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Foreword: Can the Lutheran Bodies of America Get Together?

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Foreword.

Can the Lutheran Bodies of America Get Together?

The *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* of August, 1932, in reviewing the resolutions of the Missouri Synod in its meeting at Milwaukee in June, remarks: "*Die noch vor F. Piepers Tod veroeffentlichten Thesen ueber Missouris Lehrstellung wurden offiziell angenommen, und damit ist die Arbeit des Intersynodalen Komitees begraben.*" (Page 500.)

A layman writes to the *Lutheran* of October 6, 1932: "Have enjoyed the series of four articles on 'Lutheran Union' as presented from four different viewpoints. However, your editorial remarks concerning the above were quite disappointing to me in so far as you do not seem to like 'free conferences.' How will we Lutherans ever get together if we refuse to confer with one another? Surely a free conference is a good beginning. Differences will crop out of course, but must be honestly faced by all. We Lutherans cannot unite by ignoring real differences. A mere church-government union will not suffice. It might be best if all parties that differ would confer and draw up a statement of faith based on the Bible in harmony with the accepted Confessions, and the same could eventually be used as a working basis for future 'Lutheran unity' and then 'Lutheran union.'"

All of which causes us to ask the question at the head of this article: "Can the Lutheran Bodies of America Get Together?"

Let it be stated at once that the prospects seem to be rather favorable, if one may be guided by recent public and semipublic utterances in resolutions of organizations and in statements made by representative men upon occasions which were regarded as confessional demonstrations.

There must, of course, be a common and solid confessional basis. The Word of God, inerrant and infallible in its entirety and in all its parts, must be regarded as the *norma normans*, the one and only

source of doctrine and norm of life. The writings of the Lutheran Church as contained in the Book of Concord and as now accepted or recognized by all the Lutheran bodies of America must be regarded as the *norma normata* in all their doctrinal statements and expositions. Without this common basis there can be no thought of common doctrinal thinking and therefore not of doctrinal unity. And let it be understood at once that *all* the doctrines of the Bible must be considered as essential in this platform, since the difference between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines is one merely of degree. It has been correctly stated by Stump (*The Christian Faith*, 18): "A distinction has sometimes been drawn between fundamental and non-fundamental articles of faith. But when the effort is made to point out which doctrines are fundamental and which are not, a difficulty arises. The fact is that, while some doctrines are more necessary to salvation than others, no doctrines taught in God's Word dare to be regarded as of no real consequence; and furthermore many doctrines which seem at first glance to be non-fundamental are found, when carried to their logical conclusions, to bear largely on doctrines which are unmistakably fundamental." It has well been said that all the doctrines of the Bible together form a chain and that, if one link of the chain is broken, the entire chain is severed. — But while this confessional basis *must* be maintained and insisted upon, we are just as emphatic in subscribing the words of the Augustana: "And to the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies *instituted by men*, should be everywhere alike." (Art. VII, "Of the Church." Cp. Art. XV, "Of Ecclesiastical Usages.")

The question now arises, if we may be permitted to borrow a term from the world of sports: *How do the various Lutheran bodies of America line up*, chiefly with regard to those Scriptural doctrines which have been in controversy at one time or other? Let us follow the divisions of doctrinal theology as commonly accepted in order to see just where the difficulties lie and whether any progress has been made in removing misunderstandings and false conceptions.

Bibliology. — Here the various confessions and public declarations *in themselves* seem to be adequate. For example, the General Synod, numerically the largest of the bodies now constituting the United Lutheran Church of America, stated in its Richmond Resolutions: "Resolved, That we herewith declare our adherence to the statement 'The Bible is the Word of God' and reject the error implied in the statement 'The Bible contains the Word of God.'" (Neve, *A Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America*, 453.) This was in 1909. Four years later, at Atchison, Kans., it was reported that the constitution of the body had been changed and accepted by the

