

Concordia Theological Monthly

Volume 6

Article 1

1-1-1935

Foreword: That the ministry be not blamed.

Theo. Laetsch

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Laetsch, Theo. (1935) "Foreword: That the ministry be not blamed.," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 6 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol6/iss1/1>

This Editorial is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

Laetsch: Foreword: That the ministry be not blamed.

Concordia Theological Monthly

Edited by
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary
ST. LOUIS, MO.



42,293

St. Louis, Mo.

CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE

1935

CONTENTS

JANUARY	PAGE
Foreword; Theo. Laetsch	1
"May God Preserve unto Us a Pious Ministry!" L. Fuerbringer.....	12
A Comparison of the King James and the Douay Version; Geo. A. W. Vogel	18
Die Philister; P. E. Kretzmann	25
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann	33
Dispositionen ueber die altkirchliche Evangelienreihe	35
Miscellanea	46
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	54
Book Review. — Literatur	73
FEBRUARY	
Foreword (concluded); Theo. Laetsch	81
Zur Bedeutung der Taufe Jesu; J. T. Mueller	93
A Comparison of the King James and the Douay Version; Geo. A. W. Vogel	102
"Die Schrift kann nicht gebrochen werden"; P. E. Kretzmann	114
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann	121
Dispositionen ueber die altkirchliche Evangelienreihe	125
Miscellanea	133
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	141
Book Review. — Literatur	153
MARCH	
Notes on Chiliasm; Th. Engelder	161
Das Testimonium Spiritus Sancti; P. E. Kretzmann	173
Revival Movement in the Hsin I Church; Max Zschiegner	184
Gal. 3, 24; L. T. Wohlfeil	192
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann	197
Dispositionen ueber die altkirchliche Evangelienreihe	199
Entwuerfe zu Passionspredigten	208
Miscellanea	214
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	220
Book Review. — Literatur	233
APRIL	
Notes on Chiliasm; Th. Engelder	241
Ist die Variata synergistisch und majoristisch? F. E. Mayer	254
The Old Testament at Gettysburg; W. A. Maier	267
Anklaenge an Schriftlehren in griechischen und lateinischen Klas- sikern; P. E. Kretzmann	276
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann	283
Entwuerfe zu Passionspredigten	286
Dispositionen ueber die altkirchliche Evangelienreihe	289

	PAGE
Miscellanea	303
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	305
Book Review. — Literatur	311

MAY

Notes on Chiliasm; Th. Engelder	321
Der Zeitgeist und die zeitgemaesse Predigt; J. H. C. Fritz	335
Das Verhaeltnis der Apokalypse zu den prophetischen Schriften des Alten Testaments; P. E. Kretzmann	340
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann	347
An Anniversary We Forgot; Theo. Hoyer	349
Sermon Study on 1 Tim. 2, 1—6; Theo. Laetsch	356
Dispositionen ueber die altkirchliche Evangelienreihe	365
Miscellanea	376
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	379
Book Review. — Literatur	391

JUNE

Notes on Chiliasm; Th. Engelder	401
Die Suendlosigkeit Jesu; P. E. Kretzmann	413
King Henry VIII Attacks Luther; Wm. Dallmann	419
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann	430
Predigtstudie ueber Apost. 4, 32—35; Theo. Laetsch	432
Dispositionen ueber die altkirchliche Evangelienreihe	441
Miscellanea	452
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	454
Book Review. — Literatur	473

JULY

Notes on Chiliasm; Th. Engelder	481
Der Pietismus; Theo. Hoyer	496
Kleine Studien aus dem Galaterbrief; L. Fuerbringer	501
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann	511
Predigtstudie ueber Apost. 8, 26—40; Theo. Laetsch	515
Dispositionen ueber die altkirchliche Evangelienreihe	524
Miscellanea	532
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	535
Book Review. — Literatur	553

AUGUST

The Enhypostasia of Christ's Human Nature; Walter Albrecht	561
Kleine Studien aus dem Galaterbrief; L. Fuerbringer	580
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann	592
Die kirchlichen Vorgaenge in Deutschland, lutherisch gesehen; W. Oesch	594
Dispositionen ueber die altkirchliche Evangelienreihe	600
Miscellanea	609
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	616
Book Review. — Literatur	631

