

Morning Glory

“The Coming of the Lord Draweth Nigh” — James 5:8

EXPERIENCED SALVATION • CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP • SIMPLICITY IN WORSHIP

Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation • December 2023

Where Shall He Find Room?

R. P. Haakenson,

ONCE, only once He came as a man among men, not just to improve men, or to help men, but to seek and to save men.

He came to His own first, but His own received Him not. There was no room left for Jesus in His own creation, among His own people. He was despised and rejected of men.

After He gave His first testimony in His home congregation in Nazareth, His fellow members led Him to the brow of a hill to cast Him headlong over the cliff. There was no room for Jesus in that congregation. Did you know that many a convert cannot go home to his congregation today with a testimony among us who are Lutherans by name?

The highest priest with the rest of the priests discussed ways and means as to how they could eliminate Jesus. Think of it, no room for Jesus Christ in the Ministerial Association! His teaching was in sharp contrast to their religious philosophy.

The political party, the Herodians, were disturbed that religion should enter into the political campaign. Can't you hear the shouts of "bigotry" and "hatemongering"? What business has Jesus in politics anyway? Thus, no room was given Him in the political arena.

Where shall He find room now?

Perhaps in masonry where they have a ritual, an altar, and even a masonic Bible? No, says the mason, please do not mention Jesus' Name even at the funeral, for it could offend somebody.

Perhaps in modernism? No, says the modernist, we cannot have the Jesus of the New Testament. We like Him as a good teacher and example, but we do not want Him as

Savior.

But surely there is room for Jesus Christ in our congregations, our church schools, and our seminaries? The blind, religious zealot looks at the Christian in deepest scorn if the Christian dares have any doubt. You cannot "judge" a fish to be a fish today even while you're looking at the fish! "Judge not," says the blind in fear of being exposed to Christ. While the ungodly manage to keep the Christians quiet, we watch liberalism and neo-orthodoxy work as bosom friends in our religious institutions. Both are bursting with ethics, morals, and philosophy. It all comes from the small brains of men who make their bread and butter in a vast religious traffic which now provides an excellent living for thousands of reverends and doctors. But the moment a saved sinner begins to introduce Jesus of Nazareth to this vast crowd, the saved man is pushed aside as was Jesus himself. You cannot use a "fanatic" in the church in such an enlightened age. Use methods, skill, tact, sportsmanship, but don't demand to know "nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified"! Save yourself; you will close church doors on yourself! Preach a philosophy pleasing and soothing to the intelligent in religion, but do not bring Jesus too near. He says: "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish!"

Earnest young people, with others, are confused today because of Jesus. They cannot find Jesus in this popular religion of ecclesiastical non-sensitivities and form. The Christian goes out of school and church with an empty soul. Young people know that if they give Jesus all the room, they must pay a terrific price, but THIS

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ALONE IS LIFE AND THE FULNESS THEREOF! For Jesus can find room only where hearts are broken and contrite. His disciples are in the minority group, few yes, for few there be that find it! (Matt 7:14). There was one Hauge – among the cold rationalists of Norway. The preachers killed him, but though he is dead, his spirit is not dead by far. There was no room for Daniel when he went to prayer meetings, but a den full of lions. No room for his brave confessing friends, but a hot furnace. No room for Jeremiah, but a well. No room for John, but in a jail and on the scaffold. No room for Stephen but under a barrage of bricks! No room for Jesus himself but on a shameful cross where men could spit on Him, rail on Him, and mock Him! Are we trying to be Christians and demand too much room for ourselves instead of Jesus? Let us watch lest we receive all our reward here that of being seen of men!

There is a Mary, an Elizabeth, an Anna, a Simeon, a woman at His feet in tears, a publican and a sinner with Jesus at the table. With these He found room, thank God! The kingdom of God is within you.

*Room and time now give to Jesus,
Soon will pass God's day of grace;
Soon thy heart left cold and silent,
And thy Savior's pleading cease.*

Reprinted from the
Dec. 1960 *Morning Glory*.

The contents of the Heavenly Greetings is Salvation

“Unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.”

Salvation is a very comprehensive term: It implies man’s lost condition and need of redemption. It contains “all the redemptive acts and processes: as Justification, Redemption, Grace, Propitiation, Imputation, Forgiveness, Sanctification, and Glorification.”

Salvation, as to its validity and power is in par, for the past, present, and future. Because salvation is a free gift of God, and wholly without works. The Lord’s order is: First salvation, then works.

May we briefly reason together as to the heavenly Christmas greetings:

SALVATION

1. God planned it.
2. God did it.
3. God says it.

In the eternal counsel of the Trinity, **God planned it.** (Gen. 1:26) And in Gen. 3:15 we have the first promise of salvation. And in Eph. 1:4 we have the New Testament light revealed on God’s plan of salvation. This revelation should help us to know God, know His love, wisdom, and care for us.

God could justly have condemned fallen man and committed him to eternal perdition-but Love found a better way, in which God could glorify Himself by bringing salvation. His Holy Name be praised! “O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.” Rom. 11:33. Blessed heavenly Christmas greetings! Yes, God planned our salvation

2. GOD DID IT. The best of plans are of no value if not carried out. But God does not build air castles. God has carried out His plan of salvation. Christ said: “Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.” (Heb. 10:9) And God’s will is man’s salvation; a big order, indeed, and Jesus knew it; and yet He came. Behold His love for us. Blessed heavenly Christmas greetings! How did He do it? “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” (Is.53:6) “He made His soul an offering for sin.” (Is. 53:10) “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Cor. 5:21) “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.” (Col. 2:14) Behold what God hath done! Have you thanked Him for it? But God hath done more than to plan

and to accomplish our salvation.

3. HE SAYS IT-PROCLAIMS IT. “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.” (Heb. 1:1-2) And, thank God, He is still speaking to us. Planning and working out salvation would not have helped us, had God kept it to Himself. Thank God for the message and the messengers of salvation! “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation.” (Is. 53:7)

Here is where saved people are privileged to come in and find an outlet for their heart-felt gratitude to God for salvation by doing missionary work. Thus saith the Lord: “Go preach repentance and remission of sins to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” (Luke 24:47)

The florist says: “Say it with flowers.” God says: “Go bring the Christmas message to all nations.” How are we saying it?

Note: The Christmas greetings are God and Christ-centered. He planned it. He did it. He says it. His is the glory. If we in our preaching, singing, testifying, or praying are aiming to draw people’s attention to ourselves, we are spiritual thieves-robbing God of His glory and the souls of their salvation.

