

Christian MONTHLY

DEDICATED TO THE PROCLAMATION
OF THE WORD OF GOD



Psalm 119:105
Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.

October 2012

Luther at the Wartburg

Translating the Bible

J.H. Merle D'Aubigne
The Life and Times of Martin Luther

Martin Luther was called to present his nation with the Scriptures of God. That same God who had conducted St. John to Patmos, there to write his revelation, had confined Luther in the Wartburg, there to translate His Word. This great task, which it would have been difficult for him to have undertaken in the midst of the cares and occupations of Wittenberg, was to establish the new building on the primitive rock and, after the lapse of so many ages, lead Christians back from the subtleties of the schoolmen to the pure Fountain-head of redemption and salvation.



Wartburg. Photo courtesy of Detroit Publishing Company, Detroit, MI.

The wants of the Church spoke loudly; they called for this great work; and Luther, by his own inward experience, was to be led to perform it. In truth, he discovered in faith that repose of the soul which his agitated conscience and his monastic ideas had long induced him to seek in his own merits and holiness. The doctrine of the Church, the scholastic theology, knew nothing of the consolations that proceed from faith; but the Scriptures proclaim them with great force, and there it was that he had found them. Faith in the Word of God had made him free. By it he felt emancipated from the dogmatical authority of the Church, from its hierarchy

and traditions, from the opinions of the schoolmen, the power of prejudice, and from every human ordinance. Those strong and numerous bonds, which for centuries had enchained and stifled Christendom, were snapped asunder, broken in pieces, and scattered round him; and he nobly raised his head freed from all authority except that of the Word. This independence of man, this submission to God, which he had learned in the Holy Scriptures, he desired to impart to the Church. But before he could communicate them, it was necessary to set before it the revelations of God. A powerful hand was wanted to unlock the massive gates of that arsenal of God's Word from which Luther had taken his arms, and to open to the people against the day of battle those vaults and antique halls which for many ages no foot had trod.

Luther had already translated several fragments of the Holy Scripture; the seven penitential Psalms had been his first task. John the Baptist, Christ Himself, and the Reformation, had begun alike by calling men to repentance. It is the principle of every regeneration in the individual man, and in the whole human race. These essays had been eagerly received; men longed to have more; and this voice of the people was considered by Luther as the voice of God Himself. He resolved to reply to the call. He was a prisoner within those lofty walls—what of that! He would devote his leisure to translating the Word of God into the language of his countrymen. Ere long this Word would be seen descending from the Wartburg with him; circulating among the people of Germany and putting them in possession of those spiritual treasures hitherto shut up within the hearts of a few pious men.

"Would that this one book," exclaimed Luther, "were in every language, in every hand, before the eyes, and in the ears and hearts of all men!"

Luther opened the Greek originals of the evangelists and apostles and undertook the difficult task of making these divine teachers speak his mother tongue. ~

The Apostles' Creed: Part 3

from Martin Luther's Catechetical Writings

Submitted by Rhoda Olin; Vanderhoof, British Columbia, Canada

(For "The Apostles' Creed: Part 1" and "Part 2" please see the July and August 2012 editions.)

The Third Article of the Creed

"I believe in the Holy Spirit."

That is, I not only believe that the Holy Spirit, in His union with the Father and the Son, is truly God, I also believe that the coming to the Father through Christ, His life, passion and death, and whatever is related thereto, is rendered possible and obtained only through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Through Christ and in Christ, I am moved, aroused, invited and drawn to God. But the power through which this is done is the Holy Spirit, who restores me to life, holiness and a spiritual existence. Thus He brings me to the Father; for He is the power by which the Father, through and in Christ, works and gives life.

"The holy Christian Church."

I believe that there exists on earth, throughout the entire world, but one holy universal Christian Church, which is nothing else than the communion of saints, of the righteous and believing people on earth. And it is gathered, preserved and governed by the Holy Spirit, and daily increased by means of the Sacraments and the Word of God.

I believe that no one can be saved unless he is found in this communion, is in hearty fellowship with her and makes her faith, her Word, her Sacrament, her love, his own. I believe that no Jew, no heretic, no heathen or any of her adversaries can find salvation unless he has been reconciled and restored to fellowship and concord with this Church in all things.

"The communion of saints."

