. 26:26-28. They would see the need for missionary work and understand Matt. 28:19,20.

Yes, IF. The biggest word in the English vocabulary. We can think of hundreds, even thousands of things that we would do, could do, should do and we can see other things that we can do, IF. There would be no division in the religious world today, IF. There would be no sinners in the world, IF. And we would all be saved in heaven, IF.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VII.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Louis Finkelstein, The Jews, Their History, Culture, and Religion, Vol. II, p. 1340-1341.
6. The Babylonian Talmud, . 16a.
7. Norman H. Snaith, The Jews From Cyrus to Herod, p. 80-81.
8. Finkelstein, op. cit., p. 1342.
9. Rabbi Leon Israel Fewer and Rabbi B. Benedict Glazer, The Jew and His Religion, p. 128-129.
10. Louis Finkelstein, The Jews, Their History, Culture, and Religion, Vol. I, p. 137.
11. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 1347.
12. The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VII.
13. Vladimir G. Simkhovitch, Toward the Understanding of Jesus.
14. Rabbi Lee J. Levinger, A History of the Jews in the United States, p. 11.
15. Ibid., p. 410-411.
16. The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VII.

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The Jewish Encyclopedia, Volumes VII and IV.
The Babylonian Talmud. 16a.

EXTRA MATERIAL:

The Apocrypha
 The Mishnah
 The Torah
 The Old Testament

berg, Getesburg, Newberry, Lenoir Rhyne, Mulinburg, and Carthage. Luther College is a coeducational arts and sciences school at Decorah, Iowa. It is operated by the Evangelical Lutheran Church. It was founded in 1861. It's present enrollment is 1,132. Lutherans also conduct work on the campuses of 600 non-church colleges and universities. Pastors usually receive eight years of training after high school. Many congregations maintain their own elementary schools. The churches sponsor more than 500 institutions and agencies for service to the sick, aged, handicapped, and poor. (8)

The United Lutheran Church has a children's home in Salem, Virginia and another in Springfield, Illinois. Their main hospital is in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Two of their publications are The Lutheran and the Lutheran Quarterly. They have "The Lutheran Hour" on television and are also connected with "The Protestant Hour" on television.

The United Lutheran Church in America sponsors about 150 missionaries. Their greatest work is carried out in India, Japan, and Liberia; other missionaries being in Argentina, China, and Malaya. (4)

WORSHIP

Worship in Lutheran churches generally follows an established order of service. The congregation takes a prominent part in the service. A cross and lighted candles stand at the altars of most Lutheran churches. A pastor, wearing special church vestments, conducts the service from the altar. Lutherans maintain that in the Lord's Supper, which is partaken of once a month by United Lutherans, Christ is truly present to bring forgiveness and spiritual strength to the person who communes.

In addition to attending Sunday schools and vacation Bible schools, young people spend several hours a week for one or two years in confirmation classes. After confirmation, a young person may receive Holy Communion and become a voting member of the church. (8)

The order of worship can be more fully understood by observing the program on the next page.

ORGANIZATION

Lutherans have no bond of international organization. Each Lutheran land or province has had its own history, traditions, and form. But the emergencies of World War I roused the American Lutherans to form what became the National Lutheran Council. Soldiers and sailors had to be cared for all over the world; mission fields, deprived of German pastors, had to be adopted; reconstruction and postwar aid appealed to all, irrespective of synodical division. (2)

Individual congregations are organized into groups called synods, conferences, or districts. These, in turn, are grouped under general bodies that may be national or even international. The major bodies in the United States are the National Lutheran Council and the Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America. The National Lutheran Council has the largest number of member churches. (8)

In the main the Lutheran churches of the world have become members of the World Council as well as of the Lutheran World Federation, though some, such as smaller groups in Germany, the Missouri Synod in America, and the Australian church have preferred to remain aloof, emphasizing their differences from, rather

than common heritage with, other Christian churches. (2)

DOCTRINES

The Augsburg Confession, drawn up in 1530, contains the basic doctrines of Lutheranism. Lutherans believe that God revealed Himself to man as a Father, the Creator of the universe; as Jesus Christ, whose birth, death, and resurrection made eternal life possible for mankind; and as the Holy Spirit, who calls men into fellowship with Christ in the Christian Church. They consider all who believe in Christ to be members of the true church.

Its theological tenets include justification by faith, refuting the Catholic emphasis on justification by penance; makes the Bible the final authority for the guilt or innocence of an individual and stresses the immediate personal relation of the individual with God, doing away with the system of their faith in Christ, the forgiveness and power of God will enter their lives. They demonstrate the new life that God gives them through deeds of kindness and love. Lutherans also maintain that every person is responsible to God for the way he lives. He must do his daily work as a service to God and his neighbor. (2)

There are four main principles: 1. Grace alone, 2. Christ alone, 3. Scripture alone, and 4. Faith alone. Faith is given to us by God. We do not achieve it. It is a gift of God. However we must work at attaining this faith. (4) They believe in the Apostles Creed.

Lutherans observe two sacraments, Baptism and Holy Communion. They believe that, through Baptism, God forgives sin and accepts a person into His family. They believe in infant baptism. (8) "Because infant baptism is the clearest demonstration of the sovereign grace of God. Baptism is a sacrament. God saves by giving, man is saved by receiving. Baptism is a means of God's giving, the channel Christ has chosen for giving His kingdom to human beings. He wants infants, too, in His kingdom. 'let the children come to me.' (1)

Lutherans maintain that in Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper, Christ is truly present to bring forgiveness and spiritual strength to the person who communes. (8)

They say that the gospel is not a list of things we must do or not do--it is a report of the things that God has done. That is why the Lutheran Church does not presume to permit or prohibit. Fear and love and trust in the Lord's Christ are far safer guides than any set of rules. (1)

The Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther has the Ten Commandments. It explains the sacraments, explains The Lord's Prayer, and states the creed.

Lutherans accept the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God. Lutherans do not believe that the human mind can evolve religious truth. But they do believe that the mind is an instrument for receiving whatever knowledge of His mysteries God chooses to reveal. (1)

Lutherans worship The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; they do not worship Martin Luther. No saints. No intermediaries. No angels or archangels. Not Mary, not John, not Peter, not Abraham or Isaac or Jacob.

How, then, do they think of Luther? "Like many other servants of the Most High, Luther was chosen, prepared and guided by the Holy Spirit for a specific task. And because of the urgency and immensity of Luther's task, God granted to him a special profoundness or insight into the gospel. Luther was a giant only because God needed and produced a giant. And Luther would be the first to cry, 'To God alone be glory.' (1)

Confirmation

In the Lutheran Church the rite by which baptized persons after having received a course of instruction make a public confession of their faith and give evidence that they can themselves and be admitted to the Lord's Supper. They also publicly renew their baptismal vow. (3)

WHAT ARE THE WAYS OF BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH?

1. Infant Baptism. Baptism is God's gift, a new Father-Child relationship between Himself and the recipient. Parents and sponsors promise to nurture the child in the faith. Instruction and Confirmation follow when the child is about 12 to 14 years old.
2. Adult Baptism. Persons of responsible age, who have never been baptized, may be received by Holy Baptism after instruction, upon confession of repentance and faith.
3. Confirmation. After instruction, persons previously Baptized in and church may be received into the Lutheran Church by the Rite of Confirmation.
4. Letter of Transfer, from another Lutheran congregation.
5. Restoration. Baptized and Confirmed Lutherans unable to obtain a letter of transfer may be received by reaffirmation of faith according to the Order of Restoration.

WHAT IS CONFIRMATION?

A solemn rite of the Church in which persons of responsible age, after instruction, (1) personally assume their baptismal vows, (2) declare their adherence to the Lutheran Church, (3) receive the Church's Prayer of Blessing; and (4) enter into all the spiritual privileges and responsibilities of the Church.

WHAT DOES ONE PROMISE IN CONFIRMATION OR ADULT BAPTISM?