constituent synods, in agreement with the Richmond Resolutions, so that Article II, on the Doctrinal Basis, read: "With the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Fathers, the General Synod receives and holds the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practise; and it receives and holds the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the faith and doctrine of our Church as founded upon that Word." (Neve, *Op. cit.*, 184.) The former Ohio Synod very emphatically stated its position with regard to the doctrine of inspiration in the resolutions of 1926: "The Synod accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired and inerrant Word of God and the only source, norm, and guide of faith and life," even opposing the change as suggested by the delegate of the former Iowa Synod, which read: "The Synod accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the inerrant and only source, norm, and guide of faith and life." (*Report*, 246 ff.) This was in agreement with the Minneapolis Theses of 1925, as drawn up by representatives of the Iowa, Ohio, and Buffalo synods and the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, which stated: "The synods signatory to these Articles of Agreement accept without exception all the canonical books of the Old and the New Testament, as a whole and in all their parts, as the divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant Word of God and submit to this as the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life." (*Theol. Monthly*, VII, 112.) The confession of inerrancy was placed in the appendix of the Constitution of the American Lutheran Church, while the constitution proper has the reading: "The Synod accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the inerrant and only source, norm, and guide of faith and life." But it may be assumed, so far as the constituent bodies forming the American Lutheran Church are concerned, that they stand unequivocally for the inerrancy of Scripture. The *Kirchenblatt* of September 10, 1932, states: "*Damit kommen wir nun zu dem eigentlichen Geheimnis der Bibel, naemlich zu dem Geheimnis ihres Ursprungs, wir meinen zu ihrer Inspiration. . . . Dabei ist es auch wahr, dass Gott durch diese Maenner geredet hat und dass sie, solange sie inspiriert waren, nur Gottes Wort redeten, frei von allem Irrtum und aller Truebung.*" And the *Pastor's Monthly* of September, 1932, says, in an article on "The Divine Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures": "If there is no verbal inspiration, then we can never be sure that we have God's revelation. . . . Neither the matter nor the form of God's revelation is of human origin. God made use of human beings and of human language to give us a divine revelation, a revelation which as to form as well as substance is above human frailty. In a most eminent sense God is the Author of the

Holy Scriptures." With such statements coming from every part of the Lutheran Church, from practically every body, an agreement as to the platform should not be impossible.

However, it must be understood that no doubts, concessions, or ambiguous statements may be permitted, as though, for example, the inerrancy of Holy Scripture were a mere theological deduction, not a clear doctrine of the Bible itself, or that the absolute inspiration and the verbal inerrancy of the Bible in all its parts were a doctrine peculiar to the later dogmaticians, and that one cannot hold every single statement of the Bible to be literally true, or that Scripture merely *contains* the revelation of God to men, or that "the words of the Bible are inspired words because they are the words of inspired men," or that "the inspiration was confined to matters of religion and that on scientific matters the holy writers neither knew nor professed to know more than other men of their day." Such statements are either outright erroneous or misleading or inadequate, for which reason a God-pleasing unity would demand that they be eliminated from the spoken and the written expressions within the Lutheran Church.¹⁾

Theology.—In this division of Christian doctrine the various Lutheran bodies show a most commendable unity, in keeping with the Ecumenical Creeds, both the Trinity and the Triunity being respected as well as the full deity of every Person of the Godhead. However, it certainly disturbs the analogy of faith as well as the balance of Scriptures if one "does not find the doctrine of the Trinity revealed in the Old Testament," since the second part of the Book of Isaiah repeatedly distinguishes three Persons of the Godhead and ascribes personality and activity to every one of them. In this connection it should also be noted that the practise of dealing with dissenters in the fundamental doctrines of this section of Bible truth should be more consistent, since even according to the *Symbolum Quicunque* a person not in agreement with the doctrine of the Trinity cannot be saved.

Anthropology and Cosmology.—Here the unanimous confession of the Lutheran Church demands the belief in a creation *ex nihilo*, which certainly excludes both an atheistic and a theistic evolution. Writers in practically every part of the Lutheran Church of America have denounced the vagaries of materialism and of the theory of evolution. (Cp. books by Graebner, Gruber, Keyser, Schoeler, etc.) But it would seem that an unequivocal position concerning this doctrine would also eliminate statements declaring that "the writer of Genesis lacked such a knowledge of the vastness of the universe and

1) Our position is stated in CONCORDIA THEOL. MONTHLY, I, 21 ff. 107 ff.; II, 190. 655 ff. 754 ff.; III, 838 ff.; *Lehre und Wehre*, 1902, 129 ff.

of the nature of chemical and geological processes as the modern man possesses." (We have in mind, of course, the statements contained in the inspired account.) If the omniscient and eternal God inspired the Book of Genesis, He was possessed of a vastly greater amount of information than that exhibited by all the proponents of the theory of evolution taken together.²⁾

Christology.—With regard to the doctrine of the person of Christ there seems to exist complete unanimity, both in confession (virgin birth, deity) and in practise. Apparently none of the Lutheran bodies of America are now tolerating in their midst any open denial of these truths.

