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## The Indwelling of the Trinity in the Heart of the Believer

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## The Indwelling of the Trinity in the Heart of the Believer.

Essay read before the convention of the Missouri Synod in June, 1929.

(Conclusion of Part I.)

We now turn to the discussion of those effects of the divine indwelling that are worked in the Christian's life. That life is bound up in the one word *salvation*, and salvation comes through the illumination of the soul with spiritual *knowledge*. Christ's own anointing with the Holy Spirit, according to Isaiah, was to be an anointing with "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Is. 11, 2. Now, this same Spirit of wisdom and understanding and heavenly knowledge dwells in our hearts through faith. Where our Savior has spoken most directly regarding the indwelling of the Trinity, in the last half of John's 14th chapter, He says, on the one hand, that He and the Father will come unto the believer and make their abode with him. But He adds that by this indwelling the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, will be given to us, and "He shall teach you all things." All knowledge that we have of spiritual things, the understanding of God's loving counsel toward us, of Christ's work of redemption, of our reconciliation to God, of all those things which make us to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," are the result of the Spirit's inward teaching. When Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, says Paul, we are "filled with all the fulness of God" and thus are "able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height."

When once Thou visitest the heart,  
Then truth begins to shine,  
Then earthly vanities depart,  
Then kindles love divine.

"Love divine!" When the Spirit imparts to us heavenly knowledge and spiritual wisdom, we are endowed with more than simply with a knowledge of the head. The divine nature penetrates all our personality. It operates within the mainsprings of action, the human emotions and will, now sanctified unto spiritual services. Paul refers to the indwelling of Christ as "the power that worketh in us." Eph. 3, 20. A new dynamic begins to work. We are "carried along" by the Spirit of God. Rom. 8, 14. We are endowed with a new *life*, a life in Christ, a life together with Christ, Rom. 6, 8 ;



and life in its very essence is activity. Paul fairly exhausts the powers of language in order to show forth the virtual identity of our life with the life of Christ. Speaking to the Galatians, he says that by the Gospel which he preached to them "Christ is being formed within them." Now let us note the marvelous correspondence between Paul and the Apostle John on this subject. The first fruit of the Spirit, says Paul, Gal. 5, 22, is *love*. And according to John brotherly love is the very essence of the Christian's *life*. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." "Every one that loveth is born of God. God is Love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." And once more: "He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him and God in him." To which the words of the familiar hymn make response:—

O grant that nothing in my soul  
 May dwell but Thy pure *love* alone;  
 O may Thy love possess me whole,  
 My Joy, my Treasure, and my Crown!  
 Strange flames far from my heart remove;  
 My every act, word, thought, be love!

Accordingly, then, far from being a mere dogma of the Church, though a lofty one, the doctrine of the indwelling of the Holy Trinity is related to the every-day, the week-day, life of the Christian. To give only a single instance. In his First Letter to the Corinthians, Paul warns his readers against the seductiveness of that heathen immorality for which their city was famous, yes, infamous. "Flee fornication!" And how does he enforce this admonition? Reminding the believers that by defilement of the body through an immoral life they become guilty of a most horrible inconsistency, he exclaims: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? . . . He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." With this clear reference to the indwelling of the Holy Trinity, Paul quenches the flame of carnal lust and by this very admonition lifts his readers above the temptations that surrounded them. That is one of the practical applications of the doctrine of the mystic union. It is brought down, so to say, out of the region of theology and made a principle of life and, in the instances quoted, a motive for social and personal purity.

Still He comes within us,  
 Still His voice would win us  
 From the sins that hurt us,  
 Would to Truth convert us.



**The union of the believer with God is the realization of eternal life. Even while the Christian still dwells in the midst of *suffering* and persecution, he can sing: —**

Jesus, the very thought of Thee  
With sweetness fills the breast.

Hence, all fears and sadness!  
For the Lord of gladness,  
Jesus, enters in.