SEPTEMBER		PAGE
Babylon; Alex Heidel		641
Kleine Studien aus dem Galaterbrief; L. Fuerbringer		650
Die "Theologie" der Deutschen Christen, des Reichsbischofs und des Professors E. Hirsch; W. Oesch		661
Anglo-Lutheran Relations during the First Two Years of the Reign of Edward VI; Arthur Carl Piepkorn		670
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann		687
Dispositionen ueber die altkirchliche Evangelienreihe		689
Miscellanea		702
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches		704

OCTOBER

The First Complete Printed English Bible; J. T. Mueller	721
Deutschheidnische Stroemungen; W. Oesch	732
Leadership-training in Our Church; P. E. Kretzmann	739
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann	746
Reformationsfestpredigt ueber Ps. 116, 10; Theo. Laetsch	749
Sermon Study on 1 Pet. 2, 1—10; Theo. Laetsch	754
Dispositionen ueber die altkirchliche Evangelienreihe	765
Miscellanea	773
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	778
Book Review. — Literatur	793

NOVEMBER

The Evangelical Lutheran Church the True Visible Church on Earth; W. Arndt	801
Der Pietismus; Theo. Hoyer	816
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann	822
Die Vereinigte Lutherische Kirche und die Verbalinspiration; J. T. Mueller	825
Bekennnissynoden; W. Oesch	835
Dispositionen ueber die altkirchliche Evangelienreihe	848
Miscellanea	858
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	865
Book Review. — Literatur	873

DECEMBER

Kirche, Staat, Obrigkeit, Volk, Rasse, Familie — und Gottes Wort; Th. Engelder	881
Luther's Monumental Work: Galatians; R. T. Du Brau.....	888
Der Hoehepunkt des Kirchenkampfes; W. Oesch.....	892
Medieval Religious Pageantry and Its Modern Revival; P. E. Kretz- mann	902
Der Schriftgrund fuer die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria; P. E. Kretzmann	909
Dispositionen ueber die erste von der Synodalkonferenz angenommene Evangelienreihe	912
Miscellanea	928
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	938
Book Review. — Literatur	951

Concordia *Theological Monthly*

Vol. VI

JANUARY, 1935

No. 1

Foreword.

Unionism is a sign of the times. Alliances of nations, mergers of corporations, unions of laborers, of employers, of capitalists, consolidation of resources, collective bargaining, — these are expressions familiar to every one. In union there is strength. Union eliminates much waste, senseless competition, makes for greater economy, efficiency, service, better times. Union, cooperation, is hailed by many as the cure-all for the manifold troubles of the present day, as the best possible solution of the vexing twentieth-century problems.

The Christian Church has been affected by the trend of the times, and cries for greater union within its sphere are heard everywhere. During the last thirty years no fewer than eleven mergers of two or more large bodies of Christians have been effected, and the end is not yet. There are such as would merge all religions into one world-wide Church; others urge a union of at least the various denominations and factions within Christendom; still others, regarding such a merger as undesirable, work with might and main for a closer union of all Protestant churches. Failure to cooperate in this movement is branded as bigotry, stubbornness, arrogance, separatism, altogether useless, unscriptural, and utterly out of keeping with the spirit of Christ, that of toleration and brotherly love. A particularly ardent defender of unionism has ventured the prophecy that within a few years there would be only three separate church-bodies within Christendom, the Roman Catholic Church, the Great United Church, and Walther's Church (*vulgo*, Missouri Synod). (*Theol. Magazine* of the Evang. Synod of North America, November, 1933.) In view of this overwhelming trend towards unionism it is not out of place to consider at the beginning of a new year the question, What shall our position towards unionism be in the future? We shall go into the sanctuary of God and there listen to the oracles not of men, but of the Lord, the Ruler of His Church, and humbly ask Him to enlighten our hearts that we may know His will. If then,

on the basis of the Word of God, we arrive at the conviction that unionism is of God, then let us by all means advocate and work for unionism. But if unionism is not of God, then let us pray for strength to oppose strenuously every effort toward an outward union not in keeping with the will of our God.

