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To be human is to be accountable

The Supreme Court decision on the unconstitutionality of the Texas anti-abortion law had its effects on our campus, too. In an effort to help students understand the issues and their implications, the staff of the Chapel of the Resurrection sponsored a number of sessions for students. Leadership resources were provided by people from the School of Law, the psychiatrist from the University Counseling Service, one of our University physicians, and one of the pastors from the Chapel staff.

Near the beginning of his presentation, the consulting psychiatrist made a rather wistful statement. He observed that this new state of affairs with "abortion on demand" certainly called for faith. We have to live in the faith, he went on to say, that the motherly instinct will prevail. With this faith we can hope that the race will not perish.

His naturally soft-spoken manner and his disciplined restraint in speaking added to the awesomeness of his statement. But his statement also roused the horrendous specter of mothers turning on their own young to destroy them. If the biological changes caused by pregnancy and the emotional stresses accompanying pregnancy, especially an unwanted pregnancy, become grounds for abortion on demand, then we have indeed unleashed a fury of destruction on life at its very origins. Such treatment of life is nothing short of barbarian. To call it freedom or liberation, to name it an advance, is the deception of "double speak" appropriately fitting for a people who has gone wild in its will to live for its own pleasure. An inner enmity has arisen not only against life itself, but against a fundamental fact of personal integrity and personhood: namely, the fact of being held accountable for one's choices and actions.

Suffering enough is involved if an abortion is really necessary to save the life of a mother. All the resources of family, church, and community are needed to comfort, sustain, and guide people in such a situation. But this is hardly short of sheer abandonment when the national community, through its highest tribunal, withdraws from a mother the minimal support communally guarding her personal integrity by holding her accountable for her choices and actions. One can see quickly the consequences for other life when such curbing and sustaining support is withdrawn: the fetal life is left to nothing else than the desire of the mother (who wishes to rid her body of that life) and the consent of a physician. Such a course of action opens life to despair and violence.

The principle on which hell operates is the assumption, "I belong to me." It is a slogan which reveals a fatal loneliness; it betrays an unreal view of human life, for it denies the communal nature of human life. Our own birth of a woman required the essential participation of another body. The law requiring a consenting physician underscores the biological fact that the abortion itself calls for a minimal community participation.

But more reprehensible than
predatory mothers are men who engage in siring a child with neither the will nor the intent to bind both the mother and child into a community of love and care. If the woman is indeed guardian and haven for the origin of new life, then the man is indeed guardian of both that life and that woman. What are our men? Are they boys, chronologically old and biologically capable, but ignorant of fatherhood? If depositing the seed for a new life is for nothing other than the display of prowess or for the use of a woman as a playmate, then our shame is total and deserved.

At the same time we must say that this new situation surely offers Christians a splendid opportunity to function as lights and salt on the earth. The church, our mother, seeks not only to tell us who our Father is and how to live confidently in His care, but she also teaches us to engage in the mutual care for our lives. She teaches us to live and speak the truth, that we do not belong to ourselves but to Another who was born of a woman for us. Even though the pregnancy of the Blessed Virgin caused no little emotional distress, she bore for us the One who bore our sins in His body on the tree. With this word about His death and resurrection for us, the church both lives in His resurrection and sets us to training our bodies to live toward the resurrection of our bodies with Him.

Happily, in our resistance to "abortion on demand," Christians can join with those who see life as accountable to something other than its own pleasures, whims, and comforts. We can stand on the side of human beings, guarding against the illusion that one can be a human without being accountable. The maternal instinct, impulse of the presence of the hidden Creator, may be under pressure, but Christians who confess the Creator and non-Christians or non-religious who do not acknowledge Him, can join together in sustaining that linkage with life.

Let us join together in a contract that we ourselves will not concede to a licentious age (not merely in action but in principle). However, rather than saying merely "no" to the claim that men and women may do what they will with their bodies, let us engage in giving support and insight about chastity and restraint. If and when abortions are necessary we can offer support to the parties involved, a care marked by compassion, wisdom, and justice. Finally, we can give our support to those doctors, nurses, medical personnel, and hospitals, to those counselors and legislators who will take no part in "abortion on demand."

There have been other times when Christians have been able to give a bright, clear, and steady witness on behalf of human existence. It was not and will not now be in vain.

On the death of Kent Knutson, Bishop

On 12 March of this year the life of the young and gifted Bishop of the American Lutheran Church, Dr. Kent Knutson, came to a merciful end. It was a merciful end for the family, for it must have been difficult for his wife and children, along with his friends and the members of the ALC, to watch him suffer from a rare disease which defied treatment. But it was merciful in a deeper sense, too, for his wife and children, along with the members of the church he served, committed him to the mercy of the God and Lord he confessed.

Many of us, when we first learned of the strange illness of Dr. Knutson, suddenly found ourselves partners in the symptoms of his illness. The disorder to his central nervous system made it impossible for him to talk. We, although ours was not the disorder of the nervous system, found ourselves also unable to talk about his illness. The surprising suddenness of his illness and the quick devastation with which it took hold of him came upon us in the form of shock and quickly moved to dumb silence. There is something frightening about a bishop not being able to speak.

It appears to this observer that Dr. Knutson, although Bishop for only a short time, exerted strong leadership in the ALC. About the nature of this leadership more will be known as time passes. But apart from his leadership and scholarship, the thing that haunted me most about the speechlessness was the memory I have of Bishop Knutson addressing the Synodical Convention of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod in Milwaukee. During his address to the convention Dr. Knutson made a confession of the faith that was in him, using especially Luther's exposition to the second Article of the Apostles' Creed. It was the dramatic juxtaposition of that confession and his speechlessness that would not let me alone.

So, with his wife and family, and the members of his church, I joined in commending him into the hands of the God and Lord he confessed. And now, to the members of the family and church we extend the word of comfort from that crucified and risen Lord, and we rejoice that also the Bishop, though speechless in illness, was still speaking as a confessor.

The Cresset
IN PRAISE OF PARENTS

Not many people go around praising parents these days. I doubt that many parents are looking for praise particularly, but neither should they be the sole recipients of blame if a son or daughter happens to go wrong. Most of the parents I know have done their best in raising their children, and, goodness knows, being a parent is not the easiest occupation.

It has always struck me as strange that this God-given responsibility is entrusted entirely to amateurs. To my knowledge, there are no management training courses on parenthood; it is all on-the-job training. And, unfortunately, by the time they get the hang of discipline and good child-raising techniques, parents forget what they learned and start spoiling their grandchildren.

Most of us have the impression our own parents were better parents than we are, and that their knowledge of child-raising was encyclopedic. But our parents started out just as we did, and, if they were better at it, they also had things going for them which we don't. For in the last few decades, changes in society have made raising a family a much more difficult occupation.

The mobility of society is one of these major changes. Today when children reach maturity, they scatter to all parts of the globe, but years ago families stayed around the same area. I had, for example, two aunts, two uncles, and grandparents within a three-block radius of our home. This proximity developed a sense of family and of roots. In today's fragmented society, members of a family live all over the world and most children are lucky to see their relatives once a year. This is hardly conducive to feelings of continuity and security, two feelings that aid in the development of self-discipline.

Another aid to child-raising that seems to have vanished from the scene is a stern grandfather. I had one and he lived next door when I was growing up. In later years I discovered that he was a kind man, but he always came out strong on the side of law and order. His ideas on bringing up children came from the Old Testament and he had a sense of humor something like Jeremiah's. At apparently no sacrifice, he made himself available to administer corporal punishment on his grandchildren if the parents failed to do so. The thought of what Grandpa did might do kept wrong-doing among the grandchildren very much at a minimum. He was something of an ombudsman on grandchild raising and his actions were not limited to punishment, though some were rather strange. Occasionally he required us to sit quietly and listen to sermons in German on his wind-up Victrola, in the hope, I presume, we would absorb some good by osmosis, since none of us understood a word of what sounded to us like hysterical rantings. Strangely enough, regardless of what Grandpa did, we always knew he had our best interests at heart.

But it was not just neighboring relatives that helped, since neighborhoods generally were more stable and cohesive years ago than they are now. It was not unusual for a person to be born and to die in the same house. This may not sound too exciting, but it did give children a feeling of permanence and roots. Neighbors not only felt responsibility for neighbors but also for the neighbors' children, to the point they felt free to correct anyone's child through verbal or, if necessary, physical means. Try that today in your neighborhood and you'll find yourself on the wrong side of a law suit.

The style of home life has changed drastically as well. We spent much more time at home and with our parents. I am not sure what we did during those long winter nights, but whatever it was, we seemed to enjoy it. Sitting around the radio pooling imagination is far more unifying than watching TV. Extra-curricular activities at high school were minimal, and what outside activity we did engage in was connected with the Church. Of course, life was lived at a more leisurely pace, and our parents had more time to spend with their children. This was before the days when parents were expected to fill the subsidiary roles of chauffeur, den mother, coach, band-uniform-fund-raiser, or TV monitor.

One of the most difficult stages in child development is in the late teens when the son or daughter starts pulling away from the family in the quest for adulthood. The parents find loosening the apron strings difficult, and the son or daughter feels a lack of confidence and security which is almost as strong as the pull toward independence. This was not such a problem years ago, because a person became an adult, not when he had reached a certain level of maturity but on his twenty-first birthday. This was accepted as fact by both the parents and the young adult and both were prepared for it.

When I think of what our parents had going for them which we have not—a strong neighborhood community, help from relatives, home-centered activities, and all the other phenomena which developed a feeling of stability—I wonder how I ever muddled through as a parent these past twenty years, since the odds of being successful parents were hardly in our favor. And now, with the family practically grown, I am facing that strange stage, probably faced by most men, when I am looking forward to some carefree years and a respite from child-raising, while my wife is eagerly looking forward to having some grandchildren around the house.

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May, 1973
We have this year attempted to develop a definite style of review essay for theological books that we considered to be of immediate significance for the life and work of the church. We have assumed that significant books and documents deserve detailed attention. And we have structured our reviews around a simple basic outline:

We have attempted:
1. to give a brief description of the content of the books;
2. to describe the significance that the book would have, if its assertions and conclusions were valid (at this point, we have hoped that the reader could decide whether he was interested in knowing anything more about the book or note);
3. to evaluate the validity of the book and its conclusions;
4. to provide, where we disagreed with the book, at least some statement of a more valid alternative or to point the direction in which we thought such an alternative was to be sought;
5. to describe, where possible, the implications of the book for the pastoral ministry.

The following review essay differs from previous review essays in that it is a group effort. The undersigned met together and discussed and analyzed the material involved. Then different members of the group assumed the primary responsibility for formulating our common thinking and conclusions. The reader will thus notice different styles of thinking and of writing. We have accepted such diversity in the hope that its disadvantages will be more than compensated for by the stimulation and balance that resulted from our group discussions.

A number of our reviews this year have assumed that the current doctrinal discussions in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod are of decisive importance not only for the future of that synod but for the shape of relationships among Lutherans during the foreseeable future. On that assumption, we are this month focusing our review on one of the most significant documents produced out of that discussion: J. A. O. Preus, A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles. Careful discussion and analysis of this document is of great significance both for the future course of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and for the flowering or the dessication of the tender flower of Lutheran unity in the United States.

As far as we know, neither those who accept nor those who reject this document have given it the careful, serious attention which it deserves: a clear,
simple analysis of what it actually says. In November of 1972, the executive secretary of the Missouri Synod’s Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR), Dr. Ralph A. Bohlmann, issued a “study edition” of A Statement. However, this study edition merely reprints the text of each article of A Statement and follows it with “proof texts” from Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, Missouri Synod Statements, Study Documents, and Resolutions. Some indication is given of the part of A Statement to which these quotations supposedly apply, but Dr. Bohlmann never clarifies how this imposing array of proof texts really supports the assertions of A Statement. The weaknesses of such a proof-text approach are too apparent to need extensive comment. Dr. Bohlmann’s citations once again demonstrate that there is no necessary correlation between the understanding of such proof texts and the purpose for which they are cited. These citations are then followed by an unusual kind of catechism, in which many difficult questions are raised but no answers are offered. We shall occasionally refer to this study edition material for illustrative purposes, but our essay focuses primarily on the content of A Statement itself.

The study edition of A Statement specifies two goals of this document:

1. “to serve as a tool to identify theological and doctrinal issues which the Synod needs to consider and resolve.”

2. “to offer guidance in applying Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions to those issues.” (Study edition, Preface, p. 5)

We have studied A Statement. We have carefully analyzed its content in terms of its stated goals. We have also read the supporting material in the study edition and thought through the questions which the study edition raises. We conclude that A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles adequately fulfills neither of the tasks which it has set for itself. It does not “identify the theological and doctrinal issues which the Synod needs to consider and resolve.” And the “guidance” which it offers “in applying Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions” to the issues it specifies and which are further defined in the study edition is frequently misleading. We shall identify those failures and inadequacies in the article-by-article discussion of the Statement which follows. That evaluation does not, of course, imply that we disagree with any particular assertion of A Statement except as here specified. We shall begin our analysis of this document by first reprinting the article of A Statement under discussion and, where pertinent, the “Questions” suggested by the study edition. We shall then respond to this material in whole or in part.