1. "...to abide in this faith" (the faith expressed in the Apostles' Creed, confessed in both infant (talking baby, I suppose) and in adult Baptism and in the Confirmation Rite).
2. "...to remain faithful to the teachings of the Lutheran Church" (studied during instruction and accepted).
3. "...to be diligent in the use of the Means of Grace" (regular participation in worship, frequent reception of the Holy Communion, and eager acceptance of every opportunity public and private to receive the life-giving Good News of Christ." "When one accepts the faith, the result is a spontaneous overflow that brings about a total surrender of self to Christ. It expresses itself in service to Christ's Church, support of its work, and Christian love for all of one's neighbors."

DO LUTHERANS BELIEVE THEIRS IS THE ONLY TRUE RELIGION?

Yes. But they do not believe that they are the only ones who have it. The Gospel is the power through which God works in man. However, men have tried to dilute that which God gave us -- the gospel. This is a blasphemy against God and a danger to human souls. That is why Lutherans are not among those who say, "One church is the same as the next." or, "It doesn't make much difference what you believe, just so you believe." If you drink strychnine, believing it to be cough syrup, it makes a great deal of difference.

REFUTATION

On page 112 of Luther's Catechism it says: "The Lutheran Church teaches the great central doctrine of the Gospel, that we are saved by faith alone without works." The Bible says in James 2:24: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

On page 26 of Luther's Catechism it says: "...we receive absolution or forgiveness through the pastor as of God himself," This does not lack much being blasphemy. The Bible teaches that forgiveness of sins comes only through Christ from God. (Eph. 1:7) (7)

The Lutheran Church teaches that the church has different branches of the Christian Church draw different conclusions from the Word of God. However, they say that it does make a difference which branch of the Christian church one belongs to. "Confessions are the embodiment of different faiths and of different methods of evangelizing the world; therefore it is important that we unite with that branch of the church whose confession of faith is in harmony with the Scriptures."

The Catholic Church is supposed to be the mother of all churches. The Lutherans say their church came from the Catholic Church. Supposedly, the Lutheran church is the mother and source of the Episcopal, the Presbyterian and the Methodist Churches. In Revelation 17:1-18, the Catholic Church is called the Mother of Harlots. Christ is the Vine and we, as individuals (not churches) are the branches (John 15:1-6).

Christ built ONE Church, not churches (Matt. 16:18) Christ said there is ONE fold, not folds. (John 10:16) There was ONE church set up at Pentecost. (Acts 2:47) Christ purchased the church, not churches. (Acts 20:28) We are ONE body in Christ. (Romans 12:5) Christ is the head of the ONE body, the church (Colossians 1:18,24) Paul said there is ONE faith. (Eph. 4:5,13) Jude said there is ONE faith. (Jude 3) Division is unscriptural. Christ prayed that all might be ONE. (John 17:20-23) Paul denounced division. (1 Cor. 1:10-13)

Lutherans believe that there are three kinds of law given in the Old Testament, the civil, the ceremonial and the moral law. (5) The Bible knows only one law. (Luke 24:44) They believe that the ten commandments are binding on us today. The ten commandments are done away. (II Cor. 3:7-11) We are become dead to the law by the body of Christ. (Romans 7:1-4)

As has been stated before, they believe that they should wear the name of Luther. In Isaiah 62:1, 2, it is prophesied that Christ's servants would be given a new name when salvation went out from Jerusalem and the Gentiles saw His righteousness. Agrippa knew the followers of Christ wore that name. (Acts 26:28) No salvation is promised in any other name. (Acts 4:12)

They believe that the bread and the wine are the true body and blood of Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that we are to remember Him, showing He is not materially present. (I Cor. 11:24)

They believe that the mode of baptism is non-essential. "Lutherans hold that the mode of baptism is no essential part of the sacrament, and more than the mode of celebrating the Lord's Supper is essential to it. Neither the meaning of the word baptism, nor the occasion of its administration in the Scriptures show how the sacrament was administered. (Matt. 3:7; John 3:22 23; 4:1, 2; Acts 2:41; 8:32, 36, 38) These instances referred to together with the analogy of the Old Testament ordinances and expressions indicate pouring and what is called sprinkling as quite as likely, to say the least, as immersion. For those and

other reasons the Lutheran Church baptizes by sprinkling or affusion." (5)

Christ was baptized "in" Jordan and "came up out of" the water. (Mark 1:9, 10) Baptism is called a "burial". (Romans 6:4) The Lutherans quote this in their teaching on baptism, yet say the Scriptures does not indicate the mode. The Greek word "baptizo" means to dip, plunge or immerse.

They believe that infants should be baptized. Because "Our Lord Jesus Christ declares, 'Of such is the kingdom of God'". here is there any mention of baptism in this? (Mark 10:15) explains by saying a man must receive the kingdom as a little child. They say "The Holy Scriptures inform us that entire families were baptized by the apostles". The Scriptures never mention anywhere a child ever being baptized.

The Lutherans believe that the Lord's Supper need not be kept each first day of the week. The Bible teaches that the Supper should be kept every first day of the week. (Acts 2:42; 20:7; I Cor. 16:1, 2) (6)

In closing I would like to quote James 5:20, "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

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(Continued from Page 9)

the literal presence of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper.

ORIGINAL SIN

This position is stated in Article II of the *Augsburg Confession*.

"We teach, that since the fall of Adam all men who are naturally engendered, are conceived and born in sin . . . and that this innate disease, or original sin, is truly sin, and condemns all those under the eternal wrath of God, who are not born again by baptism and the Holy Spirit."⁴

The Lutherans' concept of original sin is further clarified in the *Form of Concord—Epitome*, Article I, Negative 11.

"if even no evil thought should ever arise in the heart of corrupted man, no idle word be spoken, nor evil deed done, yet the nature is corrupted through original sin, which is congenial with us,"⁵

Note that this doctrine does not merely state that man is born with an inclination to sin, but that this inclination or weakness itself is sin. Such a position has serious implications. All new-born babies would be in a lost, sinful condition. If such a baby died in this condition, he would be subject to eternity in Hell. Any conditional plan of salvation for these infants would be dependent on the whims of the parents, and the infants would be saved or lost according to powers totally beyond their control.

Such a doctrine is a serious violation of the Bible. Ezekial 18:20 we learn that a child does not inherit the sins of his forefathers, but "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." In Hebrews 12:9 it is seen that our souls do not originate through the same genital process our fleshly bodies do, but God is the Father of our spirits (Note also Ecclesiastes 12:7 and Ezekial 12:1). Therefore, a new soul is pure and holy, a creation of God, rather than depraved by the hereditary sins of his ancestors.

One should also note that the doctrine of original sin violates the Biblical definition of sin. In I John 3:4 sin is defined as "transgression of the law." In I John 5:17 sin is referred to as "unrighteousness." The Greek word *anaptia*, which is translated "sin" in the New Testament, has a basic meaning "a failing to hit the mark."⁶ Sin, therefore, is not a tendency or inclination, but a thought, word, or deed itself. A person, then, cannot be guilty of sin until he actually violates God's will.

It is worthwhile to become familiar with certain passages used to support the doctrine of original sin. Romans 5:12 refers to the consequence of Adam's sin—physical death (Genesis 2:17; 3:22-24; I Corinthians 15:21, 22). It does not indicate man is born guilty of Adam's sin. I Corinthians 2:14 verifies that a worldly, fleshly minded *man* does not appreciate the spiritual things of God. It does not say that a *baby* is born totally depraved and a sinner before God. Ephesians 2:1-3 states that the Ephesian Christians once had a nature characterized by walking worldly, living lustrely, and doing the desires of the flesh. By this nature

they were the children of wrath. It does not say they were by *birth* the children of wrath. Psalms 51:5 states that there was sin in the act of David's conception. It does not say the sin was David's or that he was born with it.

Therefore, the doctrine of original sin as presented in the Symbolical Books is not in accord with the teachings of the Bible.

INFANT BAPTISM

The sanction of infant baptism is found in Article IX of the *Augsburg Confession*.

"Respecting baptism it is taught that it is necessary; that grace is offered through it; and that children also ought to be baptized, who through such baptism are presented to God, and become pleasing to him.

"Therefore the Anabaptists are condemned, who teach that infant baptism is not proper."⁷

Actually, this doctrine was refuted when we noted the error of the doctrine of original sin. This removed the need for infant baptism.

