

946. Keys, Power of, Catholic View of

SOURCE: *Catechism of the Council of Trent for Parish Priests*, trans. by John A. McHugh and Charles J. Callan (1958), pp. 281, 282. Copyright 1934 by Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., New York. Used by permission.

[p. 281] Having said so much on contrition, we now come to confession, which is another part of Penance. The care and exactness which its exposition demands of pastors must be at once obvious, if we only reflect that most holy persons are firmly persuaded that whatever of piety, of holiness, of religion, has been preserved to our times in the Church, through God's goodness, must be ascribed in great measure to confession. It cannot, therefore, be a matter of surprise that the enemy of the human race, in his efforts to destroy utterly the Catholic Church, should, through the agency of the ministers of his wicked designs, have assailed with all his might this bulwark, as it were, of Christian virtue. It should be shown, therefore, in the first place that the institution of confession is most useful and even necessary to us.

[p. 282] ... Contrition, it is true, blots out sin; but who does not know that to effect this it must be so intense, so ardent, so vehement, as to bear a proportion to the magnitude of the crimes which it effaces? This is a degree of contrition which few reach; and hence, in this way, very few indeed could hope to obtain the pardon of their sins. It, therefore, became necessary that the most merciful Lord should provide by some easier means for the common salvation of men; and this He has done in His admirable wisdom, by giving to His Church the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

According to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, a doctrine firmly to be believed and constantly professed by all, if the sinner have a sincere sorrow for his sins and a firm resolution of avoiding them in future, although he bring not with him that contrition which may be sufficient of itself to obtain pardon, all his sins are forgiven and remitted through the power of the keys, when he confesses them properly to the priest. Justly, then, do those most holy men, our Fathers, proclaim that by the keys of the Church the gate of heaven is thrown open, a truth which no one can doubt since the Council of Florence has decreed that the effect of Penance is absolution from sin.

947. Kingdom of God, Diverse Meanings of

SOURCE: George Eldon Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1959), pp. 18, 22, 23. Copyright 1959 by The Paternoster Press. Used by permission of the author and of The Paternoster Press, London.

[p. 18] The parables of the Kingdom make it clear that in some sense, the Kingdom is present and at work in the world. The Kingdom of God *is* like a tiny seed which becomes a great tree; it *is* like leaven which will one day have permeated the entire bowl of dough (Luke 13:18–21). Yet on the other hand, when Pilate examined Jesus about His teaching, Jesus replied, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36).

The very complexity of the Biblical teaching about the Kingdom of God is one of the reasons why such diverse interpretations have arisen in the history of theology. Isolated verses can be quoted for most of the interpretations which can be found in our theological literature. The Kingdom is a present reality (Matt. 12:28), and yet it is a future blessing (1 Cor. 15:50). It is an inner spiritual redemptive blessing (Rom. 14:17) which can be experienced only by way of the new birth (John 3:3), and yet it will have to do with the government of the nations of the world (Rev. 11:15). The Kingdom is a realm into which men enter now (Matt. 21:31), and yet it is a realm into which they will enter tomorrow (Matt. 8:11). It is at the same time a gift of God which will be bestowed by God in the future (Luke 12:32) and yet which must be received in the present (Mark 10:15).

Obviously no simple explanation can do justice to such a rich but diverse variety of teaching...

[p. 22] Our problem, then, is found in this threefold fact: (1) Some passages of Scripture refer to the Kingdom of God as God's reign. (2) Some passages refer to God's Kingdom as the realm into which we may now enter to experience the blessings of His reign. (3) Still other passages refer to a future realm which will come only with the return of our Lord Jesus Christ into which we shall then enter and experience the fulness of His reign. Thus the Kingdom of God means three different things in different verses. One has to study all the references in the light of their context and then try to fit them together in an overall interpretation.

Fundamentally, as we have seen, the Kingdom of God is God's sovereign reign; but God's reign expresses itself in different stages through redemptive history. Therefore, men may enter into the realm of God's reign in its several stages of manifestation and experience the blessings of His reign in differing degrees. God's Kingdom is the realm of the Age to Come, popularly called heaven; then we shall realize the blessings of His Kingdom (reign) in the perfection of their fulness. But the Kingdom is here now. There is a realm of spiritual blessing into which we may enter [p. 23] today and enjoy in part but in reality the blessings of God's Kingdom (reign).

We pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The confidence that this prayer is to be answered when God brings human history to the divinely ordained consummation enables the Christian to retain his balance and sanity of mind in this mad world in which we live. Our hearts go out to those who have no such hope. Thank God, His Kingdom is coming, and it will fill all the earth.

948. Kingdom of God, Present and Future Phases of

SOURCE: Robert McAfee Brown, *The Bible Speaks to You* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955), pp. 211, 212. Copyright 1955 by W. L. Jenkins. Used by permission.

[p. 211] In the Bible are three interpretations of the Kingdom.

There is *first* the understanding of the eternal and unending sovereignty of God. He exercises his Kingship over all creation "from everlasting to everlasting." God is Lord of all that is, both now and forevermore. His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, whether we know about it or not.

[p. 212] In *addition* to this, it is plain that to a certain degree this ultimate rule of God is actually manifested in human history. It is partly realized by the Jews when they obey the Torah or Law. It is partly realized in the coming of Christ. After his coming it is spoken of as being "in your midst." It is "at hand"; it has "come upon you."

Finally, there are a number of passages that make it plain that the Kingdom, in all its fullness, is still off in the future. If it has partially come, it is also still coming. The consummation of the purpose of God has not yet been completely achieved, but is still to come.

These elements can be combined so as to bring out the distinctiveness of the Biblical position by saying that the Kingdom of God has "broken in" to human history in a decisive way in the coming of Jesus Christ, but that the completion and fulfillment of this mighty act of God still lie in the future. Look at the two sides of this statement.

949. Kingdom of God, a Present and Future Reality

SOURCE: George E. Ladd, *Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God*, pp. 66–69. Copyright 1952 by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. Used by permission.

[p. 66] After we have recognized that the Gospels represent the kingdom as both a present and a future reality, we are faced with the problem of the underlying significance of these two aspects of the kingdom...

[p. 67] The Gospel data require us to recognize the future eschatological aspect of the kingdom as the primary temporal orientation and not as merely incidental to the present aspect. In the Sermon on the Mount, the kingdom is repeatedly viewed as something in the future which is yet to come... The situation reflected in these promises of future blessing is that of a future and final world order, displacing the course of the present world, set up by the mighty act of God, consisting essentially in the overthrow of every will resisting God and every power hostile to the good, when God alone and absolutely will rule the world as king.

While the Sermon on the Mount deals with a present righteousness, the possession of that righteousness is viewed as necessary not so much to live in the present world as the necessary prerequisite for entering into the future kingdom. Unless men have such a righteousness which exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, they *will never enter* the kingdom (Matt. 5:20). The kingdom is not something which was [p. 68] come, but something for whose coming men are now to prepare themselves. When it comes, it will involve judgment and a separation between men. "On that day" some will endeavor to enter the kingdom but will be excluded because they have not in this life done the will of God. Jesus himself will then be the one to whom the power of judgment is given (Matt. 7:21–22).

When a gentile centurion manifested faith in Jesus, he received the commendation that his faith would find its fullest recognition in the future kingdom. In that day, many others—gentiles like the centurion—would come from the east and the west to sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—Old Testament saints who apparently at that time have been raised from the dead—while the sons of the kingdom, the Jewish people to whom Jesus came and who ought to occupy those seats because of their religious heritage, will be cast into outer darkness where men will weep and gnash their teeth (Matt. 8:11–12). This again anticipates the coming of the kingdom after a day of judgment.

In the same vein, Jesus taught that those who were then his disciples would not experience the full blessing of their discipleship until the future. Because they had abandoned earthly possessions and relationships to follow Jesus, he promised them that "in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28).

While the parables of the kingdom view it as something present, it is not present in its fullness and perfection. Evil doers will not be gathered out of the kingdom until the consummation of the age, and only then will the righteous shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matt. 13:38–43). The kingdom of heaven will not be perfectly realized until the division between the good and the evil at the consummation of the present age (Matt. 13:47–50).

[p. 69] At the last supper with the disciples as Jesus anticipated his death, he looked forward to the day when he would drink the fruit of the vine new with his disciples in his Father's kingdom (Matt. 26:29).

When Jesus came to Jerusalem for the last time, the people thought that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. Jesus told them a parable to disabuse them of such expectations. The kingdom was to be long delayed. Jesus, who in the parable is

represented by a nobleman, is to go into a “far country” to obtain his kingly authority and then to return. The coming of the kingdom must await the return of Christ (Luke 19:11–27).

Thus while there is a sense, as we shall see, in which Jesus represented the kingdom as already present, yet he continually looked forward to the coming of the kingdom in the future when the Son of Man would return in glory. The present age must run its course before the kingdom is fully manifested, before the kingdom “comes.” By their acceptance or rejection of Jesus, men prepare themselves for that day when the kingdom is to come. The one group will find entrance into it, the others will be shut out. To this extent the consistent eschatology is correct: *the kingdom in its fullness is consistently future*.

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974. Law, Moral, Ceremonial, and Jewish National

SOURCE: Westminster Confession of Faith, **chap.** 21 (originally 19), “Of the Law of God,” **secs.** 1–4, in *A Harmony of the Westminster Presbyterian Standards*, **ed.** by James Benjamin Green (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1958), **pp.** 110, 111, **col.** 1.

- [p. 110] 1. God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it.
- [p. 111] 2. This law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness; and, as such, was delivered by God upon mount Sinai in ten commandments, and written in two tables; the first four commandments containing our duty toward God, and the other six our duty to man.
3. Besides this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly holding forth divers instructions of moral duties. All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated under the New Testament.
4. To them also, as a body politic, he gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any other, now, further than the general equity thereof may require.

975. Law, Moral, Ceremonial, and Judicial

SOURCE: Samuel Mather, *The Gospel of the Old Testament* (London: R. B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1834), **Vol.** 1, **p.** 210.

The laws ... delivered by Moses, were of three kinds—moral, ceremonial, and judicial... The first, or moral law, being the law of universal or unalterable right, is binding upon all men, and is still in force.

976. Law, Moral, Distinguished From Ceremonial and Civil

SOURCE: *Epitome of Rev. Dr. Erick Pontoppidan’s Explanation of Martin Luther’s Small Catechism*, **trans.** from the Norwegian by Edmund Belfour (Minneapolis: Book Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, 1935), **pp.** 6–8.

