



Morning Glory

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

EXPERIENCED SALVATION • CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP • SIMPLICITY IN WORSHIP

Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation • August 2024

I Saw a Throne

CS. Lewis wrote a seven-book series called *The Chronicles of Narnia*. One of the books is *“The Voyage of the Dawn Treader.”* In this book, the crew of the Dawn Treader set sail in search of seven friends who sailed off some years ago in search of adventure and never returned. At one point they find one of the seven adventurers in the water off a mysterious Island. He’s in a total panic, His face is frozen in fear and he says, “Flee, turn around, get away from here! Flee, flee as fast as you can!” They ask him, “Why, what’s out there? He responded, ”don’t go there, flee, it’s an Island where all your dreams come true!” Well, that didn’t sound so bad, all of them for a moment thought of all the dreams they held for life, for adventure for honor. “Well, what’s so bad about that?” They asked. The man pulled from the sea said, “No, you don’t understand, all your dreams come true!” This time they all stood motionless for about half a minute as each recalled a nightmare they had had, and then with a flurry of activity they turned the ship around and got away from that Island as fast as they could.

With that thought in mind, one day, billions of souls are going to arrive at a place where all their dreams/desires/nightmares will come true. In Ps 37:4 it says, **Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.** There is a flip side to that as well that is true. God gives all people the desires of their heart. But if your delight is not in the Lord, it’s not a good thing; it’s like having all your dreams (nightmares) come true. God will give you over to the desires of your heart (Rom 1:24) and it will become a nightmare.

“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the

heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ...And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Rev 20:11-15)

The apostle John says, “I saw a throne.” John also saw a throne in chapter Four of Revelation. It had a rainbow over it, 24 smaller thrones around it, and a sea of glass, and there were flashes of lightning and thunder. But notice here, no poetic beauty involved in this description. I saw a throne. Great! White!

The previous throne was a sight of much praising and rejoicing in the majesty of God. Here, no song, no mighty praises to the Lamb and the King, just a throne, great and white, and an occupant.

The world is nonchalant about this day. No big deal, they think, and it’s easy for us to pick up on that attitude. But it’s going to be a horrifying day for so many. It’s going to be an awful day. It’s interesting that heaven and earth are personified in our text and what do we see them doing? They are fleeing the presence of this awful sight. Imagine you are there, you are being drawn to the throne and suddenly you see earth and heaven fleeing past you as fast as they can, running wildly with terror on their faces, and they say as they go by, “Run for your lives, flee, flee

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I Saw A Throne	1-3
Should We Be Fasting?	3
The Order of Salvation • Dealing With Souls	4
Editorial	5-6
Blessed Are They That Mourn • Walk in the Light.....	6
From Our Fellowship Circle • Are We Lulling Our People to Sleep?	7
Believable ... Yet Unbelievable	8
Does Baptism Bring Salvation Apart From Faith? (Part II).....	9-11
Spiritual Guidance for Troubled Souls.....	11
We Believe, Baptism.....	12-13
Made Alive Through Christ • Falling Away.....	13
To You Who Cannot Get A Right Repentance.....	14-15
Adding • Hauge Bible Conference.....	15
Hauge Library	16

from the wrath of God.” As C.S Lewis put it, a place where all your dreams come true. A terrifying place.

John said, “And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened.” Remember John is given a vision of that last great day. He was there in spirit. He stood before the multitude and looked right into their eyes. “I saw the dead, the great and the small”. Who did he see? Did he see you? Did he look right into your face? You were there, we all were. Did he see your brother, your sister, your parents, your neighbor down the road? “I saw the dead”, not just some of the dead, but all the dead, the great and the small. Who will be there? Everyone from Adam, to Ahab, to Judas, from Hitler to Voltaire, President Biden and former president Trump. Even you, you will be there.

All will be there, there will be no place to go and hide. In another place in Revelation people tried to hide from God in the rocks, this time there will be no place to hide, because heaven and earth have already fled from His presence. They are all there before the throne, no place to hide and the books are opened, **“and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.”**

The Book of Life will be there. Just one book. The only thing written in this book is names. There is a

second set of books, plural, many books, And the “spiritually” (my addition) dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

Seiss a Lutheran theologian says in his commentary [The Apocalypse, pg. 479] about the “books”; ***“Myriads of human beings have lived and died of whom the world knows nothing; but the lives they lived, the deeds they did, the thoughts and tempers they indulged, still stand written where the memory of them cannot perish. Not a human being has ever breathed earth’s atmosphere whose career is not traced at full length in the books of eternity. Yes, O man! O woman! whoever you may be, your biography is written. An unerring hand has recorded every item, with every secret thing. There is not an ill thought, a mean act, a scene of wrong in all your history, a dirty transaction, a filthiness of speech, or a lustful feeling that ever found entertainment in your heart, but is there described in bold hand, by its true name, and set down to your account, to be then brought forth for final settlement.”***

It’s all been recorded, and on that day if we are not found in Christ we will be judged and found guilty by what’s written in the books.

Most people think that their works are going to save them, when the opposite is true, they will damn them. If you are not in Christ, all your works can do is damn you.

These are important things to think about, to contemplate: eternity, heaven, and hell. But Satan has our country so preoccupied with so many things, who has time to think of such things? There is so much to do, so many amusements, we have to keep up with social media, and we need noise, a TV, radio, music, or some other distraction. They never want to hear that still small voice. Oh, but we need to, we need to meditate on these things, we need to make sure our names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

How can we make sure our name is written in the Book of Life? Jesus at the very beginning of His ministry said, Mark 1:15, *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel.”* Repent means to turn, you are on the broad road that leads to hell, you turn around and take the narrow road that leads to life. Confess your sins to God, we are all sinners, we have all blasphemed God, we have all committed adultery in our heart, we have all dishonored our parents, we have all hated to the extent that we have committed murder in our heart.

Repent and believe the Gospel. The Gospel is life-changing. The Gospel is the cross. Jesus, God in the flesh, came to earth, lived the perfect life, a life without sin, a life we are incapable of living. And he willingly let himself be beaten, crucified and forsaken by the Father, to

pay the penalty that we deserved. He took our sin upon himself, and paid the full penalty for those sins, that we might be forgiven and live forever in Heaven with him. There is no greater love than this, that you lay down your life for a friend. Jesus is your friend, he laid down his life for you. If you believe in Jesus and what he did on the cross, He gives you His righteousness, and you will stand before God and before the throne one day forgiven, with the righteousness of Jesus, and your name will be written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

You may think you have a whole encyclopedia, 20 volumes written in the “Books” about your sins, but once your name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, all those sins are gone. Poof!