Lord, we thank Thee for salvation: Give us ears to hear, eyes to see, hearts to believe, and will-power to serve Thee pleasingly. Amen.

G. O. Mona – Text Luke 2:10-12

From *The Morning Glory*, December 1942

What Is Happiness?

Psalm 16

John Bunyan penned these thoughts on the subject: ***“The truly happy man was born in the city of regeneration, in the parish of repentance. He owns the largest state in the country of Christian contentment yet wears the plain garments of humility. He has ‘meat to eat that the world knows not of.’ He has gospel submission in his conduct, due order in his affection, sound peace in his conscience, and sanctifying love and joy in his soul.”***

Excerpt

Cities Of Refuge

Joshua 20

Back in the days when Israel first settled in Palestine, the Lord commanded that 6 cities were to be set aside as “cities of refuge.” This was done so that “the manslayer that killed a person unwittingly and unawares may flee thither and they (the cities of refuge) shall be unto you for a refuge from the avenger of blood.” (Joshua 20:3) What sweet words for helpless sinners who needed refuge. God has always taken the side of the sinner. Let us see what the sinner must do.

The sinner must flee. “He shall flee to one of those cities” v. 4. He must be sure, however, it is a city of refuge. There were plenty other cities, perhaps even closer, but to hide in them would bring only temporary relief and then death. Oh, sinner, don’t be lured into any other city. There is the city of Good Works which many a guilty sinner has crawled into, only to be exposed in time and to be slain.

The city of Forgetfulness has lured many a guilty sinner from going on to real safety. Here, too, the “avenger of blood” will find him in time. The land is full of cities, but weary sinner, there is only one city of refuge, and that is Jesus Christ. “And in none other is there salvation, for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

The sinner is to stand, “And shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city,” v. 4. There is a stopping place for a weary exhausted sinner. Run not past as many do. Let not the houndings of Satan cause you to flee by. Jesus has said, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. 11:28) Stop, dear tired friend. This is the sinner’s stopping place.

The sinner is to declare his cause, “Stand at the entrance of the gate of the city, and declare his cause in the ears of the elders of the city,” v. 4. At last you have come to listeners who are sympathetic. Be sure you “declare” your cause. Confess all, you have nothing to lose, for “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (I John 1:9) Remember, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” (Ps. 46:1)

The sinner is to be received. “They shall take him into the city,” v. 4. Can there be a mistake? Is the guilty sinner to be received into the city? Yes, friend, this is God’s Word. His Word is always good. Let us not depart from it. The City of Refuge is inhabited by the priests and Levites, the best of company, people whose time is devoted to the Lord’s work. Such is the company

of the weary sinner when he finds refuge in Jesus.

The sinner is to be protected. “They shall not deliver the man-slayer into his hands,” v. 5. What sweet rest can come to a weary soul as he lays down to get his first real rest with these words ringing in his ears. Listen to Jesus, our City of Refuge again say, “Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.” Blessed Lord, speak these words again, for they are “sweeter than the honeycomb to us!”

The sinner is to be free at the death of the High Priest, “Until the death of the High priest-then shall the manslayer return and come into his own city and unto his own house unto the city from whence he fled.” Christ our blessed High-priest “died for all that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again. What a blessed Savior! Him who knew of no sin, He was made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

By Maynard Force from the
Morning Glory, Dec. 1949

Warning Against Drunkenness

The tremendous sin of intemperance must have had a great hold upon a city like Ephesus. It was necessary that Christians should beware of such an insidious vice.

- I. It dishonors the Law of God (Rom. 13:13).
- II. It disturbs the reason of man.
- III. It endangers the health of the body.
- IV. It injures the soul. (Hos. 4:11).
- V. It wastes the substance and tends to beggary (Prov. 23:21).
- VI. It consumes precious time and deteriorates the character of work.
- VII. It is the cause of other sins; such as swearing, strife, licentiousness (Prov. 23:19).
- VIII. It unfits for religious duties (I Tim. 3:3).
- IX. It keeps the soul out of the Kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:9).

Therefore, Christians ought to avoid it, abstaining altogether from intoxicating drink on the grounds of Christian expediency, and using their influence to rescue others from its ruinous fascination.

Editorial

Wayne Almlie

My Grand Parents' faith

"For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well." (2 Timothy 1:5)

I need to be upfront with you, my Lutheranism is the Lutheranism of 60, even 80 years ago. It is the Lutheranism of my grandparents, or maybe even of my great-grandparents. You probably have noticed from my first few issues as Editor, most of the articles I've chosen to share have been pre-1960. The Lutheran church had a vitality to it in those years.

Many churches that are started today, they advertise and say, "We are not your Grandmother's Church." No! They are hip, relevant, contemporary, and have a rock band to lead worship. No, that's not my religion, that's not my Lutheranism, I desire my great grandparents Lutheranism. Relevant you Say? I believe there is nothing more relevant to the human condition than knowing that for Jesus' sake, your sins can be forgiven.

John Milton, professor of Old Testament Studies at Luther Seminary wrote this in 1942. This was main line Lutheranism in 1942: (If people are asking, copyright 1942 Augustana Book Concern)

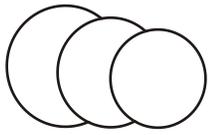
"The situation is this: We believe as a Lutheran Church that a child is born again into the kingdom of God through baptism. A baptized child, therefore, is a saved child. We believe that it possesses life in Christ. This life must be nurtured through instruction in the Word of God as the child matures, and it should be brought to a point where the child consciously accepts and confesses the Christ whose salvation he first received in baptism. We try to bring this to pass through confirmation and the instruction that precedes it. Ideally, it should be and is such a confession of Christ by one who has been a child of God since the day of baptism. But it is possible for the baptized child to fall away from the grace of God received in baptism. Instead of consciously accepting Christ and His salvation he may reject Him. Unless such a person is converted, he is lost. Such a falling away can take place before confirmation, and it can also take place after confirmation. The fact that a person has been baptized and confirmed is no guarantee that he today is living the new life in Christ; and unless he is in Christ today, he must be converted if he is to be saved. For conversion means that a sinner turns to God in true repentance and faith.

Even a child who has not fallen away from baptismal grace needs to be awakened to a conscious experience of daily repentance and faith: This too might be called conversion, though I believe it is better to call it by some other name, perhaps a quickening of the spiritual life. But there can be no question that the person who definitely turns his back on Christ needs to be converted. There is a temptation to rest upon baptism and confirmation as if that were all that is needed; forgetting the inner heart relationship to Jesus, or the life of daily repentance and faith. We fear that there are many members in Lutheran churches who are relying on ceremonies rather than on the abiding grace of God which we receive continually by faith. Whether they are few or many, conversion is the only way unto salvation for those whose heart and life are not right with God."