It is interesting to note that Luther's chief argument in the Symbolic Books to support infant baptism was that there were many very good people who had experienced this as their only means of baptism. Therefore, he considered their good lives as proof that God had accepted their baptism (*Larger Catechism*, Part IV).⁸ Such reasoning would result in the approval of Hinduism, Animism, and even Atheism. There are some good moral people representing each of these.

Some Lutherans argue that infant baptism is sanctioned by the Jewish rite of circumcision. This argument is devastated by asking what sanctions the baptism of girl babies.

The Bible teaches that there are pre-requisites to baptism. One must first believe (Mark 16:16) and repent (Acts 2:38). An infant can do neither of these, and there is not a record of one infant being baptized in the New Testament.

LORD'S SUPPER

The Symbolical Books present an approach to the Lord's Supper that is unique to the Lutherans. Note Article X of the *Augsburg Confession*.

"Concerning the holy Supper of the Lord it is thus taught, that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, and there administered and received."⁹

Lutherans attempt to distinguish between the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation and their doctrine of consubstantiation with the word "under." To the outsider, this distinction seems thin and quite arbitrary. Both doctrines result from a literal interpretation of Matthew 26:26-28. However, this passage will itself prove that Jesus was not referring to the bread and fruit of the vine as his literal body and blood. In the first place, he had not yet been crucified. Secondly, note that in verse 29 he again refers to the substance as the fruit of the vine. Obviously this is a metonymy, other examples of which occur in John 10:7 and John 15:1.

(Continued on Page 15)



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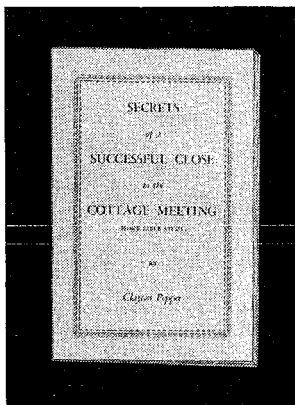
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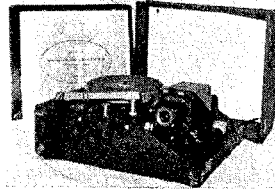
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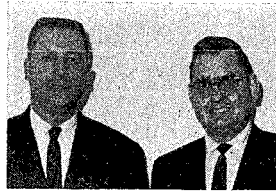
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SPECIAL NOTICE

On February 5 Juvenile Court Judge Sam Davis Tatum died of a heart attack. He was a member of the Hillsboro Church of Christ and was widely known for his lectures on the home and rearing of children.

He was one of the featured speakers at the 11th annual TEACHERS WORKSHOP at Abilene Christian College. Sister Tatum has given us permission to put these lectures on record. They will be available in a few days. The subjects discussed are:

1. Causes of Juvenile Delinquency.
2. The ONE Thing That Will End Delinquency.
3. And "A Plea For The Church to do More For Youth."

You may write Christian Lighthouse for further details.

say?

15. What is Purgatory? Is it taught in the Bible?

Chapter Twelve
Red Ruthford
The Lutheran Church

Introduction:

1. The Lutherans are an old historic Protestant group.
2. There is not one Lutheran Church, but several different Lutheran denominations.
 - a. The state churches of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland are all Lutheran bodies.
 - b. At one time there were about 150 Lutheran bodies in America; today there are approximately 12.
3. Lutherans are found mainly in the northern and midwestern United States.

Discussion:

I. Origin and History of the Lutherans:

- A. Martin Luther is the founder of the Lutheran Movement.
 1. He was born in Germany in 1483.
 2. He became an Augustinian monk and sought salvation through works of human merit.
 3. He began reading the Bible and learned of justification by faith.
 4. He became a university professor, a parish priest, and an official in his order.
 5. In 1517, he opposed the sale of indulgences by nailing 95 propositions for debate to the church-house door in Wittenburg.
 6. He refused to recant at the Diet of Worms in 1521 and was excommunicated by the pope.
- B. Luther became the acknowledged leader of the German Reformation.
 1. He translated the Bible into German.
 2. He emphasized the priesthood of believers, justification by faith

alone, the Scriptures alone as the authority in religion, and the right of everyone to interpret the Bible for himself.

3. He erroneously believed that whatever was not forbidden by the Bible could be practiced.
- C. In 1530, the Augsburg Confession was adopted as the Lutheran creed and Lutherans became a full fledged denomination.
- D. The first permanent Lutheran settlers in America arrived in 1623; a Lutheran congregation met in New York in 1649.
- E. For the next 250 years, thousands of Lutherans from Europe settled in North America.
1. By 1870, Lutherans were the fourth largest religious group in the United States.
 2. There are millions of Lutherans in America today in some twelve different denominations.
- F. The Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) is one of the largest of these denominations.
1. They sponsor a radio program called "The Lutheran Hour."
 2. In the 1960's they were engaged in a battle with evolution and theological modernism in their pulpits, colleges, and seminaries.
 3. They lost about 100,000 members as a result.
 4. "Church observers and historians maintain that it was the first time a denomination turned back a liberal trend and retained its founding doctrine." (Mead, p. 152).

II. Lutherans Teach Some Truth:

- A. Traditionally, they have taught the truth on the Godhead.
- B. Most believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scripture.
- C. They teach the priesthood of all believers, **but** have a clergy system.
- D. They teach that the Bible is the sole authority in Christianity, **but** have several creeds they follow.

III. Lutherans Teach Many Things Contrary to the Bible:

- A. They have a human founder, Martin Luther, instead of Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:18).
- B. They began at the wrong time and place to be the church of Christ (Acts 2).

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- A. They have a human founder, Martin Luther, instead of Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:18).
- B. They began at the wrong time and place to be the church of Christ (Acts 2).

- C. They follow the Augsburg Confession, the Nicene Creed, the Apostles' Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Smalcald Articles of Faith, and the Formula of Concord instead of just the Bible alone (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).
- D. They call themselves "Lutheran" rather than simply Christians (Acts 4:12; 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16).
1. Luther himself pleaded: "I pray you leave my name alone and do not call yourselves Lutherans, but Christians" (Michelle, Life of Luther, p. 262).
 2. They have the wrong name for the church as well (Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; Jno. 10:30).
- E. They hold the Ten Commandments are binding today, but the Bible says the Ten Commandments were "nailed to the cross" (Col. 2:14-17; 2 Cor. 3:7-11; Gal. 5:1-4; Rom. 7:1-7).
- F. They teach that Sunday is the "Christian sabbath" and observe numerous "holy days" such as "Lent, Easter, Christmas," etc. (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 22:18,19; Exod. 10:8-11).
- G. They teach that the Lord's supper is a sacrament through which forgiveness of sins can be received, (Lutheran Catechism, p. 159), but the Bible says it is a "memorial" (1 Cor. 11:24-26).
- H. They teach that the bread and fruit of the vine contain the **real presence** of Jesus (Matt. 26:26-28).
- I. They teach justification by faith alone without any acts of obedience (Catechism, p. 104).
1. Luther added "alone" to Romans 3:28 in his translation of the New Testament (cf. Rev. 22:18, 19).
 2. He called the book of James "a right strawy epistle" because of its emphasis on justification by works (Jas 2:14-26; Gal. 5:6; Jno 6:29).
- J. Lutherans practice infant baptism.
1. "They have inherited a sinful heart, and the germ of sin in them will soon grow." (Lutheran Catechism by Stump, p. 146).
 2. "Christ has commanded that little children should be brought to him and we obey this command by baptizing them and teaching them" (Stump, Catechism, p. 146).
 3. What is wrong with infant baptism?
 - a. Little children are innocent; therefore they are safe since they have never sinned (Ezek. 18:20; 1 Jno. 3:4; Mark 10:14).
 - b. Baptism must be preceded by hearing and believing the

Gospel, repentance of sins, and confession of faith in Jesus Christ; only then is one a proper candidate for baptism (Rom. 10:17; Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 10:8-10).