Soteriology.—With reference to the doctrine of the office of Christ the confessional basis as well as the actual confession of every Lutheran church-body in America seems to be in full harmony with Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. The strange aberration of the teaching of a *kenosis* in the humiliation of Christ has found no acceptance in the Lutheran Church in America, although it may have influenced some individuals for a time. However, their teaching was not tolerated, at least not officially. The same is true with regard to the active obedience of the Savior, which is denied in some parts of the Church. With the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions both the active and the passive obedience of Christ in His work of atonement are generally taught among Lutherans. Concerning Christ's descent into hell there seems to be some haziness, since the *κηρύσσειν* of 1 Pet. 3, 19 is taken to be an announcement that the "dealings of God with Old Testament believers and unbelievers would be completely vindicated." Others seem to hold the view expressed by some of the older Lutheran teachers, namely, that the descent of Christ into hell was according to His soul only. An adjustment concerning these doctrines should not offer unusual difficulties if the various proof-texts are carefully examined.³⁾

Pneumatology.—The doctrines treated under this category may be among the most difficult to adjust, for they include in particular conversion and election. With regard to both points both Holy Writ and the Lutheran Confessions are certainly clear and comprehensive enough. With regard to conversion this attitude is generally reflected in recent confessional statements of the Lutheran bodies in this country. As stated in the *Report* of the Ohio Synod of 1920, the National Lutheran Council in regard to conversion adopted the statement: "Conversion, as the word is commonly used in our Lutheran

2) Our position is stated in the writings referred to above; also *Lehre und Wehre*, October, 1919; *Theol. Monthly*, February, 1924.

3) Our position is stated in *CONCORDIA THEOL. MONTHLY*, I, 810. 888; II, 244; III, 826 ff.

Confessions, comprises contrition and faith, produced by the Law and the Gospel. If a man is not converted, the responsibility and guilt fall on him, because he, in spite of God's all-sufficient grace through the call, would not, according to the words of Christ in Matt. 23, 37." (P. 132 ff.) Recent utterances very decidedly favor the understanding that the synergism of both Melancthon and of Latermann have been rejected. "Since conversion begins with a sinner who is both unwilling and unable to believe and ends with the same sinner both willing and able to believe and actually doing so, it is clear that the transformation is one which must be ascribed entirely to the working of the Holy Spirit and not to any natural powers of man. . . . We reject . . . the synergistic position, which holds that the Holy Ghost must begin the work of conversion, but that then man is able by his own powers to complete it. The fact is that, from beginning to end, conversion is due to the agency and activity of the Holy Spirit, and not at all to any natural powers of man. There is indeed a certain activity of man in the process, since it is an ethical one; but that activity is produced by the Holy Spirit and is exercised by means of powers which the Holy Spirit has bestowed and not by means of any which are native or natural to man. Hence the entire work of conversion is to be ascribed to the Holy Spirit. . . . Regarded as a process culminating in contrition and faith, conversion is gradual. On the other hand, regarded as a transition from a state of unbelief to one of faith, it is instantaneous, inasmuch as there is a moment when the man ceases to be an unbeliever and has become a believer." (Stump, *The Christian Faith*, 257 f.) If this position is consistently and unequivocally held by all Lutheran bodies and teachers, with a complete denial of man's ability "to decide for salvation through new powers bestowed by God," also any and every *facultas se applicandi ad gratiam*, any *status intermedius* in which the *motus praeparatorii* are spoken of as a part of the spiritual enlightenment and ascribed to man, then these various bodies are in the way of being perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.⁴⁾

But it is right here that the greatest care will have to be exercised lest a false understanding of the doctrine of the eternal election of God become a pitfall which will once more precipitate men into the abyss of synergism. It is essential that every Lutheran church-body and every Lutheran theologian adhere firmly to the Bible and to the Formula of Concord. The Chicago Theses (A. L. C.) of March, 1919, referred to above, say of election: "The causes of election to salvation are the mercy of God and the most holy merit of

4) Our position is stated in CONCORDIA THEOL. MONTHLY, I, 561 ff. 818 ff.; II, 170 ff. 826 ff.