BEFORE BEGINNING THAT ANALYSIS, however, we need to address ourselves briefly to a question, raised by Dr. Bohlmann’s “Preface” to the study edition, which is in our opinion counterproductive of the kind of analysis which A Statement requests and deserves. Dr. Bohlmann raises the specter that we cannot differ with the statement without condemning the entire Missouri Synod. He first quotes an evaluation by a Lutheran Church in America theologian, Leigh Jordahl, who describes A Statement as “solid Missourianism.” Dr. Bohlmann then asks: “If indeed A Statement is ‘solid Missourianism,’ how can it be said to have a spirit alien to Lutheran confessional theology without thereby indicting the entire Synod?” (p. 5)

That question deserves two loud and clear answers. First, Professor Jordahl is in error. His evaluation of A Statement as “solid Missourianism” is wrong, whether one views that evaluation as a historical or as a theological judgment. Second, A Statement represents the opinion of its authors and those who have subscribed to it. We may safely reject the inadequacies of its theology “without thereby indicting the entire Synod.” We may even reject A Statement without fear of dealing inappropriately with its authors. For the Formula of Concord itself advises us to avoid repeating the inadequate formulations of “not a few orthodox teachers” (SD, IV, 36; Tappert, p. 557). And theologians of the Missouri Synod have never considered one another’s writings as being above criticism.

Now, however, we turn our attention to the issues themselves, to examine where A Statement does in fact “identify theological and doctrinal issues which the Synod needs to consider and resolve” and whether it provides acceptable “guidance in applying Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions to those issues.”

1. Christ as Savior and Lord

We believe, teach, and confess that Jesus Christ is our Savior and Lord, and that through faith in Him we receive forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation. We confess that “our works cannot reconcile God or merit forgiveness of sins and grace but that we obtain forgiveness and grace only by faith when we believe that we are received into favor for Christ’s sake, who alone has been ordained to be the mediator and propitiation through whom the Father is reconciled” (AC, XX, 9). We believe that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven and that all who die without faith in Him are eternally damned. We believe that those who believe in Christ will enjoy a blissful relationship with Him during the interim between their death and His second coming and that on the last day their bodies will be raised.

We therefore reject the following:
Review Essay

1. That we may operate on the assumption that there may be other ways of salvation than through faith in Jesus Christ;
2. That some persons who lack faith in Christ may be considered "anonymous Christians";
3. That there is no eternal hell for unbelievers and ungodly men. (p. 9)

This first article is laudably concerned to affirm that salvation is through faith alone in Christ alone, and is furnished with appropriate negative corollaries rejecting any alternative faith or alternative savior. That is unquestionably Scriptural and Confessional, and reproduces the essential content of the heading of this article: Christ as Savior and Lord.

However, the explicit purpose of A Statement is to identify theological and doctrinal issues which the Synod needs to consider and resolve. Is A Statement suggesting that significant numbers of theologians and pastors do not believe, teach, and confess this central evangelical truth? If so, the absence of any supporting documentation can only have the effect of creating needless anxiety and suspicion, or can only be regarded as resorting to the dubious tactic of accusation by innuendo.

But we must ask even more pointedly: “What theological problem is here being identified?” To this question we find no hint of an answer, for it is one thing to imply widespread denial of a fundamental article of the Gospel, but it is an altogether different matter to describe the tangled theological issues. There may indeed be a theological problem, but A Statement does not identify it. Consequently, its purpose to give guidance in applying Scripture and the Confessions to “those issues” must necessarily also falter. A list of Bible passages, Confessional citations, and Synodical resolutions is really not very helpful, since these have no specified target and are directed to no articulated theological problematic.

If A Statement does not clearly identify a theological problem and therefore cannot offer guidance in reaching a resolution, it nevertheless succeeds in exhibiting a theological problem. Consider how this first article stresses that Christ is sole Savior and Lord by faith alone. The affirmative thesis then continues by stating that believers in Christ will enjoy a blissful relationship with Him during the interim between their death and their resurrection on the last day. The study edition returns to this subject in question #6, where it asks a series of three questions:

6. Is there a conflict between Scripture passages that refer to or imply the interim state of believers after death (i.e., Philippians 1:3; Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Romans 8:38) and those that refer to the resurrection of the body (i.e., 1 Corinthians 15:42-44; John 5:28-29)? Can sound Christian teaching or pastoral care be exercised when one or the other aspect of eternal life is neglected or denied? What significance should be attached to the fact that the Scriptures place a greater emphasis on the resurrection of the body than on the interim state? (p. 11)

It is evident that A Statement regards it as important that an affirmation of Christ as Savior and Lord include also a positive assertion about the interim state of the believers, and an interim moreover that, according to a cited theological opinion of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, cited in the study edition (p. 10), provides for full consciousness of bliss.

Now, the theological problem exhibited by this position may be formulated thus: By what theological principle is the Scriptural teaching of Christ as sole Savior and Lord through faith alone extended to validate pious speculations regarding the interim as necessary church dogma? How do either the questions or the expected answer grow out of the central affirmation of Christ as Savior and Lord? Suppose that, despite a CTCR opinion to the contrary, someone were to hold (as none other than Luther himself does, WA 31/1, 517) that there is no consciousness of bliss in the interim, encouraged in this alternative opinion by the numerous biblical metaphors of death as a sleep. How would this undermine the sole Saviorhood and Lordship of that Christ who died for us and revealed his triumph over death for us in his resurrection from the dead? According to apostolic preaching, Jesus Christ is our Savior and Lord because he died for our sins according to the Scripture, he was buried, and he was raised on the third day according to the Scripture. To raise the question of the interim at this point either trivializes the doctrine of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord or introduces a hidden theological agenda. Perhaps for the sake of comprehensiveness, the study edition does both.

II. Law and Gospel

We believe that the two chief doctrines of Holy Scripture, Law and Gospel, must be constantly and diligently proclaimed in the church of God until the end of the world, but with due distinction (FC, SD, V, 24). The Law, as the expression of God’s immutable will, is to be used by the church to bring men to a knowledge of their sins as well as to provide Christians with instruction about good works (FC, SD, V, 17–18). The Gospel receives the primary emphasis in the ministry of the New Testament, for it is the message that “God forgives them all their sins through Christ, accepts them for His sake as God’s children, and out of pure grace, without any merit of their own, justifies and saves them.” (FC, SD, V, 25)

We therefore reject the following:
1. That the Gospel is any message or action which brings good news to a bad situation.
2. That the Gospel is a norm or standard for the Christian life, or that the Gospel, in effect, imposes a new law upon the Christian.
3. That what God's law declares to be sinful (for example, adultery or theft) need not be regarded as sinful in all times and situations.
4. That Christians, as men who have been freed from the curse of the Law, no longer need the instruction of the Law to know what God's will is for their life and conduct. (p. 12)

_A Statement_, in insisting that the Law and the Gospel must be constantly proclaimed in the church, "but with due distinction," reminds us that it is not enough to make a distinction between the Law and the Gospel, as if all that were required were that _some_ distinction between them be made; rather a _particular_, "due" or, as the heirs of Walther would have it, a "proper" distinction is required. Not every distinction between Law and Gospel is that _due_ distinction called for by the Lutheran Confessions. Indeed, Walther's great series of lectures was concerned to clarify that proper distinction over against inappropriate, improper, undue, misleading, and wrong ways of distinguishing. It is in Missouri's best tradition to recognize that there is _one_ "due" distinction, as the _Formula of Concord_ (SD, V, 24-25; Tappert, p. 563) says, "the due distinction" must be made so that in the ministry of the New Testament the proclamation of the law and its threats will terrify the hearts of the unrepentant and bring them to a knowledge of their sin and to repentance, but not in such a way that they become despondent and despair therein. Rather, . . . the proclamation of the Gospel of our Lord Christ will once more comfort and strengthen them with the assurance that if they believe the Gospel God forgives them . . . .

ONE OF THE MAJOR CONCERNS WHICH _A Statement_ addresses, however, is not that this "due distinction" be made, but rather that the applicability of the Law to Christians be maintained. Although _A Statement_ does not appeal to Article VI of the _Formula of Concord_ (Tappert, pp. 563-568) and its discussion of the so-called "third use of the law," it nevertheless expresses its concern for that idea. It does so by speaking of the Law's function "to provide Christians with instructions about good works" in the thesis, and, in the fourth antithesis, by rejecting the idea that Christians "no longer need the instruction of the law to know what God's will is for their life and conduct." To be sure, the _Formula of Concord_ does in fact speak of the Law's function of providing instruction. But what is not made clear, either in _A Statement_ or in the citations of the study edition, is that the _Formula of Concord_ is careful always to relate the instruction of the Law to the need for repentance. There is no justification in the _Formula of Concord_ for separating a purely instructional function of the Law from its principal, theological, accusing function; and the reason for that is stated quite plainly in the _Formula of Concord_ (SD, VI, 9; Tappert, p. 595): "because of the desires of the flesh the truly believing, elect, and reborn children of God require in this life not only the daily teaching and admonition, warning and threatening of the law, but frequently the punishment of the law as well, to egg them on so that they follow the Spirit of God." And the preceding sections of that article of the _Formula of Concord_ make that point even more fully.

Further, in its insistence that the Law be proclaimed in the church to Christians, _A Statement_ fails to indicate the real reason for that proclamation, the context or alternative against which the Law is to be proclaimed. It implies, unfortunately, that the Law's place for Christians is to give them information which they otherwise would not have about the conduct of their lives, as if the new man in Christ were without moral direction or aim until the Law of God was proclaimed to him, so that he would then "know what God's will is for [his] life and conduct." But the _Formula of Concord_ seeks not simply to assert _that_ the Law remains valid, but also to show _why_ and _how_, in accord with the "due distinction" between the Law and the Gospel, the Law is to be proclaimed to Christians. And it does this by two devices: first, Article IV of the _Formula of Concord_ shows that the antithesis is that entire system of self-chosen, holy, good works which a person performs with a view to gaining God's favor; and, second, Article VI shows that whatever instruction the Law gives to the Christian serves to expose his sin: "The law of God prescribes good works for faith in such a way that, as a mirror, it shows and indicates to them that in this life our good works are imperfect and impure"; and it concludes: "The Old Adam, like an unmanageable and recalcitrant donkey, is still a part of them and must be coerced into the obedience of Christ, not only with the instruction, admonition, urging, and threatening of the law, but frequently also with the club of punishments and miseries" (SD, VI, 21 and 24; Tappert, p. 567ff.). Thus the _Formula of Concord_ makes clear that the need for the Law in the church is to oppose any system of self-chosen works, and to expose the imperfection even of those works which the Christian does in response to the Law of God.

_A Statement_ properly rejects the idea that "the Gospel is any message or action which brings good news to a bad situation." The imprecision and inadequacy of that slogan are quite obvious, for although it has the virtue of underscoring the situation to which the Gospel is _Good News_, it is notoriously imprecise in specifying what is _bad_ in that
situation or what is good about the news of the Gospel message. Would, however, that A Statement were even that concerned about the genuinely bad situation created by the Law of God, from which the Gospel about Jesus Christ is in fact the good news of release. However, A Statement in Article II underplays the seriousness of the situation which any and every look into the mirror of God's Law discloses. One simply cannot cozy up to God's Law as if it were a source of pious directives for an otherwise un-directed life; the Law always accuses and exposes. What believers do as Christians, their good works, "are still imperfect and impure," as the Law makes clear; yet those sinful good works "are acceptable to God through Christ because according to their inmost self they [Christians] do what is pleasing to God not by coercion of the law but willingly and spontaneously from the heart by the renewal of the Holy Spirit" (SD, VI, 23; Tappert, p. 568).

The third rejection is also symptomatic of A Statement's lack of sensitivity for the full seriousness of that reality called "the Law of God." Rejected is the assertion "that what God's law declares to be sinful (e.g., adultery or theft) need not be regarded as sinful in all times and situations." Now, A Statement is quite right in its insistence that what the Law calls sin is indeed sin. It rightly rejects the idea that Law is only a bit of divine whimsy, altering itself according to the divine mood—or, worse, according to the human mood. But the understanding of Law in A Statement is only that of divine legislation or command. The essential word of Law in this view is "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not," and the corollary is that the contrary is sinful. In contrast to the Formula of Concord, A Statement fails to see that the Law in exercising its proper function "to condemn sin and to lead to a knowledge of sin," aims always to expose unbelief, the "root and fountainhead of all culpable sin" (SD, V, 17; Tappert, p. 561). A Statement speaks as if, in terms of the Law, the Christian were in a position different from the non-Christian; as if the Law's accusation were even that concerned about the genuinely bad situation created by the Law of God, from which the existence of a marriage, and the command to honor parents assumes the parent-child relationship. In this way, one can say that the whole factual reality, good and bad, promising and threatening, full of man's best and worst actions—all that is "under the Law," the realm of what the Formula of Concord and A Statement after it, calls "the immutable will of God" (except that A Statement uses also that phrase in a purely legislative way). The Formula of Concord makes clear that it includes an awareness of this creational reality when, in defining the word "necessary" as it was applied to good works, it refers "to the immutable order which obligates and binds all men to be obedient to God, but at times it implies the coercion with which the law forces men to do good works" (SD, IV, 4; Tappert, p. 551). But, because of that "order" and that "legislation" of the Law, the sinner's situation vis-à-vis the Law of God is always the wages of sin. And for that reason it is necessary to say that God's Law also is the whole reality which St. Paul calls the wrath of God, the disclosure that the creature is out-of-bounds, guilty, marked for death. In other words, Law is also, finally, the divine verdict and execution of sentence on man the culprit.

In view of all this, the Formula of Concord speaks quite clearly when it says, "to reprove is the real function of the law" (SD, VI, 14; Tappert, p. 566). And that same clarity is apparent when it regularly qualifies the Law's function for Christians with clauses such as this: "Since, however, believers are not fully renewed in this life..." (SD, VI, 18; Tappert, p. 567). For the Christian, as for the non-Christian, a look at the Law is always a look into a "mirror," in which "it shows and indicates to them that in this life our good works are imperfect and impure" (SD, VI, 21; Tappert, p. 567).

