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Miscellanea

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Miscellanea

KFUF and Radio Evangelism

What is meant by evangelism? We quote the *Concordia Encyclopedia*: "The term evangelization has not been precisely fixed and is often loosely used. Great hosts of evangelists are sent out who give their time almost wholly to preaching and who consider the establishing of organized congregations and Christian schools and also the getting out of Christian literature to be of secondary importance. The missionary task of the Christian Church, however, is not only to win souls for Christ by preaching the Gospel, but also to gather them into organized congregations."

Since we cannot gather souls into organized congregations, establish schools, and publish books and Christian literature via radio, the one prime task of radio is the preaching of the Gospel. That is the heart of mission work. That is evangelism in the true and best sense of the word. "Do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. 4:5) means: be a herald of glad tidings. The glad tidings are, of course, the good news that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Cor. 5:19.

KFUF does the work of an evangelist. It was founded for that purpose 22 years ago. The two neon crosses on our majestic tower symbolize this purpose and give silent, brilliant testimony in the quiet darkness of the night to the saving fact that "God made peace through the blood of Christ's Cross" (Col. 1:20) and that Jesus is "the Light of the world." (John 8:12; 12:46). Over KFUF we tell a world which is steeped in strife and hatred of peace and good will. On the radio frequencies, these mysterious chariots of the sky, we go to sinners who are under condemnation, judgment, and hell, and tell them of pardon. Our choirs, choruses, and soloists fill the air with songs of joy and gladness, so that a world full of grief and sorrow may lift up its head and rejoice. We proclaim to sinful men, who are helpless candidates of death, the good news of endless life in heaven. What a glorious privilege to be such an evangelist!

How our non-Lutheran listeners appreciate this "old-time religion," as they call it! Many years ago already a listener wrote to KFUF: "I never knew there was a Church in existence which preaches the simple Gospel in simple words as you people do." After realizing to her great joy that KFUF preaches the full Gospel and not a "fool" Gospel, a listener exhorted us: "Keep putting plenty of blood into your radio preaching."

The term "evangelism" suggests camp meetings, chautauquas, prison work. The primary purpose of such efforts is to preach the Gospel to the people where they are rather than to invite them to the church. How wondrously radio fits into this picture! At the unbelievable speed of 186,300 miles per second radio leaps over hills and mountains, finds its way into caves and mines, ascends

into the stratosphere, descends into the bathosphere, penetrates prison doors, steel and concrete, covers the whole earth with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, is everywhere present and everywhere heard at the twist of the dial in a split second!

If we would make an analysis of the mountains of audience mail received since the founding of KFUO in December, 1924, and enumerate the various places in which KFUO has been tuned in, the list would almost be endless. Just one striking example: One Sunday evening a member of the KFUO radio audience was called to fix a receiving set in a disreputable establishment, where besides intoxicated white people also drunken Negroes wanted to hear some radio music. Having repaired the radio, he tuned in on KFUO, from which they heard some good music and singing, and then a fine Gospel sermon. In less than ten minutes he had the whole crowd so quiet and interested that he could have heard a pin drop on the floor. He remarked that "KFUO certainly effected a remarkable change in that establishment that evening."

Philip, the evangelist, joined himself to the eunuch of Ethiopia, who was returning from Jerusalem to Africa — joined himself to him, I say, *where he was just at that moment*. KFUO does likewise. The risen Christ even went through locked doors to appear to His despondent disciples; went to them, I say, *where they were just at that time*. KFUO is a similar "omnipresent" messenger of glad tidings.

Evangelism means preaching the Gospel primarily to persons who have not yet heard it or accepted it. This, too, applies to KFUO. In the first place, let me say that KFUO is not a propaganda agency of our Church. The public interest — not private — is paramount in radio. Every station, to justify its existence, must serve public interest, convenience, and necessity. No station should consume much of the valuable time allotted to it under its license from F. C. C. in matters of distinctly private nature, which, as a rule, are not only uninteresting, but also distasteful to the listening public. The entire audience within the service area of a station is entitled to service from the station.