[p. 6] Part I. Of the Law, or the Ten Commandments.

23. *How many kinds of laws did God give in the Old Testament?*

¹Neufeld, D. F., & Neuffer, J. (1962). *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Student's Source Book*. Commentary Reference Series. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

Three kinds: 1. The ceremonial church law; 2. The civil law; 3. The moral law.

24. *Which of these laws is still in force?*

The moral law, which is contained in the Ten Commandments.

[p. 7] 25. *Cannot this law be abolished?*

No; because it is founded on God's holy and righteous nature.

26. *How had God revealed this Law?*

In the creation He wrote it in men's hearts, and hence it is called the Law of nature.

Rom. 2:15...

27. *Has not God revealed this Law in any other Way?*

Yes, He gave it on Mount Sinai, written on two tables of stone...

[p. 8] 33. *Are believers subject to the compulsion and condemnation of the Law?*

No, for Christ has redeemed us therefrom. Rom. 6:14... I Tim. 1:9...

34. *Are not believers bound to live according to the law?*

Yes, certainly. Rom. 3:31...

35. *What is it, then, that drives a believer to live according to the Law, since he does it not from fear of the condemnation of the Law?*

The love of Christ constraineth us. II Cor. 5:14, 15.

36. *Is the Law satisfied with outward works?*

No; it demands the whole man, body and soul. Luke 10:27?

977. Law, Moral, Indispensable to Our Existence in Society

SOURCE: Ralph J. Bunche, "Toward Peace and Freedom," *The Christian Century*, 70 (April 22, 1953), 479. Copyright 1953 Christian Century Foundation, Chicago. Reprinted by permission from *The Christian Century*.

People in society can live together only if their relations are governed by some recognition, however imperfect, of moral law and mutual respect. The nations of the world, which make up the international community, must be similarly governed in their relationships or there will be international chaos on a scale beggaring description and with consequences, in this atomic era, too forbidding to contemplate. In our society, in every society, there are rebels, mavericks and evildoers who refuse to govern their conduct by any accepted code... It is precisely because of them that laws, police and moral pressures are indispensable to our existence in society.

978. Law, Moral—Relationship to Salvation

SOURCE: C. S. Lewis, *The Case for Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), pp. 25–28. Used by permission of The Macmillan Company and Geoffrey Bles Ltd., London.

[p. 25] Now, from this ... [that Moral Law which He has put into our minds] we conclude that the Being behind the universe is intensely interested in right conduct... The Moral Law doesn't give us any grounds for thinking that God is "good" in the sense of being indulgent, or soft, or sympathetic. There's nothing indulgent about the Moral Law. It's as hard as nails. It tells you to do the straight thing and it doesn't seem to care how painful, or dangerous, or difficult it is to do. If God is like the Moral Law then He is not soft. It's no use, at this stage, saying that what you mean by a "good" God is a God who can forgive... [p. 26] And it's no good either saying that if there is a God of that sort—an impersonal absolute goodness—then you don't like Him and aren't going to bother about Him. For the trouble is that part of you is on His side and really agrees with His disapproval of human greed and trickery and exploitation. You may want Him to make an exception in your own case, to let you off this one time; but you know at bottom that unless the power behind the world really and unalterably detests that sort of behaviour,

then He can't be good. On the other hand, we know that if there does exist an absolute goodness it must hate most of what we do. That's the terrible fix we're in. If the universe is not governed by an absolute goodness, then all our efforts are in the long run hopeless. But if it is, then we are making ourselves enemies to that goodness every day, and aren't in the least likely to do any better to-morrow, and so our case is hopeless again. We can't do without it, and we can't do with it. God is the only comfort, He is also the supreme terror: the thing we most need and the thing we most want to keep out of the way of. He is our only possible ally, and we have made ourselves His enemies. Some people talk as if meeting the gaze of absolute goodness would be fun. They want to think again. They're still at the Munich stage of religion. Goodness is either the great safety or the great danger—according to the way you react to it...

[p. 27] Christianity simply doesn't make sense until you've faced the sort of facts I've been describing. Christianity tells people to repent and promises them forgiveness. It therefore has nothing (as far as I know) to say to people who don't know they've done anything to repent of and who don't feel that they need any forgiveness. It's after you've realized that there is a real Moral Law, and a Power behind the law, and that you have broken that law and put yourself wrong with that Power—it's *after* all that that Christianity begins to talk. When you know you're sick, you'll listen to the doctor. When you have realised that your position is nearly desperate you'll begin to understand what the Christians are talking about. They offer an explanation of how we got into our present state of both hating goodness and loving it. They offer an explanation of how God can be this impersonal mind at the back of the Moral Law and yet also a Person. They tell you how the demands of this law, which you and I can't meet, have been met on our behalf, how God Himself becomes a man to save man from the disapproval of God. It's an old story and if you want to go into it you will no doubt consult people who have more authority to talk about it than I have. All I'm doing is to get people to face the facts—to understand the questions which Christianity claims to answer. And they're very terrifying facts... Of course, I quite agree that the Christian religion is, in the long run, a thing of unspeakable comfort. But it doesn't begin in comfort; it begins in the dismay I've been describing, and it's just no [p. 28] good trying to go on to that comfort without first going through that dismay. In religion, as in the war and in everything else, comfort is the one thing you can't get by looking for it. If you're looking for truth, you may find comfort in the end: if you're looking for comfort you will not get *either* comfort *or* truth—only soft soap and wishful thinking to begin with and, in the end, despair. Most of us have got over the pre-war wishful thinking about international politics. It is time we did the same about religion.

979. Law, Mosaic—Not Legalism but Love

SOURCE: B. Davie Napier, "The Law and the Gospel," *The New Century Leader*, 59 (May, 1958), 15.

Because Christianity emerged only after a severe tussle with those who would make of it a religion of extreme legalism, we who stand in that faith and who are informed of that early struggle are disposed to discount—sometimes unthinkingly—the place of law not only in the life of faith but in the totality of life. And we would do well to reflect that the Law of Moses, the kind of law we find in Deuteronomy, is a far cry from the extreme legalistic mentality against which Christianity in its first years was forced to fight...

We will do well to understand the nature of that law. The entire Book of Deuteronomy is a moving and eloquent testimony to the warmth and vitality of law. The

average person assumes that law is and rigid, an unpleasant necessity in the disciplining of society. But look at Deuteronomy. Listen to it.

Observe first the motivation of the law. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deut. 6:5). This is Deuteronomy’s theme song. Over and over again, in a number of different ways, this body of legal material declares that its justification is love—that it asks what it does because the relationship on which it is built, the relationship between God and man, is one of love. Love is the motivation of the law, not fear, not the promise of reward, although this is certainly present, not even awe.

On what is the love based? Listen again: “When thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgements, which the Lord our God hath commanded you? Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh’s bondmen in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand . . . that he might bring us in, to give us the land” (Deut. 6:20–23). God acted first. He first loved us—this is the sense of it. He first loved us and showed that love in what he had done for us (with what deeper meaning the Christian says these same words). Yes, the appeal, the motivation, is love, love based upon the experienced, the known, the tangible, real grace, mercy, and goodness of God.

980. Law, of God, a Manifestation of God’s Nature

SOURCE: *The Augsburg Sunday School Teacher*, 63 (August, 1937), 483.

Is there such a thing as a perfect law? Everything that comes from God is perfect. The law of which we are thinking came from Him. It becomes sullied in our hands. We take from it and try to add to it, and in that way it becomes less than perfect. In a very real sense the law of the Lord is the manifestation of the nature of the Lord. It could no more be imperfect than He is. That law would work differently if we were to let it have its way in our lives.

981. Law, of God, and Love

SOURCE: Peter H. Eldersveld, *Of Law and Love*, pp. 75–79. Copyright 1954 by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. Used by permission.

[p. 75] When the Son of God summarized His Father’s law, the ten commandments, He put it in just one word: *Love*. The law of God is the law of love. And we can easily understand why. God is love. So we should be too, for we were made in His image. He wants us to be like Him. That is why He gave us His law. It tells us in practical terms what it means to love, and how we can test our love.

But Jesus also told us that this love must have two dimensions: love for God, and love for man. The one is vertical, and the other is horizontal. It was as though He took those two tablets of stone from Mount Sinai and wrote “Love God” on the first one and “Love Man” on the second. In other words, He said: If you love God with all your heart and soul and mind, you will not have other gods, nor make images of God, nor take His name in vain, nor break His sabbath; and if you love your neighbor as yourself, you will not dishonor your parents, nor kill, nor commit adultery, nor steal, nor bear false witness, nor covet. So there are two kinds of love which God requires of us in His law: love toward Him, and love toward our fellowmen.

But now, notice the intimate relationship between those two. Jesus said that the second is “like unto” the first, and [p. 76] that the whole law “hangs” on them—not on just one of them, but on both of them together. So these two dimensions of love are quite inseparable, just as those two tablets of stone on Mount Sinai were inseparable. We

cannot love God unless we love man, and we cannot love man unless we love God. There is really only one love, though it moves in two directions.

[p. 77] But men say that's too idealistic; it will never work in a world like this one; love may be a fine thing, but we have to look out for ourselves first. Why do they say that? They don't talk that way about the other laws of God in this universe, do they? For example, they never say the law of gravity is too idealistic. And it works the same way. It is just as inexorable. When a man wants to get down to the street from the top floor of a high building, there are two ways he can do it. He can take an elevator, or jump out of the window. Is he being too idealistic when he says that he will obey the law of gravity and take the elevator? He would not say that the window is more practical, would he? ...

[p. 78] If we are honest, there is only one thing we can do in the face of our failure to obey this law. We must humbly confess. There is nothing wrong with the law. But there is something wrong with us. We know that we should obey it, but we do not obey it. It does not make sense to discard the law just because we break it. And, for that matter, we cannot discard it, no more than we can discard the law of gravity.

Even the most God-fearing men are bound to confess that they fall short in their love for God and man...

But what then? Is there no hope for us? If we confess that we cannot obey this law of love, will God excuse us for disobeying it? No, indeed, He would no longer be God if He did that. And besides, He made us capable of loving Him and our neighbors. It is not His fault that we have lost that capacity through sin. And we cannot expect Him to revoke His law. Even if it were possible it would be disastrous. A moral universe depends upon it. So there seems to be no way out of our predicament. We cannot escape the penalty of our disobedience.