That same third rejection fails to make clear, as any serious churchly confessional statement should, that man's situation of utter jeopardy under the Law of God cannot be repaired by the Law of God, by some better or different or wiser or more equitable application of Law. Here Missouri's pastoral practice outstrips her vain attempts, in public utterance, to repair either church or world by legal statements. But it takes only a couple of examples of genuine moral dilemmas to convince the curate of souls that the Law does not solve its own problems; so he counsels with warm evangeli-
cal assurance to free a trapped soul from the "damned-if-you-do-and-damned-if-you-don't" dilemma with freeing words of forgiveness. A fully serious understanding of the radical jeopardy of life under the Law of sin and death would help one to see that we are always in that situation when we encounter the Law, and that only the Gospel about Jesus Christ can bring good news to that bad situation. Then such counsel as the pastor gives is not mere sloppy indulgence, nor is it a deft bit of casuistry or finding a legal loophole or appealing to a higher law; the counsel is the freeing word of the Gospel, rectifying the sinner's wrong situation and setting him again on the path of God's good pleasure. As the Formula of Concord puts it, "The Law demands a perfect and pure obedience if it is to please God. It does not teach us how and why the good works of believers are pleasing to God, even though in this life they are still imperfect and impure because of the sin in our flesh. But the Gospel teaches us that our spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God through faith for Christ's sake (I Pet. 2:5; Heb. 11:4; 13:15)" (SD, VI, 22; Tappert, p. 567).

To summarize: because A Statement understands the Law of God merely as legislation, as divine commands, and thus omits the reality of the wrath of God against sin from consideration, it comes to moralistic conclusions about the Law, conclusions which betray its fundamental failure to observe the due distinction between the Law and the Gospel. Though it calls for a proper distinction, it does not do that distinguishing properly. Thus its Law is moralized and its Gospel is, correspondingly, emasculated.

III. Mission of the Church

We believe, teach, and confess that the primary mission of the church is to make disciples of every nation by bearing witness to Jesus Christ through the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments. Other necessary activities of the church, such as ministering to men's physical needs, are to serve the church's primary mission and its goal that men will believe and confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

We therefore reject any views of the mission of the church which imply:

That an adequate or complete witness to Jesus Christ can be made without proclaiming or verbalizing the Gospel. (p. 15)

Much of Article III is praiseworthy, especially its rejection of any conception of the mission of the church which imagines that adequate witness to Jesus Christ can be made without proclaiming or verbalizing the Gospel.

A Statement proposes to give guidance to the Synod in applying the Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions to issues facing the churches. It appears that this article wants to supply such guidance in the matter of the relationship between evangelism and a "social welfare program":

4. Should a congregation give greater attention to its evangelism efforts than to its social welfare program? Why or why not?
5. Should the church as such engage in humanitarian efforts (e.g., aiding the poor, helping refugees, or assisting the victims of injustice), or is it better for the church to encourage individual Christian action? Are these proper alternatives?
6. What, if anything, is distinctively Christian about the church's humanitarian actions?
7. Suggest ways in which all the various activities of your congregation can be more directly and explicitly related to bearing witness to the Gospel. (p. 17)

We agree that these issues are deeply important for the life of the church and her mission. Lutherans frequently have had difficulty in describing adequately the relationship between justification (being effectively declared righteous before God by faith in Jesus Christ) and sanctification (living the life of holiness in one's vocation). And, certainly, the tradition of the "social Gospel" in American church life makes it even more imperative for Lutherans in America to come to grips with questions of social engagement by the churches. Jesus himself calls to us: "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Deeds need the illumination of the light before they can be seen in such a way as to glorify the Father in heaven. That illumination is nothing else than the Light, Jesus Christ, preached and witnessed to as both Source and End of the deeds.

However, although we applaud some of the manifest intent of Article III and welcome guidance in these matters, we must still ask how much guidance A Statement really gives us in these matters. There are some striking omissions:

First, A Statement does not help us think about the mission of the church in the light of what the church is. The distinctions made by the study edition in question #5 are misleading: "Should the church as such engage in humanitarian efforts... or is it better for the church to encourage individual Christian action? Are these proper alternatives?" We answer, "No; they are not proper alternatives." No clarification is given to the phrase "the church as such." However she may be defined in the questions, the church is there set apart from
the “individual Christian action,” as if the church were not the ethos for that member’s action. We certainly need guidance in our day to learn more clearly what the church is. We also need clarification on the relation between the ethical actions of individual members and the Christian community as ethos for those actions. *A Statement* helps us toward neither goal. That failure is closely related to its unclear presentation on the lordship of Christ (Article I) and its distorted perspective on the preaching of Law and Gospel (Article II). Given such limitations, we ought not have expected a deeper understanding of the nature and mission of the church.

Second, although some of the supporting confessional and synodical material in the study edition hints at resources which could guide congregations and pastors to an increased understanding of the union between faith and love, *A Statement* not only offers no help, but even sets the diaconal work of the church in a context that corrupts love at its heart. Is that love genuine which loves only for another purpose? Is not the love of God for us and the love of God’s people for the world willing to rest content with loving? Is Christian love a kind of “Marshall Plan,” carried out to extend the influence and power of the doer? Divine and Christian love wills indeed to give the supreme gift of the Gospel to everyone. But deeds of love have a righteous integrity in God and in the faithful heart which cannot allow them to be used for serving some other end. The witnessing church has a passion, a love, also that the hearer be ready and able to hear the word of the Gospel spoken. Compulsion to talk about the Lord while doing the deed of love may in fact reveal the compulsive guilt of the doer—something quite different from a free and glad witness to the Lord Jesus, who is both Source and End of the good deed.

**STUDY QUESTION #7 REVEALS AN INTERESTING DIMENSION OF THIS KIND OF THINKING.** As our discussion of the Law in Article II already indicated, *A Statement* does not take the Law with the same radical seriousness as the *Formula of Concord* does. As a result, there is no emphasis on the preaching of the Law as an essential part of the mission of the church. Correspondingly, there is no guidance given for the activity of the congregation for preaching the Law. Hence, no instruction is given toward that activity which is done for the sake of preserving and maintaining God’s good creation. Christians join God in His work in creation and in His work in redemption. The works are distinct and Christians need guidance in making distinctions between them while joining in both. But *A Statement* and the study edition collapse the work of creation into the redemption, just as the Law has been subsumed under the Gospel. Even the goodness of God can at best bring men to repentance. Yet there are some things that are worth doing for the sake of God’s creation even though they cannot be related to bearing witness to the Gospel. God himself continues to perform many good and merciful deeds in the lives of men, even though those merciful deeds do not become a proclamation of the Gospel; that happens only when the good news about Jesus is spoken. *A Statement* suggests that “there can be no adequate or complete witness of Jesus . . . without proclaiming or verbalizing the Gospel.” That is too cautious: there can be no witness to Jesus as Lord at all unless the Gospel is preached or the sacraments administered. But that emphasis leaves the church free to do acts of mercy with integrity, for the sake of doing those acts of mercy and not for some other goal.

This misdirection about the relationship between faith and love is grounded precisely in the failure of *A Statement* to give clear and accurate guidance in the matter of saving faith and its relationship to the preached and sacramentally-administered Gospel. This failure is, in turn, related to the failure to distinguish properly between Law and the Gospel as was shown in our comments on Article II. It follows from this that obedience loses its demands; faith loses its consolation; love loses its energy.

Thirdly, the consequences of this failure in *A Statement* can be seen in the neglect to give guidance to the church in her mission as a teaching and worshipping community. While difficult questions are raised, no guidance is given to the congregations for teaching or disciplining the members in holiness to care for the needs of the members of the congregation. In fact, it seems encouragement is given in the opposite direction! But the church has always been aware of the obligation to care for the members of the household of faith. And for many years the congregations of the Missouri Synod opposed fraternities, societies, insurance groups, and the like, precisely on the grounds that the Christians were to care for their poor, sick, dying, injured, and unemployed members. We need continually to be taught, guided, and disciplined in this work. But in these days of bad manners, evil conduct, and poor inner disposition, nothing is said in Article III about the mission of the church as the solicitous mother who teaches her children to walk in holiness before God.

Finally, *A Statement* gives not one word of guidance about the mission of the church in relation to her worship life. In a time when commissions on worship, worship committees, young people, indeed almost everyone is changing liturgical forms, using new texts and hymns, casting off what is tried and true, re-orienting the focus of worship,
introducing forms that are strange and maybe even trivial, it is appalling that A Statement and its study edition should give no guidance to this dimension of the mission of the church.

IV. Holy Scripture

The lengthiest part of A Statement is Article IV, "Holy Scripture." Its length is disproportionate to its importance — unless A Statement intends to say that this is the major question confronting the church today. But in that case, A Statement would have seriously failed in its task of identifying the issues which the church needs to discuss. Theoretical questions about the authority of Scripture that divert us from that task do not help but impede the mission of the church. A Statement does not demonstrate that the issues which it raises actually are current and central issues in the church's use of Scripture in the apostolic mission assigned to us by our Lord, that of hearing and communicating the full message of Scripture.

Thus we respond to A Statement in a variety of ways. One of our responses is, "We hear what you are trying to say, but that is neither confessional nor Scriptural." In order to maintain reasonable limits on the length of this discussion we shall focus on this response. We omit any detailed discussion of sections F, G, H, and I, on the infallibility and unity of the Scripture, on Old Testament prophecy, and on methods of biblical interpretation. We omit these, not because they are not at issue in the present controversy, but because they are relatively secondary in the Lutheran Confessions' view of Scripture, and because those very technical matters need much careful study before they can be defined in a confessionally appropriate way, as A Statement wishes to do. For the Lutheran Confessions teach us to begin the discussion of the doctrine of Scripture by affirming the illuminating power of the distinction between the Law and the Gospel, "an especially brilliant light which serves the purpose that the Word of God may be rightly divided and the writings of the holy prophets and apostles may be explained and understood correctly" (Formula of Concord, SD, V, 1; Tappert, p. 558). They also affirm that "the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments" are "the only true norm according to which all teachers and teachings are to be judged and evaluated" (Formula of Concord, Rule and Norm, 3; Tappert, p. 503f.). There is no confessional fascination with the question of the canon. And, regarding methods of interpretation, it should be clear from Article IV of the Apology that the Symbols insist on the priority of theological criteria (specifically, the due distinction between the Law and the Gospel) over intellectual (rational, critical, historical) criteria in interpreting the Scriptures.

One response is appropriately addressed to all sections of this article: A Statement is very Gospel-conscious. That is good. However, unlike the Confessions and the Scripture, A Statement here says very little about the Law. We have already indicated why we feel that the references to the Law in Article II are quite shallow in comparison with the Confessions. In this article on Scripture, assertions are made that are true of the Gospel but that cease to be true when made of Law and Gospel. Because A Statement is unaware of this, it fails to identify one of the major problems confronting theological interpretation today: the effective application of the distinction between the Law and the Gospel to our doctrine of Scripture.

A. The Inspiration of Scripture

We believe, teach, and confess that all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit and that God is therefore the true Author of every word of Scripture. We acknowledge that there is a qualitative difference between the inspired witness of Holy Scripture in all its parts and words and the witness of every other form of human expression, making the Bible a unique book.

We therefore reject the following views:

1. That the Holy Scriptures are inspired only in the sense that all Christians are "inspired" to confess the lordship of Jesus Christ.
2. That the Holy Spirit did not inspire the actual words of the Biblical authors but merely provided these men with special guidance.
3. That only those matters in Holy Scripture were inspired by the Holy Spirit which directly pertain to Jesus Christ and man's salvation.
4. That noncanonical writings in the Christian tradition can be regarded as "inspired" in the same sense as Holy Scripture.
5. That portions of the New Testament witness to Jesus Christ contain imaginative additions which had their origin in the early Christian community and do not present actual facts. (p. 18)

These assertions seem to prove too much. When A Statement asserts that the inspired witness of the Holy Scripture is qualitatively different from "the witness of every other form of human expression," it excludes the oral, never-written-down preaching of the apostles about what Jesus said and did. The author of John's Gospel reminds us that he knows much he did not write about. St. Paul does not hesitate to call his own preaching the very Word of God.

We accept the inspired Scriptures as the Spirit's gift to the church of a uniquely reliable and attested witness to the apostolic preaching about Jesus. The end served by that preaching (together with the written Word in the service of that preaching) is to make men wise to salvation, to equip, train, rebuke, and prepare the people of God for
every good work. The fact that faith comes by hearing (Romans 10) underscores that the Word of God is essentially an oral action and the church is pre-eminently an auditor. The witness of the Spirit, making the apostles witnesses of Jesus Christ, grounds the church in Christ and the apostles. The Spirit inspired their writings so that the church would be embedded in the apostolic message and guarded against the propensity of sin to pervert the saving message. The perversity of sinners to modify the Law of God by turning it into a moral pattern, to revise the Gospel of God by turning it into any self-styled, cheery message, thus engendering false faith, is resisted and corrected by the norm of the written Word. The uniqueness of the Scriptures lies in their being the only attested witnesses to the apostolic preaching and teaching today. The inspired Scriptures norm the apostolic message preached today in the church; they also norm all confessions of faith and doctrinal statements. Holy men of God still speak today as they preach God's Law to reveal and reprove sin and God's Gospel in Christ Jesus for salvation by faith. Or is our absolution less certain than Paul's or Peter's? Luther's Small Catechism teaches us to believe that the absolution we hear "from the confessor [is] as from God himself."

However, all claims by any person or in a document to be inspired must be tested against the apostolic norms, for the Spirit does not contradict Himself. We today test such claims in exactly the same way that Luther tested the book of James and other New Testament books whose apostolic character was in doubt. He found some of these books to be non-apostolic.