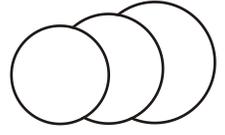
That is my story, baptized at three months, raised by parents who took their promise seriously to bring me up in the church, to bring me to Sunday School and Vacation Bible School, to have me take confirmation instructions. I was confirmed in the spring of 1969. There I was baptized, raised in the church, confirmed, a member in good standing, and at the end of it all I was lost. But God never released me, he kept after me like the hound of heaven and finally one August night in 1971 about 2 in the morning after tossing and turning for hours I crawled out of bed and got on my knees and surrendered and told Jesus I was done running from Him, that he was Lord of my life. I woke up the next morning and I was different. Something supernatural had happened. God had given me a new heart as promised in Jeremiah and in Ezekiel, a new heart with new desires.

Even though in the 50 some years since, I have so often been unfaithful, God has been faithful. Even though I have been prone to wander, God has continually called me back to Him.

PS. I know there are 7000 who have not bowed the knee to Baal. (1 Kings 19:18) I do not mean to malign the many faithful pastors and churches. But there is much work to do. The Lutheran church has much to offer to the world and to the Kingdom. We need to be about our father's business.



From Our Fellowship Circle



N.F. **Rudd, IA**
I really appreciate your inspiring articles and Biblical views on what is going on in the world. Thanks.

B.R. **LaCrosse, WI**
Hello, please will you send a copy of "Spirit and Power" to my friend at ... Thank you and God Bless.

D.P. **Maury, NC**
Dear Friends, I am writing today for two reasons: 1st, to thank you for your time in dealing with God's Word. I'm an indigent incarcerated individual within the North Carolina prison system. And through the Morning Glory publication, I basically get delivered a Meaningful Church Service right to where I am currently housed. 2nd, to request that a friend of mine please be added to your publication list for the mailing of the Morning Glory to him and his family. I believe it will be a tool used by God to bring him back into the flock, sort of speaking. His family's address is listed below.

Testimonies From the Past

March 1950 Morning Glory

My testimony

I have been reminded many times that I should send a little testimony to Morning Glory, to let others know what Jesus has done for me. I am so thankful to God for saving my soul, and that He also has kept me until this day. I know that it is all His work and that it is all of grace, nothing of myself. (Eph. 2:8-9)

It wasn't until after I was married that I had the opportunity to really hear the truth of the true Gospel. Being a Catholic I had always believed in Jesus with my head, but never knew that there had to be a real personal experience of knowing Him as my personal Savior. I'm so thankful that I've been redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb.

May we all hold fast to Him. I have to ask the Holy Spirit every day to keep me awake that I don't go to sleep before He comes for His own. God bless you all.

Mrs. Sidney N. Swenson
Belmond, Iowa

* * * * *

March 1950 Morning Glory

Rejoicing in Jesus

Dear friends in Christ: Greetings in the matchless name of Jesus.

As I just received and read the Jan. 26th issue of the "Morning Glory" I said, "Praise the Lord" from the depths of my heart as I read "The Living Experience" by Leonard Hanson of Platte, S. Dak. Truly Jesus says, I am the door.

Do look up John 10:1-9 and read those wonderful verses for yourselves. The whole chapter is precious. Truly, the way of the Cross leads home.

Jesus also says, "I am the way the truth and the life." "I am the bread of life." "I am the living bread." Oh, as the Holy Spirit enlightened me, in some measure, as I read John 6:47-63 and the references I sat amazed for days, feeding on the living bread. Precious hearts, read those wonderful verses. When we come to the 63rd verse, we read: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life." (John 1:1) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." How these scriptures thrill my very soul. Friends, let us feed on the living bread. For years I have been reading my Bible, but sad to say, I have read into the scriptures the doctrines of men and hindered the Holy Spirit's teaching. We cannot understand the things of God until we are born of the Spirit. Self together with sin must be nailed to the Cross. Romans 6th and 8th chapters are exceedingly precious to me. "When the Son sets us free, we are free indeed."

"Bless the Lord, Oh my soul, Bless His Holy name. Enclosed for renewal, and the balance to the Paper Fund.

Mrs. Karsten Borg, Nokly, Mont.

Editor: would you consider sending in a testimony, that we might all be blessed and praise God for His goodness shown to His children.

Believable ... Yet Unbelievable

Unfair Sentencing

Three pro-life activists who took part in an October 2022 “rescue” in a Washington, D.C., abortion facility were each found guilty of felonies that could land them up to 11 years in prison and fines as much as \$350,000.

The verdict follows a separate trial in which five other pro-life activists were also found guilty.

The activists – 74-year-old Joan Bell, 73-year-old Jean Marshall, and 41-year-old Jonathan Darnel – were indicted on felony conspiracy against rights and violating the federal Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act, also known as the FACE Act. The FACE Act increased penalties for people who accost or obstruct women who are seeking abortion at clinics or pregnancy resource centers.

Editor: Prov 8:36, “All those who hate Me love death.”

Meanwhile:

North Dakota man gets five years for murdering a Republican.

A North Dakota man was sentenced Friday to five years in prison for running over and killing an 18-year-old after a small-town street dance last year. The driver initially claimed the teen was a “Republican extremist” who threatened him.

Shannon Brandt, of Glenfield, North Dakota, pleaded guilty in May to manslaughter in connection with Cayler Ellingson’s death in September 2022, in McHenry, North Dakota.

Editor: Many believe our government today is operating under a two tiered Justice system. I would agree with them. God is clear in his word. *“He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, Both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord.”* (Prov 17:15) The law of “An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth” (Lev 24:20) wasn’t as barbaric as most people think. It was the concept that the punishment had to fit the crime. You didn’t execute someone for knocking your tooth out. In speaking of equal justice the Bible speaks in “Weights and Measures” a concept everybody understood back then. *“A divine decision is in the lips of the king; His mouth should not err in judgment. A just balance and scales belong to the Lord; All the weights of the bag are His concern.”* (Prov 16:10-11) It is an abomination in God’s sight to give someone 11 years in prison for blocking a clinic sidewalk, and then give someone guilty of premeditated murder 5 years. (Prov 11:1)

Effect of Smartphone Addiction on Mental Health

In 2019, a study published in JAMA Psychiatry surveyed 6,595 American teenagers. The study found that compared with those not using social media, those using it for 30 minutes to 3 hours per day had 1.89 times more risk of developing symptoms (including anxiety and depression). The risk increased to 2.47 times for 3 to 6 hours of daily usage and 2.83 times for more than 6 hours. The more time spent on social media, the stronger the feelings of anxiety, depression, and loneliness.

