

It is not man's work or man's sacrifice to God, but rather the last Will and Testament of Christ. It includes 1) "the testator who makes the testament (Christ), 2) "the heirs to whom the testament is bequeathed" (Christians), 3) "the testament itself" (the Words of Christ), 4) the bread and wine "which are His true body and blood," 5) "the bequeathed blessing . . . Namely, remission of sins and eternal life," and 6) "remembrance . . . that we should preach his love and grace, hear and meditate upon it, and by it be incited and preserved unto love and hope in him" (86-87).

Progress toward purity in teaching God's Word came hard. Early in the 1520s Luther still sometimes taught the old philosophical idea that the bread and wine, or the body and blood of Jesus, were "signs" that pointed to the "reality" of forgiveness and eternal life. Later in the 1520s Luther corrected this philosophical idea in the Lord's Supper because the blasphemers of the Sacrament among the radical reformers wanted to teach that the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper only signified or represented the body and blood of Jesus. Luther, and we Lutherans with him, utterly reject this horrible teaching. The Lord's Supper is "his own true flesh and blood under the bread and wine" (86). Or to state it plainly, the consecrated bread is the body of Jesus.

But Luther's attack on the Roman Catholic errors, begun in this *Treatise*, were stated yet more sharply and clearly in *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (AE 36.11-126), published September 1520. This work entered the heart of the papal church's worship and attached its entire sacramental system. He especially condemned three "captivities" of Christ's church in the Lord's Supper: 1) that the papists forbid giving the blood of Christ to the laity; 2) that they teach the philosophy or "metaphysical triviality" (45) that the bread and wine in the Sacrament cease to exist when they become Christ's body and blood; and 3) worst of all, that the Sacrament "is a good work and a sacrifice" which man works and offers to God.

Instead, Luther taught that in the Sacrament "God comes to us through the ministrations" of the pastor and gives to us this inheritance and bequest. The service of the Lord's Supper "is part of the gospel: indeed; it is the sum and substance of it" (56). It is "provided only for those who have a sad, afflicted, disturbed, perplexed and erring conscience." It is given for faith in Christ, the "one remedy against sins," and this "faith alone means peace of conscience" (57).

THE NEXT ROUNDUP

The next Roundup will be delivered to congregations around September 20 (October 2020 issue).



WYOMING DISTRICT ROUND-UP SEPTEMBER 2020

District Website: www.wylcms.org

"Here I Stand" on the Word in the Home

"...REMEMBERING YOU IN MY PRAYERS..." (Eph. 1:16)

For Rev. Vernon Boehlke (emeritus, Riverton), as he undergoes a new round of treatments for cancer.

For Rev. Ralph Jaeger (emeritus, Laramie), health

PASTORS AND CONGREGATIONS

St. Paul's, Sidney is being served by Rev. Allen Strawn (St. Paul's, Bridgeport) during the vacancy. The congregation is exploring options for calling and caring for a pastor.

Rev. Travis Sherman (Grace, Gordon) is serving Grace, Merriman, NE (Nebraska District) while it considers its future.

Our Redeemer, Glenrock and Zion, Douglas: On July 28 the parish called Rev. Aaron Hambleton of Lisbon, ND. He has returned the call, and the parish has scheduled its next call meeting for August 31. Our Redeemer is being served by Rev. Jon Olson (Trinity, Casper) and Zion is being served by Rev. Darren Pflughoeft (St. Paul's, Lusk).

Mount Calvary, Dubois is being served by Rev. Gregory Sonnen-schein (Wind River Lutheran Mission, Fort Washakie and Crowheart) during its vacancy.

St. John's, Lovell is in pre-call preparations. The congregation is being served by Rev. Jais Tinglund (Zion, Emblem and Grace, Greybull).

Here I Stand on Marriage

This month's article is addressed to parents. To whom did God give the duty to teach and bring up children? To you, their parents! What does this mean?

When God created man as male and female and joined man and woman together in His work of marriage, He also included great gifts and duties for their marriage. From the very beginning it has been God's will and command that marriage bring forth children, and that the parents of children bring up these children as pious Christians, educated for service to home and church and society, virtuous and wise, fruitful in all good works.

This parental duty is not an afterthought but is at the center and heart of the marriage responsibility. God commands it explicitly in Deuteronomy 6, “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7, see the whole chapter). Again, in the New Testament, “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).