Repent and believe the Gospel. That verse is written in the perfect tense. So for the rest of your life keep on repenting and keep on believing the Gospel. Do that and the second death will have no power over you.

WMA

SHOULD WE BE FASTING?

CONSIDER ALL THAT IS GOING ON AROUND US.

ISAIAH 58:6 *“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?”* KJV

FASTING

Fasting is the discipline of abstaining from food for biblical reasons. It is called “afflicting one’s soul” (IS 58:3), and is often practiced to demonstrate the sincerity of our prayers. There are several biblical reasons for fasting. Christians should fast when facing a national crisis (2 Chr. 20:13; Ezra 8:21; Esth. 4:16), for individual needs (Matt. 17:21), during periods of distress (2 Sam. 3:35; Ps. 35:13), when facing spiritual decisions (Matt. 4:2; Acts 13:2), and in anticipation of Christ’s return (Luke 5:35).

Illustration: Many people have found that heavy burdens are relieved through fasting (Is. 58), wisdom is obtained through fasting (Dan. 10), revival comes from fasting (Is 68:6), God’s protection from danger is secured by fasting (1 Kin. 21:27-29), recovery of a sick loved one may come after fasting (Ps. 35:13), and the inauguration of a great ministry may follow fasting (Matt. 4:2).

Application: When a Christian fasts, he should begin with a short fast-one day from sundown to Sundown and attempt to spend time alone with God during the fast. (Judg. 20:26; Is. 58:6; James 5:14)

From the King James Study Bible,
Submitted by Marvin Jacobson, Dundas MN

The Order of Salvation

I believe it is high time that we in the Hauge Federation, our papers, contributors, editors, evangelists, the friends who write sermons, and other testifying friends, all of us get back to the Order of Salvation more than we do. To be sure, this Order of Salvation as Pontoppidan explains so well, is simple and elementary, it circles all the time about sin and grace. There is nothing in it to please the fancies or feed the curious and highly emotional with new things. We are in danger of losing the appetite for the simple gospel of sin and grace and getting up into flighty regions. But our fathers followed it closely, Hauge, Elling Eielsen and our earlier soul-winning witnesses. We better come back a little more to the old, solid ground.

Now this so-called "Order of Salvation" is stressed as wholly the work of the Holy Spirit. It consists of repentance, to be continued throughout life. It begins with the Call, where the Holy Spirit awakens and invites; it continues with enlightenment, when the Holy Spirit brings the living truth home to the surrendering sinner and produces living faith. It continues to inform us with what happens when the sinner falls at the cross and cries for mercy: "He is justified, born again, sanctified, and at last saved forever." Then follows the four offices of the Holy Spirit, to convict and reprove, to enlighten, to guide and to comfort until the sinner is safe home with God.

All this is explained by Pontoppidan in a very simple way. It should be so set forth, so the fool should not err therein, but find his way into the arms of Jesus and continue there as a needy sinner, saved by grace alone till he reaches the New Jerusalem.

The Order of Salvation from the beginning to the end is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was the great gift, the gift of gifts from the risen Savior and the Father sent to God's people at Pentecost. Only through the Holy Spirit can the Gospel be preached right and only the Spirit can produce conversions. Man in his fallen state is so utterly corrupted, defiled, blind, and stubborn, he cannot say as much as, Jesus is the Lord from the heart, except by the Holy Ghost, (I Cor. 12:3).

We confess that without the Holy Ghost we cannot be partakers of the four wonderful blessings: "The Holy Christian Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting." They are all through the Holy Ghost. Our own reason and strength is utterly un-availing when it comes to faith and assurance. It is of the Holy Ghost. No sinner will ever come to Jesus unless the Holy Spirit convicts him of sin, awakens and invites him. Without Him, he never will be called, never enlightened, never born again, never kept in faith, never saved forever.

God's Word is a dead letter without the Holy Ghost;

the Sacraments are dead ceremonies without Him. But now God's Spirit is a living power in the Word, making it a saving Word, and also in the Sacraments to bring us in contact with the living Christ. And to my last day on earth, the Spirit keeps faithfully on convicting, comforting, enlightening, teaching and guiding me, else I never shall reach home.

As sure as God has sent forth His Son into the world to save us, so surely hath He sent forth the Holy Spirit into the hearts of believers, (Gal. 4:4-6). Without Christ there is no redemption. Without the Holy Spirit we shall never come into saving contact with His redemption.

From the beginning to the end of our Christian life upon earth the Holy Spirit works continually to bring us to and to keep us in saving contact with Christ and His finished salvation through the precious Word of God, the Sword of the Spirit.

This then is the sum and substance of what may be called the introduction to the Order of Salvation. To make the dead sinner a real sinner, and to make the historic Christ a real and personal Savior all along the way.

Taken from the *Morning Glory*
Jan 28, 1943, by P. Ljostveit

Dealing With Souls

You can seldom argue a person into the 'Blessed Little Flock that Jesus Calls His Own' and that is because the real reason for not wanting to 'enter-there-in' is because not of *disbelief* in God; but their emotions and their will forbids them as the preaching of the CROSS *is foolishness to them!* (*They don't see themselves as lost sinners!*)

In other words they refuse to 'believe' (trust, come, rely) as they don't want to believe IN Jesus; because they want to run their own lives!

BUT when the opportunity is there, we must do our best to deal with this precious soul with gentleness, firmness and respect. EVEN if we don't, the person is sincere or this person is seeking to put us on the spot; for if we don't sow the Incorruptible SEED, GOD most likely can not harvest either.

"Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone." (Colossians 4:6) *Naturally your words, character and life-style must be consistent.*

God promises: "Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him." Psalm 126:5-6. — Pastor Rodney Stueland

Editorial

Wayne Almlie

Remaining in your Baptismal Covenant?

“Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you”

(1 Peter 3:21)

To be 100% honest with you, I'm not sure what that looks like. I know what it means, but what does it look like? My problem comes from the fact, that my experience was far from it. I grew up in a small town in Northwest Minnesota, in an ALC church with a very evangelistic pastor. He was very much involved in the LEM and had Evangelists and Summer youth teams every year who would come and minister to adults and youth alike. Pastor Anhalt preached a gospel message every week with an emphasis on giving your life to Jesus, being converted, being born again.