Thank God, that is not true! There is a way out. There is a Cross on Mount Calvary. It has a vertical beam and a horizontal beam—symbols of the two kinds of love you see there. For on that Cross hangs the Son of God and Man, [p. 79] the God-Man. He loved God with all His heart and soul and mind, and His neighbor as Himself—even unto death. He obeyed the law of love perfectly, and He is the only One who ever did!

But He did not do it just to prove that it could be done. He did it precisely because it could not be done—by anyone else. It was not a demonstration. It was a redemption. He did it for us because we could never have done it. And He did it not to *show* us His love, but to *give* it to us; not to *teach* us, but to *save* us; not to set an *example* for us, but to make *atonement* for us.

If we love Him as our Saviour, by faith, we love both God and Man in one Person! And that is the only way for sinners to begin obeying this law of love again. For to love God above all and our neighbors as ourselves we must first have the redeeming love of Christ in our hearts!

982. Law, of God, and the Law of Sin and Death

SOURCE: G. Campbell Morgan, *The Ten Commandments* (New York: Revell, 1901), p. 12.

He [man] needs to be solemnly reminded that the law of the spirit of life in Christ sets him free from the law of sin and death, but not from the law of God.

983. Law, of God—Catholics Claim Right to Change Certain Commandments

SOURCE: Richard Challoner, *The Catholic Christian Instructed* (New York: E. Dunigan and Brother, 1853), p. 211 [FRS No. 19.]

Q. But has the Church a power to make any alterations in the commandments of God?

A. The commandments of God, as far as they contain his eternal law, are unalterable and indispensable; but as to whatever was only ceremonial, they cease to oblige, since the Mosaic law was abrogated by Christ's death. Hence, as far as the commandment obliges us to set aside some part of our time for the worship and service of our Creator, it is an unalterable and unchangeable precept of the eternal law, in which the Church cannot dispense: but forasmuch as it prescribes the seventh day in particular for this purpose, it is no more than a ceremonial precept of the old law, which obligeth not Christians. And therefore, instead of the seventh day, and other festivals appointed by the old law, the Church has prescribed the Sundays and holydays to be set apart for God's worship; and these we are now obliged to keep in consequence of God's commandment, instead of the ancient Sabbath.

984. Law, of God, Functions as a Mirror

SOURCE: Peter H. Eldersveld, *Of Law and Love*, pp. 83–85. Copyright 1954 by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. Used by permission.

[p. 83] The law of God is ... like a mirror which God holds up before us and says: Take a good look at yourself; this will tell you what you really are inside; you may have a good reputation, and men may not be able to see the marks of your sin, and you may even think you are getting away with it; but this will tell you the truth about yourself.

It makes us uncomfortable to look at that law. We do not like what we see. And so we run away from it. Or we close our eyes to it. Or we try to get rid of it. We do not want to be reminded of our sins. We would much rather be told about our good points.

Suppose we recall what God says in His Word about such behavior? You will find it in James 1:23, 24: "If any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was."

That is ridiculous, of course! Nonsense! When a man looks into a mirror and sees that his face is dirty, he does not run away and forget what he saw. He faces the facts and proceeds to apply soap and water. He would be slightly abnormal, to say the least, if he tried to run away from all mirrors just because he did not like his reflection.

And besides, there is no way to escape the picture of ourselves which we see in God's law. We may be able to forget it for a while, but in the end it always catches up with us. Even if we succeed in ignoring it as long as we live, we know it will be waiting to confront us at last when we stand in the searching light of divine judgment.

But why does God pursue us with that picture? Why doesn't He just leave us alone? He knows it only makes us miserable. Is He not being merciless when He confronts us with our sin? Why doesn't He just forget about it? After all, He knows we cannot keep His law. And what is the use [p. 84] of talking about our past failures? We cannot do anything about them anymore, can we?

Well, why does the doctor take an X-ray picture when he suspects there is something radically wrong with us, and then show it to us? Because he is merciless? Because he delights in diagnosing terrible diseases? Suppose he would tell us instead that we are the picture of health, and that therefore we have nothing to worry about. Would we prefer that? Perhaps some people would. And they might even be happy to pay the exorbitant fee that usually goes with such a diagnosis. But in the end they would discover that they were in the hands of a quack.

Why does God pursue us with His law? Because He knows that unless we see ourselves as He sees us, we will never realize how very desperate our spiritual condition is—until it is too late to do anything about it. If He did not love us, He would not bother us with His law. If He did not have a cure for us, He would not tell us how sick we are. If He didn't want to save us, He would not confront us with our sin.

In other words, He knows that if He did not make us go to Mount Sinai, we would never go to Calvary. If we do not see our sin, we will not see our Savior. If we will not stand in the searching light of that law, we may not stand in the saving light of that Cross. Mount Calvary is only for those who have been to Mount Sinai.

The reflection we see of ourselves when we look into God's perfect law makes us miserable. And it should, for we are all sinners by nature. But God wants us to see it, to face the facts of our sin, so that He can then show us our Savior on the Cross—the Son of God and Man in one perfect Person, who became like us in every way except sin, who never broke any of these commandments, and who therefore can save those who do.

The law of God condemns us. But the love of God redeems us. We cannot have the one without the other. We [p. 85] may not like what we see on Mount Sinai, but we may love what we see on Mount Calvary. And having seen both, we will want both. For the law of God leads to the love of God, and the love of God fulfills the law of God. So with the apostle we say: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!" And with the psalmist we say: "O how love I Thy law!"

985. Law, of God, Not Belittled by Justification by Faith

SOURCE: C. H. Spurgeon, *Sermons*, 2d series (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., 1857), sermon 18, p. 280.

The law of God is a divine law, holy, heavenly, perfect. Those who find fault with the law, or in the least degree depreciate it, do not understand its design, and have no right idea of the law itself. Paul says, "The law is holy, but I am carnal; sold under sin." In all we ever say concerning justification by faith, we never intend to lower the opinion which our hearers have of the law, for the law is one of the most sublime of God's works. There is not a commandment too many; there is not one too few; but it is so *incomparable*, that its *perfection* is a proof of its divinity. No human lawgiver could have given forth such a law as that which we find in the decalogue. It is a perfect law; for all human laws that are right are to be found in that brief compendium and epitome of all that is good and excellent toward God; or between man and man.

986. Law. Protestant Creeds on

SOURCE: Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, (New York: Harper, 1919), Vol. 3, pages as indicated below.

a. Lutheran—Formula of Concord, article 6

[p. 131] Although they who truly believe in Christ, and are sincerely converted to God, are through Christ set free from the curse and constraint of the Law, they are not, nevertheless, on that account without Law, inasmuch as the Son of God redeemed them for the very reason that they might meditate on the Law of God day and night, and continually exercise themselves in the keeping thereof.

b. Reformed—Second Helvetic Confession, chapter 12

[p. 854] We teach that the will of God is set down unto us in the law of God; to wit, what he would have us to do, or not to do, what is good and just, or what is evil and unjust. We therefore confess that 'The law is good and holy' (Rom. vii. 12); and that this law is, by the finger of God, either 'written in the hearts of men' (Rom. ii. 15), and so is

called the law of nature, or engraven in the two tables of stone, and [p. 855] more largely expounded in the books of Moses (Exod. xx. 1–17; Deut. v. 22)...

We teach that this law was not given to men, that we should be justified by keeping it; but that, by the knowledge thereof, we might rather acknowledge our infirmity, sin, and condemnation; and so, despairing of our strength, might turn unto Christ by faith.

c. Church of England—Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, article 7

[p. 491] The Old Testament is not contrary to the New: for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to Mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and [p. 492] Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the Law given from God by Moses, as touching Ceremonies and Rites, do not bind Christian men, nor the Civil precepts thereof ought of necessity to be received in any commonwealth; yet notwithstanding, no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called Moral.

d. Protestant Episcopal—Thirty-nine Articles, revised, article 6

[p. 816: Same as article 7 of the Church of England Articles of Religion.]

e. Methodist—Articles of Religion, article 6

[p. 808: Same as article 7 of the Church of England Articles of Religion.]

f. Presbyterian—Westminster Confession of Faith chapters 19, 20

[Chap. 19, p. 641] V. The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator who gave it. Neither doth Christ in the gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen, this obligation...

[p. 643] VII. Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the gospel, but do sweetly comply with it: the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God, revealed in the law, requireth to be done.

[Chap. 20, p. 643] I. The liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the gospel consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the moral law... All which were common also to believers under the law; but under the New Testament the liberty of Christians is further enlarged in [p. 644] their freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law, to which the Jewish Church was subjected.

g. Congregational—Savoy Declaration

[According to Schaff (p. 718), same as the above quotation from the Westminster Confession.]

h. Baptist—Philadelphia Confession

[According to Schaff (p. 738), same as the above quotation from the Westminster Confession.]

i. Baptist—New Hampshire Confession, article 12

[p. 746] We believe that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just, and good; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy Law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible Church [see No. 953].

987. Liberalism, Moderate, Defined

SOURCE: L. Harold DeWolf, *Present Trends in Christian Thought* (New York: Association Press, 1960), pp. 16, 17. Copyright 1960 by National Board of Young Men's Christian Associations. Used by permission.

[p. 16] Among the theologians who would, in various ways and degrees, modify the traditional interpretations of the Christian faith in adaptation to our science-dominated culture, we observe first the moderate liberals. They regard themselves as unequivocally Christian, maintaining the essential affirmations of Christian doctrine. They think these affirmations to be sound and true. Because they are true they may, without fear or favor, be subjected to all the tests and evidences which reason can muster. The moderate liberals believe that truth will have the best chance to win over error in the open arena of honest, critical examination. They believe also that doctrines ought to be stated as clearly and intelligibly as possible, in forms which make evident their relevance to contemporary life.

These moderate liberals have high respect for scientific method; they do not agree with all the ideas which are recommended in the name of science. For example, though accepting biological evolution, they reject the view that man is "only another animal." Though encouraging and participating in psychological inquiry, they vigorously [p. 17] deny that man's conduct is rigorously determined by causal law, to the exclusion of free and responsible choice. At the same time, they grant the propriety of critically examining also religious ideas, wherever found, in the open-minded search for truth. They make use of philosophical methods in their inquiries, and often move easily between philosophy and theology.