It is the Spirit of prayer that cries from his heart, "Abba, Father." Rom. 8, 15; Gal. 4, 6. For Paul says distinctly, if we can call God a heavenly Father, it is because God "hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts." In the depths of afflictions, when the Christian knows neither how to pray nor what to pray for, the Spirit Himself intercedes for him by crying with unutterable groanings to God from out of the heart of the believer. And because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of joy, the Christian is truly happy. His religion is a religion of joy. It is this experience of happiness of which Paul reminds the Galatians: "How happy were you!" And is it not strange that both the Biblical Hebrew and Greek have more words meaning joy or happiness than any other languages?

When Christ dwells in the heart by faith, Eph. 3, 17, Christians are *enabled to do the impossible*. It was these impossibilities that were performed by the early Christians that so deeply impressed the heathen world. Impossibility No. 1: *to rejoice in sufferings*. What can seem more absurd to human reason than that? The whole philosophy of the age was tending towards one end and purpose — to escape suffering, by suicide, if necessary, but at all costs to avoid suffering. The Christian religion came and told its adherents that suffering would necessarily be their lot. The sufferings of Christ were to abound in their bodies. 2 Cor. 1, 5. But at the same time the apostles called upon their readers to rejoice in suffering. What an example of this was not Paul himself! All his letters are suffused with a heavenly calm, the peace that passeth all understanding, and the joy of a conqueror with Christ. There are no more cheerful documents in the world than the letters of St. Paul. They overflow with happiness. For the ancient world to see happy people was a new experience. It was a hard and terrible age, a loveless age. People were filled with a gloomy dread of evil spirits. It was an age when might made right and when no man's life was secure. And here were the Christians bearing every evidence of happiness, even the common laborers and the slaves. Moreover, they rejoiced even in suffering. It was this



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 demonstration of divine power in the martyrs that made them the seed of the Church. Thus did the Christians make full proof of the indwelling of the Spirit. They recognized this indwelling as a promise of their resurrection. Rom. 8, 11. "Christ in them," was "the hope of glory." Col. 1, 27. Hence, since their life was so bound up with that of Jesus Christ that they were able to say with Paul, Phil. 1, 21, that "to live is Christ," therefore they could also add that "to die is gain." To rejoice in sufferings, even in persecution and death, that is the first of the impossibilities that were realized through the indwelling of God's Spirit, and it is being realized to-day. There are no more happy people on earth than the Christians. None others can bear affliction patiently and bear it with a spirit filled with gratitude. Only they have learned the secret of being happy when the tide of fortune has turned against them, when they are betrayed by friends, when they are afflicted with disease and the debility of old age; only of them can it be said that their joy is never so perfect as at the approach of death.

There is a second ability found only in Christians by which that is proclaimed which to natural man is a sheer impossibility. "*Love your enemies*," said the Savior. And the letters of the New Testament reecho the admonition: "Charity envieth not, beareth all things, hopeth all things"; "Recompense to no man evil for evil"; "If thine enemy hunger, feed him"; "Overcome evil with good." 1 Cor. 13; Rom. 12. Possessing the spirit of Christ, Christians are able to overcome the natural feelings of resentment under insult, of vengeance under injury, and are able to do good to them that hate them, to bless those who persecute them. When you have once met a believer who is scorned and slandered and have found in him the evidences of forgiving love in the face of such persecution, you have found something grander and more beautiful than all that human hand and brain have ever wrought and devised, you have looked, as it were, through a window into the temple of God. All the achievements of humanity are trivial compared with the reborn soul which is able to love personal enemies, help them, and pray for them. Here is a work truly divine.

When Christianity was first proclaimed to the world by Christ's messengers, it had to meet three principles that were regarded as the embodiment of wisdom. Socrates had taught that the key to all knowledge was contained in the command "Know thyself." The Stoics had proclaimed as the source of all power over men the principle of self-mastery — "Control thyself." Most popular of