- c. In the New Testament “men and women,” not children, were baptized (Acts 8:12).
- K. Lutherans practice sprinkling and pouring for baptism.
 - 1. One “mode” is just as good as another (Stump, Catechism, P. 147).
 - 2. The Bible teaches that baptism is a **burial** (Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:4; Acts 8: 36-39).
- L. Lutherans teach that baptism replaced circumcision.
 - 1. Circumcision was received by children as a token of the covenant-- “so now children are to be baptized and receive the token of the new covenant, the seal of the righteousness of faith” (Luther’s Small Catechism, question #335).
 - 2. Circumcision of the flesh was a shadow of circumcision of the heart (Rom. 2:28, 29).
 - 3. If circumcision came in the place of baptism, why are female babies baptized since only male babies were circumcized?

Conclusion:

- 1. Because of Luther’s attitude toward the Bible, Lutherans have retained many Roman Catholic ideas and practices.
- 2. Lutherans err in the form of government they practice (Eph. 5:23; Acts 14:23).
- 3. Lutherans use instrumental music and choirs in their worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
- 4. Lutherans usually are difficult to convert to New Testament Christianity because of strong tradition, family ties, and acceptance of authority in addition to the Word of God.

Study Questions

- 1. Who is the founder of the Lutheran Church? What do you know about his early life and background?
- 2. What are some of the doctrines Luther emphasized?
- 3. When did Lutherans become a full-fledged denomination?
- 4. Which Lutheran body was involved in a fight with modernism in the 1960’s?
- 5. What is wrong with wearing the name of Luther?

EDWIN JONES

What do Lutherans Believe?

A Summary Statement of Belief

Lutherans confess (to declare faith in, or adherence to) the faith of the apostolic Christian Church as it is taught in the three Ecumenical (Universal) Creeds, Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian. Namely, that there is only one true God, and yet in this one God there are three persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit.

Where is the 'Trinity' found in the Bible?

- Lutherans confess that all are conceived and born sinful, standing under God's wrath and are unable to save themselves.
- Lutherans confess that God the Son was born of the virgin Mary. This Jesus Christ, who is true God and true man, died on the cross and rose to life again in order to save the world from God's wrath. He ascended into heaven and we now wait for Him to return on the Last Day to judge both the living and the dead.
- Lutherans confess that we are saved by God's grace, for Christ's sake, through faith alone.
- Lutherans confess that this saving faith comes to us as God's free gift through the work of the Holy Spirit as Christ's Church proclaims the Gospel and administers the Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper).

Why do Lutherans baptize babies?

- Lutherans confess that the only authority for Christian teaching and life which is never in error, and never leads us astray is God's Holy Word, which He has given to us in the Old and New Testaments. For Lutherans Scripture (The Holy Bible) is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice.

Lutherans and the Holy Bible

Confessional Lutherans believe that the Bible is inspired.

That is, "**men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**" 2 Peter 1:21 NIV

- "**We believe, teach and confess** that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God the Holy Spirit and that God is therefore the true Author of every word of Scripture." ("A

Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles" adopted by The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 50th Regular Convention, July 6-12, 1973, adopted by LC–C at the founding convention.)

"This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words." 1 Corinthians 2:13 NIV

"I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ." Galatians 1:11-12 NIV

○ Luther writes:

- **"The Holy Spirit Himself and God, the Creator of all things, is the Author of this book." (168)**

- **"One should have a pure faith, one that believes nothing that is not grounded in Scripture. All that we are to believe, aye, more than enough, is in Scripture." (260)**

Confessional Lutherans believe that the Bible is inerrant, or infallible (without error.)

- **"With Luther, we confess that "God's Word cannot err" (LC, IV, 57). We therefore believe, teach, and confess that since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, they contain no errors or contradictions but that are in all their parts and words the infallible truth. We hold that the opinion that Scripture contains errors is a violation of the "sola scriptura" principle, for it rests upon the acceptance of some norm or criterion of truth above the Scriptures. We recognize that there are apparent contradictions or discrepancies and problems which arise because of uncertainty over the original text." ("A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles" adopted by The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 50th Regular Convention, July 6-12, 1973, adopted by LC–C at the founding convention.)**

"Praise be to the Lord, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses." 1 Kings 8:56 NIV

-

"Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth." John 17:17 NIV

-

". . . Scripture cannot be broken." John 10:35 NIV

o Luther writes:

- **"Scripture has never erred." ([geirret] LW 32 II, AE Vol. 32. p. 11, SI 15, 1481)**

- **"Scripture will not contradict itself on any one article of faith, even though to your mind a contradiction and an irreconcilability exist." (219)**

- **"The word is so completely above criticism that there is not one iota of a mistake in the Law and the divine promises. Therefore we are to yield to no sect; nor are we to yield in any point of Scripture, however much men clamor and slander, saying that we are violating love by adhering so strictly to the words" (4415)**

Confessional Lutherans, with Luther, place themselves under Scripture to be judged by it, not over it to judge it!

"We are to search says He, not to sit in judgment; not to be masters, but pupils; not to inject our notions into Scripture, but get Christ's testimony out of it; and as long as Christ is not found aright in it, it is also not being searched aright." (241)

Confessional Lutherans pray with the Church through the ages:

- Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of Thy holy Word we may embrace and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God world without end. AMEN.

The Ecumenical Creeds

- The word 'creed' comes from the Latin Word credo, which simply means "I believe." Thus a creed is a statement, or confession (declaring faith in, or adherence to

something), of what one believes.

- There are three Ecumenical (or universal) Creeds which all Christians accept (if not the creed itself, certainly the teachings they contain), the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian. They clearly define for us what constitutes Christianity. These Creeds form the core teachings or confessions of the Christian Church. These Creeds form the one area where all Christians agree.
- For Lutherans these Creeds form a part of our basic confession of faith which is found in the Book of Concord.

(To the best of my knowledge the translations of the Creeds

which follow are in the public domain.)

The Apostle's Creed

The Apostles Creed - the Holy Apostles did not write this creed but it does contain their teachings. It is the earliest of the three creeds and is a basic summary of our Christian faith. We find this creed being used in the early Church in both the baptismal and worship services. The Apostles Creed does three things for us. First, it gives us a simple way of telling others what we believe. Secondly, it gives Christians a basic statement of faith in which we celebrate our oneness in Christ. Thirdly, it gives us a handy tape measure to see if certain teachings are Christian or not.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the quick and dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of sins, the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life everlasting. Amen

The Nicene Creed

Nicene Creed - This creed seems to have been developed out of the early baptismal statement of the Church and was written in particular to safeguard the deity of Jesus Christ. Namely, the fact that Jesus is true God as well as true man. There were some people in those days (the early 300's) who thought that physical things were evil. Since they knew Jesus was true man they reasoned that there was no way that he could also be true God. They taught that Jesus was mere man. Still others went the other direction and taught that Jesus not man and only God. So it was in the year 325 A.D. that the Roman Emperor called together a Church Council to settle the dispute. One of the prominent leaders was a man by the name Athanasius. Eventually, after

much study the majority of the pastors agreed on the teachings contained in what we now call the Nicene Creed. This creed clearly states that Jesus is both True God as well as True Man. Eight years after Athanasius died (fifty-six years after the previous council) all Christians re-affirmed this creed.

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary And was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick (living) and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one holy Christian and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. AMEN.

Athanasian Creed

This creed was written to safeguard the Biblical teaching concerning the Holy Trinity. It contains the essence of the first four Church Councils (meetings at which all of the early Christian churches were represented) and is a summary of what the Bible teaches concerning God. At the time this creed was written Athanasius had been dead a long time. Yet, people were still trying to convince others that Jesus was not God. So, based on the clear teachings of Scripture this creed was written to affirm that Jesus was true God as well as true Man.

● Where is the 'Trinity' found in the Bible?

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic (i.e., universal, Christian) faith.

Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

And the catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, Neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance.

For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost.