I believe that in this Christian communion all things are in common, and that no one has exclusive possession of his own. For this reason I, and every believer, must be benefited, succored and strengthened by the prayers and good works of the entire communion at all times, in life and in death. Thus each bears the burdens of the other, as Saint Paul teaches in Galatians 6:2.

"The forgiveness of sins."

I believe that in this communion, but nowhere else, there is forgiveness of sin; that outside her pale there is no provision for the forgiveness of sin, however numerous and conspicuous good works may be; that the number, the greatness and the frequency of sins within her pale cannot over-ride the provision existing for forgiveness as long as this one communion abides. To her Christ gives the keys, saying: "What things soever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." (Matthew 18:18). The same in substance is said by Christ to Peter, an individual, as the representative of each true church, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind," etc. (Matthew 16:19).

"The resurrection of the body."

I believe that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, when, through the same Holy Spirit, there shall be an awakening of all flesh. I believe that all mankind, both the good and the wicked, shall arise in the body, that the very flesh which has died and been buried, which has perished and in many ways been destroyed, shall return and be made alive.

"And the life everlasting."

I believe that the resurrection shall be succeeded by an everlasting life on the part of believers, and an everlasting death on the part of sinners.

"Amen."

And in no way do I doubt that the Father, through His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, and the power of the Holy Spirit, will cause me to experience all these things. This is what is meant by the word, "Amen," which signifies that these things are certain and shall surely come to pass. ~

Did You Know?



Did you know that members of the Apostolic Lutheran Church of America help support a children's home and orphanages in foreign countries? One orphanage and children's home are located in India, where there are about 500 children being cared for, and one is in Kenya, where 45 children are cared for. In India, most of the children are orphans as a result of their parents dying from HIV/AIDS.

Above: Children at ALC Home in India.

Right: Study Hall completed in 2012.

Photos courtesy of themissionsite.com.



The Thoughts and Ways of God

Pastor Travis Seppala
Laurium, Michigan

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.
Isaiah 55:8-9

When considering the wisdom and knowledge of the Lord of all creation, it is easy to admit that His thoughts far outstretch the thoughts of the human race. There are not many who raise protest to such a statement, and even those who do raise such a protest do so out of ignorance or stubbornness. The simple truth is that God is infinitely more wise, more knowing, and higher than even the wisest of the race that He has created. For this reason He seems to be stating the obvious when declaring that His thoughts and ways are higher than those of the human race. Who would ever be foolish enough to question God and His ways?

Human beings are just this foolish, though. Perhaps not so foolish as to question the Lord's majesty and power and wisdom, but these are not the things that the Lord is drawing our attention to here in Isaiah. The attributes of God that are being revealed in Isaiah 55 are His grace, mercy and forgiveness. The Lord here invites all who thirst and are poor to come to Him in order to receive a blessing that

cannot be purchased and that will satisfy thirst and hunger forever. He welcomes all to hear Him and live; He reveals that while He is near all can seek and find Him. What is amazing is that He then says that pardon and forgiveness are available to all who seek Him, regardless of whatever wickedness and unrighteousness they may carry. It is only after making such a bold invitation that He states that His thoughts and ways are not to be questioned, and for good reason, because this unearned favor is constantly questioned and thought of as foolish. Human wisdom says that one gets what one deserves—no less, no more—so the idea that God shows grace to all who call upon Him is offensive and repulsive to the mind. People bristled at the parable of the people coming in the final hour and receiving the same reward as those who had labored all day. This is because giving people what they deserve falls much more in line with the human mind.

What human wisdom fails to notice is that if God gave everyone only what they deserved and earned, not a single soul would receive pardon. In fact, the Scriptures make known that the righteous requirement of the Lord is that the human race be perfect, just as He is perfect. It is only after being able to reach such perfection that one is finally worthy of all of God's promises. This is not a lofty

standard, it is an impossible standard. When faced with this reality one realizes that the solution is not to try harder but, instead, to throw oneself at the mercy of God, or else forever remain poor, thirsty and lost.

Thanks be to God that His ways are higher and His thoughts are His own! His ways see far beyond those of the human race. Rather than giving people what they deserve, He rescues humanity from despair. This rescue is found in the work of His Son, Jesus Christ. It is in Him that He has made Himself near to us. Because of His perfect sacrifice, righteousness is no longer toiled for but instead freely given to all who call upon the name of the Lord. No matter the unrighteousness or wickedness one may carry, pardon is now given full and free because God in His infinite wisdom and grace works in ways that cannot be comprehended by the human race. His ability to love and forgive will always be far beyond the understanding of humanity and His grace will always be greater than even the greatest of sins.