988. Liberalism—a Sketch

SOURCE: Bernhard W. Anderson, *Rediscovering the Bible* (New York: Association Press, 1951), pp. 11–14. Copyright 1951 by Haddam House, Inc. Used by permission.

[p. 11] Many Protestants have adopted a position which has been labeled "liberalism." Instead of hiding their heads, ostrichlike, in the barren sands of the past, these Christians sincerely and devoutly have attempted to make the Bible speak relevantly to the modern situation. A Christian cannot believe one set of ideas on Sunday and then live by another set of assumptions the rest of the week. Such religious "schizophrenia" is intolerable, for the Christian faith jealously demands the allegiance of the whole man. Therefore, liberals sought to adjust the inherited faith to the bewildering modern world whose outlook had been defined by the achievements of science. It was their intention to remain loyal to the biblical faith, but to make this faith relevant by translating its truth into the language of the modern age...

[p. 12] Specifically, this meant reinterpreting the Bible in terms of the concept of evolution, a scientific hypothesis which originally was applied in the field of biology but which soon was transferred to other fields of investigation until it became the dominant philosophical point of view on the American scene. This outlook found theological expression in the toning down or outright rejection of supernaturalism in favor of the idea of divine immanence, that is, God's indwelling in man and nature. For instance, creation by supernatural fiat was reinterpreted to mean God's continuing creation, his immanence in the long evolutionary upthrust...

Applied to religious knowledge, the evolutionary interpretation found expression in the idea of "progressive revelation." That is to say, God works immanently within the historical process, revealing his timeless truths up to man's ability to understand; on man's side, this progressive illumination yields increasing "discovery" or expanding "insight." The Bible allegedly gives evidence of such progress. The [p. 13] religion of

Moses is said to be comparatively primitive. But under the influence of the prophetic “genius,” crude and barbarous elements were gradually removed, until Jesus finally came as the great discoverer of God and the teacher of the loftiest ethical principles. Since all humanity is involved in the evolutionary process, it is no more surprising that religions outside the biblical tradition should arrive at the same insights than it is that both Russia and America, working independently, should unlock the secret of the atom. According to this view, the greatness of Jesus is that he saw what many others had seen, or could have seen, but by his forceful teaching and sacrificial death he helped men to take truth seriously.

This modern view of the Bible enabled Christians to keep their heads erect in a world where only fools or fanatics would dare to challenge the assured results of science. Of course, liberals were also children of their time, and therefore fell into the temptation of revising the Bible in accordance with their own presuppositions. Nevertheless, liberalism at its best was governed by the spirit of evangelical Christianity. This is noticeable, for example, in one of the characteristic elements of the liberal attitude: devotion to truth... According to liberalism, all conclusions must be judged by truth itself. This attitude, when applied to biblical study, has aided in our rediscovery of the Bible by enabling us to read it in the light of the circumstances in which it was written...

[p. 14] Although liberalism was swept along by a powerful current of evangelical Christianity, the theology of liberalism came too much under the influence of the modern world-view. It is one thing to attempt to translate the biblical faith into categories which modern man can understand; it is quite another thing to adopt modern categories as ruling principles of interpretation. In attempting to bring Christianity up to date, liberals virtually capitulated to the prevailing world-view of the day, so much so that the dividing line between liberal Protestantism and secularism became increasingly dim.

989. Lord’s Supper, Reinhold Niebuhr on Eschatological Significance of

SOURCE: Reinhold Niebuhr, *Faith and History*, p. 241. Copyright 1949 by Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York. Reprinted with the permission of Charles Scribner’s Sons and James Nisbet, Ltd., London.

The supreme sacrament of the Christian church, the Lord’s Supper, is filled with this eschatological tension. It is instituted with the words: “This do in remembrance of me.” St. Paul declares that “as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death *till he come*” (1 Corinthians 11:26). Thus in this Sacrament the Christian community lives by a great memory and a great hope. The present reality is different because of that memory and hope. What lies between the memory and the hope is a life of grace, in which the love of Christ is both an achieved reality in the community and a virtue which can be claimed only vicariously. The Christian community does not have the perfection of Christ as an assured possession. It will show forth that love the more surely the less certain it is of its possession.

990. Lutheran Bodies, General Statement

SOURCE: *CRB*, 1936, Vol. 2, part 2, pp. 849–853.

[p. 849] *History*.—The position of the Lutheran Church in America rests upon a birthright. It is not an immigrant church that needed to be naturalized after it was transplanted from some European land. It is as old as the American Nation and much older than the American Republic. The Lutheran Church in America is an integral part of

American Christianity. The people in the Lutheran churches of the land are a constituent and typical element of this Nation.

Lutheranism was thoroughly rooted in American soil during colonial times. It has grown up side by side with the Nation and developed by similar stages of progress. The Lutheran Church in America came from Europe, as did all other churches whose members constitute integral elements in American civilization today. Lutherans were among the very earliest European settlers on American shores. A Lutheran Christmas service was held on Hudson Bay in 1619 and a Lutheran congregation was formed on Manhattan Island in 1648. The Lutherans who came to America with the Dutch colonists of New Amsterdam (now New York) during the third decade of the seventeenth century were mostly Germans and Scandinavians. The Swedish Lutherans who settled on the banks of the Delaware during the next decade finally lost touch with the church in Sweden and passed to the control of the Episcopal Church.

The chief source of Lutheran population in the American colonies was immigration from Germany. The German immigrants came mostly in the eighteenth century. Some of them (particularly from north Germany) came to the colony of New York. The exiles from Salzburg settled in Georgia. Lutherans from Wurttemberg landed at Charleston and settled in South Carolina. But the main current of German Lutheran immigration during colonial times flowed into Pennsylvania, so that by the middle of the eighteenth century there were perhaps 60,000 Lutherans in that colony. Throughout colonial times Pennsylvania was the chief home of American Lutheranism.

From the port of Philadelphia Lutheran settlements spread inland across Pennsylvania to New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. Everywhere these Lutherans shared with other Christians the hardships and triumphs of American life and helped as much as any other group in moulding American civilization. Some of them, for example, the Muhlenbergs, were among the leaders in the Revolutionary War, in the State governments, and in the establishment of the Federal Government.

At first only a very small fraction of these Lutherans were gathered into congregations. The supply of pastors was utterly inadequate to their needs. The first organization was effected by Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, who had been sent out from the University of Halle in response to appeals from America. In 1748 he gathered some of the pastors and congregations into a synod which is known today as the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. Other synods followed, in New York in 1786, in North Carolina in 1803, in Ohio in 1818, in Maryland and Virginia in 1820, and in Tennessee in 1820.

As the territory of the church expanded and the number of synods increased, it was felt that they should be bound into some sort of unity so as to bring about greater cooperation. This led to the organization in 1820 of the General Synod. The General Synod in reality cut the European apron-strings of the Lutheran Church in America, because it established a theological seminary, prepared to train its own native ministry, and planned to carry on the home and foreign missionary work of the church. The outstanding leader among the Lutherans during this period was S. S. Schmucker, president of the Gettysburg Seminary.

[p. 850] The organization of a general body gave the Lutherans of America a nationwide outlook and interest. It gave them a sense of permanent citizenship in the Republic. It paralleled the deepest current in the life of the nation at that time. Just when the American Nation felt sufficiently solid and secure to issue its *noli me tangere* in the

form of the Monroe Doctrine, the Lutheran Church in America achieved a federal organization intended to maintain its independent existence among the other church bodies. As Washington and Jefferson, and particularly Monroe, had broken European bonds and announced to European nations that our national policy was "America for Americans," so the organization of a General Synod proclaimed to the religious world that the Lutheran Church in this country had reached its majority and announced the policy of "The Lutheran Church for Lutherans." Both were the outgrowth of the same spirit, the rising American spirit of independence and enterprise.

Then came a period of great numerical increase and territorial expansion, due in part to fresh tides of immigration from Germany. The westward movement of American civilization scattered these Lutherans over the entire length and breadth of the country. Before the middle of the nineteenth century the General Synod extended far into the Middle West, where it came into touch with younger and more conservative Lutheran bodies such as the Missouri, the Iowa, and the Scandinavian synods.

It was in 1839 that the first Lutherans from Germany settled in Missouri. They came from Saxony and were fleeing from the rationalism that was rampant in the state church of their homeland at that time. They were imbued with a double portion of the spirit of confessionalism. Their fiery zeal for the whole body of Lutheran doctrine was made even more intense by the ardor of their piety. This union of denominational zeal and religious fervor gave them extraordinary power of propagandism, so that the few shiploads of Saxon pilgrims have grown into one of the largest of Lutheran bodies, the Missouri Synod. This body was organized in 1847 with headquarters at St. Louis and under the powerful leadership of C. F. W. Walther.

Beginning about 1840 the stream of Lutheran immigration from Europe grew rapidly in volume. It came from Germany and the Scandinavian lands. The greatest strength of the current was reached in the 10 years preceding the Civil War. In that decade nearly 1,000,000 immigrants came to American shores from Germany alone. After the close of the Civil War they continued to come at the rate of about 130,000 annually. Multitudes of these German immigrants were Roman Catholics. Great numbers also went to swell the churchless and godless population of the land. But the greater portion of them were Lutherans. From Norway and Sweden also they came in generous numbers and, like the Germans, settled chiefly in the Middle West and Northwest. The results are seen both in the size and the spirit of the Lutheran Church in America.

New bodies were organized, the Norwegian Church in 1854, the German Iowa Synod in 1854, and the Augustana Synod (Swedish) in 1860. The numerical strength of the church grew rapidly. During the first 40 years in the life of the Republic the communicant membership of the church had multiplied threefold, just keeping pace with the general population of the country. But from 1830 to 1870, while the population at large was increasing threefold, the membership of the Lutheran Church increased more than ninefold, reaching in 1870 a total of about 400,000 and standing fourth among the Protestant churches.

These new Lutherans came without pomp or circumstance and took their places quietly in the land. Their genuine spirituality, the solidity of their church life, and the vigor and warmth of their piety were patent to all who came to know them. They were untrained in the habits of free churches and humbled both by the circumstances of their emigration from Europe and by their strange surroundings when they arrived in the New

World. But their training in the equable, systematic, and methodical ways of state churches, and their constant emphasis on thorough religious instruction and indoctrination insured them against the irregular fervor of that revivalism that periodically burned over their neighbor churches. It helped to guarantee their independence and permanence in their adopted land. They had much to learn in matters of church organization and administration and in the course of time they did learn their lessons along these lines. But from the beginning they also had much to teach to American Christianity in general on methods of the theology and usages of worship, and their teaching has long since yielded visible results.