We call it school. The home is God’s school. Homeschool is the original school. The parents are God’s teachers. Children are God’s students, future adults who are to receive an education fit for godly, Christian adults. In the Large Catechism Luther emphasizes this point, “But He has given us children and entrusted them to us precisely so that we may raise and govern them according to His will; otherwise, God would have no need of fathers and mothers. Therefore let all people know that it is their chief duty—at risk of losing divine grace— first to bring up their children in the fear and knowledge of God, and then, if they are so gifted, also to have them engage in formal study and learn so that they may be of service wherever they are needed” (LC 1.173-174).

No, the education of your children is not the right or duty of the government, just as the government has no right or duty to feed and clothe them, house them, put band-aids on their wounds, lead them in prayer, or teach them God’s Word. This is your duty, dear parents. If the government can help you to raise your children as virtuous and godly Christians, then you may enlist their help. But when the government school undermines or opposes God’s command and Word, then it is your duty to withdraw them from that school and provide for the education that God commands. You must do this as your “chief duty—at risk of losing divine grace.”

Nor is it the duty of the church to raise and educate your children. The church must certainly help, for God has commanded the church to baptize your children and to teach them to know and keep everything He teaches in Holy Scripture (Matthew 28:18-20). You would certainly do well to enlist the help of your pastor and your church in educating your children. “Where a father is unable by himself to bring up his child, he calls upon a schoolmaster,” Luther observes in the Large Catechism (LC 1.141). We have a Latin phrase that describes the teacher employed to assist parents: *in loco parentis*, “in the place of the parent.” Any teacher other than you, the father and mother of your child, teaches in your place and by the authority God has given you.

It is no easy task that God has appointed for you parents. But He gives you the promise of His help and strength, forgiveness and restoration, courage and zeal, if you continue in His Word and obey Him in this duty. He will sustain you by the preaching of Christ and His holy sacraments. And your home, the original homeschool, may through God’s Word be a nursery of Christian virtue, a garden

for the cultivation of faith and love and all good works, a *gymnasium* for the exercise of piety and discipline, and a homestead for inheriting and passing on our heritage of God’s Word and all useful knowledge. God bless you in this duty with joy and zeal.

Three times in Romans 1:18-32, God the Holy Spirit announced this curse on those who refuse to acknowledge God in His creation and His created orders: “God gave them up” (verses 24,26,28). This is what we see in the modern feminist goal of overcoming the natural, created distinction between the sexes, including the divine gifts of marriage and childbearing. In achieving the supposed victory of female liberation and equality, our culture has been “given over” by God to divorce, bitter and loveless marriages, abysmally low birthrate and its corresponding loss of hope for the future, and more. God grant us repentance, forgiveness, and a return to His blueprint for our humanity in Scriptures. God give us true freedom from enslavement to these evils and bring us at last as Jesus’ Bride into His eternal home.

REFORMATION 500: 1520 in Review

500 years after the Reformation, it is difficult for us to comprehend what a herculean labor it was for Luther to escape the maze of philosophical theories and false doctrines taught and believed in the church of his youth and to rediscover the pure truth of God’s Word. We rightly focus on things like justification, the authority of Scriptures, and the use of Scriptures and worship in the language of our birth. Numerous other articles of Biblical doctrine and practice are added to these. Luther and the reformers had to examine each teaching in the light of God’s Word, reconsider where it fit in the whole body of Christian doctrine, and then determine how to attack and remove the errors while keeping and restoring the truth of Scripture. And while they were laboring in the study of God’s Word, they were being attacked first by the Roman papacy and church, and then by innumerable radical reformers and fanatics on every side.

The Lutheran reform of the doctrine and practice of the Lord’s Supper illustrates the difficulty of this labor. Although Luther had written about Communion previously, it was only in the summer and fall of 1520 that he understood and began to attack the errors of the Roman church. Luther’s teaching on the Lord’s Supper would not fully mature until 1527. Controversies over the Sacrament of the Altar would continue all his life, as also now in our own day.

In July 1520 Luther published *A Treatise on the New Testament, that is, the Holy Mass* (AE 35.79-111). He emphasized that everything that is taught and practiced in the use of the Lord’s Supper must come from the Word of God, especially from the Words of Institution. Faith must take hold of God’s Word and keep it. The Lord’s Supper is a promise and a testament which God gives to man.