But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost.
 The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate,
 The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible,
 and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible.
 The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal.
 And yet they are not three Eternal, but one Eternal.
 As there are not three Uncreated nor three Incomprehensibles,
 but one Uncreated and one Incomprehensible.
 So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty,
 and the Holy Ghost almighty.
 And yet they are not three Almighty, but one Almighty.
 So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God.
 And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.
 So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord.
 And yet not three Lords, but one Lord.
 For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge
 every Person by Himself to be God and Lord,
 So are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say,
 There be three Gods or three Lords.
 The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.
 The Son is of the Father alone, not made nor created, but begotten,
 The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son,
 neither made nor created not begotten, but proceeding.
 So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons;
 one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.
 An in this Trinity none is before or after other;
 none is greater or less than another;
 But the whole three Persons are coeternal together and coequal,
 so that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity
 and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshiped.
 He therefore, that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity,
 Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe
 faithfully
 the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ,
 the Son of God, is God and Man;
 God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds;
 and Man of the substance of His mother, born in the world;
 Perfect God and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.
 Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead
 and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood;
 Who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ:
 One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh,
 but by taking the manhood into God;
 One altogether; not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person.
 For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one
 Christ;
 Who suffered for our salvation; descended into hell;
 rose again the third day from the dead; He ascended into heaven;
 He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty;
 from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

**At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies
 and shall give an account of their own works.
 And they that have done good shall go onto life everlasting;
 and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire.
 This is the catholic faith;
 which except a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.**

The Lutheran Confessions

- All Lutheran doctrine (teaching) is to be taken from Holy Scripture. Our Lutheran Confessions are very explicit on this point. ". . . **the Word of God shall establish articles of faith and no one else, not even an angel.**" (S.A. Part II, The Mass, 15, Tappert page 295.) **"We receive and embrace with our whole heart the Prophetic and Apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the pure, clear fountain of Israel, which is the only true standard by which teachers and doctrines are to be judged."** (F.C., Th. D., sum., 3, Triglot, p. 851) Holy Scripture is the only source and the absolute norm of our faith.
- The Lutheran Confessions, or Symbols are seen as secondary norms, or as true declarations of the doctrines of Holy Scripture, which all who would call themselves Lutheran must confess and teach. For this reason the confessional Lutheran Church demands of all its public teachers and ministers a bona-fide subscription to all its Confessions as the pure and unadulterated declarations of God's Word. (We call this a "quia" subscription – that is we subscribe to the Confessions "because" they are truly scriptural.) To put it another way. Holy Scripture is the deciding norm, it is absolutely necessary. The Bible decides what is true or false doctrine. The Confessions are the distinguishing norm, they are only relatively necessary. They determine whether or not a person has correctly understood the true doctrines of Scripture.
- The Lutheran Confessions are that which make Lutherans Lutheran! They are:
 - The Ecumenical Creeds,
 - The Small and Large Catechisms of Dr. Martin Luther
 - The Smalcald Articles (Luther)
 - The Augsburg Confession and its Apology (Defense) written by Dr. Philip Melancthon
 - The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope (Melancthon)
 - The Formula of Concord with the primary authors being Jacob Andreae, Martin Chemnitz, Nicolaus Selnecker, David Chytraeus, Christoph Koerner, Andreas Musculus.
 - These writings are contained the The Book of Concord.

●Project Wittenberg — This site contains many source documents, including the Augsburg Confession (entire), the Roman Catholic response to the Augsburg Confession – The Confutation (Confutatio Pontificia), Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, The Smalcald Articles, and the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope . . . as well as many other documents of interest.

- **A Summary of the Augsburg Confession**

What Evangelical Lutherans Believe, Teach and Confess

The purpose of this summary is to introduce you or to reacquaint you with the teachings of the Church of the Augsburg Confession, more commonly known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

As a result of the writings of the Augustinian monk Dr. Martin Luther in the early 1500's, the Reformation of the Christian Church spread throughout Europe and England. In the face of great opposition, the early Lutheran reformers boldly proclaimed that all church teachings and doctrines must come from Scripture alone. In harmony with the Apostolic teachings, these Confessions are in agreement with that which was proclaimed by the ancient Church.

Article 1 - On God

- We believe, teach and confess there is one divine essence who is called and is truly God (Deut. 6:4) and that there are three persons in this one divine essence (1 John 5:7) equal in power and alike eternal. God the Father (2 Peter 1:17), God the Son (Heb. 1:8), God the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4).

Article 2 - On Original Sin

- We believe, teach and confess that since the fall of Adam all people who are born according to the course of nature are conceived and born in sin. By that we teach that inherent in all people since conception (Ps. 51:5) we are full of evil lusts and inclinations and are unable by nature to have a true fear or true faith of God. Moreover this inborn sickness and hereditary sin condemns all those who are not born again to the eternal wrath of God (Rom. 5:12-21; Rom. 7:8; John 3:6).

Article 3 - The Son of God

- We believe, teach and confess that God the Son became man (John 1:1,14), was born of the Virgin Mary (Is. 7:14) and that the two natures, divine and human are inseparable united in the one person of Christ, true God and true man (1 Tim. 2:5), who was truly born, suffered, was crucified, died and was buried to be a sacrifice not only for original sin but also for all other sins and to satisfy God's wrath (1 Pet. 3:18; Gal. 3:13). The same Christ also descended into hell (1 Pet. 3:19-20), truly rose bodily from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God (Luke 24:39; Mark 16:19).
- The same Christ eternally rules and has dominion over all creation (Phil. 2:9-12) and through the Holy Spirit the sanctifies, purifies, strengthens and give comfort to all who believe in Him in order that He may give to them eternal life and every grace and blessing both in this life and the next (1 Thes. 5:23). The same Lord Christ will return for all the world to see to judge the living and the dead (Matt. 25:31-32).

Article 4 - On Justification (Christian renewal)

- We believe, teach and confess that no person anywhere can be forgiven, made righteous or acceptable before God by his or her own inward qualities, outward works or satisfactions. We can only receive forgiveness of sin before God by grace (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 2:11) for Christ's sake, through faith in Christ suffered for the sins of the whole world and for us, for His sake our sin is forgiven and true righteous and eternal life are given to us (Rom. 2:23-28; Rom. 4:5).

Article 5 - The Ministry of the Church [The Office of the Ministry]

- We believe, teach and confess that God instituted the office of the ministry for the purpose of bringing the Word and the Sacraments to His people in order that they may come to saving faith (Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:23-25; 2 Cor. 5:18; Acts 20:28). It is only through these two means that the Holy Spirit works faith where and when He pleases in only those who hear and do not reject the Gospel (John 5:52; Rom. 10:17; 1 Thess. 1:5).
- We also believe, teach and confess that the Holy Spirit does not come to us through our own preparations, imaginations, enthusiasms or works but only through the preached or taught Work of Holy Scripture and Sacraments (John 17:17; John 5:52; Eph 1:17; Titus 3:5).

Article 6 - The Necessity of Good Works

- We believe, teach and confess that true Christian faith should produce good works and that we must do good works because God has commanded them, however we should do them for Christ's sake and never place our trust in them in order to obtain favour before God. Christ says **"When you have done all that is commanded of us, say, We are still unworthy servants"** (Luke 17:10).

Articles 7 and 8 - The Church

- We believe, teach and confess that the one Holy Christian Church will be and remain forever (Matt. 16:18). The Church is the gathering or assembly of all believers wherever the Gospel is preached in its purity and the Holy Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper) are administered according to the Gospel (Matt. 28:20; Luke 22:19, Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:5-6).
- True unity of the Christian Church exists where the preaching of the Gospel conforms with a pure understanding of it and where the Sacraments are administered in accord with God's Holy Word (John 8:31; Acts 16:4). However it is not necessary for the true unity of the Christian Church that ceremonies or rites created by men must be uniformly observed in all local gatherings.
- We also sadly admit that in this life there are many false Christians, hypocrites and even open sinners among the godly but that in no way inhibits or negates the

effectiveness of God's Word and Sacraments even if a wicked pastor or minister administers them, for as Christ Himself says, "**The Pharisees sit on Moses seat**" (Matt. 23:2).

Article 9 - Baptism

- We believe, teach and confess that Baptism with water in the name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit is necessary because Christ commanded it so and that the grace of God (forgiveness and renewal) is offered through it (Matt. 28:29; John 3:5; Eph 5:26; 1 Pet. 3:21). Children should also be baptized, for in their being offered to God through Baptism the too are received into His grace (Mark 10:14; Acts 2:38-39).