Therefore, instead of trying to comprehend God's ways, the call in the balance of chapter 55 is to be at peace, to be joyful for what the Lord has done, and to share this message with all, for by this message the Lord continues to mend the broken and rescue the lost. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. ~

The Almighty Himself, even the Creator of the universe, and the invisible God Himself, established from heaven among humans and fixed firmly in their hearts His Truth, even His only and incomprehensible Word, not, as some person might suppose, sending some assistant, or an angel, or a ruler, or one of those who manage earthly things, or one of those having been entrusted with administrative duties in heaven; but rather [He sent] the Designer and Creator of the universe Himself, by whom He created the heavens, by whom He enclosed the sea in its own boundaries, whose mysteries all the elements faithfully guard, from whom the sun has received the measures of the courses of the day to keep, whom the moon obeys when He commands [it] to shine at night, whom the stars obey, following the course of the moon, by whom everything has been set in order and has been given limits and has been put into subjection—the heavens and things in the heavens, the earth and the things on the earth, the sea and the things in the sea, fire, air, depth, the things in the heights, the things in the depths, the things in between; this One He sent to them.

from The Epistle to Diognetus, 2nd century

Do You Hear What I Hear?

Gwen Wilson
Ridgefield, Washington

Hello to each of you. I pray this is a good day for you. I really hope your day is going well. Do you know that if you can start your day with a little prayer it will be off to a better start? This is a very good way to begin each day. Often it seems hard to pray first, but we CAN pray while we walk or drive or when we ride to school or work or wherever we may be going. Prayer is our direct link to our Father in heaven who is ready and waiting to hear from us. While God is listening to us, let's turn our hearts and ears to hear the wonder of His Word, and His work for us.

There is darkness everywhere, and the Spirit of God moves to take away that darkness.

Listen carefully:

- Do you hear God's voice as He speaks the world into existence, saying, "Let there be day... night... a firmament called heaven to divide the water above from the water below"?
- Do you hear the plants of all kinds coming forth?
- Do you hear the waters being gathered into one place and lapping at the shore?
- Do you hear God saying, "Let there be a sun and moon to divide day from night, and to be also for telling signs and seasons"?
- Do you hear the birds singing and the wind sighing in the tree branches?
- Do you hear the fish jumping from the waters?
- Do you hear the voices of every kind of animal being created and God saying to them, "Be fruitful and multiply"?
- Do you hear God making the man Adam from the dirt? Listen as He breathes life into the man's nostrils.
- Do you hear God telling Adam he can eat of the fruit of the Garden, but not the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?
- Do you hear Adam sleeping so soundly as God opens his side and takes out a rib bone?
- Do you now hear God breathing the life-giving breath into that bone and making it the woman, Eve?
- Do you hear Adam say of the woman, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman"?
- Do you hear Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden?
- Do you hear God calling to them, "Where are you?" and the displeasure in His voice as He casts them out of the Garden forever?



- Do you hear the animals that must have their blood shed to cover the man and the woman with their skins?
- Do you hear the people multiplying in the world? Do you hear how sinful man has become?
- Do you hear God as He looks down on His creation, saying, "I will destroy man whom I have created, man, beast, and every creeping thing, for it repenteth Me that I have made them"?
- Do you hear God giving Noah instructions to build a very large ark? Do you hear God tell Noah to gather the animals and every creeping thing, two of each, and put them into the ark, as there will be a flood over all the earth?
- Do you hear the laughter as the people make fun of Noah? But do you hear Noah's faith?
- Do you hear the terrible rain as it begins to fall on the ark with Noah, his family and all the animals safe inside?
- Do you hear the cries of the people outside the ark, those who thought Noah was silly?
- Do you hear the animals and Noah and his family as they exclaim over being able to come out of the ark after one whole year?
- Do you hear God telling Noah that He will put a rainbow in the clouds as a promise that He will never flood the whole earth again? Do you hear God say that when the bow can be seen that God Himself will look down on it and remember His promise?
- Do you hear the world beginning to fill up once again with people?
- Do you hear the cries of God's people as they slave away in Egypt under Pharaoh?
- Do you hear God speaking to Moses from the burning bush? Do you hear Moses say to Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord: Let My people go"?
- Do you hear God's people cry again and again to Him for help?
- Do you hear the prophet Isaiah say, *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light... For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:2, 6)?*

Children, do you hear what I hear? I pray that you heard the powerful voice of God, the cries of His people, the promise of a Prince of Peace. Keep your ears open to God as He calls and leads you, and encourages you on this journey of faith.