One effect of this middle period was to infuse a strong confessional element into the body of the Lutheran Church in America. In the older Lutheran bodies, those dating from colonial times, there was a doctrinal reaction due to the study [p. 851] of the confessions and theology of the historic Lutheran Church. Like the other churches in this period, Lutherans cultivated their denominational consciousness. Sectionalism in political history of our country had its parallel in sectarianism among all the churches. Lutherans shared fully in the current trend. This, together with the importation of rigid confessionalists from the Scandinavian lands and from Germany, stamped the Lutheran Church in America as indelibly evangelical and forever doctrinally conservative.

But the middle period of the century was a time of great strife in all phases of American life. In national life it led to the Civil War. This produces a breach in the ranks of the General Synod. The southern synods withdrew and in 1863 organized a new general body afterwards called the United Synod of the South. A second breach came in 1866. The recovery of the General Synod from the doctrinal indifference of the eighteenth century was not rapid enough to suit certain elements in the body, and a number of synods, led by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, withdrew and organized the General Council. This new organization formed its own institutions, prepared its own literature, and organized its own benevolent operations. As the two general bodies in the North occupied much the same territory and claimed the same mission fields farther west, there was much rivalry and conflict between them. But they both grew rapidly and they both expanded until at the close of the century the district synods of both of them extended to the Pacific.

During the period of phenomenal economic growth in our country, that is, from 1870 to 1910, the Lutheran churches reflected faithfully the spirit of the times. They were full of the spirit of expansion and enterprise. Immigration from the Scandinavian lands grew to magnificent dimensions. More than 1,750,000 came during this period, one-half from Sweden, one-third from Norway, and one-sixth from Denmark. In 1882 more than 100,000 arrived from these sources. Most of these sturdy newcomers, like most of the Lutherans from Germany, did not join any church in America. So they constituted a "Lutheran constituency" and presented a most inviting mission field. The Lutheran churches, old and new, took up the challenge and the result was a high spirit of home missionary enterprise.

The General Synod now centralized not only its home missionary work but also its chief branches of benevolence and put them into the hands of general boards. Other bodies adopted this policy, and in this way they were prepared to go forward rapidly in the practical tasks of the church when the new spirit of enterprise visited American Christianity. New fields were opened, in sprawling cities, in newly settled areas of the

Middle West, Northwest, and Far West, and in India, Africa, and Japan. Lutheran colleges and seminaries began to dot the land. Periodicals were established. A Lutheran literature began to appear. A worthy liturgy was devised and commonly accepted. An excellent hymnary was collected and introduced into the congregations. Enthusiasm was carried into every line of the church's proper business, and contributions to benevolences multiplied three times as rapidly as the membership.

So the Lutheran churches flourished and grew. The confirmed membership of all of them increased in these 40 years from less than 500,000 to nearly 2,250,000. This was the largest relative increase made in this period by any of the large denominations. The number of Lutherans passed the number of Presbyterians, and the Lutheran Church advanced from fourth to third place among the Protestant churches in the country. Only the Methodists and Baptists surpassed her numbers. Much of this increase was due to the strong tides of immigration from Europe but much of it also is accounted for by natural increase and by the aggressive missionary spirit that began to pervade all branches of the church.

The twentieth century has been a period of rapprochement among all the Lutherans in America, both along doctrinal lines and in practical work. Here again the Lutheran Church mirrors the tendency in American Christianity as a whole and in American culture in general. The last three decades have been a period of larger units. It has been a time of broad national outlook and even of international mind.

In the Lutheran Church the tendency toward denominational consolidation into larger units appeared somewhat earlier than in the other churches. The first definite expression of the growing solidarity among Lutherans in this period took place among the Norwegians. In 1917, the quadricentennial of the Lutheran Reformation, the three larger bodies of Norwegian Lutherans united to form the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America. The next year four German synods in the Middle West united and formed the Joint Synod of Wisconsin. In 1930 the American Lutheran Church was formed out of the Iowa, Ohio, and Buffalo synods.

[p. 852] But the largest merger of all was that of the three general bodies with headquarters in the East. Gradually, very gradually, the breaches were closed. The wounds made by the Civil War were healed. Many factors worked toward reunion of the factions in the North. Not the least of these factors were the advent of a new generation of leaders and the rise of the general spirit of cooperation to take the place of competition and strife. Finally, in November 1918, simultaneously with the armistice in the World War, the General Synod, nearly 100 years old, and the General Council, just 50 years old, joined hands with each other and with the United Synod in the South, and organized the United Lutheran Church in America. This was the reunion of the oldest elements of Lutheranism in this country, the Lutherans of the Muhlenberg development. It made the largest Lutheran body in America and one of the potent forces to be reckoned with in American Christianity today.

In addition to these organic unions among Lutherans, the last few decades have witnessed significant federations in the Lutheran forces of the land. About one-third of all Lutherans in America are cooperating in the Synodical Conference, a loose organization of which the Missouri Synod constitutes five-sixths and which embraces a small body of Negro Lutherans and Slovak Lutherans and Norwegian Lutherans. Then there is the National Lutheran Council, the outgrowth in 1918 of the National Lutheran Commission

for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare. This is an agency rather than a federation in the strict sense. It accomplishes a large volume of work cooperatively for the United Lutheran Church, the Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Augustana Synod, the American Lutheran Church, the United Danish Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Free Church, the Icelandic Synod, and the Danish Lutheran Church. A third federation is called the American Lutheran Conference. This began in 1930. It is a medium of cooperation and the cultivation of fraternal relations among a number of Lutheran Church bodies that have headquarters in the Middle West. It unites for cooperative purposes the Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Augustana Synod, the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Free Church, and the United Danish Lutheran Church. These bodies have many interests in common both by virtue of their geographical location and their limited history in America, and by virtue of their general outlook and attitude on questions of belief and life. All these facts testify to the high degree of solidarity that has come to expression among the Lutheran forces in America, particularly in this period of larger units that began in all American life about 1910.

Across the boundaries of these several organizations there is a growing spirit of common interest and outlook. All of the major Lutheran bodies have appointed commissions to meet and consider a more complete consolidation of Lutheran forces on this continent. These negotiations proceed slowly, but some results are beginning to appear [see editors' note].

It should be added that in these days of universal conferences and ecumenical movements the Lutherans of America have entered into definite relationships with the Lutherans of other lands. They have helped to form a Lutheran World Convention. The immediate occasion of this new Lutheran world consciousness on the part of American Lutherans was the work of the National Lutheran Council during and after the World War. The Lutherans of America, who had felt little of the ravages of war, were moved to undertake a ministry of mercy among their suffering European brethren in the faith. Commissioners were sent; contacts were made; large funds were gathered and carefully administered. A sense of fellowship developed, and at Eisenach, Germany, in 1923 an organization was effected by delegates from 22 nations. Twice since then the Lutheran World Convention has held meetings, in Copenhagen in 1929 and in Paris in 1935. The fourth meeting is planned for Philadelphia in 1940. In the meantime a vast field for international Lutheran endeavor has opened and much of it has been occupied. So the Lutherans of America are today in process of lifting their eyes above the limitations of language and nation and ecclesiastical organization. They are moving toward a unified intelligence and a consciousness of solidarity.

Doctrine.—The Lutheran churches of America believe that the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments are given by inspiration of God and are the perfect and only rule of faith and life. They believe that the three general creeds—the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian—exhibit the faith of the Christian church, in accordance with the Holy Scriptures.

They believe that the Unaltered Augsburg Confession is in harmony with the Holy Scriptures and is a correct exhibition of its teachings; and that the Apology, the two catechisms of Luther, the Smalcald Articles, and the Formula of Concord, are a faithful development and interpretation of the doctrines of the Word of God and of the Augsburg Confession.

[p. 853] Justification by faith alone in Jesus Christ is held to be the central doctrine of the Word of God according to which all other doctrines are determined and developed. The preaching of the Word of God, rightly divided between law and Gospel, occupies a prominent place in accomplishing repentance and faith. Two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are regarded as effective means of grace rather than mere signs and memorials. Baptism of infants, which is the rule among Lutherans, is held to have regenerative power through which faith is begotten. In the case of adults it seals and confirms the faith begotten of the Holy Ghost through the Word. Lutherans believe in the real presence of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Lord's Supper, offered and given in, with, and under the bread and wine. Consubstantiation, transubstantiation, and impanation are rejected, yet it is firmly believed that the real body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ are sacramentally and supernaturally received by those who partake of the communion.

The Lutheran faith centers in Christ as the only savior of sinful man. "Th

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e church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments rightly administered." Its unity is one of faith rather than of organization. Organic union is not looked upon as essential to the inner unity of faith.

The Lutheran Church is a firm believer in thorough Christian indoctrination and education, hence insists upon catechetical instruction preparatory to confirmation. Conservative in spirit yet progressive in purpose, the Lutheran Church believes its primary function is to preach and teach the Gospel message without compromise or modification.

Organization... In Europe, Lutheran Church polity has followed more or less definitely the forms of political government in the several countries, and that not always freely. Accordingly, organization has hitherto functioned through the exercise of authority from the head downward; that is, through bishops, general superintendents, and the like. With the establishment of more democratic forms of government the process has been in many instances reversed.

In the United States and Canada the church has its own free life, independent of the state. Nevertheless, organization has taken place in all Lutheran bodies, whatever the parent country whence they came, along lines having at least general resemblance to the arrangements adopted for the conduct of political government. There are (1) congregations, corresponding to the local or municipal government; (2) synods, corresponding to the State government (in some instances called districts and in still others conferences); and (3) general organizations variously named, corresponding to the National Government.

[EDITORS' NOTE: For later Lutheran mergers, see Nos. 991, 993.]

991. Lutherans—American Lutheran Church (Formed 1961 by Merger of the American Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church)

SOURCE: *CRB*, 1936, Vol. 2, part 2, pp. 889–891, 872.

²Neufeld, D. F., & Neuffer, J. (1962). *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Student's Source Book*. Commentary Reference Series. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

[a. Evangelical Lutheran Church (Formerly the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America)]
[p. 889] *History*. There were Norwegians in America before 1825. The immigration from Norway to America that developed into historical proportions, however, had its beginning in that year. It developed into a mighty stream.