Although social media can also be accessed via computers, most people use social media through smartphone apps.

A study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine in July 2017 revealed that people who frequently check social media were 2.7 times more likely to develop depression than those who checked it the least. Those spending the most time on social media had a 1.7 times higher risk of developing depression than peers spending less time.

A recent study from Canada posited that social media addiction might be as destructive as other forms of addiction, such as gambling and medicine abuse.

Researchers surveyed 750 Canadians aged 16 to 30 and found that those who frequently accessed social media on their smartphones were willing to make various sacrifices to stay on social media.

About 40 percent were willing to give up caffeine, alcohol and video games; 30 percent preferred not exercising, watching TV or dining at their favorite restaurant for a year; nearly 10 percent would accept infertility or give up a year of life, 5 percent and 3 percent were willing to lose 5 or 10 years of life; fewer than 5 percent were willing to contract sexually transmitted diseases or life-threatening conditions such as cancer; and 10 percent to 15 percent were ready to gain 15 pounds, shave their heads, give up driving, stop traveling, or live without air conditioning rather than give up social media.

Additionally, the research showed that people with higher addiction had decreased cognitive abilities, visual and auditory reactions and self control. They scored lower on overall happiness and higher on fear of making mistakes and procrastination.

Taken from *The Epoch Times*,
Sep. 20-26, 2023

Managing Editor's Note: The Scripture tells us, *"I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not fasten its grip on me."* (Ps.101:3) Truly, the smartphone is a device that can be used to do this. What perhaps some parents don't realize is that when you give a smartphone to someone, everything that the internet has to offer is at their fingertips and can come to their eyes (and heart) in an instant. I have seen numerous times that younger people who get a smartphone suddenly have far less social interaction than previously. Their lives are now centered in what they see and do on their cell phone, not what they do face to face. I have seen entire families having supper together at a restaurant and each one of them were on their cell phones and there wasn't a word between any of them, including the parents! I don't know if they just texted another member of the family if they wanted them to pass the salt!

This is not just an issue with people of the world, but even many in the church today. It isn't sin to own a smartphone, but one must have control over it, instead of the other way around.

I drove school bus for many years and twice a year we had bus evacuation drills in the event of a fire. Students were to leave everything in the bus and evacuate as soon as possible. I saw students who refused to leave their cell phone on the bus and said they would rather burn up in the bus than leave it behind! When anything in our lives reaches this level of commitment unto the death, it has become an idol and the people are breaking the First Commandment, "Thou Shalt Have No Other gods before Me." Luther explains this in the Catechism, "We should Fear, Love and Trust in God above all things."

A good alternative for parents wanting to be able to contact their children when they are away from home is to get them a flip phone which has full phone features, but doesn't have internet accessibility and won't support social media. For any parent who wants to take away a smartphone from a teen or even replace it with a flip phone, you had better be ready for battle royal. I have seen teens who totally rebelled and even left home rather than give up their smartphone.

A Comfortable Religion?

JESUS SAVES

REASONABLE RATES

COMFORTABLE REST ROOMS

As we traveled along the highway we saw one of

these cheap signs (put up with good intentions) "Jesus Saves," and just a little distance away another sign "Reasonable Rates," and then the third "Comfortable Rest Rooms," It just struck our "funny bone" right away. But then serious reflections followed. Did, after all, this accidental combination of non-related signs tell a story of a spiritual ailment of our age?

"Jesus Saves." What does it mean to the average traveler along the highway? It may remind him of the fact that "something" is wrong and that there is "someone" to set things right. But just what is wrong and just what does salvation mean? That is to the majority very indefinite. And the reason is simply ignorance of the Word of God. Revival meetings may be conducted with the message "Jesus Saves" and there is an emotional stir with "apparent" conversions, and after a little while the emotions are gone and the old life is in evidence. The whole truth of Law and Gospel has not been told.

"Reasonable Rates," which means "rates" that I like, are very acceptable to natural man. To be saved on one's own terms is good advertisement. That is popular, And so "salvation" is put on the counter at "cut-rate" prices. "Just come to Jesus," and with a great deal of emotional appeal in speech and music men "come to Jesus." But there has been no real conviction of being lost and therefore "coming to Jesus to be saved" will not be a lasting experience resulting in newness of life. We can never skip over "repentance" and have "salvation" as a bargain. God does not offer "reasonable rates." The rates are revealed on Calvary, nothing short of the Cross. To die with Him and to be raised with Him is the "experience," not just good feelings.

"Comfortable Rest Rooms." Yes, that looks good. And so we want "religion" as an "inner-spring mattress" on which we may rest an impenitent heart. We want "comfort" without "conviction," and such as can offer that kind of "comfort-stations" we like. They are so loving and kind, so like Jesus. But these preachers who always must bring in "the wet blanket" of sin and repentance, they are so unpleasant.

Yes, we like the prophet who preaches peace, peace, but a Jeremiah we would just as soon throw into the pit. And as a result the "boiling cauldron from the north" tells of coming judgments and we are even now in the midst of them. There has been too much of "Reasonable Rates," and "Comfortable Rest Rooms" religion, under the camouflage of "Jesus Saves."

Rev O. Gornitzka

The Bible Banner, July 1941 (LBI)

Scripture and the Gay Christian Movement

This is the second in a series of articles about the movement to accept the gay lifestyle within the Christian church, including same-sex marriage and ordination of openly gay clergy. Scriptural texts will be looked at first from the Gay movement's analysis of them and then from the exegetical approach of what the verses are saying.

Marriage

“And the man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.’ For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.” (Genesis 2:23-24)

Gay Argument

In the first two chapters of Genesis, God creates the heavens and the earth, plants, animals, man, and everything in the earth. And He declares everything to be good or very good – except for one thing. In Genesis 2:18, God says, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” And yes, the suitable helper or partner that God makes for Adam is Eve, a woman. And a woman is a suitable partner for the vast majority of men – for straight men. But for gay men, that isn't the case. For them, a woman is not a suitable partner. And in all the ways that a woman is a suitable partner for straight men – for gay men, it's another gay man who is a suitable helper. And the true is the same for lesbian women. For them, it is another lesbian woman who is a suitable partner.¹

Biblical Response

Genesis 2:23-24 is the only statement in the Bible on marriage. God specifically created a woman so that she would be compatible with the man, as bringing another man into the picture would not be able to reproduce and start a family. The family is God's design and the basic unit that holds society together.