One of the essential attributes of God is unity, simplicity, indivisibility. Though there are in God three distinct persons, yet there is but one God, one Lord, one divine Essence, Deut. 6, 4; Is. 44, 6. This one God is a God of harmony, of peace, of union, 2 Cor. 13, 11, to whom disharmony, disunion, is displeasing, 1 Cor. 14, 33. When God had created man, man was at peace, in close communion, at one, with God, Gen. 1, 27. And when man wilfully disrupted this bond of peace and harmony which united him with his Maker, God went to the length of sacrificing His own Son in order that an at-one-ment between God and man might be made possible. Having reconciled the world unto Himself by the atoning sacrifice of His own Son, God now in marvelous condescension has the Word of Atonement preached unto the sinner, and by such preaching regenerates him, engenders in him a new life, spiritual life, faith in the vicarious work of his Savior, thus reuniting him with Himself, who was reconciled with the world when Christ died on Calvary, 2 Cor. 5, 19. Having reestablished complete harmony and peace between man and his Maker, God now personally makes His gracious abode in the heart of the believer, making that mystic union so intimate that the very body of the believer is called a temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 3, 16, and a member of Christ, 1 Cor. 3, 15.

Not only has God effected a union with every individual believer, Scripture also speaks of a union, exceedingly close and intimate, between God and the Church, the Christian Church. The Church as such is the body of Christ, the individual Christians being the members of this body, 1 Cor. 12, 12. The Church as such is the spiritual house, 1 Pet. 2, 5, the temple of God, Eph. 2, 21, the Christians being the precious stones, 1 Pet. 2, 5, builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, Eph. 2, 22. This union between God and His Church is an actual union, which manifests itself in the fruits of such spiritual union, a sanctified, godly life on the part of the individual and the Church at large. Yet its real nature, its essence, is invisible; for it is a union existing within that sphere of spiritual life which is closed to human eyes.

One of the most precious fruits and consequences of this mystic union existing between God and His Church and all its individual members is the spiritual unity existing between all believers. Says Paul to the Romans: "So we, being many, are one body in Christ and every one members one of another," Rom. 12, 5. And to the Corinthians he writes: "For we, being many, are one bread and

one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread," 1 Cor. 10, 17. The Ephesians, who once had been Gentiles, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, he reminds of the glorious fact that "now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our Peace, who hath made both one and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us . . . for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace, and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross," Eph. 2, 13. 14. 15b. 16. Therefore the apostle speaks of a unity of the Spirit which exists between all believers, Eph. 4, 3, and speaks of this unity not as merely desirable nor as something yet to be accomplished, but as something to be preserved, to be kept, to be carefully guarded. Preserving, keeping, guarding, presupposes the existence of the object to be preserved and its possession by the person admonished to preserve it. The unity of the Spirit of which the apostle speaks here is not an ideal for which we should strive, not a vision which may never be realized. No, it is a reality, an actuality, a blessed possession of the Church of God, the bridal gift of the heavenly Bridegroom to His chosen Bride, the Church. So real it is that the Savior admonishes His Bride to keep it; so real, that there is a possibility of losing it; so real, that the apostle goes on to describe it in order that we may definitely know its nature and essence.

"There is one body and one Spirit." All the believers are one body in which dwells, like the soul in the physical body, one Spirit, even the Spirit of God. They are all called in one hope of their calling. That hope of which Peter speaks, 1 Pet. 1, 3. 4, fills all their hearts, none of them looking forward to any other heaven, to any other bliss, than the one happiness of the one eternal life. As there is one Spirit, so there is one Lord, even the Lord Jesus, yesterday, to-day, and forever, the one and only-begotten Son of God, the one and only Savior. And therefore there is only one faith, one saving faith, which, generated by the Word, Rom. 10, 17, places all its trust in this Word of God, accepts and rejoices in Jesus Christ as its personal Redeemer; one Baptism, that washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit instituted by Christ Himself; one God and Father of all, the God and Father of Jesus and through Jesus the God and Father of all believers, who is above all and through all and in them all. Hence between all believers there exists a unity which really and actually unites them into one body, ties by a close and intimate bond every believer to all other believers and all other believers to him. No distinction of race, no difference of language or nationality, can sever this unity effected by the Spirit Himself. Every believer, be he Jew or Gentile by birth, man or woman, German or Russian, Roman Catholic or Methodist or Lutheran, since he is a believer in Christ, is comprised in this marvelous unity. In

this unity the prayer of the great High Priest, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, finds its complete fulfilment: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them that they may be one, even as We are one, I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me," John 17, 20—23. Though invisible to the human eye, this unity actually exists. Though language, and race, and doctrinal differences, and church affiliation seemingly separate them, yet in fulfilment of Christ's prayer all that are believers are one, even as the Father and the Son are one and were one at the time of this prayer, though not the Father, but the Son stood visibly before His disciples and not the Father, but the Son was about to sanctify Himself for His own by suffering and dying on the cross. As the union existing between Father and Son and Holy Ghost is an invisible, spiritual union, so the union of the Christians into one spiritual body is an invisible, a purely spiritual union, an object not of sight, but of faith in the Word of Him who tells us that there shall be one fold and one Shepherd.