The Norwegian immigrants came to America to make this country their home, and most of them selected the northern part of the Mississippi Valley as the place of their abode. There are some large Norwegian congregations in a few cities on the Atlantic coast, and many congregations of later date have been established on the Pacific coast and in Canada. The larger settlements, however, were made in Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Michigan, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Texas, and Montana.

In Norway the church is a department of the national Government, and its confession is Lutheran. It was natural that the immigrants should transplant their confession to the American soil; but they could not transplant their native church polity. In Norway, since the administration of church affairs was in the hands of the Government, the people as such gave no thought to the matters of church organization. As a consequence, the immigrants were without experience in this field. Yet when they came to America, they settled in groups and early began to organize congregations; later the congregations were organized into units called "church" or "synod."

Inasmuch as neither state nor church authorities in Norway made any exertion to guide the social and religious activities of the Norwegian immigrants in their new environment, there appeared no single effective force as a unifying factor in church matters. On the other hand, there were forces operating among the people which promoted diverging tendencies. Toward the close of the eighteenth century a great religious awakening spread over Norway, of which the principal instrument was the layman, Hans Nielsen Hauge (born 1771). Among the early immigrants was the "Haugean" lay preacher, Elling Eielsen, who emigrated in 1839 and settled at Middle Point, Ill. He was ordained in 1843 and was the moving spirit in organizing the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America in 1846. This was the first synod organized among the Norwegians in America. In 1843 came C. L. Clausen, another lay preacher, who had been educated as a teacher, and was sent by the "Haugeans" as a religious instructor for the Norwegians in America. He came to Muskego, Wis., where he was ordained to the ministry in October of the same year. J. W. C. Dietrichson, ordained in Norway, came in 1844, as pastor for the congregation at Koshkonong, Wis.

[p. 890] In 1848 came H. A. Stub, and in 1850 A. C. Preus, both graduates from the divinity college at the University of Norway. Under their leadership was organized the Synod for the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, commonly called the Norwegian Synod at Koshkonong, Wis., in 1853.

In 1860, at Clinton, Wis., Norwegians and Swedes organized the Scandinavian Augustana Synod. Nine years later this synod was amicably divided along national lines. Then appeared a new movement, which sponsored a different form of church polity and which resulted in the formation of the association known as the Norwegian-Danish Conference. In the oldest synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, an effort was made to revise the constitution. Under the new constitution, which was adopted in 1875, the body assumed the name of Hauge Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Synod, commonly called the Hauge Synod. Later, a group, led by Eielsen, withdrew and reorganized under the old constitution. The Norwegian Synod, the second oldest synod,

became involved in a theological controversy which brought about a schism in 1887. The pastors and congregations that withdrew associated themselves together under the name of the “Anti-Missourian Brotherhood.”

In the year 1890 there were among the Norwegian Lutherans the following synods: The Hauge Synod of 1846, the Norwegian Synod of 1853, the Norwegian Augustana Synod of 1860, the Norwegian-Danish Conference of 1860, the Anti-Missourian Brotherhood of 1887, and the reorganized Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.

From 1860 five synods and from 1887 six synods competed in offering Lutheran church homes to Norwegian immigrants. This competition and possibility of choice to suit individual preference accounts in a great measure for the fact that such large percentages of the emigrants from Norway remained true to the Lutheran confession.

The immigration period had its problems, among which the gathering of the immigrants into the church was possibly the greatest. The transition from a Norwegian-speaking church to an English-speaking church began at the close of the nineteenth century. During this period cooperation was essential, and rivalry among the synods would be suicidal. This helped to bring success to movements for consolidation. Attempts at merging synods date back to 1852.

In 1887 the “Anti-Missourian Brotherhood” invited the various Norwegian Lutheran Synods to merge. The result was that the Norwegian Augustana Synod, the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Lutheran Conference, and the Norwegian Anti-Missourian Brotherhood all merged in 1890 into the United Norwegian Lutheran Church in America. The Hauge Synod had taken part in the negotiations but withdrew before the merging.

The United Norwegian Lutheran Church constantly worked for merging of the Norwegian Lutheran synods, but it was destined to experience a schism in 1893, when a part withdrew and formed the Norwegian Lutheran Free Church.

In 1905 the Hauge Synod took up the question of union with the other Norwegian Lutherans—the Synod for the Norwegian Church, the United Norwegian Church, and the Lutheran Free Church. The Norwegian Synod and the United Church responded cordially. The Free Church expressed its sympathy, but under its organization, lacking the corporate unity of the other bodies, it could not as a body enter the proposed organization. Definite action approving a suggested plan of union was adopted by each body, and there was a joint meeting of the three bodies at St. Paul, Minn., June 9, 1917, at which the union was formally adopted and took effect immediately. Thus the Norwegian Lutherans in the United States and Canada celebrated the quadricentennial of the Protestant Reformation by bringing together 3 organizations into 1, with a membership of about 2,500 congregations, in which 1,215 pastors ministered to the spiritual needs of 445,000 souls.

Doctrine. The church believers, teaches, and confesses that the Holy Scriptures, the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, are the revealed Word of God and, therefore, the only source and rule of faith, doctrine, and life. It accepts as a true statement of the doctrine of the Word of God the ecumenical symbols, the Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian creeds, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, and Luther’s Small Catechism.

[p. 891] In regard to church rites, each congregation may decide for itself; but in order that there may be uniformity, the church recommends that the congregations use the

ritual of the Church of Norway, modified according to the prevailing requirements in the American environment.

Organization. Beginning with 1917, the national, or rather, the international organization, held general conventions once every 3 years...

[B. AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH]

[p. 872] *History.* The American Lutheran Church is the result of a merger in Toledo, Ohio, in August 1930, of the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, organized September 1818, Somerset, Ohio; the Lutheran Synod of Buffalo, organized June 1845, Milwaukee, Wis.; and the Synod of Iowa and Other States, organized 1854, St. Sebald, Iowa...

Doctrine. The American Lutheran Church accepts the canonical books of Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life. It also accepts each and all of the symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as the true exposition and presentation of the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. In worship it is liturgical and, although uniformity is not demanded, it is generally observed.

Organization. In polity the American Lutheran Church is both congregational and synodical. It is congregational in that the individual congregation is considered the highest judicatory in the affairs of the church... The polity is synodical in that the decisions of the district synods and of the general body are final in all questions referred to them.

The district synods meet annually and the general body biennially. Delegates to the general convention are chosen at the meetings of the district synods.

[EDITORS' NOTE: The union in 1961 of The American Lutheran Church (1959 membership, 1,002,015), the Evangelical Lutheran Church (1959 membership, 1,125,867), and the smaller United Evangelical Lutheran Church (1959 membership, 66,623), gave the combined American Lutheran Church a membership of 2,194,505 (*YAC*, 1961, pp. 60, 63, 66, 255).]

992. Lutherans—Augustana Evangelical Lutheran (Formerly the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America)

SOURCE: *CRB*, 1936, Vol. 2, part 2, pp. 881, 882.

[p. 881] *History.* The immigration from Sweden to America in the seventeenth century was not large nor did it continue, to any appreciable extent, longer than a brief period of time. It left its impress, however, on both the body politic and the religious life of this land. Several of the churches which these early immigrants from the North built are still in existence, albeit they no longer belong to the Lutheran Church, chief of which are Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) in Wilmington, Del., and Gloria Dei in Philadelphia.

Another and a much stronger immigrant stream began to flow into this country from Sweden in the forties of the last century. Then, as in the seventeenth century, did the immigrants bring with them men who were to care for their spiritual welfare.

The first of the congregations of the Augustana Synod to be organized was that in New Sweden, Henry County, Iowa, in 1848, and the second was in Andover, Henry County, Ill., in 1850.

Men of the Augustana Synod, together with American, German, Norwegian, and Danish Lutherans, organized the Synod of Northern Illinois in the fall of 1851. In this body all of these worked together until 1860, when the Swedes and Norwegians withdrew and organized the Scandinavian Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America. Articles of faith were adopted as follows: "The Scandinavian Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America confesses the Holy Scriptures, as the revealed Word of God, to be the only

infallible rule of faith and practice. It holds to and confesses not only the three oldest symbols of the church, the Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian, but also holds to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a brief but true summary of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Church, understood through their development in the other symbolical writings of the Lutheran Church.” In 1870 there occurred the friendly withdrawal of the Norwegian section for the purpose of organizing the [p. 882] Norwegian Lutheran Conference. In 1894 the word “Scandinavian” was dropped from the name, which thenceforth became the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America, or, in brief, the Augustana Synod. This synod was a part of the General Council, but formally withdrew from the council November 12, 1918, and declined to enter the merger of the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South, by which was formed the United Lutheran Church in America. In 1930 the Augustana Synod joined in the organization of the American Lutheran Conference, a federation of five Lutheran general bodies.

In the early days the Swedish language was used in the public worship, but now the English language is mostly used as the great majority of the membership is American-born.

The synod is the center of authority. It convenes as a delegated body every year and is presided over by a president chosen quadrennially.

[EDITORS’ NOTE: Membership (1959), 596,147 (*YAC*, 1961, p. 225). For the 1962 merger with the United Lutheran Church and others to form the Lutheran Church in America, see No. 993.]

993. Lutherans—Lutheran Church in America (New Merger)

SOURCE: News item in *The Christian Century*, 78 (June 7, 1961), 724, 725. Copyright 1961 Christian Century Foundation, Chicago. Reprinted by permission from *The Christian Century*.

[p. 724] All 13 conferences of the Augustana [Evangelical] Lutheran Church have ratified the agreement to merge their denomination with the United Lutheran, the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran and the American Evangelical Lutheran churches to form the Lutheran Church in America...

[EDITORS’ NOTE: This initial ratification ensured the merger of at least the Augustana body (see No. 992) and the United Lutheran Church in America (see No. 996), which had already gone on record with a majority of its synods in favor of the union (*Newsweek*, 57 [June 5, 1961], 56). The 1959 membership of the other two bodies was, respectively, 36,264 and 23,800 (*YAC*, 1961, p. 255). The combined membership of all four constituents will give the merger a total of over 3,000,000. By August the final approval of all the constituents was completed.]

994. Lutherans—Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (Formerly German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States)

SOURCE: *CRB*, 1936, Vol. 2, part 2, pp. 924, 925.