I don't remember pastor Anhalt ever talking to us about remaining in your baptismal covenant, even in Confirmation class. I'm sure he brought it up, we were aware of the possibility, so he must have. I remember a conversation we had at one of our youth Bible studies after I was saved, the topic came up and one of the girls believed that she had never fallen from her Baptismal Covenant. And knowing this girl and her testimony and the woman and the mother that she became I have no reason to doubt her. Of those there, she was the only one with that profession. There may have been other girls in my confirmation class as well who would say that, but I'm pretty sure all of us guys walked away. Some for just 2 or 3 years like I did, some walked away totally and are still living in rebellion.

I can say the same thing about my two years at CLBS. I don't remember the issue of remaining in your Baptismal Covenant being taught in class. I did grab my Bible Doctrine notebooks and looked to see what was said. I found just one sentence in my notes on baptism indicating that it is a possibility, but no explanation.

I remember having numerous conversations among students at CLBS. Many students could point to a time when they were saved, awakened or converted. But some could not, so of course the question was, are the ones who couldn't point to a time, are they saved? I do remember the question coming up in class once, not as a part of a lecture, but just as a question asked by a student. I remember the answer being something like this: "It's not so important to know a time in the

past, it's more important to know what is your present? Today, are you believing? Today, are you repenting? Today, are you following? Today, are you trusting? Some people can tell you a time in the past, who today, are not following Jesus."

It is interesting when looking back at the 100-plus students that I knew going to Bible school those years, I know of some who are not walking with the Lord today, and generally, I would say they were the ones who could not point to a specific time of repentance and awakening. So this is the danger. Some indeed transition from immature faith to mature faith and walk their whole life with God, but I fear many walk away from their Confirmation with a false assurance.

This is what John Milton, professor at Luther Seminary said in His book, "People are Asking" [Augsburg Book Concern, 1942]:

“What we should do in such a case is to seek to lead him as a child of God to that conscious experience of the daily repentance for sin and the daily trust in the pardoning grace and saving power of God which is the heart of the continuing relationship between the saved and the Savior always.”

Hallesby in his book *Infant Baptism and Adult Conversion* asks this question: "Why cannot the God-fearing child keep its spiritual life by retaining its former piety? What is it that causes its life with God to die? The answer is exceedingly simple: the God-fearing child has now received new light. But it will not follow this light. And since this opposition to the Spirit of God is not merely a fall that is regretted and resisted, but develops into persistent obstinacy, the child thereby puts to death the life in God which it has had and in which it has lived from the moment of Baptism."

That would be my testimony. Through the preaching of a LEM evangelist, I was given new light. I remember the awakening. I remember the conviction, I remember the thought, God wants me to take the next step with Him, What was I going to do with this new light? Was I going to follow it and move from an im-

mature faith to maturity? Was I going to make a renewed commitment to follow Jesus? Well, I made the wrong choice. In that short time, while the evangelist preached, I counted the cost and decided I wasn't willing to pay it. I wanted to be popular, I wanted to be part of the in-crowd, I made a conscious decision and said no, fully recognizing in part anyway, the implications this decision had for eternity.

This is why we will revisit this doctrine for a couple of issues. This is why we decided to republish "*Infant Baptism and Adult Conversion*" by Hallesby. When

we look at the fallaway rate after confirmation, and high school youth group, when many of our youth after 5-10 years are no longer walking with the Lord, that should be a concern for all Lutherans. I don't know the number, but I am going to use my confirmation class as an illustration. I don't know their hearts and I could be wrong. But possibly 50 percent of my confirmation class is not walking with the Lord today. I fear that in a lot of churches, the rate is much higher. Sometimes the church behaves like they really don't believe there is a hell.

“Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.” (Matthew 5:4)

WORRY and complaint about food and clothes and all else that belongs to “daily bread” are as common as it is un-Christian and unprofitable. All the disquiet and agony that anxiety for daily bread has in its train is enough to rob us of our courage for the problems of life and our strength to work. God has therefore been so good to us that we are spared the need of worrying about such matters.

Jesus said to His disciples: “*Be not therefore anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or, ‘What shall we drink?’ or, ‘Wherewithal shall we be clothed?’ For after all these things do the Gentiles seek, for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye need all these things.*”

For what kind of mourning does Jesus call the Christians blessed? It is sorrow for sin, sorrow because of our weak Christianity, and because we do so little for Him who did everything for us. It is the feeling that we need more of God's Spirit and power in our lives, so we can be living letters for our fellow men to read about Christ. It is mourning for all those who are living without God and without hope in the world. This is the right Christian mourning.

The tears that we shed for such reasons our Savior gladly wipes away, and He comforts the heart that feels oppressed by sorrow for sin and sympathy for others.

*Cleanse us, Lord, from sinful stain,
O'er the parched heart, O rain!
Heal the wounded of its pain.*

*Bend the stubborn will to Thine,
Melt the cold with fire divine,
Erring hearts to right incline.*

Thy Kingdom Come, by Ludvig Hope, © Copyright 1939, Augsburg Publishing House, Permission Granted

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7)

The Bible tells us that Satan accuses us. He comes before God and points out our sins, and, if it were possible, he would tell us that there is no hope for sinners like us. But God says by walking in the light the blood of Jesus will cleanse us from all sin. We may confess our need of Jesus as our Savior from sin.

Satan had a long list of sins and came to Martin Luther with them one day. Luther looked at them and said, “I know all about this, but don't you have any more?”

Satan was ready with a bigger list and came with one which seemed to have no end. Luther waited until Satan did not have any more to present, and then he said, “Don't you have any more?”

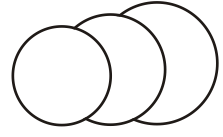
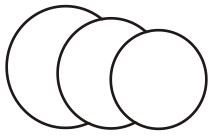
“Well, aren't all these enough?” Satan asked, with surprise.

“Oh, yes, they are enough, but now write on the bottom of the list: *‘The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son cleanseth us from all sin.’*”

Satan could not accuse Luther any more, and so he stole away. Marvelous power of the blood of Jesus! It can cleanse us from every sin. How grateful we ought to be!

Dear Saviour, make us grateful for the forgiveness of sin. Let us see Thy light and cause us to walk in it every day. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Altar Steps, by Pastor R. P. Haakonson,
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K. & F. C.

Sebring, Florida

“Sending a check for \$...,\$... for furthering the Morning Glory and \$... for Infant Baptism and Adult Conversion. My best comments on the many lessons you have for us in the Morning Glory. We so need to share our love of God with others and you all do a super job. May God continue to bless you and may the Holy Spirit guide you in your works. Jesus shows us how. Thanks again.