Article 10 - The Holy Supper of Our Lord

- We believe, teach and confess that bread and wine distributed and received in the Holy Supper (for the forgiveness of sins and for eternal life) are truly the body and blood of Christ (Matt. 26:26-28, ; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 10:16; John 6:48-58).

Article 11 - Confession of Sins

- We believe, teach and confess that private absolution has a rightful place in the Church and should be retained and not be allowed to fall into disuse (Matt. 16:19 18:18, John 20:21- 23). However, in confession it is not necessary to remember all trespasses and sins for this is impossible, "**Who can discern his errors?**" (Ps. 19:12).

Article 12 - Repentance

- We believe, teach and confess that all those who sin after their Baptism receive forgiveness of sin whenever they truly repent of their sins (Matt 11:28; Mark 1:15; 2 Sam. 12:13). Properly speaking, true repentance is nothing else than shame , sorrow and fear of God's wrath on account of sin, and yet at the same time to believe and trust in our being absolved of our sins on account of Christ.
- The changing and correcting of our sinful ways should follow. This amendment of life must produce the fruits that correspond with our repentance (Matt 3:8; 1 John 2:3.4). Therefore we also believe, teach and confess that those who once were godly can fall from God's grace again (Gal. 5:4; 1 Cor. 10:12; Matt 26:41; 1 Pet.5:8).

Article 13 - The Use of the Sacraments

- We believe, teach and confess that the Sacraments were instituted by Christ not only to be the signs by which people might be identified outwardly as Christians, but that they are signs and testimonies of God's will toward us for the purpose of awakening

and strengthening our faith (Matt. 28:19,20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

- Baptism and the Lord's Supper have the command of God to which the promise of grace has been added. When we are baptized and when we eat the Lord's Body, we are absolved and our hearts should firmly believe that we are truly forgiven for Christ's sake. Through the Word and the rite, God simultaneously moves the heart to believe and to take hold of faith, as Paul says, "**So faith come from hearing and hearing by the word of God.**" (Rom. 10:17)

Article 14 - Order in the Church

- We believe, teach and confess that no person should publicly teach or preach or administer the Sacraments without a regular call (Rom. 10:14-17; 1 Cor. 12:28; Titus 1:5; Acts 21:28).

Article 15 - Church Rites

- We believe, teach and confess that rites or customs may be used which can be used without entering into sin and which contribute to the peace and good order to the Church. However any observances of human tradition that burdens the consciences which are instituted to appease God, earn grace and make satisfaction for sins are opposed to the Gospel and the teaching about faith (Gal. 1:9; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Gal. 5:9).

Article 16 - Order in the World

- We believe, teach and confess that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God instituted for the sake of good order (Rom. 13:1-6). The Gospel teaches an inward and eternal righteousness of the heart and does not destroy the state or the family. On the contrary, the Gospel requires the preservation of the state and family as ordinances of God and the exercise of love in those who live under authority (Rom. 12:1-2). Therefore Christians are bound to obey the laws of the land and those in authority except when commanded to sin, for then Christians are obliged to obey God (Acts 3:29).

Article 17 - The Return of Christ of Judgment

- We believe, teach and confess that on the last day Christ will appear for judgment (Matt. 24:30-31; John 5:22-23; Acts 17:31) and raise up all the dead (John 5:27-29; John 6:39-40). To those who are saved He will give eternal life and endless joy (John 3:18; 1 Pet. 1:9).
- To the unsaved and evil demons He will condemn to be tormented without end (Matt. 25:31-41,46).
- Scripture teaches nothing regarding the opinions of those who say that before the resurrection of the dead the godly will take possession of the kingdom of the world

and that the ungodly will be suppressed everywhere (Matt. 25:31-46; James 5:9; 1 Pet. 4:7; Mark 13:35ff).

Article 18 - Freedom of the Will

- We believe, teach and confess that we possess some measure of freedom of the will which enables us to live an outwardly honourable life and to make choices based on reason. However, our wills do not have the power, without the Holy Spirit, to make unacceptable to God, that is, spiritual righteousness, because in our natural sinful state we habitually reject the gifts of God (1 Cor. 2:14).
- Without the Holy Spirit we cannot produce the inward affections such as fear or love of God or trust in God, **"Without faith it is impossible to please God"** (Heb. 11:6). Although our human nature is in some measure able to perform outward acts of goodness (we can refrain from theft and murder), on the other hand our nature is capable of the will to worship idols and the will to commit murder.

Article 19 - The Cause of Sin

- We believe, teach and confess that although God created and preserves nature (Heb. 1:3), the cause of sin in the world is the will of the wicked (Jer. 17:9), that is, the devil and ungodly people (John 8:44). The will that, outside of God turns itself even further away from God to evil. It is as Christ says, **"When the devil lies, he speaks according to his own nature."**

Article 20 - Faith and Good Works

- We believe, teach and confess that the term faith does not mean merely knowledge of Christ's suffering and resurrection. True faith is belief not only in the history of Jesus Christ but also in the trust and belief that we have grace, righteousness and forgiveness of sins only through Christ (Rom. 5:1).
- We also believe, teach and confess that good works should and must be done, not that they earn us God's grace but that we may do God's will and glorify Him. When faith is given by the Holy Spirit, the heart is moved to do good works (1 John 4:7; Eph. 2:8-10; 1 Thess. 4:3; Luke 17:10).
- Without faith in Christ our human nature cannot possibly do works pleasing to God, or to love one's neighbour or to avoid evil lusts. Genuine works of faith can only be done with the help of Christ as He Himself says, **"Apart from Me you can do nothing"** (John 15:5).

Article 21 - On Saints

- We believe, teach and confess that the remembrance of faithful Christians may serve as an example so that we may imitate their faith and good works insofar as our own

particular calling is concerned. However, regardless of how saintly anyone is, Scriptures do not teach us to pray to the saints or to seek their help, for the only mediator whom the Scriptures set before us is Jesus Christ.

- According to Scriptures, the highest form of divine service is sincerely to seek and call upon the name of Jesus in every time of need. **"If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"** (1 John 2:1).

This is the sum of our teaching and there is nothing here that departs from the Scriptures from which pure doctrines and profession of faith may be preserved by the power of the Holy Spirit until the glorious coming of Jesus Christ, our only Redeemer and Saviour.

Note on Article 5: The Office of the Ministry is an alternate title given this article. A footnote in Tappert's translation of the Confessions points out concerning this Title: **"This title would be misleading if it were not observed (as the text of the article makes clear) that the Reformers thought of 'the office of the ministry' in other than clerical [Pastoral, Office of the Holy Ministry] terms."** ("The Book of Concord," Fortress Press:Philadelphia, ©1959 page 31)

The official doctrinal statement of our Synod (L-CC/LCMS) tells us concerning Article 5, **"This statement, of course, does not speak of the ministry of the Word 'in concreto' or of the pastoral office but only of the ministry of the Word 'in abstracto,' of which Ludwig Hartmann, among others, rightly reminds us in his pastoral theology: "The ministry of the Word may be treated in two ways: first, in an abstract way when the state or office itself is being considered, as Art. V of the Augsburg Confession treats it; second, in a concrete way, when the persons are considered who minister in this holy office, as Art. XIV of the Augsburg Confession treats it."** Luther puts it this way in his Schwabach Articles, from which Article 5 of the Augsburg Confession is taken. **"In order that we may obtain such faith or to grant it to us men, God has instituted the ministry or the oral Word, namely, the Gospel, through which He causes such faith with its power, benefit, and fruit to be proclaimed, and through it, as through His means, He also grants faith together with His Holy Spirit how and where He wills."** (Walther, C.F.W., **Church and Ministry**, CPH:St. Louis ©1987 original German version 1875.) [return to Article 5](#)

- The Rev. Larry Labatt (All Hallows Church, 139 Grovely Rd., Sunbury on Thames, Middlesex, England, TW167JT) is the author of this summary. Minor editorial changes, and a substance change to his summary of Article 5 have been made to clear up possible misunderstandings. Namely, the principle title of Article 5 has been changed and the word Holy deleted before the word Ministry (a word which does not appear in Article V in this manner).

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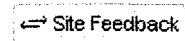
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(St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, N.D.)