When Jesus was specifically questioned about the issue of marriage, He went back to this definition of marriage. *“And He answered and said, ‘Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has*

joined together, let no man separate.’” (Matthew 19:4-6) Jesus saw marriage as the union between one man and one woman. He reinforced what God stated at the beginning. He did not list other options available, such as two men or two women getting married.

This is consistent with what the rest of Scripture lists as the acceptable pattern for marriage. In Ephesians 5:22 it states: *“Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.”* It is clear that the Biblical definition of marriage is a man and a woman only and that there are definite relational differences to be practiced within this arrangement. If two men were married, which one is the “wife” who is supposed to submit to the “husband?” As this relationship is compared to the relationship between Christ and the church, one member is not the same as the other. The Church is not the same as Christ and needs to be subject. The conclusion that is drawn from this arrangement is this: *“For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.”* (Ephesians 5:31-33)

The Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, did the same thing that Jesus did with the issue of marriage. He went back to Genesis 2 as a marriage being between a man and a woman. The Greek word for wife is feminine and for husband is masculine and is true everywhere it is used with no exceptions. There are no guidelines in the Bible that define what the relationships would supposedly be if 2 men or 2 women were married. It is always a man and a woman only.

The same is true in I Peter 3:1,7 *“In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,”* ... *“You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, **since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”*** The only clear pattern listed here is a woman is the wife and a man is the husband.

The same is true for the office of the overseer (pastor or elder) and the deacon. *“An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ... “Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.”* (I Tim. 3:2,12) The Greek text in these 2 verses is literally “a one woman

¹ The Gay Debate: The Bible and Homosexuality by Matthew Vines on YouTube.

man,” so there is no way that marriage can be between two men or two women. This should settle the question of ordaining gay clergy.

No where in the Scriptures is marriage listed as anything but between a man and a woman. There are no exceptions to this Biblical mandate. To somehow state that 2 like genders in a loving, committed relationship qualify as being fit for marriage is never even stated as a possibility, and every sexual union between like genders listed in the Scriptures is condemned with no exceptions listed as being OK if the two were married. There are no Scriptures that say that a sexual union between like genders is anything but sin – regardless of how they are practiced.

This is even further emphasized in the first marriage between Adam and Eve. God told Eve, *“To the woman He said, ‘I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you shall bring forth children; Yet your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you.’”* (Gen. 3:16) The desire of the woman would be toward her male husband, not toward another woman in a supposed marriage. This is even stated after the fall of Adam and Eve into a sinful nature. So then, to state that fallen man will be able to go into these relationships because of their sin is to miss the natural desires and arrangement that God directs for even sinful human beings. Like gender sexual relations are sin in God’s eyes with no exceptions, regardless if they are practiced with or without a supposed marriage.

If you are going to abandon the Biblical standard for marriage as one man and one woman, then where will you draw the line? Is it then all right for a man to marry multiple women (polygamy), or even to be as absurd as marrying a dog or a cat, or even a varying number of any or all of these, or anything that lives and breathes?

There isn’t one Scripture that approves of same- gender sexual relations, regardless of how they are practiced. Gay marriage is sin and a perversion of God’s design for men and women and the propagation of the human race in the context of the family unit.

Pastor Jim Haga

PEACE ON EARTH

Perhaps I was dreaming, but I thought I met one of the angels who sang to the shepherds of Bethlehem the night of the nativity.

“You sang beautifully that night,” I said, “but I sometimes wonder how you feel about it now. You sang, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.’ Nineteen weary, dreary centuries have dragged themselves across the earth since then, and every one of them has been stained with blood and tears. What

good did your song do?”

“But, my dear friend ”

“If your choir were to come back and sing that song once more,” I interrupted rudely, “the war lords would call you unpatriotic and send a fleet of airplanes in pursuit of you. O the world has gone mad, stark mad. What good has your anthem done us?”

“But, my dear friend,” repeated the angel, “you misinterpret our song. We never declared peace on earth. There is no peace on earth, there never has been since man’s first disobedience, and there never will be as long as man is out of tune with God.”

“Then why did you sing ‘peace on earth’? What did you mean?”

“The song we sang to the shepherds, and to all mankind, was an echo of the melody in the heart of God. It was a declaration of His good will toward men. He desires peace on earth. He desires it now as much as He ever did, but peace can come only when men allow Him to tune their heart strings in accord with His own.”

CAW, *Bible Banner*, (LBI) Dec 1939

DIDN’T HAVE TIME TO DIE!

It was a stormy winter night in the West-fjord, Norway. Three brothers in a small fishing vessel had engine trouble and drifted helplessly against the cliffs. Nobody saw them in the dark and nobody heard them in the storm.

After inhuman struggles they were able to get up on a naked island where the great breakers washed in through the ice-cold night. One of them was hurt and lay helplessly.

At daylight they were all saved and brought to shore. Reporters came to find out how they were rescued. “It is funny that you didn’t freeze to death out there on that island, being soaking wet and as cold as it was!” many said.

“Ah, we were so busy saving our brother we didn’t have time to die!” they answered. Didn’t have time to die!

Too many have not that burden spiritually. They have little to live for, “no brother to save.” They are busy killing time. Apparently happy, they go to work, glad when the work is over, but what about the evenings and Sundays? To shows, yes, three times a week. It costs, but what else can they do? In the summer, swimming; in the winter, skiing, skating. It is needed, but the soul dies! The soul has time to die, for nobody cares for the soul.

To do something for others, a deed of love which costs sacrifice, visit the sick, the old, be along in mission work, use the ability and the money to “save a brother,” they do not. And they have time to die!

Bishop H. E. Wisløff, *Morning Glory*, Sept 1960

Things that are Impossible To renew again to repentance

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.” (Heb. 6:4-6, NKJV)

The first thing we need to determine is who is the author referring to. Are they simply unbelievers who come close to saving faith? They understand the faith, it's so close they can almost taste it, but in the end, they reject the Gospel and go back to the temple and the Law. A sad situation indeed, those like Agrippa, who told Paul, “Almost you make me a Christian.” It sadly does happen. But if it happens, is that it, one strike and you're out?

Now I think a word of caution is needed. It is dangerous to continually reject the saving power of the Holy Spirit because I believe someone can get to a point through continual rejection, where your heart is so hard it is virtually impossible for you to be saved. But I don't think that is what Hebrews 6 is about. It is a warning to Christians to persevere to the end, because only those who persevere to the end inherit the promises.