Christ; nothing in us on account of which God has elected us to eternal life. On the other hand, we reject all forms of Calvinism, which directly or indirectly would conflict with the order of salvation and would not give to all a full and equally great opportunity of salvation, which says that God would have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim. 2, 4." (*Loc. cit.*, 123 ff.)—So far, so good. But while the statement as it stands is Scriptural and important, it does not distinguish between God's will of Redemption, which pertains to all men, and His decree of Election, which pertains to the chosen only. And if we want to remain strictly with the Bible and the Formula of Concord, we are compelled to forsake the *intuitu fidei* of some of the Lutheran teachers. The notion of a consequent will of God, namely, one "consequent upon God's foreknowledge of those who will believe," leads to a hopeless confusion and invariably introduces synergistic elements. It causes statements like these: "In the last analysis, predestination is simply the eternal justification of the sinner for Christ's sake. . . . God foreknows that John Smith will enduringly believe and hence [?] elects, or predestinates, him to salvation." And again: "*Erst wird berufen; dann wird erwählt. Wuerde erst erwählt und dann berufen, dann koennte niemand mehr dem Worte Gottes trauen noch dem Eid des Sakraments glauben. . . . In ihm [Jesu] sind hernach alle erwählt, die nicht durch ihr Nein verhindern, dass aus ihrer Berufung die Erwählung wird.*" Such confusion is the result of not simply taking Scripture as it reads, of not saying with the Formula of Concord: "Since God has reserved this mystery for His wisdom and has revealed nothing to us concerning it in His Word, much less commanded us to investigate it with our thoughts, but has earnestly discouraged us therefrom, Rom. 11, 33 ff., we should not reason in our thoughts, draw conclusions, nor inquire curiously into these matters, but should adhere to His revealed Word, to which He points us." (*Conc. Trigl.*, 1081, § 55.)⁵⁾

Ecclesiology.—With regard to the doctrines of the Church and the ministry we have this interesting phenomenon, that only certain aspects or phases of the difficulties connected with their presentation are found in the Lutheran Confessions, chiefly in the definitions of the holy Christian Church (Augustana, Art. VII. VIII), of the ministry of the Word (Art. V), of ecclesiastical order (Art. XIV), of ecclesiastical usages (Art. XV), of ecclesiastical power (Art. XXVIII), with the respective parts in the Apology, and the treatise "Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope" appended to the Smalcald Articles. It is true that the doctrine of the Church and of the Christian ministry is contained in the Confessions, but chiefly with

5) Our position is stated in *CONCORDIA THEOL. MONTHLY*, III, 8 ff.

reference to conditions as they obtained at the time of their writing. The point of view is that of opposition to the hierarchy, and therefore it is necessary to study the principles contained in the arguments. In a similar way, the student of the dogmatists must constantly keep in mind the point of view of the state church, of consistories, and other evidences of a non-democratic polity if he would understand the principles involved. From this it follows that the safest course to follow is that of studying the principles laid down in the Lutheran Confessions in the light of the Word of God. The writings of Luther will also be of great value in this connection. It will soon appear that the word *ἐκκλησία*, if used of a visible organization, is consistently used of the congregation, as the unit of the so-called visible Church, that apostolic practise recognized the independent or autonomous character of the individual congregation, and that the admission to, and the dismissal from, the church was made a function of the individual congregation. Hence it is the members of the congregation who have charge of the ministerial office in their midst, whether we want to speak of a transfer of the office or not, and no larger body, or combination, of Christians has legislative or executive powers with respect to the local congregation. — A close adherence to these truths will eliminate such statements as the following: "The Synod has legislative, not merely advisory powers," or: "Let us get rid once for all of the unscriptural [?] idea that every congregation is complete in itself. The Church is not the arithmetical sum of a number of units; it is a unity in itself." Such expressions confuse the notions of the *una sancta* and the visible churches which bear the same name and tend to lead to hierarchical conceptions of church government, whether this be in the form of an episcopal government with executive powers, of a synodical organization with legislative functions, or of a bureaucracy with an administrative jurisdiction infringing upon God-given rights.⁶⁾