This spiritual union is not only to be kept intact with scrupulous care, but according to the will of God it is to be manifested outwardly. Christians must, if they would please God, show their inward unity by outward evidences of love and fellowship, by acknowledging one another as fellow-members of the body of Christ, as coheirs of eternal life, as brethren and sisters of Christ and in Christ, Acts 4, 32; Rom. 15, 5—7; Eph. 4, 31. 32. Christians must, if they would please God, also gladly and willingly cooperate in the work which God has commanded to His Church. The one God without whom this unity would be impossible is not only above all and in all believers, He is also *through* all. He is operative not only through the individual Christian, but through the Church as such. To this body, not only in its individuals, but collectively as a Church, He has given a work to perform in which all members of the one Christian Church should, according to the will of God, unite, join, cooperate. That is the work which the Lord Himself has made possible by His incarnation, His vicarious atonement, His ascension; that work for which He now fills and rules and governs all things; that work for which He has given gifts in great diversity to His Church, offices and functions and services, and men able to fill these offices and to perform these functions and ministrations; — that wonderful work of edifying the body of Christ, of building the Church, until they all, *οἱ πάντες*, Eph. 4, 13, all the elect of God, shall have been brought into the unity

of that faith in which we now stand, the knowledge of the Son of God. In this work the whole body, all Christians, all believers, should cooperate. To His Church on earth Christ gave His Great Commission, Matt. 28, 18—20, not to one individual only nor to the believers of one nation, or race, or age, or continent, or denomination, but to the one holy Christian catholic, universal Church, the communion of saints. As the communion of saints, as members of one body and members one of another, Christians should gladly cooperate in building the body of Christ and willingly put all their gifts, material and mental and spiritual, into the service of their fellow-Christians and the Church at large. By peaceful, harmonious cooperation they should endeavor to keep and preserve that unity of the Spirit which makes of them all one body.

It is certainly not the will of God that His Church on earth be divided into an almost endless number of sects and factions and denominations. The Jewish Church in the days of the apostles was divided into a number of sects and schools, one often bitterly opposing the other, such as the Pharisees, called a sect, Acts 15, 5, the Sadducees, Acts 5, 17, the schools of Hillel and Shammai, etc. Such sects and denominations should not be found within the Christian Church. When the congregation at Corinth was threatened with a schism, the apostle pleaded with the members by all means to avert a rupture, showed them the folly of their disunion and exhorted them: "Now, I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment," 1 Cor. 1, 10; and: "Ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" 1 Cor. 3, 3, 4. Not envying, strife, jealousy, partisanship, should be found in the Christian Church; on the contrary, the Christians ought to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," Eph. 4, 1—3, and thus forestall any schism and division. Much less does God sanction the divisions ensuing from errors in doctrine, false teachings, whereby sects are created. It is not God's will that the Church be divided into various denominations. Denominationalism, far from being the normal and God-pleasing condition of the Christian Church, is so abhorrent to God that the names seditions, *i. e.*, dissensions, and heresies are named among the sins which exclude from the kingdom of God, Gal. 5, 20. Far from resembling the facets of a diamond, increasing the beauty and splendor of the Church by flashing forth the manifold forms and manifestations of truth, de-

nominalism rather obscures the true beauty of the Church, dims and darkens its glorious light of truth, is in fact unfaithfulness to her heavenly Bridegroom, Rev. 2, 20—24. The God-pleasing outer form of the Church is that of unity and union and willing cooperation and perfect harmony, presenting an unbroken front against the common enemy, the old evil Foe and all his allies.

What has been said, however, presents only one side of the question. While it is truly God's will that the unity of the Spirit be kept in the bond of peace, yet it is not God's will that churches enter into outer union indiscriminately, without regard to unity in doctrine and practise. The same Word of God which makes separatism, denominationalism, a sin condemns unionism, which is so generally advocated, so universally practised, so widely extolled as a panacea for all ills affecting the Church of our day. The Word of God clearly teaches that unionism is incompatible with the very nature of the unity of the Spirit which we are so zealously to keep; that it is utterly displeasing to God, the Author and Preserver of true unity.