Who is this warning given to? The author says five things about these people that should make it clear. The first thing that is said is that these people had been enlightened. This is the first step to salvation, not necessarily salvation yet, but the first step. We are blind in our trespasses and sins and the Holy Spirit has to pull the blinders off of us to see truth. As Luther said in the catechism, “The Holy Spirit enlightens us through the Gospel”. Sometimes in Scripture, enlighten is used in a more general sense and doesn't mean salvation, and in other places, it does mean salvation. So, in this first descriptive, we can't be positive that the author is talking about saved people.

The second characteristic is that they have tasted the Heavenly Gift. The word translated gift is used ten other times in the New Testament. Every time it is used, it is either in reference to the gift of the Holy Spirit, or to the gift of salvation. Is it possible to taste salvation, and not be saved? It's either you see Him as the Pearl of great price, and you sell all you have and you never look back, or He will have no part in you.

I don't see how you can taste becoming a new creation without becoming a new creation. Regeneration is something radical, it's being dead and being made alive. Yes, you can be enlightened and through the knowledge of your sins, you can catch maybe a glimpse of the beauty

of Christ, the beauty of a God who would die to save you. But to taste is to experience, and there is no halfway saved.

The third thing said is that these people have become partakers of the Holy Spirit. What does it mean to be a partaker of the Holy Spirit? The word translated partaker is used only six times in scripture and five of those are in the book of Hebrews. For instance, in chapter three verse one it says: “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” (KJV) Then again in chapter 3 verse 14 it says; “For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.” (KJV)

Partakers of the heavenly calling, and partakers of Christ, this is referring to a full union with Christ, I don't see any reason we should see Hebrews 6:4 any differently. To be a partaker of the Holy Spirit is to have the Holy Spirit, no one gets a sampler platter of the Holy Spirit before they are saved. When you are saved you receive the Holy Spirit.

The fourth thing said is that they have tasted the good Word of God. Again, using scripture to interpret scripture what does it mean to taste? Earlier we had those who tasted the heavenly gift, and now we have the good word of God. The word translated taste is used one other time in Hebrews 2:9, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” Jesus experienced death fully for every man. It was not partial, it was not metaphysical, it was complete physical death. So, these people tasted, and experienced fully the full word of God. This is not just appreciating the Bible as literature. Napoleon and Patton read it as a war manual. Some read it for history, poetry, or science. Instead, it is tasting, and experiencing fully the good word of God and it's power.

The last characteristic of these people he is trying to warn, is that they have tasted the powers of the age to come. Again, we have the word tasted. In the New Testament, this word always means to experience something fully. These people had tasted, had experienced fully the powers of the age to come. The phrase “age to come” was common amongst the Jews. It was the age of the Messiah. The primary power of the age to come is regeneration and the giving of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Is there any indication in scripture that you can taste these gifts without fully receiving and experiencing them?

What danger are these Christians in? The danger is that they may fall away. Right now, they are looking at their lives, the trials, the temptations, and the tribulations they are facing and they are yearning for their old lives of

temple worship where everybody left you alone. They are nostalgically looking back at the temple and are being tempted to go back. Only Christians can fall away.

The second danger for these people is that it will be impossible to renew them. To renew again, is to bring something back to its previous luster or beauty. On our 25th anniversary Rachel and I renewed our wedding vows. It was a reaffirmation of something that had happened 25 years earlier. Only saved people need renewing, lost people need saving.

This is a hard word here. The writer says that if these people reject Christ and return to Judaism and the temple, that it will be impossible to renew them again to repentance. Is anyone outside the grace of God?

I have heard of instances where people seem to get to the end of their lives and seemingly are unable to repent. Of course, Jesus said repentance is impossible for everybody, but with God all things are possible. So, we never want to make the judgment that someone is outside the grace of God. As long as they have breath our concern should be that they get saved.

But what is the warning in this text today? Why won't these people be able to be renewed if they walk away from Christ? Will these people be unable to be saved? The key is in our text. The phrase that gives us our clue is "since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame." The two words that help clarify what is being said here are the words "crucify" and "put." Those two words are written in the present perfect tense, which indicates that it is a present and continuous action. Let me re-read it with that tense inserted. "For it is impossible – if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, while they are still crucifying again for themselves the Son of God, and are still putting Him to an open shame."

These people had come out of the temple system, they had seen it was a dead system that there was no life there and they had clung to Jesus as their only hope of salvation. If they now abandon Christ, who is the only way, the only truth, and the only life, then what hope is there for them? Now if they stop crucifying again the Son of God and stop putting Him to open shame then there would be hope.

If one should reject the only plan of salvation after they had tried it, and renounce the only means of redemption after they had tasted its benefits, by what other means could they escape the wrath to come and find peace with God?

The author makes it clear what the end of such people will be. Those who walk away from God's only means of salvation and persist in crucifying the Son of God anew, as verse eight says, their "end is to be

burned." The Bible holds out no hope to those who are in a backslidden or apostate position unless they turn and repent.

The problem is not with God's ability to save anyone. No matter how hard their heart is or how much they love their sin, the problem is with them, will they repent? Will they forsake their old life, even their old self-righteous legalistic religious life, will they forsake their sins, their love for sin, and return to the Lord that He might have mercy? It is impossible to renew to repentance, because they are refusing to repent. They are still crucifying Christ and bringing shame on His name. If you are still living in that sin, you have not repented and there lies the problem.

Three times in Hebrews we are exhorted to continue on in the faith to the end. In our text today we have one of them the other two are in chapter 3.

In chapter 3:6 it says: "But Christ was faithful as a Son over His house – whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end."

And again in Verse 14 "For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end."

So, what is impossible? This text contains a serious warning to all believers. You cannot abandon the only One who can save you, that being Jesus Christ, and have any hope in the life to come. If you do, you have cut yourself off from the very source of life. But I am confident of better things concerning you, that you will remain diligent to the end and inherit the promises.

WMA

Blessed Is The Man Devotional

"How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked." (Psalm 1:1)

Psalm One is actually an introduction to the entire book of Psalms. It is therefore very important to consider what this Psalm says. Instruction is given here as to the Ways of God and the ways of men. If we can understand and appreciate the Ways of God, we will be able to understand the ways of men. If we fail to understand the Ways of God, we will be fooled by men. If we are to be wise, we must carefully consider what God has to say in His Word, about Himself and about His creation. Then and only then can we truly understand this sometimes confusing element called life.