Are We Lulling Our People to Sleep?

A peculiar paralysis seems to have possessed a major portion of our Lutheran churches. Somehow the Devil seems to have doped us. Certainly, a tremendous zeal that the New Testament church had, which drove them into all parts of the earth to make disciples, seems to be so lacking in our church. In those early days, as well as in great awakenings, the cry was everywhere heard, “What must we do to be saved?” How seldom we hear that cry today. So the question has come to me, “Are we lulling our people to sleep?”

What do we hear in many of our churches? Is it the clear-cut message, “*Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light.*” (Eph. 5:14)? Or is the message concerning the need of repentance and conversion underemphasized? I am a Lutheran and believe with all my heart that when we baptize a little child, such a one is born into God’s Kingdom. I also believe that if that child is properly nourished in the fear and admonition of the Lord, as he gets older, he will come to see himself as a great sinner who needs the forgiving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Unless that baptized child, when he gets older, comes into a realization of his sinfulness and of God’s forgiveness for Christ’s sake, that child will become a self-righteous pharisee, lost just as much as the foulest sinner in the slums. Our Lord says in Luke 13:5: “*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*”

This is according to our Lutheran teaching also. Remember what Luther said of the question, “What does baptizing with water signify?” “It signifies that the Old Adam in us, together with all sins and evil lust, should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and be put to death; and that the new man should daily come forth and rise to live before God in righteousness and holiness forever.” The answer he gives is this. Now then whenever

we mark in our members that a life of daily repentance is not lived, we must tell them that they are lost and on the road to eternal damnation. It is nothing but soul murder to tell a person who is not living in fellowship with God, that he is saved because once he was baptized. Remember what our Lord says in I John 2:15: “*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him.*” When we behold our people with no love or interest for the things of God, on the other hand when we see they are in love with the world, it makes no difference if they have not willfully forsaken Christ and committed gross sins, they are lost nevertheless, for God looks to the heart. When was the prodigal son lost? Was it only when his body went into the far country? Surely it must have been before he left, for his heart was already in the far country; and God says, “*as a man thinketh in his heart, so he is.*”

After a burning evangelistic message in a certain church, the pastor got up and said, “This message does not apply to us, because we are all saved here.” There upon one of the women arose and said, “No matter what the pastor says, I am lost. Can anyone tell me how to get saved?”

Doesn’t it seem strange that sometimes some of our members living a so-called nice life get converted and have a real experience of the living Savior, after which they say, “We were not saved before this.” Now they can say with the blind man, “One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” (John 9:25). Do we have any right to tell anyone he is saved unless the Holy Spirit tells him that? “*The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*” (Rom. 8:16). I am afraid many have been lulled to sleep by a false comfort.

Oh, how many of our members need to be converted? How many need to be convicted of sin and given a release into the experience Pontoppidan speaks of when he asks this question: “What change takes place in us when we are born again?” Here is his answer: “We obtain a new heart, a new spiritual life; that is, in the understanding a new spiritual light; in the conscience, true peace and joy; and in the will, a holy desire, power and longing.” Let us test our relationship to God by that standard. Do we have spiritual light in the understanding, true peace and joy in the conscience? And in the will, do we have a holy desire, power and longing? “By their fruits, ye shall know them,” Jesus said. When God gets possession of our people, then there will be a new day of power for the Lutheran Church.

By Pastor L.C. Masted, (Lutheran Colporteur),
Morning Glory, March 1943

Believable...Yet Unbelievable

Kind of, Murder

“Television host Bill Maher admitted abortion “kind of is murder” but added he was OK with that.

Maher, during a panel discussion Friday on his HBO show “Real Time,” discussed abortion rights in light of former President Donald Trump saying that the issue should be decided by each U.S. state and not by a national ban.

“A lot of people think it’s murder. That’s why I don’t understand the 15-week thing, or Trump’s plan is, Let’s leave it to the states. You mean, so killing babies is OK in some states?” Maher asked.

“I can respect the absolutist position. I really can. I scold the left when they say, ‘Oh, you know what? They just hate women, people who aren’t pro-choice.’ They don’t hate women. They just made that up.”

Maher then said something that silenced his audience.

“They think it’s murder, and it kind of is. I’m just OK with that,” he said. “I am. I mean, there’s 8 billion people in the world. I’m sorry, we won’t miss you. That’s my position on it.”

The Catholic League’s Bill Donohue said Maher is not the first, only the latest, abortion defender to admit the procedure’s “victims are innocent children.”

“Maher’s sincerity is appreciated, but not his promotion of violence,” Donohue wrote. “He knows, as every honest person who agrees with science knows, that abortion is the taking of innocent human life.”

Charlie McCarthy, Newsmax.com

Editor: More and more people are at least being more honest about what is happening. They are dropping all the euphemisms and using scientific language to describe what they are doing in an abortion, they are killing a human being. And the scary thing is that they are OK with it.

In both the Greek and the Hebrew language, the word for the unborn and the newborn was the same. The scriptures make no distinction, therefore God makes no distinction. Murdering our children is one of the greatest offenses against a Holy God. In history, He has destroyed nations for that sin.

Deuteronomy 18:9ff: “When you come into the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering... For who-

ever does these things is an abomination to the Lord; and because of these abominable practices the Lord your God is driving them out before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God.”

Our world is ripe for judgment, this is the greatest holocaust this world has ever seen. Our country alone has murdered close to 70 million babies, worldwide about 3 billion. There are some who say imprecatory prayers should never be prayed by a Christian. I disagree, when you have the kind of evil that we have in the world today, I say imprecatory prayers are a necessity:

“For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You. The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes; You hate all who do iniquity. You destroy those who speak falsehood; The Lord abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit.” (Ps 5:4-6)

Humanity is Good?

The Pope says: “You see tragedies, but you also see so many beautiful things,” he said. “You see heroic mothers, heroic men, men who have hopes and dreams, women who look to the future. That gives me a lot of hope. People want to live. People forge ahead. And people are fundamentally good. We are all fundamentally good. Yes, there are some rogues and sinners, but the heart itself is good.” **From The Christian Post**

God says: Jer 17:9, “The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?”

Luke 18:19, “No one is good except God alone.”

Rom 3:12, “ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.”

“Be sure your sin will find you out.”

(Num. 32:23)

You may escape the law, but you cannot escape the consequences of sin. You may escape the law of man, but you cannot escape the law of God. There is no place where any man or woman can hide from God.