all were the followers of Epicure, who prescribed the easy maxim "Enjoy thyself." Contesting these principles, the boastful pride of knowledge and the love of power and of pleasure, Christianity came with the demand, incomprehensible and to natural man impossible, "*Deny thyself.*" From that day to this it has been the principle of Christian conduct. Wherever the Spirit of Christ dwells in the heart, there is the "mind which was also in Christ Jesus, who made Himself of no reputation, but humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Phil. 2, 8. With Paul the believer rejoices in being "offered upon the sacrifice and service of the faith," v. 17. This is the very heart of the principle of Christian stewardship. Self-denial, self-sacrifice, is what our faith demands of us to-day. And the evidence of that Spirit of self-denial is not wanting among us. It was that spirit which caused the founders of our Synod to emigrate to Perry County, Mo., and to the valley of the Saginaw; which caused them to rear out of their poverty the first American churches, schools, and colleges in which sound Lutheranism was preached and taught; which caused thousands of their sons to enter the ranks of the ministry and to suffer hardships and privations on the frontiers of civilization; which is prompting our missionaries to-day to labor at scant wages at home and in foreign fields; which is living in our consecrated laity when it sustains the missions, the colleges and seminaries, the orphanages and hospices, the hospitals and old people's homes, scattered over the entire territory between the Atlantic and the Pacific, between the Arctic Circle and the Rio Grande, in Germany, in Argentina and Brazil, in China and India. It is by an appeal to the spirit of sacrifice which the Word enkindles in the heart that we depend for the continuation of the costly and far-flung work of ours. In this sense do we say that all we do for the kingdom of God is not our own work, but the work of the indwelling Spirit.

Thus we have learned that through the indwelling of the Holy Trinity in the heart of the believer there is a vital principle at work. Christ's Spirit lives and operates in the regenerate. The regenerate, endowed with the impulse of a new life, lives and labors in Christ. As Luther says: "This is the high art and experience of faith that on the one hand we are in Christ and have been saved from sin and death through His righteousness and life; on the other hand, that He is in us, speaks through us, and is active in those things which we do as members of His kingdom."



II.

Fling wide the portals of your heart;  
Make it a temple set apart  
From earthly use for heaven's employ,  
Adorned with prayer and love and joy;  
So shall your Sovereign enter in  
And new and nobler life begin.

The union of God with the believer has a twofold aspect. On the one hand, it is the active and constant coming of Christ to His saints. On the other hand, viewed from the standpoint of the believer, it is the new life controlled by the principle of love. It cannot be otherwise. The believer has been regenerated through the infinite mercies of God, divine love having transferred him from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light; and when this has been accomplished, the believer, through the necessity of his new relation to God, cannot otherwise than love Him who has blessed him with such an abounding wealth of spiritual blessings. To quote Luther once more: "Faith is the gift of divine grace. As such, however, faith is a mighty and active thing, renewing man and regenerating him, so that his entire mode and essence are changed. Now he cannot otherwise than do good without ceasing. As the tree by its very nature brings forth fruit, so good works by necessity follow upon faith. And as the tree does not require a command to bring forth fruit, even so the believer without compulsion, spontaneously, does good works. It is in the nature of man to sleep, eat, drink, hear, speak, walk, etc. It is in the nature of a Christian to lead a pious life, since the Holy Spirit enkindles in his heart a love of all that is good. The sun needs no command to shine; the water needs no command to flow; the fire needs no command to burn; 2 and 3 are 5 without outward compulsion; and so by his very nature the Christian is what he is."

Now, all the promises of God in Him are yea and in Him Amen, who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. 2 Cor. 1, 20. 22. The earnest, or guaranty, of the Spirit is the Holy Spirit Himself. It is He that makes all the promises of God an eternal, unmodified affirmation, a certainty, an Amen which says regarding every element of faith: "This is most certainly true." Where the Spirit of God does not dwell in the heart, there is uncertainty, doubt, and skepticism. Where it reigns, there is an inward assurance, that assurance which is the great principle of *Protestantism*.

Protestantism has made religion a matter of the individual and



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 not of the group. The kingdom of God is within you. Each individual soul stands in direct relation to its Maker and Redeemer. Every government by ecclesiastical authority is thereby made impossible. It was the clear recognition of man's individual relation to God and of the responsibility which follows out of that relation that gave birth to the Protestant Church.