In the second place, KFUO was founded not primarily for our own Lutherans and for the Christians in other denominations, but for the unchurched and the unbelievers. Our Lutherans have their church services, which they can and should attend; they have the services of faithful pastors 24 hours a day. We, of course, are very glad to have them, too, in our radio audience. However, KFUO was founded as a missionary agency.

Listen to the sainted Dr. Richard Kretzschmar's address delivered at the founding of KFUO on Sunday, December 14, 1924: "For eighty years this Concordia Theological Seminary has trained ministers and missionaries of the Gospel that were sent out to every section of our country and to distant parts of the globe, all of whom were solemnly pledged to proclaim nothing but the ever-

lasting truths plainly and definitely set forth in the inspired and inerrant Word of God.

"From this seminary an unwavering testimony has also gone forth in numberless publications throughout the world for every Bible doctrine. May the same message and testimony also be carried on the waves of the air through this Station KFUE to many thousands who will lend their ears, and may it bring salvation, joy, peace, and hope into many hearts and many homes!

"May the song and music coming through this medium from the air ever remind the great radio audience of the wonderful Christmas song of the heavenly hosts and of the celestial harmonies resounding from the skies from above the fields of Bethlehem, and may those strains everywhere on earth be re-echoed to the end of days: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'" Thus Dr. Kretzschmar in eloquent words dedicated KFUE to the great task of Christian missions.

Finally, evangelism means a distinct kind of preaching. It does not merely set forth the truths of God's Word in a dry, matter-of-fact way, but there is a pleading in the evangelist's voice. He urges, exhorts, beseeches, begs men to accept the Gospel for their soul's salvation. Every pastor or professor who preaches over KFUE is requested to keep this important point in mind. We bring only one example from the thousands of sermons which have been delivered over KFUE: "Do you believe the Gospel? Anyone less righteous than Christ needs the salvation of Christ. Are you as righteous as He was? Are you as sinless as God is? I warn you not to trust in the Law, for the Law damns, because you cannot keep it. Trust in Christ; He saves. Do you know that unbelieving men are rebels in a lost cause? Why sponsor a hopeless cause? You are interested in your health, your economic welfare, your social standing, your reputation, your comfort, your pleasures, etc., are you not? Why not be interested in your soul, the greatest of all gifts which the Lord has bestowed upon you? You often ask many whys, for instance, 'Why can't I enjoy better health?'—'Why can't I have a larger income?'—'Why can't I associate with persons of higher social standing?'—'Why can I not have more of life's luxuries?'—'Why can't I enjoy more pleasures of life?' etc. Do you know that God asks you a question too? It is this, 'Why will ye die?' He is confronting your conscience with such a 'why' right now. Oh, repent and believe the Gospel!"

It is because of this type of preaching and pleading that the results of our radio work have been so very encouraging. Your heart will leap for joy to read the following terse expressions from radioland: "I am a patient in a T. B. hospital and listen to your programs every day. They are the light of the world, as we are not able to go to church very often."—"KFUE helps me to live closer to my Savior and makes me more determined to press forward and live a more consecrated life."—"The sermons are fundamental and surely are food for my soul. The quality of music is

the best. I just couldn't get along without such a fine station. It has become part of my life."—"The daily programs of Bible messages and songs of our precious Redeemer are as the bread from heaven to me."—"KFUO has been the turning point in my life and the inspiration to the better things of life. KFUO is my favorite station. I listen to nearly every sermon daily and have told others how these beautiful messages over the air waves have brought sweet peace and the divine atmosphere of God's presence in our home."—"It was through your broadcast that I was converted and led to God, and now I am a member of Concordia Lutheran Church." Indeed KFUO is a real winner of souls!