[p. 924] *History*. The incipient stages of “Missouri Lutheranism” (Lutheranism as restored, proclaimed, and propagated by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States) are clearly discernible in certain events which transpired just 100 years ago, chief among which the following deserve special mention: Unionizing of Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Prussia in the early decades of the nineteenth century by the state protested against in words and actions by confessional Lutherans; emigration from their fatherland by the latter; their arrival on the friendly shores of our country in the late thirties; their settlement in St. Louis and Perry County, Mo.; in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and New York; organization of congregations with churches and parochial schools; building of a (log cabin) college in Perry County, Mo., in 1839 (later transferred to St. Louis); erection of a Practical Ministerial Seminary (shorter

course) at Fort Wayne, Ind. (at first privately owned by Pastor William Loehe of Neuendettelsau, Germany, transferred to the Missouri Synod at its organization in 1847); issuing of a religious periodical, "Der Lutheraner," in 1844 (synodical organ since 1847); pioneer missionary and organization work of the Saxon pastors, particularly the Rev. C. F. W. Walther in Missouri; the pastors of the Franconian settlements in Michigan, Pastors Fr. Wyneken, Wm. Sihler, and others in Indiana and Ohio. A special centennial celebration of the arrival of the Saxon immigrants was arranged for the years 1938–39.

[p. 925] After preliminary correspondence and special meetings held at St. Louis and Fort Wayne, Ind., the organization of the synod was effected at Chicago in May 1847, 12 voting pastors, 11 advisory pastors, 4 lay delegates, and 7 guests attending the conventions.

The Saxon immigrants of 1839, with a few accessions, numbered not quite 1,000 souls. In 1848, the first statistics after the organization of the synod listed: 37 congregations, 19 pastors, 4,099 souls. Since then the growth in membership (souls) has been as follows: 1857, 20,501; 1867, 73,106; 1877, 122,177; 1887, 459,376; 1897, 685,334; 1907, 838,646; 1917, 1,001,380; 1927, 1,106,745.

Doctrine. In doctrine the Missouri Synod recognizes one standard, to which there must be absolute accord, and upon which all its pastors are pledged: The Holy Scriptures, accepted as the infallible inspired Word of God; the three ecumenical creeds—the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian; and the six Lutheran Confessions accepted as a correct presentation of the Biblical doctrines—the Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, The Smalcald Articles, the Large and Small Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

Organization. On polity the Missouri Synod is pronouncedly congregational... The synod and its officials ... [act] merely in an advisory capacity...

Originally organized as a German church body, the Missouri Synod now numbers only 178 all-German stations in North America... Church attendance is 33 percent German and 67 percent English.

[EDITORS' NOTE: This Lutheran body, with a membership (1959) of 2,304,962, is the largest of the four members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, a conference organized in 1872 by synods of the stricter type. The other three are the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (see No. 997), the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (formerly the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, with a 1959 membership of 14,302), and the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (formerly Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church), with a 1958 membership of 19,931, as well as the Negro Missions conducted by these four bodies, with a 1959 membership of 7,999 (*YAC*, 1961, pp. 60, 225).]

995. Lutherans—Lutheran Free Church

SOURCE: *CRB*, 1936, Vol. 2 pp. 898, 899.

[p. 898] *History.* The Lutheran Free Church was organized in Minneapolis, Minn., in June 1897, at a meeting of the Norwegian Lutherans representing churches in some of the Central and Western States. The immediate occasion of the organization was a disagreement between the trustees of Augsburg Seminary at Minneapolis and the United Norwegian Church. On the organization of the latter body, in 1890, it was understood that it would include Augsburg Seminary, the oldest Norwegian divinity school in America, and until that time supported by the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Lutheran Conference. In the prosecution of its work for educating Lutheran ministers the seminary developed certain characteristics which its friends and supporters considered essential to the work to be done. It had been incorporated under the laws of Minnesota, and its management was in the hands of a board of trustees. When the demand came that,

according to an agreement with the Norwegian—Danish Conference, the seminary should be transferred to the United Norwegian Church in such a manner as to enable that church to control it entirely, it became evident to some that material changes were intended in the plan of the school, and on this account the board of trustees refused to transfer, unconditionally, the property and management of the seminary to the United Church. The result was a sharp disagreement and the withdrawal, and in some cases expulsion, from the United Church of certain churches and ministers, because of their support of the position taken by the trustees of the seminary. These churches and ministers were at first known as the “Friends of Augsburg,” and had no other organization than a voluntary annual conference. Nevertheless they carried on the work of an organized synod, and had their divinity school, home and foreign missions, deaconess institute, orphans’ homes, and publishing business. In 1897 they adopted the name of the “Lutheran Free Church.”

Doctrine. The Lutheran Free Church, with its strong emphasis on the independence and autonomy on the independence and autonomy of the individual congregation, puts the more stress on the Lutheran principle of the unity of the church—that it exists in the confession of the one common faith. The Lutheran Free Church, holding that Holy Writ is the only perfect, divine revelation of salvation, and therefore the absolute rule for the Christian faith, doctrine, and life, adheres with unflinching fidelity to the Lutheran confession because it believes that this agrees with Scripture. Hence it lays the greatest stress on practical Christian experience on the part of all church members and especially all teachers and ministers in the congregation. The Lutheran Free Church holds Lutheranism to be the correct and sound union of the most profound insight into the way of salvation, and of the most intense experience of the power of grace unto a new life in the hearts of men.

The doctrinal basis of the Lutheran Free Church is: The canonical books of the Old and New Testaments; the Apostolic, Athanasian, and Nicene creeds; the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther’s Small Catechism.

The Lutheran Free Church further believes and teaches that:

(1) According to the Word of God, the congregation (local church) is the right form for the kingdom of God on earth. (2) The congregation consists of believers who, by using the means of grace and the gifts of the Spirit (charismata) as directed by the Word of God, seek salvation and eternal blessedness for themselves and for their fellow men. (3) According to the New Testament, an external organization of the congregation is necessary, with membership roll, election of officers, stated times and places for its gatherings, etc. (4) Members of the organized congregation are not, in every instance, believers, and such hypocrites often derive a false hope from their external connections with the congregation. It is, therefore, the sacred obligation of the congregation to purify itself through the quickening preaching of the Word, by earnest admonition and exhortation, and by expelling the openly sinful and perverse. (5) The congregation governs its own affairs, subject to the authority of the Word of God and of the Spirit, and recognizes no other ecclesiastical authority or government above itself. (6) A free and independent congregation esteems and cherishes all the gifts of the Spirit which the Lord gives it for its own edification and seeks to stimulate and to encourage their use. (7) A free and independent congregation gladly accepts the [p. 899] mutual assistance which

the congregations can give one another in the work for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.

Guiding principles and rules.—(8) This mutual assistance consists both in the exchange of spiritual gifts between congregations through conferences, exchange of visits, laymen's activities, etc., whereby congregations are mutually edified, and in the voluntary and Spirit-prompted cooperation of congregations for the purpose of accomplishing such tasks as would exceed the ability of the individual congregation. (9) Among such tasks may be mentioned specifically a theological seminary, distribution of Bibles and other books and periodicals, home missions, foreign missions, Jewish missions, deaconess institutes, children's homes, and other institutions of charity. (10) Free and independent congregations have no right to demand that other congregations shall submit to their opinion, will, judgment, or decision; therefore, all domination of a majority of congregations over a minority shall not be tolerated. (11) Cooperating agencies that may be found desirable for the activities of congregations, such as larger and such as smaller conferences, committees, officers, etc., cannot, in a Lutheran free church, impose any obligations or restrictions, exert any compulsion, or lay any burden upon the individual congregation, but have the right only of making recommendations to, and requests of, congregations and individuals. (12) Every free and independent congregation, as well as every individual believer, is prompted by the Spirit of God and has the right of love to do good and to work for the salvation of souls and for the quickening of spiritual life as far as its abilities and power permit. In such free spiritual activity it is limited neither by parish nor synodical bounds.

Organization. The Lutheran Free Church is not a synod, as that term is commonly understood. It is an association of free and independent Lutheran congregations...

A very important feature of the organization of the Lutheran Free Church is its annual conference...

[EDITORS' NOTE: Membership (1959), 82,595 (*YAC*, 1961, p. 255).]

996. Lutherans.—United Lutheran Church in America

SOURCE: *CRB*, 1936, Vol. 2, part 2, pp. 953–955.

[p. 953] *History.* The United Lutheran Church in America is direct successor and heir to three Lutheran bodies—the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America, the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America, and the United Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the South—which were merged into the United Lutheran Church in America in 1918.

For the General Synod the figures for 1916 were as follows: 1,846 organizations, 370,715 members, 1,232 ministers from whom schedules were received, and 1,514 ministers reported on the rolls of the body. For the General Council in 1916 there were 2,389 organizations, 540,642 members, 1,327 ministers from whom schedules were received, and 1,664 ministers reported on the rolls of the [p. 954] body. For the United Synod in the South there were 492 organizations, 56,656 members, 189 ministers from whom schedules were received, and 259 ministers reported on the rolls of the body. Immediately prior to the merger in 1918 the Augustana Synod, with 1,167 organizations, 204,417 members, and 720 ministers reported on the rolls, withdrew from the General Council. Thus, the totals for the United Lutheran Church at its first convention were as follows: 3,560 organizations, 763,596 members, and 2,717 ministers reported on the rolls (1916). No account has been taken here of the gains made by the merging bodies between 1916 and 1918.

The United Lutheran Church in America not only brought together three general bodies, each of which had its historical beginnings far back in colonial times, but it restored the organic union between the Lutherans of the North and South which had been broken by the War between the States.

There is a native bent among Lutherans for unity. They are not unionists, seeking to make the unity of the church manifest in external organization, where real inner unity does not exist. They put unity in the faith first, and where this is found to exist the desire to unite finds expression in one organization upon a common confession or doctrinal basis.

Out of this deep concern for the faith and unity therein came several free Lutheran diets and general conferences, looking to complete understanding and harmonious cooperation between these three general bodies and extending over the period from 1877 to 1902. Committees and commissions were appointed for the purpose of arranging for the conduct of home-mission enterprises, without friction or interference with one another, and for cooperation in liturgical reforms. Especially noteworthy among these was the joint committee to prepare "A Common Service for all English-speaking Lutherans." Through the work of this committee "The Common Service" was completed in 1887 and was adopted by each of the three bodies. The hymnal was finished in 1917 and published in the Common Service Book of the Lutheran Church. This Common Service Book was authorized by the United Lutheran Church in America at the time of its organization in 1918. The work of this joint committee had much to do with preparing the way for the merger of the three constituent bodies.