This is the quadricentennial of the birth of Protestantism. During the *Reichstag* of Spires, in 1529, the Catholic majority ruthlessly broke the agreement of 1526 which permitted the citizens of every state to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. The concession had been wrested from Emperor Charles V by political necessity, since he was at war with the Pope and the Turk and needed the support of the Lutheran princes. When he had crushed his enemies, the emperor forgot his promise or remembered that it was not necessary to keep faith with heretics and now demanded that the Lutheran religion be destroyed and that the Catholic religion be restored as the only religion of the whole German Empire. Out of this great trial the Lutheran confessors came forth victorious. What, should they forget their Master's command: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature"? If one of the states of the empire desired some day to follow their example and be reformed, should they take away its power of doing so? Having themselves entered the kingdom of heaven, should they shut the door after them? No; rather endure everything, sacrifice everything, even their states, their crowns, and their lives. "Let us reject this decree," said the princes. "In matters of conscience the majority has no power." They resolved to appeal from the resolutions of the diet to the Word of God and from the Emperor Charles to Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. A declaration was drawn up to that effect, and this was the famous protest that henceforward gave the name of "Protestant" to the renovated Church.

"In matters of conscience the majority has no power." To such extent as we let our congregational and synodical life conform to this principle, we are truly Protestant. In matters which have been determined by the Word of God, majorities do not count, whether in the congregation, the synodical District, or our Synod as a whole. When at the Diet of Augsburg, Charles V by his imperial authority commanded Landgrave Philip of Hesse to march in a Roman procession, the Landgrave gave that reply for which, with all his faults, we shall love him as a true Protestant. His



reply was: "Your Majesty's conscience has no right to command my own."

Our Church and Synod is founded on the proposition that neither ecclesiastical officers nor convention majorities can dictate to us in those matters which concern conscience.

It is true that this principle, like every evangelical principle, can be abused. It has been abused in our own church-body. It has been construed to mean that the resolutions of a Synod are no more than a suggestion of possible lines of action. Cooperation has sometimes been regarded as entirely optional, thus destroying one of the great purposes for which our congregations have been united in a synod, namely, to do by cooperation those things which are the duty of every Christian, but which can be accomplished only when Christians join hands for the tasks which they have in common. True, the Synod is not, like the local church, an institution founded by Christ Himself. But it is true what the sainted Dr. Koren said twenty-four years ago at a meeting of the Norwegian Synod. By what other means, that great churchman asked, can we obey the apostolic command that we should "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"? And how shall that Spirit in whom we are united perform through us that calling and gathering of the holy Christian Church on earth unless we possess such Christian unanimity of purpose, such willingness to yield to others, that like-mindedness which should be the guiding principle of our church-life? Rom. 15. For this reason, says Paul, so many different gifts have been given to us, that we may function as members that have each its own office. "Be of the same mind one toward another," admonishes the same holy apostle. Stubborn insistence upon one's own preferences is not a fruit of the Spirit. Yielding to the wishes of the majority is a high Christian duty when the undertakings for the advancement of God's kingdom are at stake.

But while this is true, while congregations should heartily cooperate with sister congregations, Synod has no authority where matters of conscience are involved. No majority in our Church can compel a minority to do that which is contrary to the will of God. And also this is true: No majority can withhold from a minority, whether in Synod or congregation, those things in which they are partakers through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is well that we emphasize the "Evangelical" in our denomination name "Evangelical Lutheran." Evangelical Church means Gospel Church; and where the Gospel is, there is "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." This was in the mind of Luther when



he would sometimes sign his letters *With the free Believer*. Hence the protest of our Lutheran Confessions against any government of the Church by council, by hierarchy, by majorities. Luther at Worms made his stand against the all but unanimous opposition of Church and State when he said that it is not safe nor right to act contrary to conscience. At Spire, and again at Augsburg, it was against overwhelming majorities that the fathers of our Church asserted the same supremacy of conscience. And we remember that through much tribulation and bitter heartache the early fathers of our own Synod learned the meaning of a truly free Church, free congregations, free Christians.

Yet the liberty which we have as Christians through the indwelling of Christ's free Spirit is a privilege that imposes certain obligations, foremost among these being the duty of *confession*. Not as if the Christian believer confesses his faith more or less in a spirit of submission to a duty, acting under constraint. When Peter and John were before the council of the Jews, they said: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." Acts 4, 19. That was the supremacy of conscience. But they continued: "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard," v. 20. That was the duty of confession. "We cannot but speak by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us," says Paul writing to Timothy, 2 Tim. 1, 14. We "*keep* that good thing which was committed unto us." Confession, far from being an act of outward or inward compulsion, is the effect of the Word that is nigh unto us, even in our mouth and in our heart, that cannot otherwise than seek utterance, remembering the blessed promise: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. 10, 9. "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the *doctrine* of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." 2 John 9.