This article of A Statement rejects the inspiration of non-canonical writings. By what authority does A Statement distinguish between canonical and non-canonical writings? The authors of A Statement surely know the tradition of the Missouri Synod. The assertion that James, Hebrews, 2 and 3 John, 2 Peter, Jude, and Revelation are canonical cannot be made binding doctrine nor can it be made grounds for an accusation of false doctrine. Are they inspired? If we do not hold them to be canonical, may we hold them to be inspired? May we decide they are inspired but not canonical? What decision is primary? When canonicity is questioned we find A Statement offers no other clue than inspiration. And when inspiration is questioned, it offers no other clue than canonicity. There is no other clue; for any two people may agree or disagree about the canonicity and/or inspiration of James (and therefore also about this section of A Statement) without any necessary consequences for agreement or disagreement on any point of doctrine or practice—not on the six-day creation, the deity of Christ, the firmament and the windows of heaven, nor even on justification through faith without works, and the distinction between the Law and the Gospel.

B. The Purpose of Scripture

We believe that all Scripture bears witness to Jesus Christ and that its primary purpose is to make men wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. We therefore affirm that the Scriptures are rightly used only when they are read from the perspective of justification by faith and the proper distinction between Law and Gospel. Since the saving work of Jesus Christ was accomplished through His personal entrance into our history and His genuinely historical life, death, and resurrection, we acknowledge that the recognition of the soteriological purpose of Scripture in no sense permits us to call into question or deny the historicity or factuality of matters recorded in the Bible.

We therefore reject the following views:
1. That knowing the facts and data presented in the Scripture, without relating them to Jesus Christ and His work of salvation, represents an adequate approach to Holy Scripture.
2. That the Old Testament, read on its own terms, does not bear witness to Jesus Christ.
3. That it is permissible to reject the historicity of events or the occurrence of miracles recorded in the Scriptures so long as there is no confusion of Law and Gospel.
4. That recognition of the primary purpose of Scripture makes it irrelevant whether such questions of fact as the following are answered in the affirmative: Were Adam and Eve real historical individuals? Did Israel cross the Red Sea on dry land? Did the brazen serpent miracle actually take place? Was Jesus really born of a virgin? Did Jesus perform all the miracles ascribed to Him? Did Jesus' resurrection actually involve the return to life of His dead body? (p. 20)

The assertion that "all Scripture bears witness to Jesus Christ" is an example of A Statement's Gospel-reductionism. All Scripture does not bear witness to Jesus Christ. The Scripture is full of statements that do not do so—neither as individual statements nor in their proper context. Statements such as "Nimrod was a hunter," and "The man who sins shall die," are not Gospel; they do not bear witness to Jesus Christ. On the contrary, they are Law. We thus have no quarrel with this article's first rejection, for example. However, we would suggest to the authors of A Statement that they are very close to the anti-nomianism condemned by Luther and Melanchthon in the Instruction to the Visitors (1528). Like those anti-nomians, A Statement preaches the Gospel of Jesus without relating it to the Scriptural understanding of sin (see Article V) and the confessional proclamation of the Law as a call to repentance (see our comments on Articles II and III).
C. The Gospel and Holy Scripture

(Material and Formal Principles)

We believe, teach, and confess that the Gospel of the gracious justification of the sinner through faith in Jesus Christ is not only the chief doctrine of Holy Scripture and a basic presupposition for the interpretation of Scripture, but the heart and center of our Christian faith and theology (material principle). We also believe, teach, and confess that only "the Word of God shall establish articles of faith" (SA, II, ii, 15), and that "the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule and norm according to which all doctrines and teachers alike must be appraised and judged" (FC, Ep, Rule and Norm, 1) (formal principle). The Gospel which is the center of our theology is the Gospel to which the Scriptures bear witness, while the Scriptures from which we derive our theology direct us steadfastly to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We reject the following distortions of the relationship between the Gospel and the Bible (the material and formal principles):

1. That acceptance of the Bible as such, rather than the Gospel, is the heart and center of Christian faith and theology, and the way to eternal salvation.

2. That the Gospel, rather than Scripture, is the norm for appraising and judging all doctrines and teachers (as, for example, when a decision on the permissibility of ordaining women into the pastoral office is made on the basis of the "Gospel" rather than on the teaching of Scripture as such).

3. That the historicity or facticity of certain Biblical accounts (such as the Flood or the Fall) may be questioned, provided this does not distort the Gospel.

4. That Christians need not accept matters taught in the Scriptures that are not a part of the "Gospel." (p. 23)

The conceptual tools of the material and formal principles introduced by A Statement are neither Scriptural nor confessional. They were developed by late eighteenth-century rationalism as a way of looking at various positions without involving the question of truth. They were brought to the United States by theologians who had been trained by rationalistic and semi-rationalistic theologians and used without reflection. F.E. Mayer used these terms effectively and appropriately as tools to compare various Christian denominations as long as he was concerned with understanding and explaining various positions apart from the question of their truth. As soon as one asks the question of whether this is true for me, the distinction between the formal and material principle cannot be maintained. The four rejections in this section of A Statement rest upon the attempt to maintain this distinction in connection with questions of truth; they are therefore inadequate and inappropriate.

For example, the first rejection asserts that the acceptance of the Gospel is "the heart and center of Christian faith, and the way to salvation." Such an assertion can be properly made only of Jesus who is the way to the Father and of the grace of God revealed in kind; it is never true of "acceptance of . . . the Gospel."

This inadequate formulation of A Statement underlies the formulation of the next three rejections as well. For example, we personally know of no Lutheran who would assert that "the Gospel . . . is the norm for appraising all doctrines." To say that would imply the Gospel is the norm of the Law. Consequently, questions #3 and #5 are inadequately formulated:

3. Some people argue that since the Gospel is the object of faith it should also be regarded as the norm of theology. What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of this argument?

5. Must all theological questions be "elevated" to "Gospel questions" in order for them to be truly Lutheran? For example, is it Lutheran to ask Holy Scripture simply whether it is God's will for children to obey their parents, or must that question somehow become a "Gospel question"? (p. 26)

Now we shall reformulate them and address them to the authors of A Statement: the possibility suggested by question #3 is very weak. We would rephrase it thus: 3. The Confessions assert that all Scripture, which is the norm of all theology, is to be divided into the Law and the Gospel. The doctrinal content of the church's preaching and teaching is to be evaluated in terms of its adequate proclamation of and proper distinction between the Law and the Gospel. And its faithfulness to the Scriptural norm is to be evaluated in terms of its skill in properly dividing the Law and the Gospel. Why are some theologians who consider themselves faithful to the Scripture unwilling to accept such an evaluation? We would then also rephrase question #5: Are any theological matters of doctrinal significance if they do not involve the proper distinction between the Law and the Gospel? Is it Lutheran to insist on the acceptance of any Scriptural statement as a matter of doctrine unless we are able to show how it depends upon the proper distinction between the Law and the Gospel?

D. The Authority of Scripture

We believe, teach, and confess that because the Scriptures have God as their author, they possess both the divine power to make men wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (causative authority), as well as the divine authority to serve as the church's sole standard of doctrine and life (normative authority). We recognize that the authority of Scripture can be accepted only through faith and not merely by rational demonstration. As men of faith, we affirm not only that Holy Scripture is powerful and efficacious, but also that it is "the only judge,
rule, and norm according to which as the only touchstone all doctrines should and must be understood and judged as good or evil, right or wrong." (FC, Ep, Rule and Norm, 7)

We therefore reject the following views:
1. That the authority of Scripture is limited to its efficacy in bringing men to salvation in Jesus Christ.
2. That the authority of Scripture has reference only to what the Scriptures do (as means of grace) rather than to what they are (as the inspired Word of God).
3. That the Scriptures are authoritative for the doctrine and life of the church, not because of their character as the inspired and inerrant Word of God, but because they are the oldest available written sources for the history of ancient Israel and for the life and message of Jesus Christ, or because they were written by the chosen and appointed leaders of Israel and of the early church, or because the church declared them to be canonical.
4. That the Christian community in every age is directly inspired by the Holy Spirit and is therefore free to go beyond the doctrine of the prophets and apostles in determining the content of certain aspects of its faith and witness. (p. 26)

The title of this section would more appropriately read: "The Authorities of Scripture." A Statement first distinguishes two kinds of authority (normative and causative) without making any attempt to integrate the two; then it immediately speaks as though it had not distinguished two kinds of authority. Thus, when question #7 asks, "Do you think that the power of Holy Scripture is sometimes confused with its authority?" we can only answer, "Yes." And when the next question is, "If so, how?" we know of no better answer than, "See the section of A Statement under discussion for a very clear example of that confusion."

What seems to be happening, again, is the result of that failure we diagnosed already in the second article of A Statement, namely, the failure to make the due distinction between the Law and the Gospel; thus, A Statement makes a misleading distinction between causative and normative authority, and misses the really crucial distinction between the authority of the Law and the authority of the Gospel. The Law is that divine authority to bind and oblige us and to punish us finally with the divine verdict of death—an authority which resides in the Law's divine author Himself, from whose verdict we have, under Law, no appeal. And the authority of the Gospel is that authority which the Son of Man has, on earth, to forgive sins (Matt. 9:6), and which he has given to his church—and that is the only authority, again grounded in the divine author Himself, that can grant a stay of execution of the Law's verdict on the sinner.

For the rest, we suggest to the interested reader that he take a careful look at the section on the authority of Scripture in, for example, Schmid's compendium, Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (pp. 51-64), where the normative authority of the Scriptures is grounded in their inspiredness, which, in turn, is admitted to be demonstrable finally only by virtue of the believer's experience of the power of the Holy Spirit in making the Scripture's causative authority have its way in bringing him to faith. Translated into the terms of the current debate, this means that for the orthodox dogmaticians the Scripture as rule and norm for doctrine and life has its (normative) authority precisely because its witness to Jesus Christ is believed as Gospel for me (causative authority).

In other words, the Bible has authority for the sake of the Gospel; any other authority it has (and it does have that other, normative authority) grows out of and serves the Gospel.

E. The Canonical Text of Scripture

We believe, teach, and confess that the authoritative Word for the church today is the canonical Word, not precanonical sources, forms, or traditions—however useful the investigation of these possibilities may on occasion be for a clearer understanding of what the canonical text intends to say.

We therefore reject the following views:
1. That there are various "meanings" of a Biblical text or pericope to be discovered at various stages of its precanonical history, or that the meaning a canonical text has now may differ from the meaning it had when it was first written.
2. That Biblical materials that are judged to be "authentic" (for example, "authentic" words of Jesus, "authentic" books of Paul, or "authentic" ideas of Moses) have greater authority than "non-authentic" Biblical statements.
3. That certain pericopes or passages in the canonical text of Scripture may be regarded as imaginative additions of the Biblical authors or of the early Christian community and therefore need not be accepted as fully authoritative.
4. That extracanonical sources may be used in such a way as to call into question the clear meaning of the canonical text.
5. That the essential theological data of Biblical theology is to be found in the precanonical history of the Biblical text.
6. That certain canonical materials have greater authority than other canonical materials because of their greater antiquity or because they are allegedly more "genuine" or "authentic."
7. That various statements of Jesus recorded in the Gospels may not actually be from Jesus and therefore lack historical factuality or the full measure of His authority. (p. 29)

Such an emphasis on the canon and the implicit assumption that it is clearly defined or definable is neither Scriptural nor confessional. The Lutheran Confessions contain no list of canonical books
because there is no Scriptural basis for such a list. In the course of history the church has recognized some books as representative of apostolic preaching and teaching. But the authority of that list is neither more nor less than the authority of the church. There is no way to establish an authoritative list of biblical books except by an exercise of the authority of the church. But to assert that the church has such authority is neither confessional nor Scriptural. For example, Luther had serious questions about the traditional list. At the time the Confessions were written, Luther's introductions to the books of the Bible, in which he challenged the apostolicity of several New Testament Epistles, were being circulated. Yet those introductions were not repudiated by the Confessions. Consequently, this section on the canonical texts of Scripture must be called into question. And we call on the authors of A Statement to cite the authority for their definition of the canon.

We can illustrate our position by responding to two of the study questions:

3. Since the Lutheran Confessions have no official list of canonical writings, is it un-Lutheran to place extracanonical sources (e.g., precanonical traditions or apocryphal writings) on the same authoritative level as the Scriptures? (p. 31)

No, it is not un-Lutheran to do that. Holsten Fagerberg, for example, points out that the Confessions refer to the Apostles' Creed as "God's Word" without distinguishing it from the inspired text of Scripture; and he cites the Apology of the Augsburg Confessions' interpretation of Tobit as evidence that "the whole of Scripture is looked upon as a uniform divine word." (Holsten Fagerberg, A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions [1529-1537] [St. Louis: Concordia, 1972], pp. 16 and 37).

4. If you assume that the words of Jesus recorded in the New Testament were not actually spoken by Him but were in fact developed by the early Christian community, what does this do to our understanding of the Lord's Supper? of Holy Baptism? of the Sermon on the Mount? (p. 31)

Jesus spoke Aramaic most of the time. Thus every saying that has been preserved is almost certainly a translation. The translations are clear enough and the written Scriptures are the norm for all doctrine and life in the church, but they do not permit us to say that we have the words actually spoken by Jesus.

For reasons noted above, we omit extensive comments on the remaining sections of Article IV. These last sections name, but do not clarify, key questions and real issues, and therefore do not facilitate the discussion. We intend to publish an article in The Cresset in which we will treat the technical issues involved, showing how A Statement, in these sections (F-I, pp. 31-41), obscures the nature of saving faith. The issues surrounding methods of biblical interpretation are vital for the teaching and preaching of the Church, and for her pastoral care, worship, and evangelism. Antievangelical conclusions can be and have been drawn by users of the historical-critical method, as well as by users of the grammatical-historical method or a fundamentalistic, literalistic method. Such issues call for and deserve ongoing discussion.