The third important cooperative undertaking which contributed directly and most effectually to the same end was the establishment of a joint committee with authority to arrange for a proper general celebration in 1917 of the four-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. At the first meeting, September 1, 1914, the suggestion was made that the celebration should be marked by the union of the three bodies in the year 1917... The joint committee thereupon adopted the following: "Believing that the time has come for the more complete organization of the Lutheran Church in this country, we propose that the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod in the South, together with all other bodies one with us in our Lutheran faith, be united as soon as possible in one general organization, to be known as the United Lutheran Church in America."

The presidents of the three general bodies named in the resolution ... each ... assumed the responsibility of introducing the constitution and the proposed merger on the basis of it to the next convention of his own general body.

The constitution was approved by the General Synod in June 1917, by the General Council in October, and by the United Synod in the South in November. It was submitted by each of the three bodies to its district synods, and in each case was ratified by all of them, except by one of the synods composing the General Council—namely, the Augustana Synod—which declined to enter the merger and formally withdrew from the Council, November 12, 1918...

The First Convention of the United Lutheran Church in America ... was held in the city of New York, November 14–18, 1918.

[p. 955] At this convention there were present, from churches in Canada as well as the United States, 542 delegates—289 clerical and 253 lay delegates. These represented 43 constituent synods; 24 of these belonged to the General Synod, 13 to the General

Council, and 8 to the United Synod in the South; 2 district synods of the General Council were not represented. At this convention officers—president, secretary, and treasurer—were elected; the report of the joint committee on ways and means was heard and acted upon; the constitution and bylaws were adopted; a certificate of incorporation under the laws of the state of New York was secured and filed with the secretary of state; papers of conveyance and transfer of property and rights to the United Lutheran Church in America, severally signed by the president and secretary of each of the merging bodies, were read; and the United Lutheran Church by resolution accepted “the execution of the trusts relating to any property conveyed or to be conveyed under the action reported by the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod in the South.” Boards were elected, among them an executive board, which was authorized and instructed to complete the work of merging.

Conventions have since been held biennially in October, as follows: Washington, D. C., 1920; Buffalo, N. Y., 1922; Chicago, Ill., 1924; Richmond, Va., 1926; Erie, Pa., 1928; Milwaukee, Wis., 1930; Philadelphia, Pa., 1932; Savannah, Ga., 1934; and Columbus, Ohio, 1936. The mergers of constituent synods of the three bodies which have taken place have reduced the number of such bodies. In 1918 there were in the United States 45 constituent synods, reduced by mergers and territorial rearrangements to 33 in 1936. In most cases the merging synods belonged to different general bodies before they entered the United Lutheran Church.

Doctrine. The doctrinal basis of the United Lutheran Church in America is given in its constitution, as follows:

SECTION 1. The United Lutheran Church in America receives and holds the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and as the only infallible rule and standard of faith and practice, according to which all doctrines and teachers are to be judged.

SECTION 2. The United Lutheran Church in America accepts the three ecumenical creeds—namely, the Apostles’, the Nicene, and the Athanasian—as important testimonies drawn from the Holy Scriptures, and rejects all errors which they condemn.

SECTION 3. The United Lutheran Church in America receives and holds the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the faith and doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, founded upon the Word of God, and acknowledges all churches that sincerely hold and faithfully confess the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession to be entitled to the name of Evangelical Lutheran.

SECTION 4. The United Lutheran Church in America recognizes the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large and Small Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord as in the harmony of one and the same pure scriptural faith.

Perhaps the most significant action taken in recent years was the adoption of the declaration concerning “The Word and the Scriptures.” In these times when authority in religion has been made an issue, and much confusion is manifest, it is timely that a clear-cut statement should be made pointing to the Word of God as the sole authority for faith and practice and to the Holy Scriptures as the divinely inspired record of God’s revelation in His Word. In this declaration the United Lutheran Church recognized its own need, its responsibility for definite testimony to the whole Christian world, and a duty toward other Lutheran bodies.

Organization. The polity of the United Lutheran Church in America, like that of other Lutheran bodies, is not fixed and essential... The synodical and congregational polity has thus varied somewhat.

[EDITORS' NOTE: Membership (1959), 2,369,263 (*YAC*, 1961, p. 255). On the 1962 merger with the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church and others to form the Lutheran Church in America, see No. 993.]

997. Lutherans—Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (Formerly Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States)

SOURCE: *CRB*, 1936, Vol. 2, part 2, pp. 930, 931.

[p. 930] *History.* The history of the Wisconsin Synod goes back to the forties of the nineteenth century. The Missouri and the Buffalo synods were already at work in Wisconsin when Ehrenfried Seebach, a farmer of the town of Oakwood, near Milwaukee, appealed to the committee of the Langenberg Mission Society to send a faithful pastor to the flock of about 300 souls whose spiritual wants he was trying to supply by reading sermons in public gatherings and by instructing the children in the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

Pastor J. Weinmann was sent and began to minister to this congregation. Recognizing the great need of and opportunities for work among the German settlers, he prevailed upon Pastor J. Muehlhaeuser, then stationed in Rochester, N. Y., to come to Milwaukee, Wis. He arrived June 27, 1848, and began to preach and to sell Bibles and devotional books in the vicinity of Milwaukee, finally gathering a congregation in the city and serving it as its pastor.

On December 8, 1849, Muehlhaeuser, Weinmann, and W. Wrede founded the "First German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin." In the month of May 1850, the constitution they had drafted was submitted to and adopted by a gathering of 5 ministers, representing 18 congregations, at Granville, near Milwaukee.

The young synod began to expand along the shore of Lake Michigan, finally reaching Green Bay, Wis., then westward as far as La Crosse, Wis. The field was large, but there was a dearth of reliable preachers. Aid came to the body from the Langenberg and the Berlin mission societies, and the Home Mission Society of Pennsylvania. Among the pioneer ministers were: C. Goldammer, J. Bading, Ph. Koehler, W. Streissguth, E. Mayerhoff, G. Reim, Ph. Fachtmann, Dr. E. Moldenhake, and Dr. Th. Meumann.

To meet the demand for ministers and missionaries, the synod resolved to open a seminary and college. Pastor J. Bading was sent to Russia and Germany to gather funds and a library, but the German authorities withheld these funds when the synod in 1867 broke with its former friends by taking a clear-cut stand for a strictly confessional Lutheranism.

In 1863 the school was opened in a dwelling in Watertown, Wis., with Dr. E. Moldenhake in charge and 14 students in attendance. In 1865 the building of "Northwestern University" was dedicated, Prof. Adam Martin having been called as president. In 1866 Prof. Ad. Hoenecke was made professor of theology. Later [p. 931] the seminary was discontinued, the students being sent to St. Louis, Mo., for their theological training. It was reopened at Milwaukee in 1878, under Prof. Hoenecke, removed to Wauwatosa in 1893, and in 1929, to Thiensville, Wis.

When the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America was organized in 1872, the Wisconsin Synod was one of the constituent bodies. It is a member today, and takes part in the support of the Negro mission and African missions conducted by the conference.

In 1881 the synod entered Nebraska and in the nineties, the far Northwest—the States of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana, where the work progressed so satisfactorily that each of these sections now is represented in the joint synod as a district.

In 1865 the “Gemeindeblatt” was founded, and the beginnings of the Northwestern Publishing House date back to 1876.

The Michigan Synod was organized in 1840 by F. Schmid and two other pastors. In 1831 the Basel Missionary Society sent Schmid to a number of Wuerttembergers who had settled in Washtenaw County, Mich. There he founded 20 congregations. The Michigan Synod in 1845 had three missionaries at work among the Indians at Sebewaing. On account of doctrinal differences most of the members withdrew to join other synods, and the synod passed out of existence in 1846. In 1860 Stephan Klingmann and Chr. Eberhardt arrived from Basel, and the second Michigan Synod was organized. In 1867 it joined the General Council but in 1888 withdrew on account of the “Four Points.” In 1867 a building was erected in Saginaw, Mich., for a seminary. The first president, A. Lange, was soon succeeded by F. Huber.

The Minnesota Synod was organized by a group of five or six pastors of the Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh synods at work in Minnesota, gathered together by “Father” J. Heyer. Among the founders were: Heyer, Blumer, Wier, Brandt, Mallison, and Thompson. Heyer was succeeded as pastor of Trinity of St. Paul and as leader of the group of Fachtmann. Aid came from the Pilger Missionary Institute of St. Crischna and from the General Synod. Now the names of E. A. Kuhn, F. Hoffmann, Seifert, C. J. Albrecht, Braun, and Hunzinger appear. There was a constant struggle between those who favored unionizing tendencies and those who were for uncompromising Lutheranism. The latter were rallied by J. H. Sieker, one of the first students of the Wisconsin Synod. Leaving the General Synod, the body sought fellowship in the General Council, but on account of the “Four Points” withdrew from the Council to join the other bodies in the organization of the Synodical Conference. In 1883 Dr. Martin Luther College was founded as a seminary and a college at New Ulm, Minn., Prof. O. Hoyer being chosen as its first president. The “Synodalbote” was published first in 1886. The Minnesota Synod carried on the missionary work in the territory that now forms the Dakota-Montana district of the joint synod.

The Joint Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan—under this name the above three synods united in 1892. The theological seminary was to become common property, Dr. Martin Luther College was made a teachers’ seminary, and Michigan Lutheran Seminary a preparatory school. The “Gemeindeblatt” was made the official organ of the three synods. In 1893 this body sent the first missionaries to the Apache Indians of Arizona. This remained the relation of the three bodies until 1917 when they entered into a still closer union under the name The Evangelical Lutheran Joint synod of Wisconsin and Other States.

Doctrine. “This synod accepts the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the divinely inspired and inerrant Word of God, and submits to this as the only infallible authority in all matters of doctrine, faith, and life.

“This synod also adheres to the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church embodied in the Book of Concord of 1580, not insofar as, but because they are a correct presentation and exposition of the pure doctrine of the Word of God.”—Constitution.

Organization. The synod is divided into eight districts.

[EDITORS' NOTE: Membership (1957), 342,993 (*YAC*, 1961, p. 255). For the participation of this body in the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, see No. 994n.]

³Neufeld, D. F., & Neuffer, J. (1962). *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Student's Source Book*. Commentary Reference Series. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.