Not only in obedience to conscience, but as a manifestation of their innermost life, the early Christians *confessed* their faith even in the face of most relentless persecution. With exile and death threatening them, the fathers of our Church in Reformation days announced their determination to stand by that great confession of faith which is called the Augustana. When that noble Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt signed the Augsburg Confession, he said: "I would rather quit the country of my fathers, staff in hand, rather gain my bread by cleaning the shoes of the foreigner, than



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 receive any other doctrine than that which is contained in this Confession." The Elector of Saxony spoke these memorable words: "I am resolved to do what is right, without troubling myself about my crown. I desire to confess the Lord. My electoral hat and my ermine are not so precious to me as the Cross of Jesus Christ. I shall leave on earth these marks of my greatness; but my Master's Cross will accompany me to heaven."

Luther on Coburg during those critical days of 1530 is the greatest example of the Spirit-given courage of a true confessor since the time of the apostles. Out of the depths of a faith bound to the Word of God alone, out of the strength of a conscience bound by no human authority whatever, he preached and sang, warned, comforted, — consumed with zeal for the honor of the Lord and of the Lord's house. When the confession of the evangelical princes had been victoriously maintained at Augsburg, he wrote: "Though our enemies should have around them, beside them, with them, not only that puissant Roman Emperor Charles, but still more the emperor of the Turks and his Mahomet, they could not intimidate, they could not frighten me. It is I who, in the strength of God, am resolved to frighten and overthrow them. They shall yield to me, they shall fall, and I shall remain upright."

This is what we mean when we say that we are *Evangelical* Lutherans. As many of us as are members of the Lutheran Church have confessed before many witnesses that we shall remain true to this faith and "rather suffer all things, even death, than fall away from it." We were able to do that, and to maintain that confession in our lives, through the indwelling Spirit of God, in token of which, as the minister laid his hands upon us in the form of confirmation, he pronounced the words: "God give you the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Is. 11, 2.

Lutheranism is evangelical because it is based on the confession of the Gospel. Its adherence to the great fundamentals of Christian belief gives our Church the right to be called "Christian." In this sense we are fundamentalists. In this sense we proclaim ourselves one of the evangelical denominations. In this sense we are members of the great Protestant branch of the Church Visible. But we are not Protestants, Evangelicals, Fundamentalists, simply. We are Lutherans. What does that imply? We are here reminded of two statements of Dr. Martin Luther that appear to contradict each other. At one time he wrote that he wanted no man to call his Church "Lutheran." It was not founded on Martin Luther.



He preferred the name "Evangelical Church," "Gospel Church." On the other hand, and in another connection, he as definitely declared that those who are ashamed of the name "Lutheran" deny the truth of Jesus Christ, since it was only and exclusively the doctrine of Christ and His apostles that he, Luther, had proclaimed. And so we say that, whereas justification by faith alone is the great formal principle of the Reformation and of Lutheranism, so the principle *sola Scriptura*, the Scriptures alone, is its great twin star, the material principle of our theology and belief.

Far from being an outward subscription only to the doctrine of the infallibility of Scripture, far from being a merely intellectual assent to the doctrine that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, this material principle of our faith involves an inward attitude, a hearty assent, a profound conviction, a Spirit-born assurance, that the Bible is the Word of God. Some of the clearest statements of our Lord concerning the indwelling of the Trinity have a bearing upon this point. If a man love Me, *he will keep My Word*, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make Our abode with him." John 14, 23. And our Lord's teaching is reechoed in the writings of the beloved apostle: "Whoso keepeth His Word, in him, verily, is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in Him." 1 John 2, 5.