For further comment on this section on Scripture, we refer the reader to "A Scrutiny of A Statement on Scripture," by Walter E. Keller, The Cresset (June 1972), pp. 6ff.

V. Original Sin

We believe, teach, and confess that God, by the almighty power of His Word, created all things. We also believe that man, as the principal creature of God, was specially created in the image of God, that is, in a state of righteousness, innocence, and blessedness. We affirm that Adam and Eve were real historical human beings, the first two people in the world, and that their fall was a historical occurrence which brought sin into the world so that "since the fall of Adam all men who are propagated according to nature are born in sin" (AC, II, 1). We confess that man's fall necessitated the gracious redemptive work of Jesus Christ and that fallen man's only hope for salvation from his sins lies in Jesus Christ, His Redeemer and Lord.

We therefore reject the following:

1. All world views, philosophical theories, and exegetical interpretations which pervert these Biblical teachings and thus obscure the Gospel.

2. The notion that man did not come into being through the direct creative action of God, but through a process of evolution from lower forms of life which in turn developed from matter that is either eternal, autonomous, or self-generating.

3. The opinion that the image of God in which Adam and Eve were created did not consist of concreated righteousness, that is, a perfect relationship to God.

4. The notion that Adam and Eve were not real historical persons and that their fall was not a real historical event which brought sin and death into the world.

5. The opinion that original sin does not deprive all men of their spiritual powers and make it impossible for them to be in the right relationship to God apart from faith in Jesus Christ. (p. 42)

We have previously drawn attention to the way in which A Statement does not understand or apply the Law with the radical seriousness which characterizes the Lutheran Confessions' use of the Law. Vague statements about man's need for salvation lead to inadequate statements about the work of our Lord Jesus. Similarly, A Statement defines the church's mission and proclamation in
terms of the preaching of the Gospel without the Confessions' corresponding emphasis on the preaching of repentance. Now Article V offers us a statement on original sin which, it seems to us, exposes the basis for the deficiencies we have been observing. The doctrine of original sin in *A Statement* in fact marks a retreat from the theology of the Lutheran Confessions; it could have been written by any of a number of medieval theologians or opponents of the Reformation, for *A Statement* mentions none of those accents which are characteristic of the Confessions' teaching on original sin. The *Augsburg Confession* says, "Our churches also teach that since the fall of Adam all men who are propagated according to nature are born in sin. That is to say, they are without fear of God, are without trust in God, and are concupiscent" (Article II, Tappert, p. 29). It is the second sentence, not the first, that distinguishes the genuinely Lutheran understanding of original sin from a variety of pre- and post-Reformation versions of that doctrine.

The emphasis in the presentation of the doctrine of original sin in *A Statement* is certainly different from the emphasis in the Lutheran Confessions. This difference can be noted in the concentration on affirming that "Adam and Eve were two real historical human beings," as if the church’s teaching about original sin could be more effectively done and more firmly grounded by getting us to focus primarily on the two original sinners rather than to hear the truth of Genesis 3 as it reveals and explores our own lack of fear and trust in God and our own endless cravings.

Serious warning is to be made about the use of "real" and "historical" in *A Statement*. Of course, the authors of *A Statement* know that these terms are neither biblical nor confessional. But that in itself is neither our criticism nor our warning: rather, the problem is that they are undefined, they are diversionary, and they lead us to trivialize and underuse Genesis 3. Being undefined, that is, not clearly excluding anything, they could invite the thoughtful reader to ask whether there might be "unreal historical human beings" or "real unhistorical human beings"? Furthermore, they are diversionary in that they are symptomatic of this article's leading us away from the truth of Genesis 3 as it diagnoses people, locked in their sinnership in their particular time and place. Between the truth of the situation in which Adam and Eve found themselves and our own confrontation with that truth, the link is a deduction about our own original sin. The weight of the confrontation is lightened to the weight of a conclusion managed by our minds. Thereby sinners are allowed to hide behind the fig-leaves afforded by such terms as "real" and "historical." Finally, these terms lead to trivializing the biblical account of the fall. People should not be led to think of Genesis 3 as if it were a story merely of what happened once upon a time, but should be helped instead to hear it as the very Word of God diagnosing sin, condemning sinners to death, and promising rescue to believers, not only Adam and Eve, but also the present readers and hearers. An illustration of the Article's underuse is provided in the thesis and the fourth rejection, when it there uses the biblical text merely as the basis for saying that Adam and Eve were the first sinners; it fails to give the church the guidance she needs in using the biblical text for her preaching of the Law and the Gospel to sinners today. We make this warning precisely because we do not want the Genesis material to be regarded as mere myth. In this we feel we share the concern of *A Statement*.

VI. Confessional Subscription

We reaffirm our acceptance of the Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God, and our unconditional subscription to "all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God" (Constitution, Article II; cf. also Bylaw 4.21). We accept the Confessions because they are drawn from the Word of God and on that account regard their doctrinal content as a true and binding exposition of Holy Scripture and as authoritative for our work as ministers of Jesus Christ and servants of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

We accept the following clarifications of the nature of our confessional subscription:

1. We acknowledge that the doctrinal content of the Lutheran Confessions includes not only those doctrines of Holy Scripture explicitly treated in the Confessions but also those Biblical doctrines set forth somewhat indirectly or incidentally, such as the doctrines of Holy Scripture, creation, the Holy Spirit, and eschatology.

2. With the fathers, we recognize that not everything in the Lutheran Confessions is a part of its doctrinal content, but we reject all attempts to abridge the extent of this doctrinal content in an arbitrary or subjective manner. We recognize, for example, that subscription to the Lutheran Confessions does not bind us to all strictly exegetical details contained in the Confessions, or even to the confessional use of certain Bible passages to support a particular theological statement. However, since the Confessions want to be understood as Biblical expositions, we reject the notion that we are not bound by our confessional subscription to the exposition of Scripture contained in the Confessions or to the doctrinal content which the Confessions derive from individual Bible passages.

3. We recognize that the Confessions must be read and studied in terms of the historical situations in which they were written, but we reject the view that our confessional subscription means only
that we regard the Confessions as a historically correct response to the problems encountered by the church when the Confessions were written.

4. We recognize that the doctrinal content of the Confessions centers in Jesus Christ and the Gospel of our justification by grace through faith, but we reject the view that the doctrinal content of the Confessions includes only those confessional statements which explicitly and directly deal with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Accordingly, we do not accept the idea that our subscription to the Lutheran Confessions permits us to reject such confessional positions as the existence of the devil and of angels or that Adam and Eve were real historical persons whose fall into sin was a real historical event.

5. We recognize that the Lutheran Confessions contain no distinct article on the nature of Holy Scripture and its interpretation, but we acknowledge and accept the confessional understanding of the nature of Holy Scripture and of the proper theological principles for its interpretation.

6. We recognize the Lutheran Confessions as a true exposition of Holy Scripture and therefore reject the opinion that our subscription to the Lutheran Confessions leaves us free to reject any doctrinal statements of the Confessions where we feel there is no supporting Biblical evidence.

7. We acknowledge that our subscription to the Lutheran Confessions pledges us to preach and teach in accordance with the entire Holy Scripture. We therefore reject the opinion that all Biblical matters not explicitly treated in the Lutheran Confessions are open questions.

8. We confess that the Holy Scriptures are the only rule and norm for faith and life, and that other writings "should not be put on a par with Holy Scripture" (FC, Ep, Rule and Norm, 1·2). We therefore reject the notion that it is legitimate to maintain the doctrinal conclusions of the Confessions without accepting their Biblical basis, or to regard formal confessional subscription as an adequate safeguard against improper exegetical conclusions.

9. Finally, we affirm that our acceptance of the Lutheran Confessions means not only that we tolerate the doctrinal content of the Lutheran Confessions as a viable option for Lutheran Christians today but that we in fact preach, teach, and confess the doctrinal content of the Lutheran Confessions as our very own. (p. 45)

The question of confessional subscription does need to be discussed. The appearance of A Statement is itself a symptom of the seriousness of the problem. However, this article of A Statement makes such general and ambiguous assertions, that to subscribe to it would either be an act of implicit faith or an oath in uncertain things. The authors of A Statement owe the church much greater clarity than this section provides.

As for the questions, we suggest that one ought not raise a question such as this

1. Doctor C.F.W. Walther held that "the servant of

Our review essay is not presented lightly or with a love for quarreling. As serious and sober churchly theologians we have responded to requests from alumni to make an analysis of A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles. Furthermore, we have listened to and heeded the request of the President of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as he expressed himself in the Preface to the original edition of A Statement:

We pray that this statement will promote Biblical study and discussion which will aid our dear church in solving its theological and doctrinal problems and in concentrating its efforts on the great work of proclaiming the Gospel of the risen Christ.

The Synod can use serious and sober analysis of A Statement, so that it may be known that disagreements with it do not come from frivolous theologians who have neither desire nor knowledge to be Missouri Synod Lutheran theologians. Neither does this review essay arise from a desire to serve any political cause within the Synod.

A Statement has not received the careful analysis it deserves. Its proponents are pushing it with apodictic pressure; its opponents attack it with slogans. But, to our knowledge, it has not been seriously studied in print and in public debate, in terms of its content, purpose, and context. In this sense A Statement has been dishonored by all.

A Statement does not fulfill its stated goals: "to serve as a tool to identify theological and doctrinal issues which the Synod needs to consider and resolve"; "to offer guidance in applying Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions to those issues" (study edition, Preface, p. 5). It does not clearly identify, much less define, the burning theological issues in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. This already cripples its effort to offer guidance. But A Statement is itself confes-
sionally deficient in its misunderstanding of the proper distinction between the Law and the Gospel for the church’s life and mission, her teaching and care of souls, and, above all, of her interpretation of the Scriptures.

We do not share the opinion that the church under the Gospel is permitted to be an undisciplined mob or that true doctrine is a matter of indifference for the life, worship, and work of the church.

On the contrary, we applaud those efforts which seek to clarify the issues facing the church and to bring us under the discipline of the truth. Our commitment to these efforts and our pastoral concern for the church have led us to take A Statement seriously. Our own will to be normed by the Sacred Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, as A Statement would have it, compels us to register our objections to it.

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From the Chapel

MARTIN H. FRANZMANN

A Brief Discourse on the Cause and Cure of Righteous Indignation

When the days drew near for him to be received up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him; but the people would not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to bid fire come down from heaven and consume them?” But he turned and rebuked them. And they went on to another village.

ST. LUKE 9:51-56

The Cresset
ONE READS THE JOURNALS, OF COURSE; AND one keeps in touch when one is absent from one's native land. But one is startled nevertheless to note, upon one's return, how the scene has changed and how the accents of men's speech have shifted. I have been surprised, for instance, to find how our concern about surpluses has changed to a worry about shortages; that men are not so sure as they once were that there will always be, no matter what, plenty of the things that our opulent culture has hitherto taken for granted: good air, good water, land, and food. But I was struck no less by the fact that there are so many people so sure (and so vocal) about their righteous indignation. I cannot recall that there ever were no pleasanter and no easier days for His own hand; He went by God's calendar and read the dates for Great Events from it. He had no clock of His own; He heard the hour struck upon the Father's clock — when that clock struck, "His" hour was come.

HOW DOES HE GO? He goes "to be received up." He goes as the Servant who "walks in darkness and has no light yet trusts in the name of the Lord and relies upon His God" (Is. 50:10), who sees in death His victory and can therefore say, "Behold the Lord God helps me; who will declare me guilty?" (Isaiah 50:8). Amid the shattering of all empiric certainties, amid shame and spitting, the smitten back, the plucked-out beard, and death, He is possessed by the one certainty that He is to "be received up"; the Servant knows that God's Servant "shall be exalted and lifted up and shall be very high" (Isaiah 52:13).

THEREFORE THE SERVANT SETS HIS FACE like a flint (Isaiah 50:7) toward Jerusalem; therefore He turns and rebukes those classic righteous-indignation lads, James and John, who were ready to mount a crackling, roaring demonstration in Samaria. Therefore He gives the story its tame and anticlimactic conclusion: "They went on to another village."

He goes His anticlimactic way and takes His disciples with Him. Therewith He answers our third simple question, "HOW DO WE FOLLOW HIM?" We remember how our Lord blasted the unfruitful fig tree, how His zeal for His Father's house moved Him to that furious crackling, roaring demonstration in Samaria. Therefore He gives the story its tame and anticlimactic conclusion: "They went on to another village."

We remember how our Lord blasted the unfruitful fig tree, how His zeal for His Father's house moved Him to that furious cleansing of the Temple which is more to our taste than this meek backward exit from a hostile village. Before we emulate the Temple Cleanser, we had better ask ourselves: Whose house are we so zealous for? What Temple are we ready violently to cleanse? Is it that cozy shrine where my rights and my virtues sit enthroned? Or is it that terribly holy place where the presence of the Lord of Hosts overwhelms me with the consciousness that I am a man of unclean lips, a charter member of a society of men of unclean lips? Have I who hope in the Cleanser of the Temple purified myself as He is pure (1 John 3:3)? Am I clean enough to cleanse the temple? Am I man enough to expend myself as He expended Himself? When we have asked ourselves that question, then we are on the way to follow that quiet Servant whose uncanny certitude silences our rancorous righteous indignation. Then we are on the way toward being of some help to those whom the Servant alone can help, the bruised reeds which only He can make grow strong and straight again, those smoldering wicks which only His breath can make burn clear and bright again.

Martin H. Franzmann, Guest Professor at Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois during the Spring semester, was the preacher at the special Vespers on the Feast of the Anunciation in which J. S. Bach's Cantata No. 56, "Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen," was sung.
ALTHOUGH ERIC GILL DIED in 1940, he was a Jesus freak, an artist who worked in many media, a pacifist, a nudist, a writer, as well as the head of a religious art commune. Yet one profoundly deep attitude would have kept him from being tolerant of the 1970’s—his total dedication to craft and craftsmanship. It was a craftsmanship based on the negation of self, which is the highest expression of that self.