We will continue this next time; there is so much more to "listen" to. ~

Why Does Our Church Baptize Babies?

Scott L. Niemitalo
High Point, North Carolina

This is a very good question and worthy of a sound, biblical response. May God help me as I endeavor to respond to this question with as much clarity as I can.

Why do we baptize?

The Lord Jesus gave this instruction to His disciples, *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* (Matthew 28:19-20) We baptize out of obedience to this command/instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Who is baptism for?

Our Lord Jesus taught His disciples the following: *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.* (Mark 16:15-16) Notice in this text that believing is the essential item for salvation (and not water baptism). We thus conclude that baptism is for the believer.

Do little children believe?

Jesus, again, taught His disciples: *Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven... And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me...* (Matthew 18:3, 5-6) Jesus, here, gave the testimony that little children do believe in Him.

Therefore, in summary, we baptize in obedience to the Lord's command; we baptize those who believe, according to the Lord's instruction, and children do believe, according to the Lord's teaching. So, we baptize all who believe, young and old alike.

Some have reasoned in their minds that, because babies cannot understand this water baptism, they

should wait until they are old enough to fully comprehend with their own minds. I understand that logic, but the Word teaches us: *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness...* (Romans 10:10) Faith is a God-given substance, not something that we develop by our own human intellect. God has given faith to children as well as adults. Faith is not a matter of the carnal mind. The Apostle Paul teaches us that *the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you...* (Romans 8:7-9)

The Apostle John has written in his first epistle: *I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.* (1 John 2:12) And in verse 13 of that second chapter *...I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.*

The Lord has clearly accepted little children into the household of faith, and so do we! Therefore, we baptize them, not to become God's children, but because they are God's children.

In the time of Jesus, even the disciples had similar reasoning as some today. *And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer (allow) little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.* (Luke 18:15-16)

Remember, also, that God commanded Abraham to circumcise baby boys at eight days old as a token of His covenant.

For further information on this subject, see the *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ* as taught in the Apostolic Lutheran Church of America, pages 15-17, or online at apostoliclutheran.org/doctrine.php.

Sincerely and in the spirit of prayer.

I would like to encourage everyone to do their civic duty and vote in the upcoming election in November. It is very important for our nation, as we are at the crossroads regarding what direction we want this nation to go. Our freedoms are at stake, and we must make a stand as it is part of a spiritual battle exhibiting itself in the here and

now. Pray for our nation and for our state governments and our federal government, as the Lord is our leader in this battle. If you are not registered to vote, it is easy to get a voter ID by going to your local DMV, library, etc., remembering to take along proper ID to start the process. In some states you must be registered 30 days before the election or you cannot vote in that election. Please register today to receive your card in time for this important election, and please pray for God's guidance as you make your decisions in November.



Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.

Elaine Valitalo
Lake Worth, Florida
Deuteronomy 1:13

The Journey of Sheep

I'Ching Thomas

Submitted by Alvar Helmes; Battle Ground, Washington

A few years ago, while traveling across to Europe in a ferry, we found our bus parked next to a truck. It was one of those trucks where there are two levels of storage space for live animals. This time, it was loaded with sheep. There must have been at least a hundred sheep crammed into that vehicle, all on their way to the slaughterhouse.

As I observed the animals, they were behaving rather amusingly—some were sticking out their noses sniffing away, while others were trying to peek out curiously as they experienced the new smells, sights, and sounds that were quite different from their usual farmstead. Little did they know they were on their way to be butchered!

In another incident, it was reported a while ago that shepherds in Turkey watched in shock as hundreds of their sheep followed each other over a cliff. It started when one sheep went over the edge, only to be followed by the whole flock. At the end of the episode, more than 400 sheep died in the plunge—their bodies buffering the fall of 1,100 others that followed.