Eschatology. — With regard to the doctrines of this section most of the difficulties of the first decades of controversy seem to have been removed. The statement of the Augustana (Art. XVII) concerning the Jewish opinions "that before the resurrection of the dead the godly shall take possession of the kingdom of the world, the ungodly being everywhere suppressed" has succeeded in making enough of an impression to drive out all gross chiliasm and also many of its finer forms. There is good reason therefore for believing that a more careful study of the respective passages of Holy Scripture will eliminate also the finer conceptions of millennial glory, such as the

6) Our position is stated in CONCORDIA THEOL. MONTHLY, II, 886 ff.; III, 23 ff.; *Lehre und Wehre*, October, 1916; 1923, 297 ff. 360 ff.; 1925, 171 ff.

statement that "the truths of Christianity will become dominant and by reason of the government of Christ and the Church of the first-born the kingdom will be a kingdom of righteousness and justice," also that "the Jews shall be converted to Christ . . . , that the Jews as a whole shall have been turned from their unbelief to faith in Christ as the Messiah." And as for the Antichrist: While the chief proof-text is 2 Thess. 2, it must not be forgotten that additional features found in Daniel and in the Apocalypse very definitely connect the reign of Antichrist with the city of Rome. While the last-named doctrine is not a fundamental doctrine, it is a touchstone for Lutheran consciousness.⁷⁾

Practical Questions Based upon Doctrinal Considerations.— Having considered the doctrinal points which will have to be reviewed very carefully by the various Lutheran bodies if ultimate unity and union is to be the goal, we turn our attention to questions which are more in the domain of church practise, although also connected most closely with clear demands of Scripture.

There we encounter, first of all, the vexing problem of *unionism* itself, that is, the confederation or the merging of church-bodies without a basis of true spiritual unity. We find some very encouraging statements regarding the right position on this problem. In the *Report* of the former Ohio Synod for 1918 we read: "Much as an organic union is desired, we, in agreement with our worthy President, declare we can never enter into union with any Lutheran synod unless we agree in doctrine and practise, especially at this time, when the unionistic spirit is threatening to creep into our Lutheran Church." (P. 121.) In the Toledo Theses of the former Iowa Synod the statement is made: "Full agreement in all articles of faith constitutes the irremissible condition of church-fellowship. Persistent error in an article of faith must under all circumstances lead to separation. . . . Those who knowingly, obdurately, and persistently contradict the divine Word in any of its utterances whatsoever, thereby overthrow the organic foundation (of the faith), and are therefore to be excluded from church-fellowship." (Neve, *Loc. cit.*, 450.) The same stand is taken in the Minneapolis Theses of 1925: "Mutual recognition, altar- and pulpit-fellowship, and eventually co-operation in the strictly essential work of the Church, presupposes unanimity in the pure doctrines of the Gospel and in the confession of the same in word and deed. Where the establishment and maintenance of church-fellowship ignores present doctrinal differences or declares them a matter of indifference, there is unionism, pretense of a union which does not exist." (*Theol. Monthly*, VII, 113.) Dis-

7) Our position is stated in CONCORDIA THEOL. MONTHLY, II, 241 ff. 641 ff.; *Lehre und Wehre*, 1925, 237 ff.

regarding the somewhat unsatisfactory expression "in the strictly essential work of the Church," it surely is most encouraging to find the principles of the Word of God set forth so emphatically. If declarations of this kind, which are found in the reports of other Lutheran bodies also, are consistently followed, the outlook for an agreement in fundamentals, in fact, in every statement of Scripture, is very bright.⁸⁾