Gill lived at a time of great experiments in seeing, yet his own work was deeply traditional, demonstrating the continued vitality of Medieval forms and their possibilities for today’s new use. Forms and Archetypes persist throughout histories, and Gill saw this in both European and Asian art. Chartres and the caves at Ajanta were both understood through his close friendship with Ananda Coomaraswamy. He educated Gill in both traditions to see the similarities of intent in both Medieval European Art and traditional Indian Art.

Gill’s drawing of a hand, any hand, becomes Universal as it forms a Mudra—the Asian system of religious gestures that once also existed in Medieval Europe as a gesture language. Born in 1882, the son of a Congregationalist Minister, Gill remained a Christian. In 1913 he became a convert to Roman Catholicism, yet he might have been a better Celt or Druid.

Gill soon became an embarrassment to the Church. A figure of St. Frideswide presented to the small Anglo-Saxon church at Binney was placed behind the altar to avoid shocking the parish. By 1973 it had disappeared from behind the altar as well. It was Gill’s celebration of the human body as a great gift of God that disturbed them—or perhaps his manner of celebration. Gill openly discussed sex at a time when sex was never openly discussed and still more rarely at a church conference. He spoke of the sexual
act as a Sacrament and it is said that he would mark a Christian cross in his diary every time he had sexual intercourse with his wife.

He hated the rigid fit of Edwardian clothing design, and often wore a Medieval monk's robe. In the summer heat he would often tie it up around his waist, or discard it completely for nudity. His neighbors were shocked—Carnaby Street and the Beetles were still almost half a century away.

Gill understood the corrosive influence of the factory and the need for the simple directness of Man in Nature. It was with this fear and hope that he moved his family, students, and work to found a religiously-based art community. The place he chose was an empty nineteenth-century Anglican monastery at Capel-y-ffin in the Black Mountains of Wales. Nearby was the twelfth-century Abbey of Llanthony whose trees were said to have been planted by Landor himself. Perhaps it was a Druid or Celtic valley, as Christianity always seemed to flounder there. Gill, a Druid or Celt at heart, flourished there.

Gill's sense of craft was deeply rooted in traditional uses of materials and in the careful training and growth of the artist himself. That training was spiritual as well as practical. Sometimes his work was highly finished and polished, such as his stone sculpture or his pencil drawings. He worked in woodcuts, ignoring copper etching or lithography. One often finds roughness in his carved stone inscriptions, sometimes a hint of carelessness. Gill was a master calligrapher. For him (as in Asia), calligraphy was the Mother of all the Arts. Although he hated the factory, he did design typefaces for the Monotype type-setting machines as well as handset type setting. He designed a sans-serif face, and two, “Perpetua” and “Johanna”, are still in common use.

He often carved houghton stone, a finely textured stone that is capable of registering fine detail. It has a soft matte surface when polished. He used this for his inscriptions and for many of his sculptures. The simplification of forms within his sculpture is often confused with the Art Deco style of the 1920's and 1930's. Perhaps now that the Deco style interests again, it will become apparent that simple forms need not be stylized form. He carved free-standing forms, forms to be used architecturally, reliefs, and tombstones.

Gill would not have understood the transformation of Art from a spiritual process into the entertainment it has become in the last decade. He could not create an Art without a content, be it an image or an Art free of the specific content of Beauty itself. He might have been an angry artist, but even our angry artists prefer to be stylish as well as angry. No... Gill just wouldn't fit in now.
The housing crisis in urban America is metropolitan in scope, not solvable at present by initiatives to be taken within the city limits. This has become increasingly clear with the movement of industry and semi-skilled jobs to suburban areas and with present resistance to the location of federally subsidized low cost housing, as well as of welfare recipients, in the suburbs. Judicial, legislative, political, and technological "breakthroughs" are proposed; but in the present impasse, there is little official response to waiting families and little relief for the damage being inflicted—ominously—on their members.

Following is a personal account by one member of the Valparaiso Builders Association who believes that cries from the Cabrini Homes in Chicago must reach even to outlying small towns. In making and gaining response in Valparaiso, she has found her own life strangely enriched and that of her town, well—enlivened.

RHL

I campaign for just causes, divide my time among those agencies advocating Solutions for the Poor, and worship faithfully. My days are busy with church, state, and home. Keeping a dog, four children, and a husband fed and amused is no small fete, and as Faculty Wife I feel a certain obligation to keep a finger on the academic pulse by attending seminars dealing with truth-goodness-beauty. Then there are the day-to-day priorities—community activities, paying bills, scraping off old McGovern stickers, planning meatless meals. Life would be relatively serene and predictable if it weren't for this problem I have with poor people. In spite of my support of those institutions reputed as pro-poor, poor people keep getting through to me. Someone is slipping up on the job, and all I want to know is why? Why do poor people keep appearing on my doorstep when there are all those agencies out there with their fool-proof formulæ?

But they do, and they're not. Official government statistics announce that the poor are worse off than ever. Urban Renewal has displaced more than it has sheltered. Massive federal programs have failed to reach the pockets of poor people. Welfare agencies? Well that's a story. Ask the poor if they want those strings-attached hand-outs; sit in the waiting room of your local agency of a morning and savor the faces emerging from the inner sanctum. The Church then? Surely the pooled compassion of the faithful would be the answer. Then why do the welfare folk in our own community still pluck through the rutted muck that connects their non-sewered, non-winterized housing outside of the city limits as we pray on alternate Sundays "Almighty God, help us to heal...show us the ways to share housing and riches?"

Why do we keep depending on institutions for the answers? Because they are comforting? Because they maintain the barricade that keeps us from seeing poor, from knowing poor people; because, after all, they are efficient? So long as we continue to pull anchor from the realities of the poor for an extended cruise on the sea of our own illusions, we have no problems?

But what if a cry for help has been shuffled from one clearing house to the next until it comes directly and personally to you? Neither prayer nor ballot nor financial support of those larger organizations has managed to dilute the cry. What then?

You profess Christianity and Democracy in the face of a friend who believes you enough to cry for help. This is a poor friend with a family to raise, one whose prior pleas to institutions have only managed to instruct her in despair. She was given prayers for her family's welfare, a turkey at Christmas, and a cell in Chicago's Cabrini-Greene public housing projects where violence and dead-end is the name of the game. She wants more. Her despair is real.

What if you warn her family that where you live they might not feel welcome? You live in an all-white middle-to-upper income town, and they are black and poor. You tell them all this, but they are desperate enough to ask again. The same opportunities? And so you begin to look around and find nothing for welfare families from civic, federal, or state sources. Besides, you are told the town "isn't ready." Faculty chums, cocktail buddies, all manner of strangers and acquaintances file through with kindly advice: "Now maybe a 'whole' family...certainly a 'professional black.'" Realtors communicate the message, when approached, that they can't be "the first."

So you get together with three or four good friends and fan out on your own. You finally find one house that is available which you can afford. The key is even in hand for cash one week before the family has been promised it can move in. Because they're already packed, you decide they cannot be disappointed and you plan a foolhardy thing—build, mainly with volunteer

Lois Bertram Reiner received her BA from Valparaiso University in 1952.

The Cresset
help. Miraculously the house goes up and the family moves in after some strange enforcement of zoning restrictions and city ordinances.

Then life becomes a bit hellish. How do you respond when NBC and Chicago and local papers start hitting you for interviews regarding “the story”? Certain community organizations, including your own congregation, request a public explanation, and the local bank denies your group use of its new community room for your meetings, inspiring paranoia. You wonder if you’ve grown a second head. Threatening phone calls in the middle of the night, and vitriolic messages by anonymous authors in the noon mail, prompt you to establish a night “watch” for protection. From what, you’re not certain. What if you simply don’t know what to expect? Because there is no precedent, no institutionalized formula, you do silly things, step by step. Every action is performed out of Necessity.

Tension and confusion, polarizations within and between families, grim looks in the supermarket. You begin to curse the role you’ve been forced to play and try not to appear defensive. Until one morning you wake up to reflect that you’ve done something necessary which no other institution could or would do. A family has left the horrors of Cabrini-Greene for a house with a yard in a town with good schools and new opportunities. You look in the mirror and whistle a few bars of the Hallelujah chorus and put your shoulder into a new day—where there are suddenly new faces waiting. But then new cries which no institution seems able to cope with. The story has reached Cabrini-Greene. Now there are twenty-eight new faces. Twenty-eight! God, what do you do? Pound on the door of every blessed agency to see if the Bogey has been dispelled? Watch your blood pressure rise because there is no one “out there” doing the job?

Again you act out of necessity, and your actions (however minimal) have attracted additional recruits from the private sector—people you would never have known had it not been for the initial cry from Cabrini. As you cope corporately with each crisis, and discover understanding at each new level of human interaction, the terms “neighbor” and “community” become more clearly defined. You are forced to murmur, “Thank God for this devious route to a new definition!”

Yet it is all institutionally inadequate. The problems are so immense we could weep; I drive past the concentration camps of poor people as fast as anyone these days. Anything to keep another face from my door, another voice from asking... "Where were you when I was hungry... naked... a stranger?” As long as I don’t see, I need not struggle with the answers. But it gets harder to box down the nausea that comes from knowing the realities: those miles of gray brick lining the eastern bank of Chicago’s Dan Ryan expressway that comprise Robert Taylor public housing projects, a piously-planned and officially-sanctioned hell for 28,000 poor and black (20,000 of them children); acre after acre of bulldozed, burned-out rubble—all that is left of “Woodlawn” on the South side, where the poor have been displaced at the rate of several thousand each year while Renewal aims its guns at a Profitable Market; the glass-strewn “playgrounds” of Cabrini-Greene on the Near North side, that duplicate hell of socio-political-educational-economic-judicial federally-funded despair, where 500 apartments presently stand empty because “even the poor” are afraid to live there—and where twenty-eight new friends might still be living if...

That is Central City, we say; what does it have to do with us? We have problems enough in our own community. Let us first take care of our own. At the risk of sounding cynical, I venture a titter. While the city fathers might acknowledge a need to deal with building low-cost housing on pressure from the federal government (having accepted subsidy for sewers, hospital, parks, etc.), there doesn’t seem much hope for the really poor. Realtors propose rezoning of available land to meet the market for low and moderate income purchasers, but where in the comprehensive plan for Common Good is there mention of those who cannot purchase much of anything? While the request for “fair planning” is somehow interpreted in the direction of “sons and daughters of established Porter County families... our sons and daughters, in fact,” who is going to ask the Board of Realtors or the City Council, “Who is prepared to ask the Board of Realtors or the City Council, “Who is prepared to ask the Board of Realtors or the City Council, “Who is prepared to ask the Board of Realtors or the City Council, “Who is prepared to ask the Board of Realtors or the City Council, “Who is prepared to do what? And if they are, who will they talk to? Who is prepared to do what? And if they are, who will they talk to? Who is prepared to do what? And if they are, who will they talk to? Who is prepared to do what? And if they are, who will they talk to? And if they are, who will they talk to? And if they are, who will they talk to? And if they are, who will they talk to? And if they are, who will they talk to?

But that suggestion is almost impossible to consider. Property and Productivity are basic, and the poor, who have little to offer in either category, need not be taken seriously on the drawing board of community planning. Since the majority of poor cannot work, they do not produce. Therefore they do not own property. Nor are they a threat at the polls. Assign them to a committee. Establish one more agency for solving their dilemmas, and assume that basic needs are being tended by those modern technological processes from which we get our comfort.

Until the poor themselves manage to claw at our precious assumptions, we are whistling up our sleeves. It is when a specific voice...
shouts "Help" from center stage and we discover to our chagrin that we are alone in the audience, that we stand to gain a fresh sense of justice, good and evil, moral and immoral. We may fight and scratch. We may point the finger in other directions and rage against Institution, but there is no way to understand personal human significance outside of that ultimate, individual responsibility vis-a-vis our neighbor.

Considering the order of personal and national priorities, how does one initiate personal relationship with poor people? They have been kept invisible for so long, it's not likely we can shinny up to the back fence for a chat or bend neighborly-like over the pew to welcome them. We might pack a lunch and hike through the public housing where most welfare folk live these days. Or we may simply perk our ears to those who are calling 'help' where we are? Why? How is that call being heard, if at all? Are we praying with any awareness of a Face that might suggest some Action to parlay our prayer into a meaningful demonstration of hope?

In Valparaiso, a town of 25,000, rich in human resources (though not at all unique), someone began calling "help" the first of February. A Mexican-American family, down on its luck, agreed to pose for front-page coverage in our city's daily paper when its plight had reached emergency status. The father suffered a heart attack and could no longer work, and the family was threatened with eviction from a home it had rented for two years. The mother described what a painful decision it had been to agree to the 6" by 8" which appeared beneath the caption, "Family of Thirteen Looks for Housing." There had been no other way. Not an agency in town was willing or able to deal with them. Yet, even after the publicity, there was silence. I myself looked at those mournful faces and sighed on my way to the editorial page, certain some larger organization would leap to the rescue. Their priest, the congregation, the father's union, the county welfare agency—certainly one of them! I should have known better.

Ironically, it was the welfare worker who contacted us. Nothing in procedure. No precedent. Can you help?