While we might laugh at the silliness of the sheep, it is also a vivid illustration of our human state. On a daily basis, we are offered joyrides that promise pleasure and adventure, opportunities that seem to realize our ambition for recognition, power, material wealth, intimacy, and even meaning. At every turn, we are led by advertisers to believe that their products or services can satiate our thirst for excitement and thrill. Unknowingly, we accept invitations for rides which take us on roads that could result in our slow spiritual deaths. Sadly, we are not often

aware of the looming danger as we are too preoccupied taking in the new experience and novelty. By the time we arrive at our destination, it would be too late for us to escape our end.

Anyone who has been to a sheep pen would tell you that sheep are not exactly the smartest in the animal kingdom. They do, however, have a strong instinct to follow the leader. When one sheep decides to go somewhere, the rest of the flock usually follows, even if the first sheep has no idea what it is doing. The incident in Turkey is a case in point. Apparently, even from birth, lambs are conditioned to follow the older members of the flock.

Interestingly, sheep are often used to typify humans in the Bible. Jesus speaks of himself as the Good Shepherd and how we are like sheep that have gone astray who are in need of a shepherd. (John 10:14, Mathew 9:36.) Meanwhile, the wisdom of Proverbs warns us that "There is a way that seems right to a person, but in the end it leads to death."

Realizing our propensity to follow ways that are dangerous to our souls, how then might we safeguard ourselves from following the wrong leader? Paul, who recognized how easily the human heart is enticed by the things and the ways of the world, urged the Romans to no longer conform to the pattern of this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds in the power of one worthy of leading. In short, if we are to follow the Good Shepherd, there is hope for every journey no matter how discouraging it might appear. By renewing our vision with the power of his life and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can discern the options presented to us by the world and avoid the way that leads to far less promising ends. ~

"The Journey of Sheep," by I'Ching Thomas, A Slice of Infinity, No 2785, originally printed 16 August 2012 (www.rzim.org). Used by permission of Ravi Zacharias International Ministries.

To Understand Grace

Pastor Tom Lappi; Newberg, Oregon
July 2005 CM

It is a delight to meditate on God's Word and to discover the treasures of wisdom hidden there. He is the Source of the Living Water that flows of its own volition. It flows silently, and we cannot see from where it comes. Yet, for those willing to stoop down and drink, it is refreshment unlike anything else.

Jesus told of two men whose lives were about as different as they could possibly be. *There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores. (Luke 16:19-20)* In two short verses, Jesus described the unbeliever and the child of God.



Our hearts are united with the beggar named Lazarus. We can identify with him, and somehow we are not ashamed. The one aspect of Lazarus that is so moving is the last phrase, for Lazarus is described as *full of sores*. There is the mystery of godliness that is hidden from the eyes of the world, and especially from the self-righteous who pass by and point out the sores of the Christians.

The real story isn't that we have these sores, or that we have to get rid of them, but rather that we are fit for heaven by His grace, shown to us because of the merits of Jesus. Lazarus carried these sores until the moment of death, and then the angels carried him home.

May we not be discouraged, or despair, when we take our place with Lazarus, for it is here that we understand grace. We know that each of us, like Lazarus, also has a name, written in heaven in the Lamb's book of life. ~

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP,
MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION
(Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Title of Publication: Christian Monthly; 2. Publication Number: 0009-5494; 3. Date of Filing: September 10, 2012; 4. Frequency of Issue: Monthly; 5. Number of Issues Annually: 12; 6. Annual Subscription Price, \$12.
7. Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: PO Box 2126, Battle Ground, WA 98604; Contact Person: Anders Sundqvist; Telephone (360) 896-7344.
8. Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: PO Box 2126, Battle Ground, WA 98604.
9. Name and Address of Publisher: Apostolic Lutheran Book Concern, PO Box 2126, Battle Ground, WA 98604; Editor: Lois Matson, PO Box 2996, Battle Ground, WA 98604; Managing Editor: Lois Matson, PO Box 2996, Battle Ground, WA 98604.
10. Owner: Apostolic Lutheran Book Concern, PO Box 2126, Battle Ground, WA 98604.
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities: None.
12. Tax Status: Has not changed during preceding 12 months.
13. Publication Title: Christian Monthly.
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data: September 2012.
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation: Christian Devotional
a. Total Number Copies Printed: Average Number of Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months, 400; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 350.
b. Paid Circulation: 1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions: Average, 292; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 240. 2) Paid In-County Subscriptions: Average, 50; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 40. 3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, and Counter Sales: Average, 0; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 0. 4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS: Average, 32; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date: 28.
c. Total Paid Distribution: Average, 374; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 308.
d. Free Distribution by Mail: 1) Outside-County, 0; 2) In-County, 0; 3) Other Classes, 0; 4) Free Distribution Outside the Mail: Average, 0; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 0.
e. Total Free Distribution: Average, 0; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 0.
f. Total Distribution: Average, 374; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 308.
g. Copies Not Distributed: Average, 26; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 42.
h. Total: Average, 400; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 350.
j. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation: Average: 100%; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date: 100%.
16. Publication of Statement of Ownership: October 2012.
I certify that all information above is true and complete.