Billy Sunday

Does Baptism Bring Salvation Apart From Faith? (Part II)

“He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.” (Mark 16:16)

This is the second and final article in a series on baptism and faith. The first article was in the June 2024 issue of the *Morning Glory*.

In our Lutheran circles many think that you can be saved solely because you have been baptized. We hear it all the time – At our baptism – At our Confirmation – At a funeral. I was at another funeral and the pastor put the Baptismal font in front of the casket and said the deceased is in heaven – It all happened right there. This statement was made REGARDLESS OF WHAT THEY BELIEVED OR HOW THEY LIVED! Some Lutheran Pastors decry that if you have doubts about your salvation – to “Remember Your Baptism” or “Look to your baptism.” This is nowhere in the Bible! They teach that you were saved in your baptism and all you need is to just sit there and remain in that covenant.

Rather than that, the Scripture states that we are to “Remember Jesus Christ risen from the dead” (II Tim. 2:8) and “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.” (Heb. 12:2) Rather than looking to our baptism, the Scripture admonishes us to “examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith” (II Cor. 13:5) – Not to see if we were baptized.

If baptism is all that is necessary for salvation – then the reformation was a waste of time. Luther was baptized – yet it gave him no inner assurance of salvation. When he was in a quandary on how to find forgiveness of sins – why didn’t he simply “remember his baptism” or “look to his baptism?” Luther had a time when he came to salvation AFTER his baptism:

“Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement that “the just shall live by faith.” Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise.”¹

The cry of the Reformation was that salvation was “By Grace Alone through Faith Alone based on Scripture Alone.” This was in the face of a church body that practiced baptism as we do.

The Response to God’s Grace

Baptism is a means of grace, but like any grace offered to us by God, it must be responded to. Baptism without personal faith will not avail salvation – as Jesus said, “*He who believes and is baptized shall be saved.*” (Mk. 16:16) All of God’s Grace given to us needs a response of faith to be effective in our lives. Our baptism needs a response of faith if baptism is going to accomplish what God desires in our lives. It isn’t that baptism is wrong or is limited – it’s that it has to be personally responded to.

It is just like hearing God’s word. It has God’s grace in it as well – in fact it is The Primary Means of Grace. Does just hearing the Word mean that it has done its work? No, not until we respond to what God brings us in His Word. James 1:21-22 “*in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.*” So we must respond to God’s Grace that comes to us in His Word if it is going to be effective in our lives. The same is true with all means of Grace that God brings to us. Is it because there is something wrong or limited with baptism? No, it is a means of Grace, but there must be a response to the grace that has been offered to us. In Mark 16:16, Jesus is describing 2 things necessary for salvation (Faith and Baptism) – Not just one (Baptism only). “*He who believes and is baptized shall be saved.*” Other Scriptures bear this out as well.

John 3:5 “*Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’”*

Acts 2:38 “*And Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”*

Titus 3:5 “*He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.*”

So those who are baptized still need to be born again of the Spirit. This is THE missing element in most churches practicing infant baptism today. Prominent religious people give testimony that they were saved when they were baptized. They are only half-way there! When were you born again of the Spirit? A testimony of salvation simply because you are baptized is not a testimony at all – it is a testimony of being baptized, not being a receptor of the Holy Spirit. You receive the Holy Spirit when you receive Christ as Savior and Lord and He comes to

1 *Here I Stand – A Life of Martin Luther* by Roland Bainton. Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN, pg. 49.

reside within you – this is what is necessary for everyone who was baptized as an infant.

The infant did not repent when it was baptized so this must take place in the life of the baptized. The infant did not turn to Jesus as Lord and Savior when it was baptized, so this must take place as well. This process of coming to a living faith is called conversion, which means turning.

Am I making a mountain out of a mole hill – is this really all that important? Notice very carefully what happens to those who don't come to Christ – "*but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned*" (Mark 16:16) Even the baptized who don't come to faith in Jesus will be condemned. This is THE ACID TEST on whether you are going to make it to heaven or not. It is Absolutely crucial so Don't Miss It. Have you been born again of the Spirit? Does the Holy Spirit reside within you? If the answer is "no," then you aren't going to make it to heaven. Romans 8:9 says, "*However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.*"

This happens when you accept Jesus Christ into your heart as your own personal Savior. When Jesus came into your heart, He came to reside there by the Holy Spirit. That is why the Scriptures admonish you to examine yourself and see if you are in the faith. "*Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you— unless indeed you fail the test?*" (II Corinthians 13:5) True salvation comes through repentance of sin and acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Faith is NOT just a knowledge of historical fact. You can know all the important facts of the Bible about Jesus: His Virgin Birth – Sinless Life – Vicarious Death on the Cross for the sins of all mankind – His Bodily Resurrection from the dead – His Ascension to heaven – His return in Glory to rule and reign, and still not have salvation. Just knowing these will not bring you salvation. Faith is not just to sit there and believe, but to accept this grace in Jesus for yourself.

Some Lutheran clergy will say, "But it just isn't Lutheran to have altar calls for people to accept Christ. They are already there through their baptism. To do this is to deny the efficacy of baptism."

Calling the baptized to come and accept Christ is not denying the efficacy of baptism – not doing so is denying the need for a personal response to the grace that is offered. The *Lutheran Confessions* teach this:

"We also reject the following formulas if they are used without explanation: That man's will

before, in and after conversion resists the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit is given to those who resist Him. From the foregoing exposition it is clear that when the Holy Spirit's activity produces no change at all for good in the intellect, will and heart, when man in no way believes the promise and is not prepared by God for grace, but wholly resists the Word, conversion does not and cannot take place. For conversion is that kind of change through the Holy Spirit's activity in the intellect, will and heart of man whereby man through such working of the Holy Spirit is able to accept the offered grace." (Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article II, Free Will)

Luther's Small Catechism teaches this as well:

"What Gifts or Benefits Does Baptism bestow? Answer: It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe, as the Word and the promise of God declare."

It is both Biblical AND Lutheran to call sinners to receive Christ by an act of their will as the Holy Spirit works in their hearts through Law and Gospel as the Scriptures declare:

John 1:12 – "*But as many as **received** Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.*"

Colossians 2:6 – "*As you therefore have **received** Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.*"

Romans 5:11 – "*And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now **received** the reconciliation.*"

I Corinthians 15:1-2 "*Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you **received**, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.*"

II Corinthians 11:4 "*For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you **receive** a different spirit which you have not **received**, or a different gospel which you have not **accepted**, you bear this beautifully.*"

All of these verses direct the sinner to receive or accept Christ and the Gospel with no mention of baptism

Does this not give us some understanding into I Peter 3:21, "*And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you— not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience— through the res-*

urrection of Jesus Christ?" The whole context of this Scripture is that of Noah being placed into the Ark for deliverance from the flood. Noah had to obey God by faith and respond to God's directive to build the Ark and then get into it. So Baptism is not to be viewed apart from faith that accepts Christ and lives and walks in Him.