So you're at the wall again. You can't believe all the channels have been tried and so you double-check—knowing you'll end up with those few individuals whom your pastor calls together after it becomes clear that Easy Answers has closed for the season. If thirteen human beings are to learn that they are Sons and Daughters, it is up to those members of the Family assembled around the table to act positively—the banker, the business executive and college professor, the housewife and plumbing contractor. Because the cry has come specifically and personally, there is a chance to experience together the freedom given to every son and daughter willing to accept it. There is the challenge to preserve hope for people in danger of losing it. It becomes necessary to transcend the ballot and the little yellow envelope for a gamble with possibilities—even though new tensions and polarizations loom on the horizon. As this new gathering struggles with the physical and emotional, you remember how "neighbor" and "community" will come to new definitions before the job is done.

So the poor have gotten through to you again just when life was going smoothly. They have stripped down your precious defenses and pulled you into the arena of their realities, with no nifty formulae to whip out of file "P," no comfort to be gained from shaking the fist at do-nothingness in high places, nor at runarounds from bureaucracy. There is the pain of looking into those faces and seeing mirrored your own reluctant response—of seeing your weaknesses and strengths exposed as you deal with Necessity. If you have learned anything, it is just that—the priorities of the poor are Necessary. There is little glamor or glory connected with ferreting out a house, pitching in on the rent, supplying groceries, finding a way for kids to get to school. Why couldn't some institution carry that out?

Now there's the problem, as I said. For the present, we seem called to heal, to share means, housing, to be about preserving life. Dear God, we?

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**FILM — RICHARD LEE**

Letter to an Alumnus:
Chiefly
On Film Criticism

DEAR KIM,

Your letter was a happy surprise. Surely your church is to be cheered for fostering a film society and stretching its ministries through more of the arts. You remember my prejudice well. I like to think film is the art closest to the heart of that great Creator who made the first
moving images—of Himself, in us—after He separated the darkness from the light.

I am not surprised your church is finding its film society a most welcome ministry to one another. Obviously there are always more movies worth seeing from the past than there are movies worth seeing from the present, and film society screenings serve well to bring the longer past to light. Even more warming, however, was the news that your church newsletter prints criticism of current movies too. Certainly it is the discipline of churches not only to treasure what is good in the past but also to welcome what is good in the present.

I understand your tremors now that the lot of the newsletter film critic has fallen to you. Considering the heavy odds against it, it's a lingering wonder to me that any film criticism gets written at all. You ask for readings and forewarnings, and I shall not spare you some hard truths and good books to make you battle-ready.

I assume the seeds of film criticism are in you. The cinema quanon is a suffering love for movies, a sure touch with your own feelings, a working knowledge of film syntax, enough background in film history for making relative judgments, and some usable theories of film for making such absolute judgments as mortals may. It also helps to have a very durable bottom. Now you are ready to see, write, and grow.

Your first hurdle is speed. The experience of film is fugitive and tyrannical. It can't be had at less than the relentless twenty-four frames per second, and the films come and go like the dew on the grass. Unlike a novel or poem, a movie usually can't be mulled, taken up bit by bit, and returned to again and again. You will soon envy the ease in Zion for the literary critic and learn that the way of the film critic, like the way of the transgressor, is exhausting. Enjoy, enjoy.

Your next obstacle is complexity. No medium short of architecture brings more arts and technologies together than film. Even after you attend to the screenplay, direction, acting, lighting, setting, cinematography, editing, and sound, you still lack the whole of the film and many more of its parts. Most movies, however, are lucky to get two or three of those arts working together well, and your criticism will do well if it illuminates that many arts at once too.

Your third difficulty is documentation. It's nigh impossible to give evidence in print for your case about a movie. In darker moments I sometimes think that film criticism is only possible by making films about films. Otherwise it's virtually hopeless to "quote" film and invite your reader (back) into the original movie. (Even if you can print still photographs with your appreciation of a film, it's scant help. Such stills are like a literary critic writing "Wordsmith's novel has some fine nouns" and then quoting them.) Do not be surprised that most film critics write about the literary elements of a movie—perhaps summarizing the plot, quoting some dialogue, and commenting on the theme—and remain blank about the more visual and cinematic elements. Film critics rarely have space in print for the thousand words worth one picture. And the average motion picture is 150,000 pictures in a row.

Your fourth thorn is the whole nettlesome thicket of the popular arts. Critics who do not toss the word "art" around loosely might agree there are scarcely a dozen films in existence which can be indubitably called fine art. Those films are an impressive achievement in the short, upstart history of the medium, but they also mean that almost all the time the film critic is writing about the more murky and funky popular arts. Not a little film criticism therefore must be the sociology of tastes and mores, the psychology of fleeting enthusiasms and enduring archetypes, the economics of pleasure consumption, and the anthropology of mass society and its industrialized artifacts.

In short, the film critic needs to see movies and see through them at the same time. For better or worse, film criticism also marries you to writing about what the movies are about. Even a failed film may be about something that really matters in the real world and you may have to do some film slumming to see it and tell us about it. Movies are a delightfully impure art, mixed with the realities of the world, and your criticism should hope to be equally impure, mixed, and real.

By now you may be feeling that only fools try film criticism and only saints attain it. Not so, on both fears. Yet I would lay a last straw on your back.

Your final burden is getting through to your reader. The critic of literature may assume that his reader writes words and knows something about that medium. Few filmgoers have ever made a film. Your reader therefore may be put off at the first mention of camera movements, montage, mise-en-scene, and many other arts the film maker brings to his medium. Take a small example.

You want to alert us to the tempo in a fine film. Whoo! Your reader may be schooled in less than half of what moves in movies and their peculiar "spatializations of time." Or you may wish to praise the design in the film. Alas for you again. Your reader sees the borders of the screen as a frame rather than a mask and does not see film space come and go as you do. He is understandably puzzled by your appreciation of fine "temporalizations of space" in a movie he didn't like. In just this one example, all you really want to do is treat space and time in a movie—but you will seem precious and exacting to do so.

The upshot? Film criticism, more than most other kinds of criticism, must also carry the freight of basic education in the medium. Your mission impossible, should you choose to accept this assignment, is to make that education as winsome as you can and as welcome as you must.
This part of my letter self-destructs in ten seconds. I wish you well.

Now, to that summer reading to pack in your picnic hamper. You ask for the fastest thousand pages on film criticism, and I shall oblige your undergraduate haste with truth one more time. Consider the following four books a short, taut, cram course in film criticism worth any moviegoer's matriculation.

The best brief book on film history is Gerald Mast's *A Short History of the Movies* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1971. $4.95). His *History* is a critical history and gathers film criticism around a chronology of classic movies. His critical strength, however, is sometimes his historical weakness. Film history is not the succession of motion picture pearls on invisible string. While reading Mast remind yourself more than he does that those bright pearls were strung on the grubby industry, cult, and commerce of the movies.

The next reading is Alan Casty's *The Dramatic Art of the Film* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971. $3.50). Few books so spare strike a better balance elucidating all the arts of film. It's an especially welcome corrective to those auteurist (I almost wrote autistic) critics who emphasize one art (usually the direction) at the expense of all others. We need the enthusiasts to bring in the truths which moderates miss, but they are not the best place for you to begin. Casty is home base, solid ground.

Now you are ready for V. F. Perkins' *Film as Film* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1972. $2.25). Here is respectful criticism of the received tradition of film theory for you. While grateful for the labors of the fathers (Izenstein, Pudovkin, Arnheim, Balazs, Lindgren, Kracauer, and Bazin), Perkins respectfully marks the insufficiencies of the received tradition for the further illumination of film. His own tack is to turn from film theory which focuses on the artist and medium toward a theory which focuses on the viewer. "A useful theory," he well argues, "will have to redirect attention to the movie as it is seen, by shifting emphasis back from creation to perception." Time will destroy Perkins' theory too, but it does now seem to illumine more of the movies and our aesthetic experience at once.

Finally, read Raymond Durgnat's *Films and Feelings* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971. $2.95). Durgnat shares the balance of Casty and, roughly, the synthetic theory of Perkins. He nearly revels in the impurity of film as art and is almost giddy with the truth that the "essence" of film exists "between" the pure acts it integrates into its own impure whole. The special virtue of *Feelings* is its body of practical criticism which mediates between fine art and popular art and therefore makes the fullest response to film. You will find Durgnat handy both for the classic films in your film society and at the everyday neighborhood flickers.

These current paperbacks should move you surely toward your own reflections upon the screen. My schoolmasterly joy will increase when you have more time and I can invite you leisurely into the classics. If there is anything as good as a good film it is a great book about film.

Thank you for sharing your college memories in your letter. Of course I remember you. Your papers were always late, and your excuses have not been surpassed by any student since you left campus. I often think of our alumni—baptized, bachelored, confirmed, commenced—and wonder whatever becomes of most of them. As you walk worthy of your degree, may Alma Mater and Pater Noster go with you.

DICK LEE

P.S. Don't forget to send your alumni dues.

Rabb

Trying to Knock Out Shakespeare

Since my early youth in the Twenties when I saw *Hamlet in Frack* (evening dress and black tie) in Vienna, I have been subjected to a series of attempts in which the Bard was updated. The temptation to tamper with his works seems to be great. They were already butchered and bowdlerized in the seventeenth century when Samuel Pepys recorded that he saw *The Tempest* performed with music and dance
and had nothing but praise for a Macbeth production, “one of the best plays for a stage, and variety of dancing and musique that ever I saw.” That Shakespeare survived such and similar mutilations and some gentler changes over the centuries only proves the staying power of his dramatic and poetic vision.

Why so many stage directors desire to contemporize older plays is understandable—although rarely pardonable—because the theatre’s immediacy seems to demand a factual nowness in a play’s presentation. But the updating of a play may often reveal its being dated or of a certain age even more than when recreated as a period piece. Shakespeare has a way of defying those who want to best him. Ellis Rabb seems to be one of those directors who cannot help trying to use a play merely as a vehicle for his vision—and the play and its dramatist be damned. The Repertory Theatre of Lincoln Center put on The Merchant of Venice which Rabb has turned into a put-on.

You can easily picture Shylock as a blood-thirsty, revengeful usurer, but Rabb went out of his way and mind to create Shylock as the image of a gentleman with the gesture of greatness when proved wrong, with royal serenity in his pain. Shakespeare endowed Shylock with enough humanness in a wretched and tragic situation not quite of his doing, in order to make us feel for the man who also has eyes and is as human as anyone else. But Rabb was intent on giving us a completely new version of Shylock, of the merchant Antonio, and of Venice. He admirably succeeded in this intention by totally failing in his rewriting of Shakespeare.

Of course, if you look closer at the play, then you will notice that Shakespeare was very fair and seemed to have played a bit into the hands of Ellis Rabb. Even if Shakespeare calls it a “comicall historie,” it is a bloody, serious business for four acts and becomes romantically serene in the fifth. So Rabb compromised with Shakespeare and himself by giving the entire play an evenly sombre look in a concordino mood. There is no joy and exuberance in the poetic words between Lorenzo and Jessica at the beginning of the fifth act in Portia’s house (which in Rabb’s vision is a yacht). On the contrary, while murdering the lines, the two actors behave as if they wanted to prove that they are not afraid of Virginia Woolf. The exchange of reproaches and rings does not have the gaiety and lightness of banter which lie in Shakespeare’s words, but it feels like the bickering of people who deeply mistrust each other.

Before the final lights go out, Antonio is left alone on stage. His “bosom” friend has left to go to bed with Portia. We do not have to be mind readers to realize that Antonio’s thoughts are with this couple, wondering how Bassanio will fare in Portia’s bed and whether he will think of his kisses while kissing her. Shakespeare intimated that the bond for the money would never have become a threatening and dramatic fact had it not been for that other bond between Antonio and Bassanio, a tie deeper than skin-deep. But Rabb established all motivations as dependent on an unconcealed homosexual relationship. Rabb’s Antonio is heartbroken to lose Bassanio to Portia, and Bassanio is totally uninspired, hiding his sexual discomfort behind a monotous speech pattern (whenever he faces his future wife). He makes it clear that he went bisexual only to get Portia’s fortune. Her realization “that this Antonio, Being the bosom lover of my lord, must needs be like my lord . . .” becomes in this production the unambiguous and resigned acceptance that she will have to share her husband with Antonio.

In spite of the anti-Semitic mood of the time when Shakespeare had quickly to write this play to please his company, he nevertheless wrote it in a conciliatory tone, seeing in the union of love and money a way out of the Renaissance man’s awakening appetite for possessions and for making a fast ducat. Shylock’s intelligence is beyond doubt and he is well-informed. So far the Bard. Rabb, however, makes Shylock tower above his Christian environment as a man of noble manners, exquisitely dressed in his latest Rialto business suit. We never hear him say a loud word. He does not come running out of his house shouting: “My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!” He is an unfortunate but utterly lovely man.

Shakespeare gave us to understand that the intelligence of Antonio and Bassanio is debatable. Antonio is a strangely unrealistic character, not at all like a sixteenth-century businessman. When every merchant in Europe is accepting interest, he refuses to take it. When every shipper insures his cargoes at the rate of 10 to 15 per cent, he sends his vessels out completely uninsured. And when he comes to his friend’s rescue, he lets Bassanio offer Shylock three times the principal of the note. This suggestion must have made Rabb go berserk and make a travesty of the play. If money and love are the pivotal points of the play, then—Rabb said to himself—it is logical to create a mod fictitious movie set of Venice with Portia living on an Onassis yacht where sun-bathing men in very short bathing trunks and women in Bikinis or chic suits linger, smoke, and sip Campari; where an entire Fellini world of decadence and decay becomes revolting when it wins out against this noble Shylock; where Jessica, Lorenzo, and Launcelot are a strange, but unquestionable, love trio; where the passing masquerade of which Shakespeare’s Shylock warningly speaks but which is never shown in his version, turns in Rabb’s imagination into a fantastically surrealistic revel and orgy, with the Jewess
Jessica being put on a cross in crucified position, an idea whose meaning is as manifold as it is nonexistent. What a bizarre world in which the Prince of Aragon is brought onstage in a wheelchair from which he gets up and walks around as if it were self-evident to be wheeled in. Nerissa is a beautiful-looking Nubian lady stretched out on a deck chair talking flippantly about Portia’s suitors.