Would to God our Synod owned and operated a station like KFUO in every one of its Districts to preach the "old-time religion" frequently every day, 365 days a year! Since that, of course, is not the case, we ought to cherish KFUO with all our heart and work zealously for its continued growth and development. Just that is the purpose of our present \$300,000 Forward Movement. This Expansion Program is worthy of the generous support of every pastor and lay member in our beloved Synod. We definitely need this support, because KFUO is a noncommercial station, dedicated to the preaching of the everlasting Gospel.

Lord, show us our work,
And set our hands to do it!

REV. HERMAN H. HOHENSTEIN
Director of Radio Station KFUO

Père Lagrange

In the *Theologische Zeitschrift* of Basel a review appeared in the November-December issue of 1946 which draws attention to a famous Roman Catholic scholar who is commonly referred to by the name given above. His name was Albert Lagrange, and he lived from 1855 to 1937. A book was published recently, *L'Oeuvre du Père Lagrange*, the work of Father Lagrange, in which his labors are described and his books are listed. We are told that originally he was a lawyer, but that in 1879 he became a member of the Dominican order. He went to Jerusalem, and there in 1890 he founded "The Practical School for Biblical Studies" and in 1892 the journal *Revue Biblique*. His school or institute became a prominent center of geographical, ethnographical, and archaeological research. At first the emphasis in his studies was placed on exegesis of the Old Testament, in which he, strange to say, always espoused the cause of liberalism as far as Roman Catholic dogma would permit. Thus the accounts of the flood and of the tower of Babel were regarded by him as legends, while he considered the account of the fall of Adam and Eve as historical, because the teaching of the fall is Roman Catholic dogma. After 1920, probably on account of his somewhat liberal attitude toward the Old Testament, he turned to the special study of the New Testament and produced commentaries that have become famous.

The reviewer points out that while Lagrange studied all the scholarly works of Protestants that had to do with the New Testament, he did not arrive at the agnostic or ultra-modernistic positions of Ernest Renan and Alfred Loisy. The bibliography of his books and article and reviews contains almost 1800 titles. Since this scholar is often mentioned in modern works of scholarly research, we thought it proper to submit these few notes concerning him. Apparently his commentaries, written in French, have not been translated into English. A.

Spiritual Conditions in Germany

Dr. E. Sommerlath, professor at Leipzig, according to the *Lutheran Outlook*, January, 1947, reports, among other things, on the German Church as follows:

"First of all, one must say that a great revival of faith, affecting everything, has not taken place. Innumerable people have experienced their own helplessness. In the cellars of crumbling houses, at home and at the front whenever death was near, most people learned again to pray. But it was at first only the experience, 'I am a powerless and weak man,' that drove them to it. It was not yet the experience, 'I am a miserable and sinful man.'

"The human heart is indeed slow in the recognition of its own guilt — and merely because others are also guilty, and all are sinners. And yet Christ is grasped and loved wholeheartedly only where a human being and a nation learn through suffering to see themselves with the eyes of God. One must also remember that concern over the bare preservation of life, the loss of house, home and often native land and the terrible suffering and death of so many lies heavily upon most people. They are unable to look at their fate objectively and to think through profoundly. The soul of man can only carry a certain maximum burden — for many this limit has been passed, and they have become dull and indifferent.

"And yet a new Church is growing, a communion of those who went with open eyes through this time of suffering. Many of those who were estranged from the Gospel look again to the Church. Many begin again to realize that if one wants to find truth in this time of error, one has to look for it in the Church. And if one wants to find mercy in this hard and cruel age, it will be found in the Church. Even though the training was painful and hard, we may have learned things which nobody outside of Germany had the opportunity to learn and experience.

"If somebody would ask today where in the world I would like to work most, I could give only one answer — In Germany. I know that it is nowhere else more difficult than here. I walked through the untouched cities of Sweden. I saw the fortunate circumstances and the prosperity of a country which — though it also felt the results of war — has been enjoying long years of undisturbed peace. And yet I prefer to do my work among

the ruins and in the midst of all the suffering of my people. For I know that Christ likes best to go to those who are in the depth of suffering and cry unto Him out of this depth.