Dear reader, are you baptized? That is good and right and necessary. But are you in Jesus – is Jesus in you? Are you born again with the Spirit of God in your heart? Because if you aren't – your baptism alone won't give you salvation apart from a born again faith in Jesus with the Spirit of God residing within.

Pastor Jim Haga. Reprinted from the August 2020 issue of the *Morning Glory*

Spiritual Guidance for Troubled Souls

QUESTION:

I have confessed my sins to God, and He has given me these words: "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." That was a great day for me. I could only thank God for His wonderful grace. I then thought I should be able to live happily the rest of my life. But I have had many struggles since that day. The greatest difficulty is that so often my entire sinful life comes back to me. And now I am wondering if I must again confess everything to God, both the sins that I believe were forgiven, and the many faults and failings that I see in me from day to day.

ANSWER:

In answer to this, I would first say, the great difficulty with us is that we have not learned to know God aright. When God forgives sin, then that sin is blotted out. He says: "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and I will not remember thy sins." (Is. 43:25). He blots out our sins like a fog. When the fog is gone, we see it no more. It has disappeared.

These are God's own promises, and He never retracts what He has said. His forgiveness is so assuring that the sin He has forgiven is no more. This is what makes a sinner so happy, when he receives this promise from God, that all is forgiven the sin is forgotten and is no more, and we stand before God as if we had never sinned. This was what prompted David to say: "*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom Jehovah imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.*" (Ps. 32:1)

We read in another passage that God has cast all our

sins behind His back. (Isa. 38:17).

The great trouble with us is that we are not like God. We cannot forget our sins. If we could forget sin as God does, then we would be rid of it for all time. But it comes back to our memory. When we recall our past sins and see the faults and weaknesses in our daily life, our conscience begins to condemn us, and then the judgment does not only fall upon what we now see, but condemns us for all that we have done in the past. And we again feel our guilt before God.

We begin to enumerate our sins from the beginning and confess all anew. And this is quite natural, for we conclude: Since I again have sinned against God, and it is not only this sin of which I am guilty, but also all sins of the past. That is how it happens that one who has believed his sins forgiven will come back to God with his entire old burden of sin. It appears that even David did the same thing. He says in Ps. 25: "*Remember not the sins of my youth.*" He had made up with God, and received the assurance that his sins were forgiven, but still his past sins came back to him, and would condemn him.

God does not demand that we shall confess the sins that He has forgiven. He has cast them behind His back and forgotten them, but it may be necessary for ourselves. For when our conscience reminds us of our sins way back to the days of our youth and pronounces judgment upon them, then we cannot deny that it is true, but we must humbly admit all these things we have done and turn to God with it all. But how do we find God when we come to Him in this way? We find that He has forgiven all and forgotten it, so it is no more recorded against us. We find that God is the same faithful God He always was, and this again gives my heart rest and peace. My heart is filled with thanks and praises. Truly all is still forgiven and forgotten. John had also experienced that his heart wanted to condemn him, for he says: "*If our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things.*" (1 John 3:20).

He did not depend on the judgment of his own heart, but he appealed his case to God. God knows everything, and God knew that all was forgotten and forgiven, and that was his comfort. He had surrendered all to God, and whenever his heart condemned him he would appeal his case to God, and again find peace and rest for his conscience. My advice to you, my friend, is that you go to God whenever your heart condemns you, and admit it all. You shall then hear from His own word that all is forgiven and forgotten. God is like that.

S.H. Njaa, Pastor ELC

We Believe, Baptism

The practice of baptism reflects what we believe in the larger picture about redemption. An infant is a human being who is born in sin and needs salvation. The infant is unable to offer anything to God, is unable to cooperate with God, is not able to contribute anything to redemption, can only receive what God gives.

These children (as they are becoming adults) need to come to know (experience in their own hearts) that they are sinners with a sinful nature that opposes God. This reality needs to be communicated effectively to children. Since only sinners can be saved, the Law needs to continue to do its work in the lives of people if they are to continually see their need of Christ. The problem is that children are not adults. Treating them as adults (or treating adults as children) does not take people seriously.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, they need to confess their sinfulness and yield to God; and possess for themselves forgiveness of their sin through Jesus Christ, as they are led from the faith received in infant baptism into a clear conscious personal faith in Christ as their Lord and Savior and being assured of salvation, rely solely on the finished work of Christ, and the power of the Gospel to live as children of God.

The task of leading children to conscious faith is not something that can be isolated or assigned to a particular age or activity. Young children, who believe almost anything adults tell them, need to be nurtured in grace and cared for in ways that are appropriate to who they are. Older children and teenagers need to be confronted with the new realities of human nature that they are dealing with as well. And just because a teen has responded as a teen to the grace of God in Christ Jesus, the church needs to realize that the struggle with faith continues. The crisis events that may have happened when they first felt guilt as a five-year-old or when they first came face to face with personal sinfulness as a fifteen-year-old may recur when they begin to set down roots independent of family and friends in a work or academic environment. God continually calls them by Law and Gospel in ways appropriate to their age and experience. They will yield to his wooing in ways appropriate to who they are and where they are.

The Law in the theological/narrow sense needs to be preached to these children. Often the Law is preached as good advice. They need good advice, but they also need to be convicted of sin and sinfulness in a way that kills them and drives them to Christ. If they are going to confess their sinfulness, that will only happen

as the Holy Spirit convicts them through the Word of the Law, Jesus said the work of the Spirit was to “convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8). Paul writes, “We know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin” (Romans 3:19-20). Through the Law, the Holy Spirit brings people to confess their sinfulness.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, they need to yield to God. It is God’s will that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). God is the one who calls and pursues and loves and sacrifices so that humanity may be saved. In the words of the Explanation to the Catechism, the Holy Spirit “calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies” (Olsen and Rinden, 1992, p. 75). God pursues humans. It is not that we loved him, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. It was not Adam who came looking for God in the garden. God was and is the seeker. The God of the Bible is a missionary God who desires the salvation of people. Consider what God has done for our salvation in Christ. Realize that God the Holy Spirit is pursuing and calling and convicting and enlightening us through Word and sacrament and people. “We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us,” (2 Corinthians 5:20). What is the response of the rebellious sinner to all this? It is appropriately stated in the words, yield to God. The tendency of humanity is for each to go one’s own way. “Prone to wander, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love,” in the words of the songwriter. The opposite of going one’s own way is to yield to God. This yielding means that not only do I acknowledge that he “has redeemed me a lost and condemned creature, bought and freed me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil,” but that he has a place for me—“that I might be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness” and joy forever (Olsen and Rinden 1992, p. 60).

And possess for themselves... There is a sense in which a young person is not his or her own. They are products of biology and environment. The life they lead now, the attributes and possessions they have – are to them as gifts from someone else, especially from their parents. They did not think to reject these gifts. But as their world expands and their minds mature they begin to make assessments of the things they have been given. “Just because my dad sells furniture, does that mean I will? Just because my parents are of a particular politi-

cal party, does that mean I am also? Just because my parents are Christian, does that mean I am?"

When young people possess for themselves the forgiveness of their sin through Jesus Christ, they will then be trusting in the Word, not as a given from childhood that they never much doubted, but as a teaching and promise that they have learned and have come to rest upon. When they rest on the finished work of Christ not even on their own experience of it – this brings assurance of salvation. This assurance will necessarily have to be established again and again in their relationship with God, for example, when they are defeated by sin or when they are tempted to find security in their own works. For the baptized child this is a spiritual development that parallels his or her personal development. It cannot be prescribed whether an individual's spiritual development will be a day-to-day development, or a development through a variety of crises.

Taken from *Doctrines and Beliefs of the Church* by Dr. Timothy Ysteboe, © Copyright 2009 by *Faith and Fellowship Press*, Used with permission

MADE ALIVE THROUGH CHRIST

"As everyone dies because of Adam, so also everyone will be made alive because of Christ."
(I Corinthians 15:22)

Paul is speaking here only about Christians. He wants to teach and comfort them about being made alive in Christ. Although non-Christians will also rise from the dead, it will not be a comfort or a joy to them because they will be raised to judgment, not to life. This is not a comforting or happy message to the world. Godless people don't want to hear about this. This is the way I felt when I wanted to be a holy monk and tried to be pious. I would rather have heard about all the devils in hell than about judgment day. The hair on my head stood on end when I thought about it. The whole world hates to think about leaving this life. They don't want to die, and they are terrified when we speak of death and the afterlife. Aside from that, all of us are stuck in the muck of our own unholiness and think that by our life and works we can pacify God's judgment and earn a place in heaven. All we accomplish by this is that we become even worse and grow more hostile towards the judgment day.

I won't say anything about the large group of people who look for all their pleasure and comfort here in this life, despise God's Word, and won't give a penny for God and his kingdom. It's no surprise if such people are aggravated by hearing about the resurrection. But to us, this message

is pure comfort and joy because we hear that our greatest treasure is already in heaven. Only a small part remains on earth, which Christ will resurrect and draw to himself, as easily as a person awakening from sleep.

Faith Alone, A devotional based on the writings of Martin Luther, No copyright listed

Falling Away

"But I have this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love. Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works." (Rev. 2:4-5)

TO fall away from the inner fellowship with God and at the same time to be a zealous worker for God—that seems to be a form of backsliding which is just as dangerous for the people of God as it is easy to get into. Outwardly all may seem proper. We can have an open eye for evils found among Christians, we may love the truth, be patient, teach correctly, and work with great zeal in the kingdom of God, and yet, in the midst of all this we may have lost the kernel and the spark, yea, life itself.

We may hide from ourselves our entire inner defeat with great concern for everything that is right and true and good; yea, also by working for Jesus' name's sake without growing weary. We may hide our internal wound with external works. Life in Christ's love can drown in reasonable and Christian correctness. There is the danger, and the danger is great.

But what then is the first love?

That which characterizes all true life with God from its beginning is a tender conscience, an honest spirit, and an entirely open attitude toward God. The slightest thing that we feared might be wrong in heart or deed, was enough to drive us into the presence of God, so that we might tell Him all. We could hide nothing from God. That is the way he lives who has not lost his first love.

It is this fellowship with God that we can so easily lose.

*There is a blessed home
Beyond this land of woe,
Where trials never come,
Nor tears of sorrow flow'
Where faith is lost in sight,
And patient hope is crowned,
And everlasting light
Its glory throws around.*

Thy Kingdom Come by Ludvig Hope, Augsburg Publishing House © Copyright, 1939.
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To You Who Cannot Get a Right Repentance

Many awakened and seeking souls are in distress, because they cannot find a real sorrow for sin in their hearts.

They know they have sinned, and they are unhappy. But they cannot work up a deep and true sorrow for sin; they cannot attain to a broken heart.

Sin is raging in the flesh, in thoughts and desires, yes in words and actions also. "I ought to be ashamed of myself and humble myself thoroughly" -they lament. But I feel so hard and cold. How I wish, I had sorrow for sin and true longing after God.

If I only had the right repentance!

It is very important to come to a true repentance. Not all repentance is true. Even Cain repented and complained about his sin and said: "My iniquity is greater than I can bear." But his repentance did not lead to conversion. He went away from the presence of the Lord.

Esau wept over the loss of the blessing he even sought it with tears-but he found no room for true repentance. His weeping was over the consequences of sin, not over sin itself.

Saul broke into weeping over his unrighteousness toward David, and even confessed that he was in the wrong. (I Sam.24:18). But he did not want to break away from sin, and he was never saved from it.

He had no right repentance. Only regret.

In our days repentance is made superfluous. Sin is being polished and given attractive names and is made as innocent as possible, that no room is left for true repentance and conversion. Just a little improvement here and a little coat of paint on the outside there, that is sufficient these days.

"Flee the serious, shun repentance," says the poet.

Yes - For sin is not sin these days.

But true repentance will never be at rest with this. It shuns the hollow and false appearance. First of all, it wants to know the truth. Here I shall mention a few earmarks of true repentance.

1. True repentance acknowledges and confesses sin.

True repentance will never cover up sin or seek to excuse it. It comes before God with an honest confession of sin, confess it to God just as it is. It is without guile; he comes to God and acknowledges how dishonest and false the natural heart is.

2. True repentance wants to be set free from sin.

It is not only forgiveness it seeks, but it also seeks to

be set free from the bondage and power of sin. False repentance wants forgiveness, but not deliverance from the power of sin. Therefore, it never leads to a full surrender and experience of salvation.