When the Augsburg Confession had been read by that noble layman whose name ought to be a household word in every Lutheran family, Chancellor Beyer, the eyes even of some of the sternest opponents of Luther caught a glimpse of truth. Duke William of Bavaria immediately addressed to Dr. Eck this pointed question: "Can you refute this doctrine?" Eck answered: "With the Church Fathers I can, but not with the Scriptures." "Ah," the reply was, "I am to conclude, then, that the Lutherans are in the Scriptures and we outside!"

Unless we would become traitors to Protestantism, to Lutheranism, let our single purpose in all that we do and say also at this convention conform to the principle: "The Lutherans are in the Scriptures."

In those days it was the authority of the Roman Pontiff and of the church councils that disputed the seat of authority in the Church with the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. That same conflict endures to the present time, since the Roman Church to this day finds its principle of authority not in the Scriptures alone or primarily, but in the utterances of an "infallible"



Pope. But the Roman Church has received some strange auxiliaries in its war against the *sola Scriptura*. A great wave of unbelief has invaded the body of Christianity and is now tearing at its vitals — Rationalism, also called Modernism. In the place of an inspired Bible, Modernism, with its helpmeet, the higher criticism, has left us only a "record of religious experience" as preserved by a Semitic tribe which inhabited the land of Canaan some two thousand years ago. Throughout, it is an attitude of denial: denial that Moses wrote the five books that bear his name; denial that David wrote the Psalms; denial that Isaiah and Daniel wrote the books which bear that title; denial that the New Testament writings give a truthful account of our Lord's life, death, and resurrection; denial that the canon of the Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures is the Word of God. And they call that theology which is based upon an infallible Bible a static theology, a reactionary form of religion, unfitted for this modern life.

What shall we say to these inferences and accusations?

Bidding defiance to the unbelief and radicalism that speaks from such utterances, we hold fast the conviction, of which we have the seal through the indwelling Spirit of God, that the Scriptures are throughout the work of the Holy Ghost and are the sole norm of Christian life and doctrine. A static theology? A reactionary form of religion? A fossilized Church? Words more inappropriate could not be found to characterize our faith and Church though you searched an unabridged dictionary for a year and a day. Static? There is no more dynamic power, no greater reservoir of spiritual energy, than the belief in an inspired Bible. Have we not heard our Savior's own assurance that, if we keep His words, the Father and Son will come to us and make their abode with us? Has not His holy apostle said that we know that we are *in Him* if we keep His Word? And is not the Word of God "quicker and more powerful than any two-edged sword"? Reactionary sixteenth-century theology? What is it but the first-century theology, the doctrine of Jesus Christ, "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," of which our Lord Himself has said "heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall never pass away"? Let those testify who through diligent use of the means of grace permit this power of God unto salvation to work upon their hearts; whose mind has become illuminated; whose emotions have become sanctified; whose hands and feet have become organs of the Holy Spirit through that Word of God which has made their heart a dwelling-place of the Holy Trinity. As certain as God is a God of ceaseless action, the



life that has been engendered by Him cannot otherwise than endow man with the new powers of will and purpose and make him active in every good work. As we sing in our church services:—

Enlarge my heart to make Thee room;  
Enter and in me ever stay.  
The crooked then shall straight become;  
The darkness shall be lost in day.  
Redeemer, come! I open wide  
My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide!  
Let me Thy inner presence feel,  
Thy grace and love in me reveal.

“Ye are the temple of the living God.” Note another implication of that glorious doctrine. A temple, not a suburban subdivision with scattered cottages. The temple which forms the means of comparison with one great stately building, unified in plan, serving a single purpose, and pointing to *the unity of the Christian Church*. Similarly we are called the body of Christ,—“the Church, which is His body,”—of which we are indeed members, but members that are a unity, an organism. “Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said: I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” Where does Paul quote this Old Testament promise? In the same passage in which he warns the Corinthians and, through them, us all: “Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers.” 2 Cor. 6, 14—16. And thus we say that the unity of faith involves a separation, as Paul continues, v. 17: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”

Therefore, let no one be concerned about the *isolation* of our Church. We are isolated not as Esau was, whose sword was against every man and every man’s against him, but as Israel was when it said, replying to Joshua: “God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods. We will also serve the Lord, for He is our God.” They made this covenant, knowing fully that it meant separation in heart and mind, in body and substance, from the unbelieving Canaanites. “There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee,” was the promise which had been given to Joshua and his people when they crossed Jordan. Josh. 1, 5. It is the promise of which every believer has the seal of the Spirit in his heart; it is the pledge given to the Church that observes all the commands of its Lord, turning not



from it to the right hand or to the left. "Then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and thou shalt have good success." Is not the growth and prosperity of our Church a visible testimony to the faithfulness of our Lord? Are we not able to say to-day as Joshua told the children of Israel at the close of his life: "Ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord, your God, spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof"? Josh. 23, 14.