Everything is made to look like a world dominated by the jet-set. But this sensual, lustful world is strangely sad and disgusting. Portia is so elegantly dressed as the “learned judge” that her disguise is unbelievable. Rosemarie Harris as Portia sounds uninterested in her mercy speech and one hates to see blood.

This is a remarkable production as to its fluidity in staging. One scene moves into the other with cinematic ease. But this is its only achievement. The text is cruelly mutilated; German words are grafted on it. Why must Shylock say Auf Wiedersehen! to Tubal and why break out into a woeful German sentence when convicted? (Oh God, did I wish to hear again Sir Olivier’s Shylock cry of despair after this scene!) Is Shylock a Hitler refugee who had settled in Venice? Had he spoken in Yiddish or Hebrew, it would also have been a crime, but at least it would have been a pardonable crime.

This is probably an unforgettable production as the worst that can be done to Shakespeare in a most elegant gesture. It took all the greatness, drama, excitement, joy out of the play and left us with an eye-filling, cheap, and frightening facsimile of our time, into which fell a few mangled Shakespearean words as a memento of how not to present the Bard. But there is one consolation to what we have witnessed: after this show nothing worse can happen to Shakespeare.

These two works are fittingly coupled in this release for, in addition to being in the same key, they are two of the great sacred masterpieces written in Mozart’s final two years in the service of Archbishop Collaredo at Salzburg. They demonstrate how the composer’s emergent musical personality continually annoyed the liturgy-minded archbishop, who was increasingly insistent on more succinct utterances, a la Michael Haydn. The curiosity of the matter is that even in those places where Mozart “toed” the archbishop’s “line,” he was still fascinatingly creative. Mozart was a child of his day, and what he wrote was completely meaningful to the Eighteenth Century. Even today there is a return to happier terms for sacred expression.

The Kyrie of the Mass opens and closes with stately choral sections sandwiching a duet for soprano and tenor with oboe obbligato. The Gloria is strongly unified in one long movement, with contrasts created by the use of the solo quartet and tonal development to related keys. The Credo, the most magnificently constructed movement of the Mass, is divided into three sections, the first and third of which have strong musical relationship, but still manifest divergent creative contrast. Used effectively is the device of having the soprano recite the text on one tone, while the other voices and the orchestra move in opposing directions. The middle section has two marvelously contrasting parts: the first, in which the quartet declaims in a sweet, lyric style et incarnatus est and the second, in which the chorus sings a tense, heart-rending setting of the crucifixus. The Sanctus opens with broad, majestic chords which contrast with the vivaciousness of the Osanna. Benedictus, for solo quartet, is in rondo form. The lovely soprano solo, which opens the Agnus Dei, is infamous for the fact that it is so strongly associated with the melody of Dove Sonofrom Figaro. The Andante of the Kyrie returns in the Dona nobis pacem and a very lively choral burst concludes the work.

The Solemn Vespers for the Feast of a Confessor (we are not sure for which saint they were intended)
consists of settings for the five psalms and a solemn Magnificat for that sacred office. *Dixit Dominus* (Psalm 109) is a massive expression of the regal works of God's hand against His enemy. The phrases are appropriately broad and incisive. *Confitebor* (Psalm 110) opens with a chorale-like phrase, which several times calls to attention the organization of the piece. (One wonders if Mozart had *Wachet auf* in mind.) *Beatus Vir* (Psalm 111) is a most typical example of the use of stile moderno, while *Laudate Pueri* (Psalm 112) is an outstanding example of the composer's use of the stilo antico. The main theme of this fugal setting contains a diminished seventh which had greater realization in the *Kyrie* of the *Requiem*. This psalm closes with a double canon in mirror, beautifully rendered. *Laudate Dominum* (Psalm 116) is one of those irresistible slow movements of the master. A melting theme is introduced by solo soprano and then echoed by the chorus. It is truly a masterpiece of expressivity. The *Magnificat* is liturgically appropriate and dramatically varied. Three trombones are used throughout to double the bottom three parts in the chorus. Trumpets and timpani are used for bombast in the opening and closing movements. Cello, bass, bassoon, and organ are the continuo group. (The bassoon does have an optional obbligato line in the last psalm.) Two violin parts make up the rest.

The total artistic forces of this recording are completely excellent. One could quibble about small details. The soprano and tenor both have a tendency to aspirate coloratura passages. But the style, beauty of tone, artistry, spirit, and accuracy are all just right. One must particularly commend Miss Stitch-Randall for the beauty of her voice and her seemingly unending phrases. The sound is live and church-like. Highly recommended! Particularly considering the price.

**JOSEPH T. MCCALL**

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**BOOKS**

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**AUGUST 1914.**


Anyone who has read and enjoyed *The Red Badge of Courage, All Quiet on the Western Front, The Night of Time, Catch-22, Slaughterhouse Five,* or *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* will be disappointed in *August 1914*. It is a war novel, a type with which we have become very familiar in this century. The novel's subject is the defeat of the Russian Army in the Battle of Tannenburg in East Prussia. Perhaps it is too much a Russian war novel. Certainly it represents a retreat from the universality of *Ivan Denisovich*.

Modern writers have accustomed us to thinking about war in terms of cruelty, inhumanity, absurdity, insanity, and gore. News coverage of Viet Nam has strengthened this habit. The war in *August 1914* is not of this kind. About it, rather, there is an air of rationality, of purpose (bungled though it is), of nobility. Consider, for example, Col. Vorotyntsev's awareness of "the vigorous, inexhaustible, spiritual strength of Russia that lay hidden under these soldiers' tunics and made them so fearless." There is even a wounded soldier who refuses to be a burden to his comrades: "Just put me in a comfortable position," he says, "and give me a few rounds of ammunition." To students of Heller and Vonnegut, these passages come as a bit of a shock. When was the last time any of our novelists wrote in praise of the spiritual strength of America?

Unfortunately, belief in Solzhenitsyn's point of view is not helped by his main character, Col. Vorotyntsev, who is a dull fellow. The man has no past; at least, it is not revealed in the novel. Vorotyntsev has a wife, but he felt a great sense of freedom when he left her to go to war. The rest is surmise. (We may learn more later because Solzhenitsyn plans this as the first part of a chronicle of the downfall of Tsarism.)

In the war, Vorotyntsev provides information to General Headquarters about the movements of troops. Through him, Solzhenitsyn shows that the Russians' defeat was caused by bungling, sycophantic generals, the products of the decadent Tsarist system. We have to take his word. Even with maps for endpapers we are never clear where the many generals are or what they are sup-
posed to be doing. Confusion persists despite Vorotyntsev, who examines all the pieces but never puts the puzzle together for us. The failing is strange because otherwise Solzhenitsyn has created the perfect reporter. Vorotyntsev observes men and events without taint of professional bias or personal prejudice. He can do this because, unlike every other officer in the book, he is without personal ambition. His only ambition is for Russia: “Ever since his youth, Vorotyntsev had been obsessed by one profound desire: to be a good influence on the history of his country....” Vorotyntsev has contempt for the bunglers but no hate. He takes no action himself but, like a good soldier, reports his findings, takes a reprimand (for revealing the bungling), clicks his heels and walks out. Very correct, very dull.

Vorotyntsev has no sense of humor. He makes no jokes (neither does anyone else) nor does he descent to ribaldry with his fellow soldiers. *August 1914* is unquestionably the cleanest war novel ever written.) Students of Heller and Vonnegut would say Vorotyntsev lacks any sense of the cosmic absurdity of war or the horror of it. His sanity is never threatened and therefore he can’t save it by laughing. Solzhenitsyn obviously has not read Heller or Vonnegut. I think he read too many documents and talked too little to soldiers. Whatever the reason, Vorotyntsev takes war nationalistically and solemnly.

This solemnity is reinforced by the book’s unremarkable style. I do not know if Mr. Glenny’s translation is good, bad, or indifferent. The result, though, is indifferent. One neither puts down the book with puzzlement or distaste nor picks it up with anticipation or pleasure. Parts of the book are written as movie scripts; others catalog excerpts from newspapers and pamphlets: Solzhenitsyn’s attempts at panorama, focusing on battle action and popular thought. The action evaporates in the sparse language of the scripts and, for Americans, the catalogs are too reminiscent of James T. Farrell and John Dos Passos to seem original.

*August 1914* makes us examine the view of war given by our novelists. It is odd that America, attacked but once in the great wars, produces writers who shriek condemnation of war’s horrors, while Russia, which suffered prodigiously, produces one who writes of war coolly, objectively, dully. The novel’s chief merit lies in its conception. Solzhenitsyn has had a great idea and perhaps in later volumes it will bloom fully and beautifully. But, by itself, *August 1914* presents nothing new or exciting as a work of art. I came to it wanting to be moved and I left it the same way.

---

*Therefore I make provision, ere I begin
To do the thing thou givest me to do,
Praying: Lord, wake me oftener, lest I sin.
Amidst my work, open thine eyes on me,
That I may wake and laugh, and know and see
Then with healed heart afresh catch up the clue,
And singing drop into my work anew*

George Macdonald, *Diary of an Old Soul.*
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May, 1973
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PLUM CREEK PASTURE
Seward, Nebraska

1.
They scrape the earth
and leave it bare
and trucks that rumble everywhere
fill the creek with dirt;

2.
the cows cannot adjust
to stakes with flags
or row on row of chain
and so keep bumping, bumping,
until their heads are full
of blood;

3.
and standing in the rain
they see the houses rise
as row on row go up and up—
til all is settled; the creek
is dry;
and each to each one diseased elm
and a portion
of the sky.

MAINE SUMMER

Up from the lazy, heavy sea
that foams around the summer grasses
stands the wood—

    covered, thick among the leaves and needles,
fragrant with Spruce and Balsam.

Beneath the branches
the ground cover of Blueberry floats
leaf to leaf like some fairy sea,
    rocking gently on the slanting summer breezes
rising off the warm ocean;

    and in the mystic movement
of these two seas, green and alive,
comes the call, one to the other:
    this sea at the rocks,
    this sea of green beneath the trees,
this Maine.

J. T. LEDBETTER
FREEDOM AND COVENANT

Our University Senate’s Community Life committee has been wrestling all this year with the dual question of the meaning of community and the degree to which a university is or can be a community. It is a tough question, but a vitally important one. Some of us would go so far as to say that upon its answer hangs the long-term fate of our university, perhaps of any university which is interested in being anything more than an education factory.

My own contribution to the discussion has been the suggestion that the two pillars upon which community rests are freedom and covenant. As I see it, neither can bear the weight of community alone. One is needed to correct and amplify the other. Freedom, standing alone, produces a kind of anarchy which manifests itself institutionally as anarchy. Of this we have more than enough on most college campuses. Covenant, standing alone, produces a kind of conformity which can very easily become institutionalized as a velvet-glove tyranny. This was what we had, especially on non-public college campuses, in the past, and many older faculty members still long for the return of those golden days when everybody knew what was done and what was not done and what his own place was in the academic pecking order.

The balance between freedom and covenant obviously varies greatly from one campus to another. On the church-related college campus, I suspect that the emphasis tends to be for the most part on covenant, expressed in its most extreme form in the question: “If you don’t like it here, why don’t you go somewhere else?” Where this is the case, there is no possibility of the development of true community until the windows have been opened to the winds of change, of renewal, of freedom.

True covenant is possible only between those who take their pledges willingly. One must, therefore, calculate the risks. On a college campus, one has to make the rather frightening wager that young people, inexperienced and volatile and rebellious against authority, can and will handle a large measure of real freedom without blowing up themselves and/or the institution. It is safer, of course, not to take the gamble. Safer still, in the present mood of American academia, is to dole out large dollops of counterfeit freedom which will, it is hoped, be accepted as a surrogate for the real thing. What makes this temptation particularly attractive is that one can usually get away with it. Only a few of the brightest and most sensitive students will ever know that it was all a fraud, and they will be too embittered by the knowledge to cause any kind of ruckus.

I am “high” on freedom, I suppose, because at my university, for more than thirty years and under two very different presidents, we have had a remarkably wide area of freedom—not as much as I would like, but much more than one finds on most state-supported campuses, not to mention private and church-related campuses. And I would maintain that, largely as a result of this freedom, we already have a degree of community which many of us do not fully realize until we leave the community.

What the present generation of students and younger faculty finds hard to accept is the necessity of covenant. The trouble with insisting upon following one’s own star is that one learns eventually that, great as the number may be, the number of stars is still finite and the brightest ones always attract a company of people. And how can men walk together unless they are agreed among themselves? Put in more practical terms, all of us know that homo academicus becomes immobile at somewhere around forty-five. Most of us, therefore, if we will not freely submit to a covenant established among free men, will have to settle eventually for “conditions of employment” in an education factory. Either that or we become academic outlaws, sabotaging as best we can the institution which supports us.

We happen to be passing through a moment when covenant is perceived as a limitation on freedom and therefore something to be avoided. Most of the “new morality” is, I would suggest, a fear of meaningful covenant. It always has been hard to say to another person, “Come hell or high water I will stick with you.” For the present younger generation, it is apparently impossible. But real community, whether of person with person or of persons within institutions, demands just that kind of absolute commitment. You can’t play around with it. You can’t set a term on it. You can not make it dependent upon the ebb and flow of the emotions.

And so real community is a very rare thing. Perhaps we are expecting too much when we even suggest that the campus—ours or any other—can ever be a real community in the full sense of the term. But what may be impossible of attainment may at least be possible of approximation. Some of us think that we have had a taste of it. We would like to share as much as we have of it with those who are discontent because they have tasted none of it.