[Adopted 1932]

4. On the basis of the Holy Scriptures we teach the sublime article of the Holy Trinity; that is, we teach that the one true God, Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:4, is the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, three distinct persons, but of one and the same divine essence, equal in power, equal in eternity, equal in majesty, because each person possesses the one divine essence entire, Col. 2:9, Matt. 28:19. We hold that all teachers and communions that deny the doctrine of the Holy Trinity are outside the pale of the Christian Church. The Triune God is the God who is gracious to man, John 3:16-18, 1 Cor. 12:3. Since the Fall, no man can believe in the "fatherhood" of God except he believe in the eternal Son of God, who became man and reconciled us to God by His vicarious satisfaction, 1 John 2:23; John 14:6. Hence we warn against Unitarianism, which in our country has to a great extent impenetrated the sects and is being spread particularly also through the influence of the lodges.

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Of Man and Sin

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6. ~~We teach that the first man was not brutelike nor merely capable of intellectual development, but that God created man in His own image, Gen. 1:26, 27; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10, that is, in true knowledge of God and in true righteousness and holiness and endowed with a truly scientific knowledge of nature, Gen. 2:19-23.~~

7. ~~We furthermore teach that sin came into the world by the fall of the first man, as described [sic] Gen. 3. By this Fall not only he himself, but also his natural offspring have lost the original knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, and thus all men are sinners already by birth, dead in sins, inclined to all evil, and subject to the wrath of God, Rom. 5:12, 18; Eph. 2:1-3. We teach also that men are unable, through any efforts of their own or by the aid of "culture and science," to reconcile themselves to God and thus conquer death and damnation.~~

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Of Faith in Christ

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[Adopted 1932]

9. Since God has reconciled the whole world unto Himself through the vicarious life and death of His Son and has commanded that the reconciliation effected by Christ be proclaimed to men in the Gospel, to the end that they may believe it, 2 Cor. 5:18, 19; Rom. 1:5, therefore faith in Christ is the only way for men to obtain personal reconciliation with God, that is, forgiveness of sins, as both the Old and the New Testament Scriptures testify, Acts 10:43; John 3:16-18, 36. By this faith in Christ, through which men obtain the forgiveness of sins, is not meant any human effort to fulfill the Law of God after the example of Christ, but faith in the Gospel, that is, in the forgiveness of sins, or justification, which was fully earned for us by Christ and is offered by the Gospel. This faith justifies, not inasmuch as it is a work of man, but inasmuch as it lays hold of the grace offered, the forgiveness of sins, Rom. 4:16.

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Jews. And thereby God in some lands and persons exhibits His severity to those that are His in order to indicate what we all would have well deserved and would be worthy and worth, since we act wickedly in opposition to God's Word and often grieve the Holy Ghost sorely; in order that we may live in the fear of God and acknowledge and praise God's goodness, to the exclusion of, and contrary to, our merit in and with us, to whom He gives His Word and with whom He leaves it and whom He does not harden and reject...And this His righteous, well-deserved judgment He displays in some countries, nations and persons in order that, when we are placed alongside of them and compared with them (*quam simillimi illis deprehensi*, i.e., and found to be most similar to them), we may learn the more diligently to recognize and praise God's pure, unmerited grace in the vessels of mercy...When we proceed thus far in this article, we remain on the right way, as it is written, Hos. 13:9: 'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thy help.' However, as regards these things in this disputation which would soar too high and beyond these limits, we should with Paul place the finger upon our lips and remember and say, Rom. 9:20: 'O man, who art thou that repliest against God?' The Formula of Concord describes the mystery which confronts us here not as a mystery in man's heart (a "psychological" mystery), but teaches that, when we try to understand why "one is hardened, blinded, given over to a reprobate mind, while another, who is indeed in the same guilt, is converted again," we enter the domain of the unsearchable judgments of God and ways past finding out, which are not revealed to us in His Word, but which we shall know in eternal life. 1 Cor. 13:12.

16. Calvinists solve this mystery, which God has not revealed in His Word, by denying the universality of grace; synergists, by denying that salvation is by grace alone. Both solutions are utterly vicious, since they contradict Scripture and since every poor sinner stands in need of, and must cling to, both the unrestricted universal grace and the unrestricted "by grace alone," lest he despair and perish.

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Of Good Works

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[Adopted 1932]

20. Before God only those works are good which are done for the glory of God and the good of man, according to the rule of divine Law. Such works, however, no man performs unless he first believes that God has forgiven him his sins and has given him eternal life by grace, for Christ's sake, without any works of his own, John 15:4, 5. We reject as a great folly the assertion, frequently made in our day, that works must be placed in the fore, and "faith in dogmas" -- meaning the Gospel of Christ crucified for the sins of the world -- must be relegated to the rear. Since good works never precede faith, but are always and in every instance the result of faith in the Gospel, it is evident that the only means by which we Christians can become rich in good works (and God would have us to be rich in good works; Titus 2:14) is unceasingly to remember the grace of God which we have received in Christ, Rom. 12:1; 2 Cor. 8:9. Hence we reject as unchristian and foolish any attempt to produce good works by the compulsion of the Law or through carnal motives.

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Of the Church

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[Adopted 1932]

24. We believe that there is one holy Christian Church on earth, the Head of which is Christ and which is gathered, preserved, and governed by Christ through the Gospel.

The members of the Christian Church are the Christians, that is, all those who have despaired of their own righteousness before God and believe that God forgives their sins for Christ's sake. The Christian Church, in the proper sense of the term, is composed of believers only, Acts 5:14; 26:18; which means that no person in whom the Holy Ghost has wrought faith in the Gospel, or -- which is the same thing -- in the doctrine of justification, can be divested of his membership in the Christian Church; and, on the other hand, that no person in whose heart this faith does not dwell can be invested with such membership. All unbelievers, though they be in external communion with the Church and even hold the office of teacher or any other office in the Church, are not members of the Church, but, on the contrary, dwelling-places and instruments of Satan, Eph. 2:2. This is also the teaching of our Lutheran Confessions: "It is certain, however, that the wicked are in the power of the devil and members of the kingdom of the devil, as Paul teaches, Eph. 2:2, when he says that 'the devil now worketh in the children of disobedience,'" etc. (Apology, Triglot, p. 231, Paragraph 16; M., p. 154.)

25. Since it is by faith in the gospel alone that men become members of the Christian Church, and since this faith cannot be seen by men, but is known to God alone, 1 Kings 8:39; Acts 1:24; 2 Tim. 2:19, therefore the Christian Church on earth is invisible till Judgment Day, Col. 3:3, 4. In our day some Lutherans speak of two sides of the Church, taking the means of grace to be its "visible side." It is true, the means of grace are necessarily related to the Church, seeing that the Church is created and preserved through them. But the means of grace are not for that reason a part of the Church; for the Church, in the proper sense of the word, consists only of believers, Eph. 2:19, 20; Acts 5:14. Lest we abet the notion that the Christian Church in the proper sense of the term is an external institution, we shall continue to call the means of grace the "marks" of the Church. Just as wheat is to be found only where it has been sown, so the Church can be found only where the Word of God is in use.

26. We teach that this Church, which is the invisible communion of all believers, is to be found not only in those external church communions which teach the Word of God purely in every part, but also where, along with error, so much of the Word of God still remains that men may be brought to the knowledge of their sins and to faith in the forgiveness of sins, which Christ has gained for all men, Mark 16:16; Samaritans: Luke 17:16; John 4:25.

27. Local Churches or Local Congregations. -- Holy Scripture, however, does not speak merely of the one Church, which embraces the believers of all places, as in Matt. 16:18; John 10:16, but also of churches in the plural, that is, of local churches, as in 1 Cor. 16:19; 1:2; Acts 8:1: the Churches of Asia, the church of God in Corinth, the church in Jerusalem. But this does not mean that there are two kinds of churches, for the local churches also, in as far as they are churches, consist solely of believers, as we see clearly from the addresses of the epistles to local churches; for example, "unto the church which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified, in Christ Jesus, called to be saints," 1 Cor. 1:2, Rom. 1:7, etc. The visible society, containing hypocrites as well as believers, is called a church only in a improper sense, Matt. 13:47-50, 24-30, 38-43.

28. On Church-Fellowship. -- Since God ordained that His Word only, without the admixture of human doctrine,



Of the Public Ministry

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31. By the public ministry we mean the office by which the Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are administered by order and in the name of a Christian congregation. Concerning this office we teach that it is a divine ordinance; that is, the Christians of a certain locality must apply the means of grace not only privately and within the circle of their families nor merely in their common intercourse with fellow-Christians, John 5:39; Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:16, but they are also required, by the divine order, to make provision that the Word of God be publicly preached in their midst, and the Sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, by persons qualified for such work, whose qualifications and official functions are exactly defined in Scripture, Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; 20:28; 2 Tim. 2:2.

32. Although the office of the ministry is a divine ordinance, it possesses no other power than the power of the Word of God, 1 Pet. 4:11; that is to say, it is the duty of Christians to yield unconditional obedience to the office of the ministry whenever, and as long as, the minister proclaims to them the Word of God, Heb. 13:17, Luke 10:16. If, however, 6:30-8:30 the minister, in his teachings and injunctions, were to go beyond the Word of God, it would be the duty of Christians not to obey, but to disobey him, so as to remain faithful to Christ, Matt. 23:8. Accordingly, we reject the false doctrine ascribing to the office of the ministry the right to demand obedience and submission in matters which Christ has not commanded.

33. Regarding ordination we teach that it is not a divine, but a commendable ecclesiastical ordinance. (Smalcald Articles. Triglot, p. 525, paragraph 70; M., p. 342.)

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LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

Of the Election of Grace

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35. By the election of grace we mean this truth, that all those who by the grace of God alone, for Christ's sake, through the means of grace, are brought to faith, are justified, sanctified, and preserved in faith here in time, that all these have already from eternity been endowed by God with faith, justification, sanctification, and preservation in faith, and this for the same reason, namely, by grace alone, for Christ's sake, and by way of the means of grace. That this is the doctrine of the Holy Scripture is evident from Eph. 1:3-7; 2 Thess. 2:13, 14; Acts 13:48; Rom. 8:28-30; 2 Tim. 1:9; Matt. 24:22-24 (cp. Form. of Conc. Triglot, p. 1065, Paragraphs 5, 8, 23; M., p. 705).

36. Accordingly we reject as an anti-Scriptural error the doctrine that not alone the grace of God and the merit of Christ are the cause of the election of grace, but that God has, in addition, found or regarded something good in us which prompted or caused Him to elect us, this being variously designated as "good works," "right conduct," "proper self-determination," "refraining from willful resistance," etc. Nor does Holy Scripture know of an election "by foreseen faith," "in view of faith," as though the faith of the elect were to be placed before their election; but according to Scripture the faith which the elect have in time belongs to the spiritual blessings with which God has endowed them by His eternal election. For Scripture teaches Acts 13:48: "And as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed." Our Lutheran Confession also testifies (Triglot, p. 1065, Paragraph 8; M. p. 705): "The eternal election of God however, not only foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect, but is also, from the gracious will and pleasure of God in Christ Jesus, a cause which procures, works, helps, and promotes our salvation and what pertains thereto; and upon this our salvation is so founded that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it, Matt. 16:18, as is written John 10:28: 'Neither shall any man pluck My sheep out of My hand'; and again, Acts 13:48: 'And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed..'"

37. But as earnestly as we maintain that there is an election of grace, or a predestination to salvation, so decidedly do we teach, on the other hand, that there is no election of wrath, or predestination to damnation. Scripture plainly reveals the truth that the love of God for the world of lost sinners is universal, that is, that it embraces all men without exception, that Christ has fully reconciled all men unto God, and that God earnestly desires to bring all men to faith, to preserve them therein, and thus to save them, as Scripture testifies, 1 Tim. 2:4: "God will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." No man is lost because God has predestined him to eternal damnation. -- Eternal election is a cause why the elect are brought to faith in time, Acts 13:48; but election is not a cause why men remain unbelievers when they hear the Word of God. The reason assigned by Scripture for this sad fact is that these men judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life, putting the Word of God from them and obstinately resisting the Holy Ghost, whose earnest will it is to bring also them to repentance and faith by means of the Word, Act 13:46; 7:51; Matt. 23:37.

38. To be sure, it is necessary to observe the Scriptural distinction between the election of grace and the universal will of grace. This universal gracious will of God embraces all men; the election of grace, however, does not embrace all, but only a definite number, whom "God hath from the beginning chosen to salvation," 2 Thess. 2:13, the "remnant," the "seed" which "the Lord left," Rom. 9:27-29, the "election," Rom. 11:7; and while the universal will of grace is frustrated in the case of most men, Matt. 22:14; Luke 7:30, the election of grace attains its end with all whom it embraces, Rom. 8:28-30. Scripture, however, while distinguishing between the universal will of grace and the election of grace, does not place the two in opposition to each other. On the contrary, it teaches that the grace dealing with those who are lost is altogether earnest and fully



Of Sunday

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41. We teach that in the New Testament God has abrogated the Sabbath and all the holy days prescribed for the Church of the Old Covenant, so that neither "the keeping of the Sabbath nor any other day" nor the observance of at least one specific day of the seven days of the week is ordained or commanded by God, Col. 2:16; Rom. 14:5 (Augsburg Confession, Triglot, p. 91, Paragraphs 51-60; M., p. 66).

The observance of Sunday and other church festivals is an ordinance of the Church, made by virtue of Christian liberty. (Augsburg Confession, Triglot, p. 91, Paragraphs 51-53, 60; M., p. 66; Large Catechism, Triglot, p. 603, Paragraphs 83, 85, 89, M., p. 401.) Hence Christians should not regard such ordinances as ordained by God and binding upon the conscience, Col. 2:16; Gal. 4:10. However, for the sake of Christian love and peace they should willingly observe them, Rom. 14:13; 1 Cor. 14:40. (Augsburg Confession, Triglot, p. 91, Paragraphs 53-56; M., p. 67.)

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Of the Antichrist

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43. As to the Antichrist we teach that the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures concerning the Antichrist, 2 Thess. 2:3-12; 1 John 2:18, have been fulfilled in the Pope of Rome and his dominion. All the features of the Antichrist as drawn in these prophecies, including the most abominable and horrible ones, for example, that the Antichrist "as God sitteth in the temple of God," 2 Thess. 2:4; that he anathematizes the very heart of the Gospel of Christ, that is, the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins by grace alone, for Christ's sake alone, through faith alone, without any merit or worthiness in man (Rom. 3:20-28; Gal. 2:16); that he recognizes only those as members of the Christian Church who bow to his authority; and that, like a deluge, he had inundated the whole Church with his antichristian doctrines till God revealed him through the Reformation -- these very features are the outstanding characteristics of the Papacy. (Cf. Smalcald Articles, Triglot, p. 515, Paragraphs 39-41; p. 401, Paragraph 45; M. pp. 336, 258.) Hence we subscribe to the statement of our Confessions that the Pope is "the very Antichrist." (Smalcald Articles, Triglot, p. 475, Paragraph 10; M., p. 308.)

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Of the Symbols of the Lutheran Church

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45. We accept as our confession all the symbols contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580. -- The symbols of the Lutheran Church are not a rule of faith beyond, and supplementary to, Scripture, but a confession of the doctrines of Scripture over against those who deny these doctrines.

46. Since the Christian Church cannot make doctrines, but can and should simply profess the doctrine revealed in Holy Scripture, the doctrinal decisions of the symbols are binding upon the conscience not because they are the outcome of doctrinal controversies, but only because they are the doctrinal decisions of Holy Scripture itself.

47. Those desiring to be admitted into the public ministry of the Lutheran Church pledge themselves to teach according to the symbols not "in so far as," but "because," the symbols agree with Scripture. He who is unable to accept as Scriptural the doctrine set forth in the Lutheran symbols and their rejection of the corresponding errors must not be admitted into the ministry of the Lutheran Church.

48. The confessional obligation covers all doctrines, not only those that are treated ex professo, but also those that are merely introduced in support of other doctrines.

The obligation does not extend to historical questions, "purely exegetical questions," and other matters not belonging to the doctrinal content of the symbols. All doctrines of the Symbols are based on clear statements of Scripture.

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