Let us therefore not consider it a misfortune that the same Spirit who has given us unity of the faith also causes us to remain separate from all who turn, some to the right hand and some to the left, from the teachings of our Lord and His apostles. Such separation is not burdensome to the Christian. As surely as the will of God is an active principle through the Word dwelling in his heart, he shrinks from becoming conformed to this world.

For my heart, which He hath filled,  
Ever cries: Lord, as Thou wilt.

"And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you." John 14, 16. 17. In connection with this promise the Lord assures us of the most intimate communion and union of His Spirit with the believer: "Verily, verily, I say unto you; He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto My Father." Jesus offers a new reason for consolation and now includes in His promise, not only the Eleven, but the believers of all ages, also us. Whoever believes in Jesus will do *the works* that Jesus did — works of grace and mercy, of forgiving love, of overcoming evil with good. Yes, when Jesus would go to the Father (enter into His state of exaltation, making use of His full divine power), He would enable His believers to do even greater works. The Gospel would then be preached to all the world, kingdoms would fall down before its message, the cruelty and vice of savage tribes would be overcome, help would be extended to the sick, the blind, the deaf, the slaves, the outcasts of society, through the influence of Christianity. Have we not evidence of all this in the far-flung operations of our Church?

In order to do the work of the Lord, we are convened as a Delegate Synod. However, that work by necessity is the work of



individuals. We as a convention can receive reports, pass resolutions, and elect officers. But the work of this body is not done through the officers or through the representatives of our congregations, but through the congregations which have sent them. No; it is not done by the congregations, but by the individuals who are members of these. Not by power of organization, not by programs and by system, but by the strength which our individual Christians draw from their union with God by faith, shall these works be done. "Now, there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." 1 Cor. 12, 4—6. God working in us in Synod and congregation — thus we shall become builders together with God, soldiers in the spiritual army of Christ, or, as described in the beautiful saying of John, Rev. 1, 9, "brothers and companions in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."

Gird each one with the Spirit's Sword,  
The sword of Thine own deathless Word,  
And make them conquerors, conquering Lord,  
Where Thou Thyself wilt come.

Raise up, O Lord the Holy Ghost,  
From this broad land a mighty host,  
Their war-ery, "We will seek the lost  
Where Thou, O Christ, wilt come!"

## Marburg: Der Sieg des Schriftprinzips.<sup>1)</sup>

Was einst zu Marburg geschah, ist den Vertretern von „wohl fünfzig verschiedenen Gruppen und Formen des Protestantismus“, die im Oktober vergangenen Jahres zu Marburg eine Gedächtnisfeier des Religionsgesprächs abhielten, nicht zum Bewußtsein gekommen. Sonst wären sie, Lutheraner und Reformierte, Methodist und Presbyterianer, Konserervative und Liberale, Europäer und Amerikaner, nicht zusammengekommen. Sie konnten höchstens des Propheten Grab schmücken.

1) Die folgenden Ausführungen geben teils in verkürzter, teils in erweiterter Form ein Referat wieder, das der Pastoralkonferenz des Westlichen Distrikts im Oktober 1929 vorlag und zum Teil besprochen wurde. — Über das Marburger Religionsgespräch (1.—4. Oktober 1529) liegen ausführlichere Relationen und kürzere briefliche Mitteilungen von Teilnehmern vor. Die Relationen von Hedio, Collin, Pfander, Brenz, dem lutherischen Anonymus nebst einigen andern sind mitgeteilt in der Weimarer Ausgabe von Luthers Werken, 80, III, 110 ff., ein Teil der brieflichen Mitteilungen von Luther und andern in der St. A. Ausg. 17, 1943 ff.