Anders Sundqvist, Business Manager

Primitive Christianity and the Reformation

J.H. Merle D'Aubigne
History of the Reformation

Primative Christianity and the Reformation are the two greatest revolutions in history. They were not limited to one nation only, as were the various political movements that history records; but their influence extended over many, and their effects are destined to be felt to the utmost limits of the world. Primitive Christianity and the Reformation are one and the same revolution, brought about at different epochs and under different circumstances. Although not alike in their secondary features, they are identical in their primary and chief characteristics. One is a repetition of the other. The former put an end to the old world; the latter began the new: between them lie the Middle Ages. One is the parent of the other; and although the daughter may in some instances bear marks of inferiority, she had characters that are peculiarly her own.

The term "revolution," which I here apply to it, has of late fallen into discredit with many individuals, who almost confound it with revolt. But they are wrong: for a revolution is merely a change in the affairs of men—something new unfolded (*revolutus*) from the bosom of humanity; and this very word, previous to the end of the last century, was more frequently used in a good than in a bad sense: a happy, a wonderful revolution, were the terms employed. The Reformation was quite the opposite of a revolt: it was the re-establishment of the principles of primitive Christianity. It was a regenerative movement with respect to all that was destined to revive; a conservative movement as regards all that will exist for ever. While Christianity and the Reformation established the great principle of the equality of souls in the

eyes of God, and overthrew the usurpations of a haughty priesthood that assumed to place itself between the Creator and His creature, they both laid down this fundamental rule of social order, that all power is derived from God, and called upon all men to "love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king."

The God of pagan antiquity was only a faint reflection, a dim shadow of Jehovah—of the Eternal One. The true God whom the Hebrews worship, willing to impress on the minds of all nations that He reigns continually upon earth, gave with this intent, if I may venture the expression, a bodily form to this sovereignty in the midst of Israel. A visible theocracy was appointed to exist once upon the earth, that it might unceasingly remind us of that invisible theocracy which shall for ever govern the world. And see what luster this great truth (God in history) receives under the Christian dispensation. What is Jesus Christ, if He be not God in history?

Is not this great truth, that God has appeared in human nature, in reality the keystone of the arch—the mysterious link which binds all earthly things together, and connects them with heaven? History records a birth of God, and yet God has no part in history! Jesus Christ is the true God of man's history: it is shown by the very meanness of His advent.

When man would raise a shelter against the weather—a shade from the heat of the sun—what preparation of materials, what scaffolding and crowds of workmen, what trenches and heaps of rubbish!—but when God would do the same, He takes the smallest seed that a new-born child might clasp in its feeble hand, deposits it in the bosom of the

Continued on back cover

Christian Monthly Vol. LXVIII—No. 10

Subscription Rate: 1 Year

US: \$12 (Washington residents add your local sales tax)

Canada: \$18 (US money order only) Foreign: \$25

Apostolic Lutheran Church of America

www.apostoliclutheran.org

Western Mission: western@apostoliclutheran.org

Eastern Mission: eastern@apostoliclutheran.org

Foreign Mission: foreign@apostoliclutheran.org

The *Christian Monthly* (ISSN 0009-5494) is published monthly for \$12 per year by the Apostolic Lutheran Book Concern, 19113 NE 144th Street, Brush Prairie, WA 98606. Periodical permit paid in Brush Prairie, Washington.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: PO Box 2126, Battle Ground, WA 98604

General Disclaimer: The material in the *Christian Monthly* is reviewed for scriptural soundness and to ensure that it does not conflict with the teachings of the ALCA. Publication does not imply that other material by included authors has been so approved.