The unity of the Spirit which we are to keep is, in the first place, in its very nature, incompatible with unionism. True unity of the Spirit consists essentially in being one body and one Spirit and having one hope, one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, Eph. 4, 4—6. The true unity of the Spirit, as described in Scripture, has never existed, nor can it exist, where there was not, or is not, one faith, one Lord, one Baptism. This true unity, wherever by the grace of the Spirit it exists, is attacked and endangered and eventually destroyed if all or any one of its component parts are attacked, denied, rejected, just as the harmony and perfect unity of the human body is destroyed if any one or all of its component members are destroyed, marred, or injured. Denying the one God and Father of all as He has revealed Himself in Scripture, we have no God; for there is no other God than the God of Scripture. How, then, can unity of the Spirit exist where the one God and Father is denied, and how dare we enter into union with such as deny the very Author of that unity which we are to keep? That applies to every factor named by the apostle. Rejecting the Lord, the hope, the faith, the Baptism, of Scripture, we have no Lord, no hope, no faith, no Baptism; there is no unity of the Spirit which we can possibly keep. Would not outward union be utterly futile without this inward unity? Would the Lord be pleased with us if we would unite with such enemies of His and call this union an endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit?

Nor is the situation essentially changed if the factors of true unity are not directly denied and rejected, but are changed, falsified, either by our adding to them any human opinion or taking away any one item revealed in Scripture. The one faith of the Bible is

rejected not only by teaching salvation by character only, but by adding to faith one's good works, or preparation, or contrition, or good conduct as necessary for salvation or by taking away from faith its one saving object, Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus is rejected not only by Modernists, but just as surely, though not to such a degree, by all such churches as deny to the human nature of Christ the full use of all divine attributes even after His exaltation. They may not intend to reject their Lord, yet they are not teaching the Lord Jesus of Scripture, but one like Him in some respects, altogether unlike Him, however, in another. That is not keeping the unity of the Spirit; that is changing, altering, its very nature, perhaps not entirely, yet partly; and a dollar is counterfeit whether 100- or 25- or 10-per-cent. counterfeit.

For that reason the Lord solemnly warns against adding unto His Word or diminishing from it, Deut. 4, 2; 12, 32; Rev. 22, 18. Lest one say that these passages refer only to these two books, our Lord, by whose Spirit the prophets spoke in the Old Testament and the apostles and evangelists in the New Testament, tells us: "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," John 8, 31. 32. Only on one condition are we Christ's disciples indeed, truly, — if we continue in His Word. Deviating from His Word, we are no longer disciples, followers of Christ; we are substituting for His Word our own views and opinions. Since His Word is truth, we no longer teach the truth nor know the truth if, and to the extent that, we no longer continue in His Word. Since alone the truth can make us free, we again fall into the servitude and slavery of error and falsehood and sin if, and to the extent that, we do not continue in His Word. Unless the grace of God restrains us, we are in danger of walking directly into eternal destruction. Shall we, then, unite with those who do not continue in the Word of Christ?

Moreover, only by continuing in the Word of Christ, by teaching all things whatsoever He hath commanded us, Matt. 28, 20, can we disciple the nations, build the Church of God. Error will not disciple one individual, falsehood will not gain one soul for Christ, human doctrine will not add one stone to that spiritual temple, will not truly comfort one sin-oppressed mortal, will not strengthen one weak Christian, will not lead one sinner to salvation. Error, false doctrine, will harm, destroy, murder, the individual, the Church. Error robs the individual, if not of his faith, then of much of the comfort, of the strength, of the joy, of the satisfaction and contentment, and of many of the rights and privileges which Christ has provided for His own and offers to them in His Word of Truth. Error will undermine the very foundations of the Church, sap its very life. Like leaven, Matt. 16, 12, it will slowly, but surely permeate the entire

PRITZLAFF MEMORIAL LIBRARY
CONCORDIA SEMINARY
ST. LOUIS, MO.

Church and will not rest until it has leavened the whole lump, Gal. 5, 9. Like a cancer, 2 Tim. 2, 17, it will spread, unobserved perhaps, unnoticed at first, spread until it has infested the whole body and no more cure is possible. Shall we, dare we, unite with such as preach error?

Time and again in both the Old and the New Testament, God voices His displeasure with error and threatens errorists with His wrath and punishment. "Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them and cause My people to err by their lies and by their lightness; yet I sent them not nor commanded them. Therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord," Jer. 23, 31. 32. God curses him who dares to change His Law: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this Law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen," Deut. 27, 26. In like manner God through His holy apostle curses every one that changes, alters, the Gospel: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel, which is not another; but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed," Gal. 1, 6—9. Shall we, dare we, unite with errorists?

Surely our duty is plain. Nor is this duty merely to be deduced from the many passages quoted and other similar passages, too numerous to mention. God Himself demands that we do not unite with errorists, that we separate from them, that we avoid them. Let us study some of the pertinent passages.

In the well-known passage Rom. 16, 17 we read: "Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them." The apostle speaks of such as cause divisions and offenses. The word *divisions* occurs only three times in the New Testament, Rom. 16, 17; 1 Cor. 3, 3; Gal. 5, 20. It is derived from *δισσοστανίω*, which is translated by Liddell-Scott "to stand apart," or "to disagree." *Δισσοστανία* is translated by Liddell as "a standing apart, dissension, sedition." Cremer translates *Verwirrung*, confusion. The word offense, *σκανδαλον*, means properly a trigger, then a trap, then anything whereby one is trapped or caught, a stumbling-block, offense. The articles before *δισσοστανίας*, *σκανδαλα*, and *ποιούντας* do not refer to any special class of divisions or offenses or to any special group of such as cause these special divisions and special offenses. The articles rather point to the whole class of divisions and offenses and makers of such

irrespective of degrees, variations, etc., which may, and actually do, occur within this class. The article is used in the same manner as in Rom. 14, 1, where not a special, well-known weak person, but the whole class of weak Christians is referred to. Every one and any one that is weak is the weak brother who is to be received. In like manner the article is used John 10, 12, *ὁ μισθῶνης, ὁ λύκος*. The Savior has in mind not a particular species of wolves or hirelings or only a well-known wolf or hireling; but every wolf, be he timber-wolf or jackal or gray wolf, may be "the wolf" who is coming to destroy, and any and every hireling is "the hireling" of whom the Savior here speaks. Compare on this use of the article Rom. 13, 7 and Rev. 5, 12, where the article is used but once, and v. 13, where it is placed before every noun. Any dissension, any offense, becomes *the* dissension, *the* offense, which an individual is causing; and any maker of such dissension *the* maker of dissension, whom we should avoid. The apostle therefore has not in mind only such outspoken, anti-Christian errorists as openly and flatly deny every fundamental truth of Christianity. He does not say, Avoid such as subvert completely the Christian truth or as at least deny some of the basic doctrines of the Bible. He warns us against such as cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned. Contrary to, *παρά*, properly beside, alongside of, side by side with; hence these teachers may still be professing and teaching parts of the Christian doctrine. But side by side with this doctrine they make dissensions and thus cause offenses. The reason for such dissensions and offenses is the failure of such teachers to continue in the Word of Christ, John 8, 31. They do not teach all things that Christ commanded, but either add to, or take away from, the doctrine as revealed in the Bible. In this manner they themselves are standing apart from the Word of Christ and are causing others to stand apart by creating differences of opinion, dissensions, divisions, beside, and hence contrary to, the doctrine laid down, divisions that would be impossible if all accepted, and continued in, the words of Christ. In making such divisions, they are certainly putting stumbling-blocks in the way of their fellow-men, over which many a person may fall, receive painful injuries, perhaps die. Through their false doctrine they will deprive people of the liberty which Christ has earned for them, fill their hearts with fear and trepidation, cause spiritual security, perhaps spiritual death. The makers of such divisions may not realize that they are teaching false doctrine. They may spread their errors with the purpose of serving God. Christ tells us that they who kill the Christians think they are doing God a service, John 16, 2. And Paul confessed that in his bigoted zeal for the Jewish religion he thought that he was serving God by persecuting the followers of Christ, Acts 22, 3, 4; 26, 9; Phil. 3, 6. We cannot look into the