"We have experienced the temptation and the violence of the dark demonic powers more horribly than anyone else. We have seen the devil face to face. But we also experienced the nearness and the help of the angels of God.

"During the last months of the war I met an old pastor on the street. He died soon afterwards—but he told me then, and these were his last words: 'I am an old man, and have learned how God guides and leads men. But never before in my long life have I experienced the help and mercy of God as much as in these last two years of terror and suffering.' It was that way. We have always known that God is gracious and our Helper, but now we have experienced thousands of times that there is no need so great but that He could save us and there is nothing so small but that He cares for it. He helps beyond all our asking and understanding."

The *Augustana Quarterly* of January, 1947, presents an analysis of the spiritual life in Germany written by K. Hutton of Stuttgart. He points out three characteristics:

"1. The initial problem of the existence of God has again taken on a terrifically earnest actuality.

"2. A strong apocalyptic element is present in the congregations. The terrifying event through which people have lived with its abysmal evil, its antichristian hatred, its demonic seductions, its mental cruelties, its mass suffering, has apocalyptic dimensions. In Hitler one sees the Antichrist, in the sign of the party the symbol of the Antichrist. The Book of Revelation has for many years been the most-read book of the Bible. Jehovah's Witnesses, and other sects and groups, are very busy and win many followers with their prophecies and descriptive preaching. Other groups within and without the church have concentrated on a mystic teaching of the rapture, gather themselves in *Brautgemeinden* and nourish themselves on a hectic and feverish piety that is not Biblical but fanatic.

"3. This same motive appears again in another kind of flight from reality: the flight into the world of the sacramental mysteries, as is seen in the *Christengemeinschaft*, a mixture of theosophy and Biblical elements. The worship service that formerly had too much of the character of instruction, became in a real way a worship of God. To this came also the urge that not only Sunday, but also the weekday should be lived in the presence of the Eternal. Through daily Bible reading a whole invisible congregation would be united in the same scriptural texts, through the mottoes of the Moravian Brethren of Herrnhut, through the Berneuchener rules of prayer, through the religious significance of various parts of the Church year, and the week, and the division of the day for prayer."

The most appalling fact is that large sections of the German people are apathetic toward all spiritual things. The encouraging factor is that among the Christians there is a deepened and purified spirituality. A tremendous responsibility rests upon these.

F. E. M.

Notes on Ps. 51:12

Practically all our churches are now using the "Offertory" in their English order of service, and practically all worshipers, including pastors, find it hard to understand the prayer: "Uphold me with Thy free Spirit." Nor is this only their problem, for as we study various Bible versions, we find that the translators, too, had trouble with the Hebrew words: *veruach nedibah tismekeni* (transliteration our own). Here is the translation of the LXX: Kai pneumati hegemoniko sterixon me," i. e., "and with a spirit fit to lead (*imperatorius*) strengthen me." The Vulgate puts it thus: "Et Spiritus spontaneus (voluntary, willing) sustentet me." Luther's translation reads: "Und der freudige Geist ent[er]halte mich," which comes close to the Latin. Similar, yet more clear is the Spanish (the ancient *De Valera*) Version: "Y el Espiritu voluntario me sustentará." But the Spanish *Version Moderna* has this: "Y el Espiritu de gracia me sustente." The French translation of David Martin reads: "Et que l'esprit de l'affranchissement (liberation) me soutienne," while that of J. F. Ostervald has: "Et que l'esprit franc (free) me soutienne." The Smith-Goodspeed Version has: "And sustain me with a willing spirit," while Moffatt's Version has it thus: "And give me a willing spirit as my strength." Why these differing translations? Delitzsch in his Commentary on the Psalms (Vol. II, p. 161 f.) explains that the ancient expositors regarded *nadib* as meaning "noble" or "prince," and *nedibah* as meaning "nobility" or "majesty" (cf. Job 31:15), which explains the LXX translation: *pneumati hegemoniko*, which has been rendered in Latin with *spiritu principali* (*mit einem fuerstlichen Geist*). In the passage, however, he suggests, the term should be taken in an ethical sense, and the phrase *ruach nedibah* be used as a second accusative of the object, so that its meaning is: *With a spirit of willingness, of willing, noble impulse toward that which is good, uphold me.* David thus prays: Maintain in me such a spirit as continues in steady perseverance after what is good, for he speaks of a human spirit set free by the Holy Ghost from the dominion of sin, a spirit to which that which is good has become an inner, instinctlike necessity. Thus assured of his justification and confirmed in his new obedience, David will teach transgressors God's ways. So far Delitzsch. This agrees with the meaning of *nedabah* as explained in Gesenius' *Handwoerterbuch* (ed. Buhl), which defines *nedabah* as meaning 1) "Innerer Antrieb zu etwas," "freiwillig," "gern" (cf. Ps. 110:3: *Dein Volk ist ganz und gar Freiwilligkeit*), 2) *freiwillige Gabe, freiwilliges Opfer*, and 3) *Reichlichkeit, Fuelle*. The verb *samak*, with which the prayer closes, means to *support, prop, uphold, sustain*. The petition begins with