God calls us to not counsel with the wicked. Anyone can go with the crowd. Anyone can go along with the tide of popular opinion. That requires no character

whatsoever. The real man is the one who is able to walk alone if need be, in that way which he knows is right. This is true character.

Many years ago a young man, brought up in a good home, with everything he needed in life was forced to stand alone against the pressure of his time. The Bible tells us this young man “set upon his heart that he would not defile himself.”(Daniel 1:8) Because he was willing to stand alone, God raised up three others to stand with him. Daniel and his three friends then became instrumental in influencing and changing a whole world empire.

“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked.” This is a specific blessing offered to one who refuses to walk in a certain way or direction. Proverbs 4:14 warns us: “Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not proceed in the way of evil men.”

Basically, the way of man is contrary to the Way of God. It is not enough simply to use “common sense,” for our common sense is often opposed to God. We must seek the wisdom which comes from God’s Word, and the application of this wisdom will guide us into another path, for “the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.” (Matthew 7:14)

PRAYER: “Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, there is no help for him in God. But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.” (Psalm 3:1-6)

Oliver and Patricia Olson, © Copyright 1975.

A Meeting with Ludvig Hope

Today I was invited to meet with Ludvig Hope for coffee. He met me in the doorway and gave me a real good “Klem.” (hug) He stayed at our home in Brooklyn for a whole month and it was wonderful to meet him again. We talked for an hour and a half straight. I asked questions and he answered, I will mention a few things we discussed. What do you think of the spiritual situation here in Norway now after the war? The general opinion among the different Christian organizations is that it is very difficult to reach the unsaved after the peace came. Is that true? This is Hope’s answer: There was bound to come a reaction after these hectic five years of occupation. That was inevitable. We must reckon with that. But I am a real optimist and I believe definitely that

in a year or two we will again experience times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. There is still good ground to be found in the heart of our Norwegian people for the preaching of the gospel. But many of these, even Christian pastors, are becoming so sacramental and ultra high churchly that you could get sick in your heart. Many believe that when you once have been baptized there is no more need of regeneration even after you have gotten so far away from God that you have landed in the pig pen like the prodigal. I admit we will have a fight here. This kind of preaching is in diametrical opposition to the preaching of the Christian layman movement that started with Hans Nielsen Hauge.

And if this sacramental, high churchly preaching becomes a dominating factor in the work of the church, the old fashioned revivals which have been so predominant for the last hundred years under the layman movement will eventually be banished from our people and everything will end up in dead formalism. But this will not happen because we have still a thousand Christian laymen who have some of the old fire left and they will boldly proclaim an unstinted message from God. And the Word of God is still quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. The Holy Spirit has not lost His ability to convict of sin and grace and we will still experience great awakening.

Lars Stalsbraaten in *Faith and Fellowship* From Evangelize (LEM) February, 1947

Editor: The revivals did last for several decades, but today Norway, as a country is almost totally secular and unbelieving. Although I have heard that the spark still burns in some. How about here in America, do we have a thousand Christian laymen and preachers who have some of the old fire left to go out and boldly proclaim an unstinted message from God? Pray the Lord of the harvest would raise up laborers, for the fields are ripe.

Just a reminder, we have reprinted Ludvig Hope’s great book “Spirit and Power.” It is available for a donation of \$12 to Hauge Lutheran Innermission. Use the convenient envelope included with the *Morning Glory* or mail donation to Joel Zeltinger at address listed on page two.

Oops!

In the November issue of the *Morning Glory* on page 4, we forgot to mention that Brian Lunn was instrumental in completing the translation from Norwegian to English. Sorry for the oversight.

Thanks Brian!

Christ And Christmas

The very word, Christmas, gives us the key to the real meaning of this festive day. The person of Christ gives the word meaning. Many leave Him out. They cross out the Christ and write Xmas instead. Not all mean to do this; printers ink, space and haste account for some reasons why Christ's name is omitted. But His Name is so important that none of these reasons should be accepted. His Name deserves to be written out in full, just as He should have our full attention and worship.

You can be sure of one thing: the Devil is pleased to see Christ's Name deleted! He demands a lot of recognition. Travel anywhere, you'll see in bold type: "Devil's Gate," "Devil's Lake," "Devil's Gap," "Devil's Den," "Devil's Knob," "Devil's Tower," etc. Men swear and curse by Christ's Name, but they are slow in coming to kneel at His feet.

Face it: Christians celebrate Christmas; the unbelievers substitute Xmas! The first have the key to, and the source of, real joy. The others express the emptiness of their hearts, having crossed out the only true source of joy. To many Xmas expresses the choice of an imaginary white-whiskered Santa Claus, in place of the Savior. Some Christian parents seem to be ignorant of the evil they bring into their homes by allowing the image of Santa Claus to supplant the image of Christ. The worldly idea to make children "be good" before Christmas by promises of gifts from Santa, turn young minds to the lie, rather than the truth. When the children later discover that they were deceived, the results are often disastrous.

Illustrated:

A little boy who sneaked out of his bed on Christmas Eve, and overheard his parents joking about Santa Claus, and saw his father try on the Santa Claus face and whiskers, quietly retraced his steps and upon getting back into bed, said to his sister, "There's no Santa Claus and there's no God either."

"Train up a child in the way he shall go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," is Scriptural advice, sorely needed at Christmas time. God's gift of salvation should fill the mind and heart of young and old. The gifts we buy should not be so expensive that God's work suffers. Gifts to missions, church, radio broadcasts, should be larger than our gifts to one another. Someone has asked, "Whose birthday is it? Ours or His?" Christmas festivals should center around the person and work of Christ, with heart-warming music and personal testimonies of what He means to us. Revival fires should

burn, in harmony with the many colored lights that shine so beautifully at Christmas time. Fruit from the "Tree of Life," can grow at this season; in contrast to artificial fruit hung on Evergreens. Let's make sure that Christ is in our Christmas celebrations. Then shall Satan and his Santas be defeated; souls shall be saved, and God glorified.

From the December, 1969 *Lamplighter*
by Pastor R. Norheim

December 25th

"He will save us." (Isaiah 25:9)

God's greatest gift at Christmas is the assurance which our Scripture text offers us on this birthday festival of our Savior. We look beyond Christmas trees, gifts, holiday activities, to the Lord Jesus incarnate in the manger at Bethlehem, because, as Isaiah declares, "He will save us."

Here is the heart and soul of His Nativity: Jesus is not only our God, He is also our Savior. In the first section of the New Testament we are assured, "He shall save His people from their sins." When the angels announced His birth, they told the shepherds, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord"; and throughout the entire Scripture, Christ is pictured as the Redeemer, the Rescuer of the whole race, the Ransom for all human sin.