hearts of these errorists and determine their intentions. Neither need we do that. What the apostle impresses upon us is, "Mark them and avoid them." By their words they are judged, and by their words they are condemned, Matt. 12, 37. And their words prove them to be creators of divisions, disturbers of that unity of the Spirit which characterizes the Church of Christ. Mark them, observe them, plead with them, patiently show them the error of their way. If they hear you, you have not only gained them, you have also removed the offense and restored peace and thus kept the unity of the Spirit intact. But if they continue making divisions, if they persist in teaching their error or remain in membership with a body that teaches such error and thus help to create and maintain the divisions and offenses caused by errorists, then the clear and plain injunction of the apostle is, "Avoid them," sever fraternal connections with them. *Ἐκκλίνατε ἀπ' αὐτῶν.* The apostle does not say *κατακλίνατε σὺν αὐτοῖς*, lie down, associate with them, but "avoid them," turn out of the way, away from them. Causing divisions and offenses within the Christian Church is not a light matter. The apostle tells us v. 18: "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." These may seem harsh words, yet truer words were never spoken. And they refer to all that cause divisions and offenses. Does any one who causes divisions contrary to Christ's doctrine thereby serve the Lord Jesus? Certainly not. For Jesus has not told us, You may make divisions, but rather, Continue in My Word. If one does not serve Jesus, does he not serve the devil, does he not actually serve his *own* belly, his *own* interests (note the emphatic position of *ἑαυτῶν*), and not even the higher, but the lower, material, selfish interests? And are not all his good words and fair speeches placed into the service of leading man into error and falsehood? Whether they do this intentionally and consciously or not is not for us to determine. The point of the apostle's admonition is to avoid those, all those, who cause such divisions. Neither should we wait until they have actually deceived, misled, people, until they have by their actions betrayed their true character; but as soon as they teach contrary to the doctrine laid down in the Bible, they are to be marked, admonished, and, if they continue, avoided. If they will stand apart, do not follow them, let them severely alone. If this rule were followed by all Christians, if schismatics would gain no adherents, there either would be no *schisms*, or, if they occurred, they would end with the death or the return to the Church of the schismatics.

Another very instructive passage is found Titus 3, 10. "A man that is an heretic," one who is inclined to denominationalism, sectarianism, should not be permitted to follow his inclination. His brethren should admonish him, and if he persists in teaching his own

chosen opinion, *αἵρεσις*, in contradiction to God's Word, if he continues in this sin, which excludes from the kingdom of God, Gal. 5, 20, then we should reject not only his doctrine, but him, the heretic, and thus sever fraternal relations with him.

John, the apostle of love, writes, just because he is the apostle of true love: "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed; for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds," 2 John 10. 11. The doctrine of Christ, of which the apostle here speaks, is not the doctrine concerning Christ, but the doctrine which Christ teaches and reveals in the Bible. Wherever in the New Testament the word *διδασχῆ* occurs with the genitive of the person, the genitive is invariably the subjective genitive. Cp. Matt. 16, 12, the doctrine of the scribes and Pharisees; Acts 13, 12; the doctrine of the Lord; Rev. 2, 14, the doctrine of Balaam; v. 15, the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. Cp. also Matt. 7, 28; 22, 33; Mark 1, 22; 11, 18; Luke 4, 32; John 18, 19, His doctrine, and Acts 5, 28, your doctrine. In fact, the only passage in which *διδασχῆ* is used with an objective genitive is Heb. 6, 2, and even here quite a number of commentaries do not accept this as the objective genitive. In view of this general usage of the term *διδασχῆ τινος* we are practically forced to take the "doctrine of Christ" in this sense here also, especially since this interpretation is in full keeping with the context. In v. 7 the apostle warned against any one who denies Christ's person and redemptive work. In v. 8 he admonishes to faithfulness in retaining all those things which we have wrought in order that we receive a full reward. And in vv. 9—11 he warns against every apostasy from the doctrine of Christ, against every deviation from the truth of God as laid down in the Bible. Dare we, in the face of these clear Scripture passages and many other passages that are just as clear, unite with such churches as cause divisions and offenses by not continuing in all the words of Christ? Does not God declare such a union to be a sinful one, displeasing to Him, contrary to His will, and harmful to the unity of the Spirit?

Now the question arises: How does this apply — or does it apply at all? — to the present situation within the Lutheran Church of America? Is the Synodical Conference obedient to Christ's teaching in refusing to establish fellowship with certain other Lutheran organizations? Does the question of false teaching or of its toleration enter here at all? These are questions of vital importance and warrant a thorough discussion in a later issue.

THEO. LAETSCH.