Old man Kjelland, on the Litchville-Valley City Prairie, once told an experience from his younger days, when he was a sailor: On a trip to India, they anchored at a small island near Sumatra. The natives had small monkeys for sale. They told how they had caught them. They bored a hole in some big nuts that grow there, took the meat out and spread sugar on it, put it back and tied it inside the nut. The little apes liked sugar and came to help themselves-putting the little hand in through the hole and filled it. But the hole was not wide enough for them to pull the hand back filled. They pulled and shrieked when caught, but they did not have sense enough to let go of the sugar. So, they were caught.

Many awakened souls go at it in the same way. They are in distress and long for peace with God. But sinful things are binding them which they don't want to give up. Certain things hinder them, which they will not renounce; things are in the way, which they will not humble themselves under.

Then when the time of revival is over, they little by little sink down into carelessness and worldliness, held fast in the chains of the devil to their own eternal perdition.

My friend: Let go of the sugar! True repentance breaks with sin.

3. True repentance cannot see itself.

This often makes it bitter for the seeking soul. He feels condemned and unhappy. When he seeks in his own heart for grief and sorrow for sin, he cannot find it. Instead of feeling broken-hearted, he feels sinful desires deep down in his heart.

He feels perplexed and comfortless.

This is distressing.

But this disappointment over himself is really the best thing for the awakened soul. If he could find a deep sorrow in his heart, he would be apt to build his faith on his own repentance and not on Christ alone.

"If I only could feel broken-hearted! Just so I was rightly converted! If I could only attain to a real faith! Then there would be help and a way out for me to be saved. But no matter how much I pray, I don't get any different."

My dear seeking friend: It is really your good fortune that it has gone to pieces for you. It is the Holy Spirit that has done this. He wants to turn you away from a dangerous side track, which your own deceitful heart was leading you in on. Therefore, does He want

you to experience the fourth earmark of true repentance.

4. True repentance goes to Jesus

Jesus said: "Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

He said it. The one who is of the truth is coming. He accepts the invitation. He obeys the invitation.

In Roman 10:16 the apostle speaks of someone who did not obey the Gospel. Therefore, they never came to a living faith.

True repentance obeys the Gospel. It renounces its own thoughts and accepts God's thoughts. It places God's Word above its own feelings.

True repentance goes to Jesus and obeys the Gospel. When Jesus says: Come unto me! Then the repentant person comes to Jesus, comes with his sin and sorrow, comes with his shortcomings, failings, discouragements and accusations, with it all. In this way the obedience of faith is worked in the sinner's heart. In this way he also receives the seal of the Holy Spirit in his heart.

It is not for the sake of your repentance that God offers you His grace. He does not give you His forgiveness in exchange for your sorrow.

God saves you for Jesus' sake only. And Jesus was broken and crushed for your sins and for mine. He wept over them and knew to the full the anguish of penitence in Gethsemane and Calvary – your and my sorrow – a sorrow that we cannot produce. But Jesus knew it and felt it. His soul knew anguish and sorrow-even unto death. This sorrow was sufficient in the sight of God. He requires no more.

Our Iowa friend, Alvald Stole once told about a beggar who came to his father. When his father wanted to put something into his bag, it came to light that the beggar was so poor that he did not even own a bag.

So, the beggar had to receive both the gift and the bag.

The law in the kingdom of God is that the poorest receive the most. He filled the hungry with good gifts but the full and the rich he sent empty away.

The hungry who are so out and out poor, that they do not even find sorrow for sin in their own poor hearts, even such are filled with good gifts, especially these.

"The whole does not need a physician, but they who are sick (sin-sick). I have not come to call righteous, but sinners to repentance," Jesus said.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

They shall be filled.

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Adding

"...they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

"Many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand."

Acts 2:41, 4:4

Three thousand souls saved! Five thousand souls saved! The surprise is that the men leading this evangelical surge were scathingly referred to as "ignorant and unlearned men". Where then was the secret to their power? Surely it was that they were "filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:4) Perhaps one of our failures to day is that we depend more on our programs and techniques to the exclusion of the Holy Spirit. May we all covet to be filled with the Holy Spirit. – W. H. Burnett.

O fill me with Thy fullness, Lord, until my very heart o'erflow,

*In kindly thought and glowing word, Thy love to tell,
Thy praise to show.*

Frances Ridley Havergal

ACTS 4:12-13

Mark Your Calendar!

Hauge Lutheran Bible Conference

Zion Lutheran Church
4300 Beaver Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50310

October 11-13, 2024

Speakers:

Dr Craig Jennings of Bottineau ND
Pastor Jim Haga of Shoreview MN,
Dr. Mark Mattes, Professor, Grand View College
Maybe one more, yet to be confirmed.

Mark Your Calendar!

PLAN TO PRAYERFULLY ATTEND

PLEASE PRAY now for the Conference for the Holy Spirit to be present in power and whom you might invite.

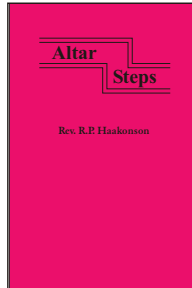
WELCOME!

The Hauge Library

We have the following publications available for you. They can be ordered using the envelope in the center. Postage will be paid by an anonymous donor.

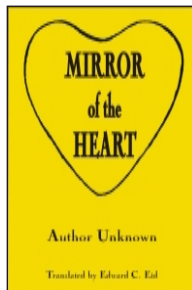
Altar Steps

This daily devotional was written by Pastor R.P. Haakonson and was published in 1947. It is suitable for families with children. It has illustrations from daily life, and a strong salvation emphasis. Suggested offering: \$8.00.



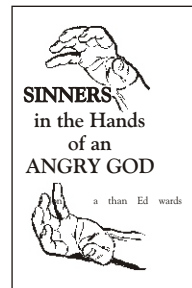
Mirror of the Heart

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. 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.



Spirit and Power

Ludvig Hope was a Norwegian lay preacher, writer, teacher and organizer. 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



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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

Infant Baptism and Adult Conversion

This work by Ole Hallesby is much needed in our Lutheran circles today as salvation solely through baptism is proclaimed far and wide and people are given assurance at a funeral that the deceased is in heaven because they were baptized as an infant, even if they had no faith at all. Hallesby answers the needed questions: Is Infant Baptism Biblical?; Do all those baptized need to make a choice to repent and follow Christ?; Is Conversion needed for everyone, including those who were baptized?; Can the baptized go lost? Suggested Offering: \$10.00.