With regard to the evil and menace of *lodgery* the position of most Lutheran bodies of our country, at least in theory, is in accordance with the Word of God. In the theses adopted by the National Lutheran Council, as reported in the minutes of the Ohio Synod for 1920 (p. 132 ff.), we read: "Any association or society which has religious exercises from which the name of the Triune God or the name of Jesus as a matter of principle is excluded or which teaches salvation through works must, according to Holy Scripture, be regarded as in its very nature incompatible with the faith and confession of the Christian Church, and more especially the Lutheran Church, whether this be realized or not." And the Minneapolis Theses of the bodies now merged in the American Lutheran Church declare: "These synods agree that all such organizations or societies, secret or open, as are either avowedly religious or practise the forms of religion without confessing as a matter of principle the Triune God and Jesus Christ as the Son of God come into the flesh and our Savior from sin or instead of the Gospel teach salvation by human works or morality, are antichristian and destructive of the best interests of the Church and the individual soul and that therefore the Church of Christ and its congregations can have no fellowship with them." (*Theol. Monthly*, VII, 114.) The weakness of the theses is found in the next section: "They agree that a Lutheran synod should not tolerate pastors who have affiliated themselves with any anti-christian society," for it is hard to tell on the basis of the statement in the previous paragraph why only pastors should be dealt with. Nevertheless it seems plain that the possibility of an agreement also in this question is not remote.

A few other questions which will have to be discussed and settled according to the Word of God are those of the celebration of Sunday, which cannot be said to be divinely commanded, certain questions of marriage and divorce, particularly the validity of a rightful betrothal, the value of John's baptism, and a number of other points, chiefly in the field of Christian ethics.

We have discussed the difficulties within the Lutheran church-bodies of America in a very open way, for it is best to see clearly

8) Our position is stated in CONCORDIA THEOL. MONTHLY, I, 321 ff. 498 ff.; II, 565.

what the trouble consists in, as only thus will those who love the peace of Zion be able to apply the proper remedies. The obstacles may seem formidable, but they surely are not insurmountable. The Missouri Synod has presented its position to the whole world. There seems to be no reason why free conferences should not discuss the proposed basis of doctrinal agreement with a view of eventually coming to a full agreement on the basis of the Word of God.

P. E. KRETZMANN.

Präsidialrede.

Verehrte Väter und Brüder der Synodalkonferenz, teure Glaubensgenossen! *)

Es ist sonst nicht Sitte bei den Versammlungen der Synodalkonferenz, daß eine besondere Eröffnungs- oder Präsidialrede am Anfang der Sitzungen nach der Organisation gehalten wird. Nicht einmal bei der allerersten Versammlung geschah dies. Die Eröffnungspredigt galt als Eröffnungsrede, wie schon in dem ersten gedruckten Bericht hervor-gehoben, daher denn auch die Eröffnungspredigt im Druck mitgeteilt wird. Wenn der Vorsitzende sich diesmal erlaubt, eine Ausnahme zu machen und mit einer kurzen Ansprache die Sitzungen einzuleiten, so hat dies seinen Grund in der Tatsache, daß es dieses Jahr gerade sechzig Jahre her sind, daß die Synodalkonferenz zu ihrer ersten Versammlung zusammentrat und dies die einfachste Weise schien, an diese Tatsache zu erinnern.

Vom 11. bis zum 13. Januar 1871 war nach längeren Vorberhandlungen eine Konvention von Vertretern der Synoden von Ohio, Missouri, Wisconsin und der norwegisch-Lutherischen Synode in Chicago abgehalten worden, auf der der Entwurf einer Form der Vereinigung dieser Synoden beraten worden war. Vom 14. bis zum 16. November desselben Jahres hatte dann eine zweite Vorversammlung in Fort Wayne getagt, zu der sich auch Glieder der Synoden von Illinois und Minnesota eingefunden hatten. Auf dieser Vorversammlung wurde die beabsichtigte Konstitution nochmals besprochen und zugleich revidiert, und es wurde beschlossen, diese Konstitution in den Blättern der betreffenden Synoden zu veröffentlichen und den Synoden vorzulegen, worauf dann auf Grund dieser Konstitution die Synodalkonferenz ins Leben treten sollte. Zugleich wurde dieser Versammlung eine Denkschrift vorgelegt, in der die Gründe dargelegt waren, weshalb die betreffenden Synoden sich nicht an eine der bereits bestehenden Verbindungen von Synoden zu

*) Diese Rede wurde in der ersten Sitzung der Synodalkonferenz in Mantato, Minnesota, am 10. August 1932, gehalten und sollte im gedruckten Bericht erscheinen. Da dieser der Kosten wegen auf das Allernötigste beschränkt werden muß, wird sie hier ihres historischen Inhalts wegen mitgeteilt.