Send articles for publication to:

Lois Matson, Editor
CHRISTIAN MONTHLY
PO Box 2996
Battle Ground, WA 98604 USA
Phone: (360) 904-6951
Fax: (360) 686-4131
Email: cm@apostoliclutheran.org

**Address subscriptions, payments,
and Book Concern orders to:**

Anders & Clara Sundqvist, Managers
THE BOOK CONCERN
PO Box 2126
Battle Ground, WA 98604 USA
Phone: (360) 896-7344
Email: books@apostoliclutheran.org

Christian Monthly

October 2012



HAVE YOU MOVED? Please notify the Book Concern of address changes. We must pay return postage on undelivered mail.

Primitive Christianity: *continued from pg 7*

earth, and from that grain, scarcely distinguishable in its commencement, He produces the stately tree, under whose spreading branches the families of men may find a refuge. To effect great results by imperceptible means—such is the law of God.

In Jesus Christ is found the most glorious fulfillment of this law. Christianity has now taken possession of the gates of every people. It reigns or hovers over all the tribes of the earth, from the rising to the setting sun; and even a skeptical philosophy is compelled to acknowledge it as the social and spiritual law of the world. And yet what was the commencement of this religion, the noblest of all things under the vault of heaven—nay, in the "infinite immense" of creation? A child born in the smallest town of the most despised nation in the world—a child whose mother had not what even the most indigent and wretched woman of our towns

possesses, a room to shelter her in the hour of travail—a child born in a stable and cradled in a manger! In this, O God, I acknowledge and adore thee!

The Reformation recognized this divine law, and was conscious of fulfilling it. The idea that "God is in history" was often put forth by the reformers.

We find it particularly expressed by Luther in one of those homely and quaint, yet not undignified similitudes, which he was fond of using that he might be understood by the people. "The world," said he one day at table with his friends, "is a vast and magnificent game of cards, made up of emperors, kings, princes, etc. The pope for many centuries beat the emperors, kings and princes. They yielded and fell before him. Then came our Lord God. He dealt the cards: he took the lowest (Luther) for himself, and with it he beat the pope, that vanquisher of the kings of the earth.....This is the ace of God. As Mary said: 'He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and

exalted them of low degree.'" (*Colloquia*, or Table Talk)

The epoch whose history I am desirous of retracing is important for the present generation. When a man becomes sensible of his own weakness, he is generally inclined to look for support in the institutions he sees flourishing around him, or else in the bold devices of his imagination. The history of the Reformation shows that nothing new can be made out of things old; and that if, according to our Savior's expression, we require new bottles for new wine, we must also have new wine for new bottles. It directs man to God as the universal agent in history—to that Divine Word, ever old by the eternal nature of the truths it contains, ever new by the regenerative influence that it exerts; which purified society three centuries ago, which restored faith in God to souls enfeebled by superstition, and which, at every epoch in the history of man, is the fountain whence floweth salvation. ~

“...As My Father Hath Sent Me, So Send I You...”

Pastor Wayne Juntunen
Esko, Minnesota

As sheep before wolves are we sent,
For this is the way our Savior went.
For the lost, forlorn, weary and worn,
Our Savior in Bethlehem was born.

Early in days of flaming youth,
Empowered by Spirit, endowed with Truth,
The young lad 'midst rabbi, priest and scribe
Did question, debate, challenge and chide.

To Jordan's waters did Jesus come,
Made as a sinner, yet the Father's Son;
The One in whom the Father was pleased,
Sent as the Man to sinners He frees.

With signs of healing while preaching and teaching,
Drawn multitudes followed hung'ring and thirsting.
Like sheep without shepherd, the Savior discerned
Fields white unto harvest; salvation they yearned.

Disciples He called from common folk,
Trained and sent forth with the Word He spoke.
Miraculous healings spelled Satan's demise;
Freed captives "Hosannas!" reached to the skies.

But Satan opposed, a false learner employed;
Plans were devised, soldiers deployed.
"Crucifixion!" they cried; Pilate bowed to their will:
Beaten, scorned and rejected to Calvary's hill.

As the Father had sent from eternity past,
Jesus suffered and died breathing out His last.
"'Tis finished," He cried; His work now was done.
Redemption's story is now begun.

As sent by the Father, so Christ sends you
To wolves and rebels with love's message so true:
Forgiveness, freedom, and peace 'midst sorrow,
Victory in Christ and an endless tomorrow.