How reassuring, looking beyond Bethlehem to Calvary, to have the faith that the blood which dripped from His lacerated feet and hands, the never-to-be-measured anguish of soul, paid the full price for our freedom from sin, from spiritual destruction and everlasting death! Therefore on the anniversary of the greatest day in human history, let us journey in spirit to the manger, kneel in contrite adoration before our God incarnate, knowing that Bethlehem's Babe, "will save us."

PRAYER

Jesus, our blessed Christ Child: How can we sufficiently thank Thee for coming into our flesh to redeem all men, Jews and Gentiles? We praise and glorify Thy name for the compassion which made Thee become one of us that our sinful souls might be cleansed. Help us not only to approach Thee with reverence and adoration, but also to send the saving message to the very end of the earth! We bring Thee humble and grateful hearts. Amen.

Dr. Walter A Maier (The Lutheran Hour),
Day by Day with Jesus, 1946 Calendar

Are You Converted?

The greatest danger an awakened individual faces is being awakened but not converted, and, consequently being in a state of self-deception from the very beginning.

This danger is ominous because someone who has not been converted has nothing against being awakened as long as no conversion occurs. The devil does not oppose your awakening either, as long as he can see to it that you only remain awakened at best. No one is easier for him to seduce than someone he can lead to an awakening but never to conversion.

Every awakened individual is afraid of meeting God because then he has to break away from sin, and then try to gain peace without reconciliation with God. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door..." That is what every awakened soul is afraid of. Because of their awakening, they realize that they must seek God. That is why they now go to the door to negotiate peace. They say to Him that they are willing to change their lives. They want to begin to read and pray. They want to abandon this or that sin. And then they try to convince Jesus to be satisfied with this. But they receive no peace.

Then they begin to negotiate with Him once again. They are willing to go a bit farther. They are willing to acknowledge Him in the presence of others, and maybe even to be prayed for during a prayer and testimony meeting. They may even pray by themselves and give a small testimony. However, their turmoil continues and drains them of much energy. And when it becomes too much, they grasp onto the means that awakened souls try to grasp onto most often: good intentions. Good intentions have a remarkable way of relieving the pain in a stinging sore. "If anyone opens the door," he will be converted then and there.

The one great result of conversion is allowing Jesus' light of truth to shine on my entire heart, even into its most secretive recesses. Then I cannot negotiate anymore with Jesus about peace. Now I want to know what Jesus thinks about me. Now I ask Him to tell me the whole truth about myself, no matter what the cost. Now I want to know what it is in my life that separates me from my Savior.

Ole Hallesby, Published by Pietan Publications, 2015

Three Great Truths

"Three Great Truths" – 2 John 1-13

"Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love." (2 John 3)

Bo Giertz, the Lutheran bishop of Gothenburg, Sweden (and author of *The Hammer of God*), once wrote that these were the three great lies: (1) There is no God; (2) There is no devil; (3) Everyone can be saved in his own way.

We can balance this out with three great truths. First, there is the true God, the Creator of us all and the Father of all believers. He is a God of justice and of mercy, of righteousness and of love.

The second great truth is this: Not only is there a devil, but there is also the One who destroyed Satan's kingdom and power-Jesus Christ, the Son of God-He who gave His life on the cross as an offering for the sins of the world. John writes, "Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9)

The third great truth involves the third person of the one true God: the Holy Spirit. He it is who brings us to faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior. If it were true that everyone could be saved in his own way-by serving idols, by doing works that he deems good, by bringing great sacrifices such as bestowing all his goods on the poor or even giving his body to be burned- then there would be no need for faith in Christ and no need for the Holy Spirit to implant the saving faith in us through the Gospel.

But, some ask, cannot an upright person, by inherent powers of mind or the good qualities of character, achieve saving faith? Not at all. God said through Paul, Faith comes through hearing the Word of God, the Gospel, which alone is the power of God unto salvation. Salvation is not humanly achieved; it comes from outside of us as God's outright gift of grace – not of works, lest people would boast.

We can put the three great truths like this: The Father thought (planned) it; the Son wrought (worked) it; and the Holy Spirit has brought (delivered) it to us in the Gospel.

By Pastor Edwards,
Contributed by Paul Peterson, Kenyon Mn.

"Reading the Bible without the illumination of the Holy Spirit is likened to reading a sun dial by moonlight."

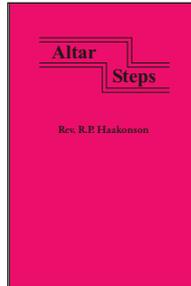
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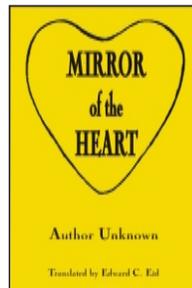
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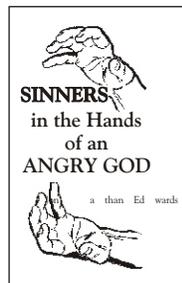
Mirror of the Heart

This book was published in 1900 by an unknown author. It contains some very earnest meditations and fervent prayers. It also contains ten very graphic pictures of the human heart. Inside the heart, the devil is visualized and also seven animals representing some of the most prevalent sins found in the heart of the impenitent sinner. These pictures show how these animals as sins are driven out of the heart when the sinner is converted to God, but how they can re-enter the heart if a person falls away from grace. One picture visualizes the fearful death of the ungodly, and another shows the blessed death of the righteous. Suggested Offering: \$3.00.



Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God

Jonathan Edwards preached this remarkable sermon at Enfield, Conn. on July 8, 1741. It was at night while he was reading it to a large congregation, that the lights became dim and he read with difficulty, and the influence was so great on the congregation that strong men and women cried and screamed for mercy and even grabbed their seats for fear they would slide into hell that very moment. Suggested Offering: \$1.00.



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Spirit and Power

Ludvig Hope was a Norwegian lay preacher, writer, teacher and organizer. He was a popular preacher from the late 1890's and would gather up to 5,000 listeners at his meetings. During World War II, he was imprisoned at the Grini concentration camp, after having signed a protest letter together with other church leaders.



This book is filled with solid Biblical meat for those who want to walk in depth with the Lord. It is written from a Lutheran pietistic perspective and contains 40 chapters of exposition on different aspects of how God works to bring a lost sinner to be saved and then to follow Jesus in the Power of the Holy Spirit. This is not casual reading, but earnest direction for anyone wanting to take up their cross and follow the Lord. Suggested Offering: \$12.00