an imperative, *haschibah*, and closes with a jussive, *tismekeni*. The expression *ruach nedibah* may be taken either as the subject of the second part of the prayer (so Luther, Vulgate, etc.), so that the spirit of willingness does the supporting, or it may be regarded as an adverbial accusative, used instrumentally, so that God does the supporting by means of the willing spirit. In the light of all this the Smith-Goodspeed Version seems to express the sense of the original Hebrew most simply and faithfully: "And sustain me with a willing spirit." Hengstenberg argues that *ruach nedibah* cannot be taken as the subject of the prayer (as Luther does), since in the preceding verses all petitions are addressed directly to God, which remark is certainly worthy of consideration. He explains the derivative *nadib*, one impelled (*ein Getriebener*), as one who has in himself a living impetus toward that which is good, an inward impulse, so that *ruach nedibah* means a free and noble mind filled with enthusiasm. He agrees with John Arnd, who says that since by nature we are unwilling and loath with regard to that which is good, we must ask God for a cheerful, willing spirit, so that here all works are condemned which are done from coercion of the Law, since they do not flow from faith. Faith does nothing from coercion, but it does all things out of pure love and gratitude. It is for such a willing spirit that David here prays. (Cf. Commentary on Psalms, V, 3, p. 32 ff.) With this also Luther agrees, for he writes in explanation of the passage: "So far as the grammar is concerned, the word *nadib* denotes a prince, for which reason our Latin interpreter rendered it with *principali Spiritu* ('Strengthen me with a princely spirit,' instead of: 'with a cheerful spirit'). But *nedibah* no doubt stems from the verb *nadab* and denotes one that is willing, a volunteer, who desires and wants something of his own accord and undertakes it with great courage. Such a spirit is a great gift of God, with which He fills the heart so that we may not be terrified by the devil and the world, a spirit, which undertakes a thing not from any legal coercion, but freely, moved by the joy of doing good" (cf. St. Louis Ed., V, 583). Luther thus takes "*freudig*" and "*willig*" as synonyms, the cheerful spirit being given by God through faith. The practical question that arises in connection with the passage is how a pastor may best explain the somewhat obscure and perhaps also misleading words: "Thy free Spirit" to his parishioners. The problem may be solved most easily by pointing out that the word "spirit" should not have been printed with a capital S since it denotes not the Holy Spirit, as it does in v. 11, but the *willing spirit of faith*, from which alone truly good works flow. (By the way, no capital initials are used in this Psalm in the Authorized Version.) He may then tell his people that while the personal pronoun "Thy" is not found in the original, the willing spirit of faith implanted in the heart must come alone from God and cannot be obtained by our own reason or strength. The pronoun will thus be well understood by all who take part in this liturgical service.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER