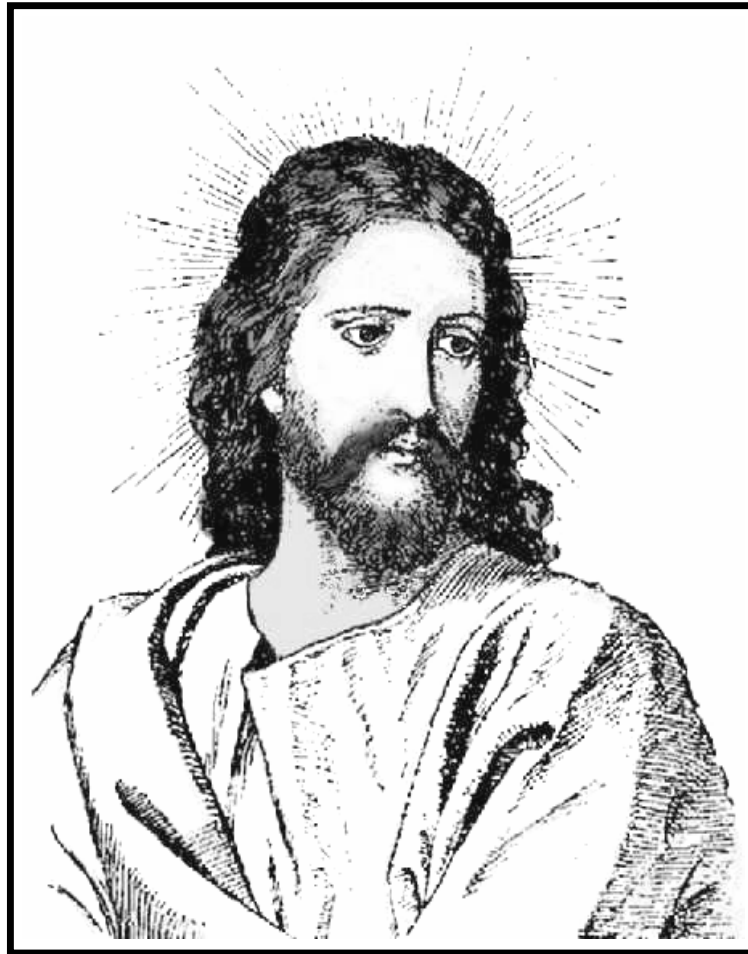


L.C.C.F.

NEWSLETTER



“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am,” John 14:1-3

Volume 26 Number 2
Sola Scriptura-Sola Fide-Sola Gratia
(By Scripture alone-By Faith alone-By Grace alone)

LCCF NEWSLETTER

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The LCCF Newsletter is a bi-monthly publication of the Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship. Faith should be followed by confession, and together with Christians of all times, the members of the LCCF publicly confess the truth of God's Word as found in the faithful, historic confessions of the church. By the grace of God, the LCCF traces its heritage to the Lutheran Reformation through the Synodical Conference. Following the example of the early Lutheran church, the members of the LCCF have found it necessary to fight the good fight of faith by responding to those controversies surrounding the dissolution of the Synodical Conference with confessions true to the inspired Word of God. We want to continue in what we have learned and have become convinced of, because we know those from whom we have learned it (2 Timothy 3:14). We invite all inquiries into our confession, our fellowship, and our publications. As a small group of Lutherans, it is our hope that all who read this little publication would scrutinize our confession, test it by the truth of Scripture, and, finding it faithful, would make it their own through the tender mercies of the Lord.

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In This Issue

IN MEMORIAM – MARVIN H. EIBS 1924-2009	1
Funeral Sermon for Marvin H. Eibs.....	3
Sacred Meditations by Johann Gerhard # 13: THE ADVANTAGES OF TEMPTATIONS	9
OUR HOME IN HEAVEN	12
WE ARE LUTHERAN. WE ARE NOT “ELCA LUTHERAN.”.....	20

Note on Johann Gerhard Sacred Meditations: The current meditation is #13 in the series started by Pastor Eibs. A mistake was made in numbering in Newsletter Volume 25 # 2 and that numbering was carried forward but has now been corrected.

The Word Search Solution for the Bible Word Search in the last issue was incorrect. Please email us if you still need the correct solution.

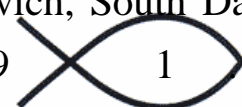
The LCCF Publishing Committee is publishing the Newsletter four times per year.

Subscribers will receive the full number of issues for which they have paid.

IN MEMORIAM: MARVIN H. EIBS 1924-2009

Marvin Henry Eibs, 84, of Mankato was called to his eternal rest on Saturday, October 24, 2009 at his home. He was born November 16, 1924 at home in Marshall to Carl and Catherine (Richters) Eibs, He was baptized, confirmed and married at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church in Marshall. He graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois in 1947. Marvin was united in marriage to Mildred Marks on June 15, 1947. They were married for 62 years until her death on August 26, 2009. They were blessed with four children. He is survived by his daughters and sons-in-law, Ruth and Lloyd Greve and Katherine and Daniel Greve all of Mankato; sons and daughter-in-law, Jonathan and Mary Eibs of Tucson, Arizona, Timothy Eibs of Marshall; a sister, Margaret Gilbertson of Lucan; seven grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren.

During the course of his ministry, Marvin served as pastor at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Smiths Mill until January, 1951; First Lutheran of Faulkton, South Dakota and Zion Lutheran of Ipswich, South Dakota



until December 1953; St. John's, Mazeppa Township of Summit, South Dakota and St. John's, Rauville Township of Watertown, South Dakota until May 1959; founding Pastor of Berea in St. Paul until April, 1970; Faith Lutheran in Sanborn until problems with his voice led to his retiring in September, 1991. He moved to Mankato after retiring and was a member of Christ Our Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mankato. In the summer of 2008 he was diagnosed with cancer. During his retirement, he was ministering to families in Chuluota, Florida on a part time basis until his final illness prevented him from continuing.

Upon his graduation from Concordia Theological Seminary of the Missouri Synod in 1947 he asked for a call into the Wisconsin Synod (WELS), concerned about the growing liberalism in the Missouri Synod. In the 1950s he took a stand against the unscriptural fellowship practices of the Wisconsin Synod. His name is included among those who were publicly protesting the Wisconsin Synod's refusal to separate from the Missouri Synod on the basis of Romans 16:17-18 at least as early as 1957. ([A District Divided](http://www.wlssays.net/files/MuellerCLC.pdf), Pastor Bruce Mueller, October, 1997, <http://www.wlssays.net/files/MuellerCLC.pdf>)

At the 1955 Wisconsin synodical convention at Saginaw, Michigan,

“it was decided to ‘hold in abeyance,’ until a Missouri convention had met, the final vote on the proposition. “Whereas the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has created divisions and offenses by its resolutions, policies, and practices not in accord with Scripture, we in obedience to the command of our Lord in Romans 16:17-18, terminate our fellowship with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod”

<http://www.wlssays.net/files/MuellerCLC.pdf>

In the late 1950s, the WELS and the ELS began to defend a continuing fellowship with an erring church body (the LCMS) during the process of admonition, whereas the Word of God clearly directs us to avoid "those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned" (Romans 16:17). The CLC correctly noted at the time that this passage contains not one word regarding admonition. Admonition will take place before, during, and after the avoiding, but it dare not be used as an excuse for not avoiding.



The Wisconsin Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) continued to hold to the position that "termination of church fellowship is called for when you have reached the conviction that admonition is of no further avail..." (from a WELS paper of 1958). Leaving the Wisconsin Synod in 1959, Pastor Eibs became part of the Church of the Lutheran Confession. (CLC)

“In the mid-70’s, when the fraternal benefit society issue arose in the CLC, Faith Congregation with its pastor (Pastor Eibs) took an active part in seeking a scriptural approach and resolution of the problem of what to do about congregation members who would not give up what the synod had called a sinful membership. There was little or no problem about this in Faith Congregation itself, but there was concern about what was being done in other CLC congregations. In support of those congregations which did not discipline their members who would not give up their fraternal benefit society membership, the CLC arrived at this teaching that

‘as long as the members took what was considered the right attitude toward their sin when they were admonished, they were absolved as penitent sinners at the Lord’s Table, even though they continued their unionism in the AAL’ (Aid Association for Lutherans, now known as Thrivent Financial for Lutherans). The defense of this false teaching and practice on the part of CLC officials led to our suspension of fellowship with the CLC in November of 1981.” (The Beginnings of the LCCF, pp11-12)

The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord! We thank our Lord God for such a faithful servant.

- R. Mehlretter

Funeral Sermon **for Marvin Henry Eibs**

New Ulm, Minnesota
October 30, 2009

Hymns: 198, 552, 50.

Sermon Texts: 2 Timothy 4:6-8 and
John 14:1-6.

Sermon by Pastor Robert
Mehlretter



In the name of Jesus Christ, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

This earth is not the real home of believers in Jesus Christ. The Bible in Peter's first epistle calls us, "*aliens and strangers in the world,*" 1 Peter 2:11. Every believer in Christ will say with the psalmist, "*I dwell with you as an alien, a stranger, as all my fathers were,*" Psalm 39:12. We are called aliens in the world because we are only passing through on the way to heaven, our real home. So also we are called strangers here because we have no abiding city here and we really don't feel at home here.

We live on this earth only for a time. How long, we do not know. Some live many years here. Others do not live beyond infancy. Some of us are still young. Others are well advanced in years. When will the day of our death come? Only God knows. Therefore, it is essential that all of us know

HOW WE MAY REACH OUR HEAVENLY HOME.

Today I am going to try to preach two sermons. The first is an acknowledgement that a man who became a called servant of the Lord Jesus Christ has received his final call, a call to his eternal home. An

individual may decide to prepare for the public ministry in the church or may be encouraged by family to study for it. But he is given a divine call by the Lord through a Christian congregation or a church body. Marvin Eibs received such a call in 1947 and served congregations most of the time until 1991, for 47 years. For an additional 18 years he served the Lord by writing sermons, devotional materials, and doctrinal articles and in other ways. One of the passages I shared with him in the last days of his life on earth was 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "*For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. {8} Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*"

He would be the first to give God the credit for anything he had accomplished in his life on earth. God had led him at least three times to take a stand for the truth of God's Word against a heterodox church body. Although he graduated from a seminary of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, he asked for a call



into the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod at that time, concerned about the growing liberalism in the Missouri Synod. In the late 1950s he took a stand against the unscriptural fellowship practices of the Wisconsin Synod, and again in the early 1980s against the unscriptural fellowship practices of the Church of the Lutheran Confession. God led him to like-minded people who gathered around the Word and sacraments seeking to preach, teach, and live the Word of God in its truth and purity. That is all due to the grace of God.

And it is by the grace of God that Marvin, a sinner, received the gift of eternal life through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Just because he was a minister does not mean he was sinless. Of course not. I think that Satan works harder in those who serve the church. Temptations surround us – all men – and it is only through the Word of God that we can fight such temptations. He sought to be an example and to always speak the truth. But the truth sometimes hurts. That's because the truth of God's Word is something we humans don't always want to hear. Mankind likes to hear good news. Mankind – all of us – doesn't like to hear bad news especially if it is our fault.

God's law shows us the bad news: we all sin daily and much, in thought, word, and deed. Pastor Eibs knew that all applied to him, too. And that was part of the message he fought to present to anyone who would listen before he finished his race on earth. But just like St. Paul wrote these words about himself, I thought it appropriate when I applied these words to Pastor Eibs: he "*fought the good fight, [he] finished the race, [he] kept the faith.*" And now, because of the grace, the undeserved love of God, we can say "*there is in store for [Pastor Eibs] the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to [him] on [judgment] day-- and not only to [him], but also to all who have longed for [the Lord's] appearing.*" I can say that the Gospel of Jesus Christ was not only part of his preaching but it was something he believed and lived. Here is a passage where the King James Version is clearer. The crown of righteousness in heaven is a gift of grace, something "*which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day*". It is a gift, not a reward or an award.

Law and Gospel, sin and grace. That was Pastor Eibs' message. He knew he couldn't atone for his sins, and he looked to

Jesus Christ for full atonement. I was able to assure him of the forgiveness of sins because of what Jesus did for him. That is the greatest message anyone can receive: all your sins are forgiven because Jesus Christ paid for them and God washes them all away in the blood of Jesus Christ. We are all sinners who have broken God's law and deserve eternal damnation. But God's word plainly teaches in Ephesians 2:8-9: ***“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.”*** We are saved eternally from damnation because Jesus Christ died on the cross for all our sins after he lived a perfect, sinless life, the life we could never live. It is God's grace, that is, his undeserved goodness and mercy which saves us from our sins. When we believe in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior from sin, we have freedom from the guilt and the power of sin, membership in His family, and are able, by God's grace, to seek to walk ***“worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called”***. Ephesians 4:1. That is the good news that God gives us.

That's one sermon. My second sermon is based on an unpublished sermon Pastor Eibs

wrote, possibly in 2006, with the heading “for future use if the need should arise”.

In our second sermon text Jesus has something most comforting to say to his believing followers about their heavenly home. ***“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am,”*** John 14:1-3. I love the picture from the King James Version: ***“In my Father's house are many mansions”*** Jesus speaks in such a kindly and comforting way here when he speaks of mansions in heaven where he has gone to prepare a place for us. But to whom is this a comfort? Can everyone go through life with an untroubled heart and confidently expect to go to heaven? No, sadly that is not so. To believe that everyone who dies goes to heaven is foolish sentimentality. Jesus truly died for all people and paid for their sins. But the only way to get to heaven is to believe this. When anyone rejects the Gospel of Christ, they will not get to heaven. The Bible plainly says, ***“Whoever does***



not believe will be condemned,”
Mark 16:16.

Therefore, every time someone we know dies, this is a time when the Lord wants all of us who are still living to think most seriously about HOW WE MAY REACH OUR HEAVENLY HOME.

Our Savior says, *“I am the way.”* He does not say, I will show you the way to heaven, and then if you try your best to lead a good life you will get there. That is the way of work-righteousness that makes our salvation dependent on something we do. No, Jesus says, *“I am the way.”* In order to get to heaven we must believe in Jesus as our Savior. It is not enough to have some vague thoughts about Jesus or to know in a casual sort of way that he is called the Savior. We ourselves, individually, must know Jesus as OUR Savior. We must know and believe what the Gospel says of him, that he is God’s *“one and only Son,”* John 3:16. We must also know that *“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him,”* John 3:36. We must know, *“He is the true God and eternal life,”* 1 John 5:20.

Of Jesus the Bible says, *“He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification,”* Romans 4:25. *“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God,”* 2 Corinthians 5:21. We cannot appreciate this unless we first of all know, *“There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus,”* Romans 3:22b-24. So Jesus was the peacemaker between God and sinners. *“There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men,”* 1 Timothy 2:5-6. By his atonement for sin, which he offered on the cross when he died and shed his blood, Jesus has reconciled sinners to God. When we by God’s grace believe this, then it also is true, *“Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,”* Romans 5:1. Jesus is the one who opened the way to the Father in heaven. He himself is the way.

Jesus also says in our text, *“I am the truth.”* He is not one who merely speaks some truths. He IS the truth. In Jesus Christ all truth is

embodied. The Bible says that Jesus is God's one and only Son who is "**full of grace and truth,**" John 1:14. The truth about God the Father is revealed by Jesus who came to this earth for that purpose. Jesus said, "**No one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him,**" Matthew 11:27. Jesus says to his followers, "**If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free,**" John 8:31-32. That truth is the Gospel as recorded in the Bible. The Gospel, Paul says, "**is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,**" Romans 1:16. We are to hear the Gospel truth about Jesus, and the Holy Spirit creates faith in our hearts through the powerful Word. That is the way we reach our heavenly home.

There is a third phrase in our text that Jesus speaks, "**I am the Life.**" This is the most comforting word we have in the Bible at such a time as this. Marvin Eibs has died; our friend, our father, grandfather, great grand-father, our pastor, and we are going to put his body in the grave. But it is not death and the grave that we think of at this time. Rather it is life, eternal life that we think of. Today we sang "O, where

is thy sting, Death: We fear thee no more; Christ rose, and now open is fair Eden's door. For all our transgressions His blood does atone; Redeemed and forgiven, we now are His own." (The Lutheran Hymnal, 198:4) The body of a believer in Christ is indeed buried after death and decays in the grave. But Jesus says, "**My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day,**" John 6:40. Jesus could say, "**I am the life**" because he is the true God who in the beginning created all life. At the beginning of the Gospel of John the evangelist says of Jesus, "**Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made,**" John 1:3. Jesus as our Good Shepherd says, "**I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full,**" John 10:10b. He can say this because he laid down his life for the sheep. He says, "**I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep,**" John 10:11. But he received life again on the third day. He ascended into heaven 40 days later and lives and reigns eternally.

At this time of Marvin Eibs' death we think of another time long ago when another loved one, Lazarus, had died at Bethany, and

for our comfort we remember Jesus' words to Lazarus' sister Martha, "*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die,*" John 11:25-26. This precious comfort is for everyone who believes and trusts in Jesus. Jesus is the only way to the Father in heaven. Jesus says in our text, "*No one comes to the Father except through me.*" The Bible tells us this most important truth, "*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be save,*" Acts 4:12. All religions except true Christianity are rejected with these words. Any thought of earning heaven by so-called good works is simply foolishness. It leads inevitably to everlasting punishment in hell.

Today we rejoice and thank God that Marvin Eibs faithfully heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are confident that the Holy Spirit through that Gospel Word brought him to faith in Jesus and kept him in that faith unto the end. We look forward to seeing him again on the great day of resurrection. May God grant that all of us trust in Jesus as "*the way and the truth and the life*". Then we too will finally reach our heavenly home. Amen.

SACRED MEDITATIONS

By Johann Gerhard

Continuing the Sacred
Meditations of Johann Gerhard
edited and rewritten in the
language of our day.

No. 13 in a series based on
Gerhard's Meditations #40, page
229.

THE ADVANTAGES OF TEMPTATIONS

*The Palm Tree Grows
Upward in Spite of
Weights and Hindrances.*

It is very profitable to the believer in Christ to be tested and confirmed in the faith by temptations, while abiding in this world. Our Savior Himself was willing to wrestle with the devil in His temptations in the wilderness, in order that He might overcome him for us and for our salvation. In this way He can be our faithful Champion in all our conflicts with the tempter. Before He ascended to heaven He descended into hell as its Conqueror, and so the believer in Christ must first descend into the very lowest depths of temptation, before he can ascend to the glories of heaven. The children of Israel



could not fully occupy the promised land of Canaan until their various enemies were first conquered. Just as Jesus himself was tempted severely by Satan, including the 40-day stretch in the wilderness, so the Christian today is tempted daily by the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Temptation tests the soul, because our faith, assailed by storms of adversity strikes its roots more firmly down into the very bed-rock of our salvation. It spreads out its branches more widely in good works, and shoots up higher and higher in its hope of the glorious liberty of the children of God. When Abraham, told by God Himself to offer up his son in sacrifice, had given full proof of his prompt and cheerful obedience, the angel of the Lord appeared to him saying, *"Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."* Genesis 22:12 And so if you, in your temptations, offer up to God in sacrifice your own will and desires, you too will be counted as one that fears God, and in your inmost heart you will hear the divine word of approval. As fire tests the gold, so temptation tests your faith. The battle shows the fighting ability of the soldier, and so the ability to overcome temptation shows the strength of

your faith. When the stormy winds beat against the boat that carried Christ, and the foaming billows dashed into it, then appeared the little faith of His disciples. When the Lord directed that the Israelites should be led out to overcome the Midianites, they were first taken down to the water and tested there. The Lord said to Gideon: *"There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will sift them for you there."* Judges 7:4. So we are to be tested in the water of tribulation and temptation, before we shall be led triumphantly into our heavenly fatherland, when all our enemies have been conquered. Whatever adversities then, whatever temptations, the faithful believer suffers here, let them be regarded not as a mark that God is blaming us for our sins, but rather that He is strengthening our faith.

Temptation also purifies our souls. Our great Physician, Christ, employs many bitter remedies to expel the deadly spiritual diseases of love of our sinful self and love of the world. Tribulation moves us to make a careful examination of our consciences, and often reminds us of the sins of our past lives; it also often preserves us from the commission of sin, as certain medications act as a preventative of contagious bodily diseases. We are

inclined to fall into sin at all times, and yet more so in times of prosperity than of adversity. Too many riches are as thorns that spring up and choke the good seed sown in their hearts. A parable tells us: ***"The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful."*** Matthew 13:22. God, therefore, may take them away, so that they may not destroy the soul. A multitude of worldly business cares hinder many from obeying God the way they should; and so He often lays them on a sick bed, that they may have time to turn their thoughts in upon themselves, and thus begin to die to the world, that they may live unto Him. To very many it has been a great blessing to have fallen from an exalted station of wealth or of honor to the comparative quiet of an unimportant position in life. Worldly honor puffs up many with pride; and so God often rebukes them and removes that which feeds this worldly pride.

Finally, temptation illuminates the soul. How imperfect and worthless is all worldly comfort. We come to recognize this only in time of temptation. While Stephen was being stoned to death he saw the

glory of Christ, and so Christ shows himself to the truly contrite believer in the hour of his worst trouble. ***"But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,"*** Acts 7:55. It is only as God Himself dwells in us that we may have true and lasting joy, and God dwells with him that is of a contrite, humble spirit. ***"I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite."*** Isaiah 57:15. Affliction as a severe test of our faith serves to make our spirits humble and contrite, so that the souls of the afflicted may greatly rejoice in all their afflictions. Through temptation we come to know God more truly and intimately, for the Lord Himself says, ***"I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him."*** Psalm 91:15. Why does the Apostle say: ***"Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."*** 1 Corinthians 13:12? Because in temptation and trial we learn to know that God brings joy to the hearts of His elect children in a way that seems to suggest only sadness; that He makes them spiritually alive by apparently putting them to death;



that He heals them spiritually by allowing them to be subjected to various diseases, and makes them rich in spirit by keeping them poor in this world's goods. Therefore, we ought to cheerfully accept the cross and temptation in grateful appreciation of the love of Christ, who was tempted, and tried, and suffered on the cross for us.

O blessed Jesus, let us pass through fiery trials here on earth; let us be bitterly persecuted, even, in this world, if only You will spare us in the world that is to come. O blessed Jesus, who often spares us by apparently casting us away from You, grant that by Your merciful stripes upon us we may be brought back again to You. Afflict and chastise us as you will, if only we may in this way grow in strength and power. O merciful Jesus, be with us to help us in all our conflicts with ourselves; direct us in our struggles, and crown us with glorious victory. Whatever adversities we may suffer in this life, let them serve to increase our faith. Strengthen our feeble faith, O blessed Jesus, for so You have promised to do by Your holy prophet, *"As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you,"* Isaiah 66:13. As a mother cherishes and nourishes with more tender and

anxious care her newborn infant because of its very helplessness, so, O merciful Jesus, encourage and strengthen our souls because of the very weakness and feebleness of our faith. Grant that the inward consolations of Your grace may have more influence and power upon me than all the contradictions of ungodly men and of the devil himself. O Jesus who is the Good Samaritan, pour into the gaping wounds of my sins the stinging wine of Your just judgments, but at the same time, also, add the soothing oil of Your divine consolations. Increase the burden of the cross we already bear, if You will, but grant us also the strength to bear it.

- M. H. Eibs

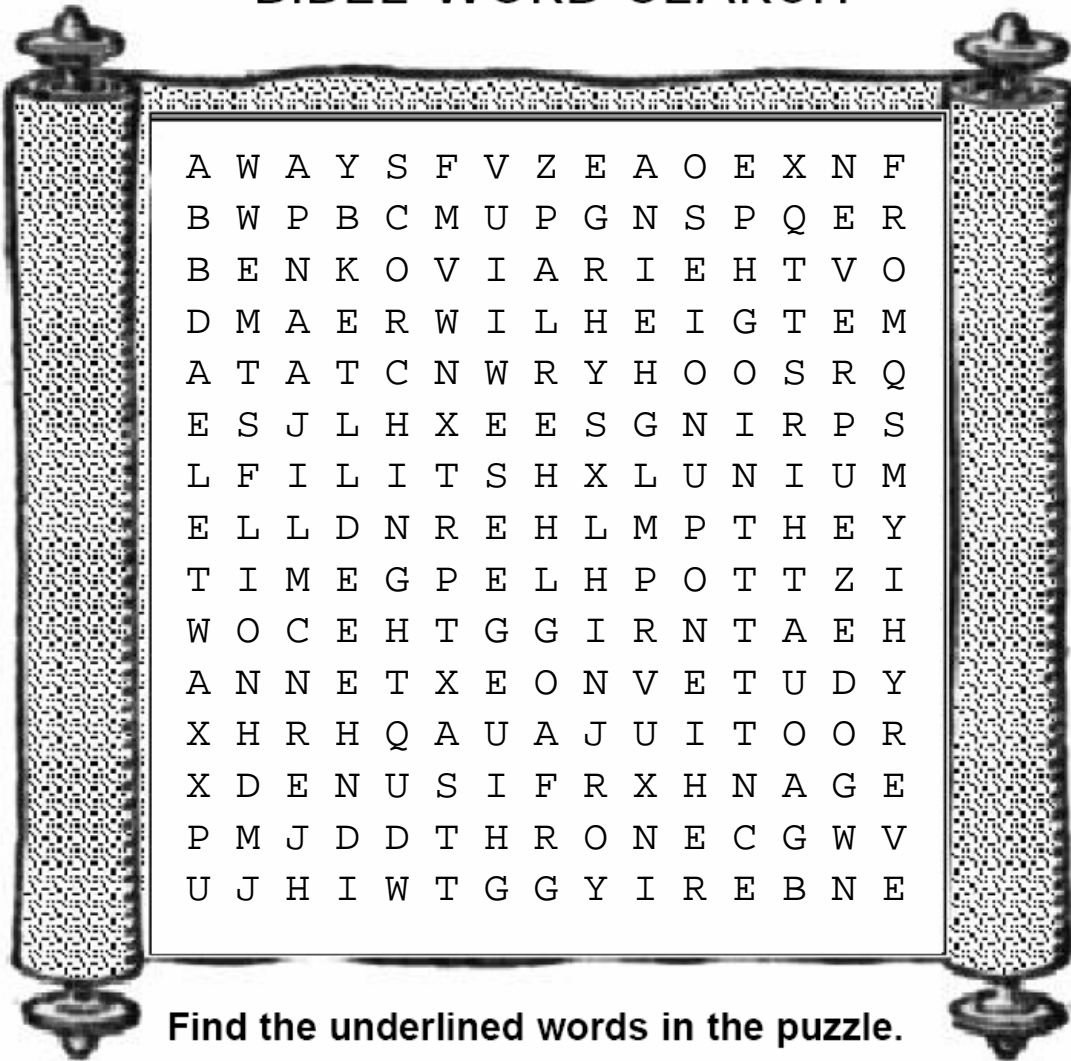
OUR HOME IN HEAVEN

(Editor's Note: This was written as a pamphlet by Pastor Marvin H. Eibs in 2006 and revised shortly before his death. It was made available by his family at his funeral and is reprinted here for our edification. It is still available in pamphlet form by contacting the LCCF Newsletter.)

When we have returned from a long trip, we are glad to be



BIBLE WORD SEARCH



PROMISES OF HEAVEN

“Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Revelation 7:16-17.

at home. The saying goes, “There’s no place like home.” When we come back from a hard day’s work, we are glad to be at home and rest. We as believers in Christ long to be at home with the Lord in heaven. Paul writes, *“Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling,”* 2 Corinthians 5:1-2. Again the Apostle Paul writes, *“We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord,”* 2 Corinthians 5:8. The same thought is expressed in the last spiritual song in our Lutheran Hymnal:

*“I’m but a stranger here,
Heaven is my home;
Earth is a desert drear,
Heaven is my home.
Danger and sorrow stand
round me on every hand;
Heaven is my fatherland,
Heaven is my home.”*

(The Lutheran Hymnal: 660:1)

The Apostle Paul exhorts us, *“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden*

with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory,” Colossians 3:1-4. Paul also tells how believers in Christ feel in contrast to those he describes as *“enemies of the cross of Christ,”* whose *“mind is on earthly things.”* He says, *“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,”* Philippians 3:18.19.20.

WHERE IS HEAVEN?

We cannot pinpoint the exact location of heaven, but it is a place. Jesus told his followers, *“In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am,”* John 14:2-3. We are accustomed to thinking of heaven being up above and so the Scriptures also speak. David wrote, *“The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God,”* Psalm 14:2. Jesus said, *“I am the living bread that came down from heaven,”* John 6:51. Jesus’ ascension into heaven is foretold by the psalmist, *“God has ascended amid shouts of joy,*

the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets,” Psalm 47:5. Luke in the book of Acts speaks of Jesus’ ascension into heaven. **“He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight,”** Acts 1:9. Likewise, the Gospel of Mark tells us, **“After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God,”** Mark 16:19. The Gospel of Luke says of Jesus before he suffered, died, rose again, and ascended into heaven, **“As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem,”** Luke 9:51.

WHO IS IN HEAVEN?

Heaven is the **“dwelling place”** (Ezekiel 3:12) of the Lord. *Jesus said, “This is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven,”* Matthew 6:9. **“This is what the LORD says: ‘Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool,’”** Isaiah 66:1. In Psalm 33:13, we read, **“From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth.”** David writes, **“Where can I go from your Spirit? – Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you**

are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast,” Psalm 139:7-10. But God is not restricted to any one place. All three persons of the Godhead are omnipresent; that is, they are present everywhere at the same time. Jesus, the Son of God, in his Great Commission to us as his followers, said, **“Surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age,”** Matthew 28:20. In our liturgy the pastor speaks this versicle, **“The Lord be with you,”** and the congregation responds, **“And with thy spirit.”**

Heaven is also the abode of the holy angels. They are called the heavenly hosts. **“Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will,”** Psalm 103:20-21. When Jesus called a little child to come to him, he said, **“See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven,”** Matthew 18:10. During the 70-year exile of the Kingdom of Judah in Babylonia, Daniel was given a vision in which he saw many angels attending the Lord. **“Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him,”**

Daniel 7:10.

The souls of departed believers in Christ that we read about in the Old Testament Scriptures are in heaven. We will see people like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job, David, and all others who believed in the promised Messiah. We will also see the believers spoken of in the New Testament Scriptures, people like the Apostles. We will see the martyrs, the believers who gave up their lives for Jesus' sake. We will see Martin Luther whose writings are so valuable for us and have helped us to remain steadfast in the faith. Their bodies are buried in the ground, they decayed and turned to dust, but their souls are in heaven. Solomon writes, ***"The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it,"*** Ecclesiastes 12:7. ***"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on,"*** Revelation 14:13. ***"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints,"*** Psalm 116:15. In the parable of the rich man and the poor beggar Lazarus, we are told, ***"The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side,"*** Luke 16:22. Jesus promised the penitent criminal who was crucified with him, ***"I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in***

paradise," Luke 23:43. Paul writes, ***"We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him,"*** 1 Thessalonians 4:14. This is genuine comfort that is based not on wishful thinking, but on God's Word of truth. We will see our loved ones who died trusting in Jesus. It helps us to bear our grief when we know that those who had to suffer so much because of disease now have no more pain and are at rest in their home in heaven. When a loved one is suddenly taken from us in death, and we know from their confession of faith and their Christian life that they trusted in Jesus as their Savior, our grief is lightened in knowing that they are now at home in heaven. This is not the false comfort of people who because of wishful thinking assume that their loved ones who died will go to heaven. They like to think this way even though their loved ones did not go to church to hear God's Word or confess their faith in Jesus as their Savior. But the Bible teaches, ***"Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ,"*** Romans 10:17. Jesus says, ***"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him,"*** John 3:36.

WHAT DO WE HAVE TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN HEAVEN?

There are many things the Bible tells us about heaven to give us great joy. It tells us, *“Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away,”* Revelation 21:3-4. *“Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes,”* Revelation 7:16-17.

The Bible tells us that there is such a great contrast between being in heaven or on earth that it is beyond comparison. Paul thought about both dying and going to heaven and about continuing in his work on earth and he said, *“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two; I desire to depart and be*

with Christ, which is better by far,” Philippians 1:21-23.

Peter wrote about *“an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you,”* 1 Peter 1:4. As believers in Christ we are filled with joy because we will receive that precious inheritance. Speaking of Jesus, Peter writes, *“Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls,”* 1 Peter 1:8-9. We really have something wonderful to look forward to.

There is perfect rest in heaven after the labors of this life. *“There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his,”* Hebrews 4:9-10.

There is perfect joy in heaven. David writes: *“Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with*

joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand,” Psalm 16:9-11. What a wonderful thing to look forward to after having so much sadness in our life on earth! We can say with Paul, *“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal,”* 2 Corinthians 4:17-18.

We will have the image of God, lost when man fell into sin, restored to us in heaven. Paul writes, *“For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when*

perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known,” 1 Corinthians 13:9-12.

Our loved ones who died in the faith are in heaven. This is the basis for our comfort when we mourn the death of loved ones. Paul writes, *“Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no*

Word search solution

A	W	A	Y	S	+	+	+	E	A	+	+	+	N	F
B	+	+	+	C	+	+	P	G	+	+	+	+	E	R
B	E	+	+	O	+	I	A	R	I	E	H	T	V	O
D	M	A	+	R	W	I	+	+	E	+	+	T	E	M
A	+	A	T	C	N	+	R	Y	+	+	+	S	R	+
E	+	+	L	H	+	E	E	S	G	N	I	R	P	S
L	+	+	L	I	T	S	H	+	+	U	+	I	+	+
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+	D	E	N	U	S	+	+	R	+	H	N	A	G	E
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+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	E

(Over,Down,Direction)

AGAIN(10,1,SW)	NOT(3,11,NW)
AWAY(1,1,E)	SCORCHING(5,1,S)
BEAT(1,2,SE)	SHEPHERD(9,6,SW)
CENTER(3,10,NE)	SPRINGS(15,6,W)
EVERY(15,15,N)	SUN(6,13,W)
EYES(10,4,SW)	TEAR(6,10,SE)
FROM(15,1,S)	THEIR(13,3,W)
GOD(14,13,N)	THEM(5,11,SW)
HEAT(15,10,W)	THEY(12,8,E)
HUNGER(11,13,NW)	THIRST(13,9,N)
LAMB(4,6,NW)	THRONE(6,14,E)
LEAD(1,7,N)	UPON(11,7,S)
LIVING(8,9,SE)	WATER(14,14,NW)
NEVER(14,1,S)	WILL(1,10,NE)
	WIPE(6,4,NE)

hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words," 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

"So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him," 2 Peter 3:14. Then we can join the great multitude in heaven that John writes about. *"After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches*

in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.' All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: 'Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!' Then one of the elders asked me, *'These in white robes – who are they, and where did they come from?'* I answered, *'Sir, you know.'* And he said, *'These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,'* Revelation 7:9-14.

We pray in the hymn,

*"Jerusalem, my happy home
When shall I come to thee?
When shall my labors have an end?
Thy joys when shall I see?"*

*O Christ, do Thou my soul prepare
for that bright home of love
That I may see Thee and adore
with all Thy saints above."* Amen.
(The Lutheran Hymnal: 618:5-6)

M. H. Eibs



WE ARE LUTHERAN.
WE ARE NOT
“ELCA LUTHERAN.”

As our members know and have often heard, there is a world of difference between “Evangelical Lutheran Church” and the “Evangelical Lutheran church in America” (ELCA).

The Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship (LCCF) is an organized fellowship of true Evangelical Lutherans. The word “Evangelical” means “Gospel-preaching”. Our doctrinal history is found in the conservative Lutherans who struggled to preserve the Word of God in its truth and purity, in doctrine and practice, among clergy and laity. See the cover pages of this Newsletter for more information about our doctrine and practice.

We believe the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God. We believe that the Bible plainly identifies homosexuality as a sin, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. Those are both doctrines which the ELCA has plainly rejected, most recently in August, 2009 when the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis voted to allow homosexual pastors who are “living in committed relationships.” The

ELCA “previously allowed people who are gay and lesbian into the ordained ministry only if they remained celibate” so homosexual clergy should be no surprise. The difference is that they are now publicly approved and tolerated. Membership in any ELCA church is really an acknowledgment, a toleration, and an approval of what the church teaches and does in its practice.

We have been saddened and even angered by many news media writing and saying things that would let people believe that all Lutherans have accepted openly homosexual clergy. We do not. We have not. We pray that we never will in the LCCF. Homosexuality is a sin. Scripture teaches that we are to repent and to turn away from sins and believe in the forgiveness of sins which Jesus earned on the cross for us.

So we sing and say, not with a boast but as a prayer

*“God's Word is our great heritage
And shall be ours forever;
To spread its light from age to age
Shall be our chief endeavor.
Through life it guides our way,
In death it is our stay.
Lord, grant, while worlds endure,
We keep its teachings pure.
Throughout all generations.”*

(The Lutheran Hymnal, 283)

-R. Mehlretter



Churches

**Christ Our Redeemer
Evangelical Lutheran Church**
C/O Pastor Mehlretter
County Road 33 & Birch St.
Mankato, MN 56001 507.345.4867
Worship– Nov-Apr Sunday 9:30 am
May-Oct Sunday 7:00 pm
Bible Class – One hour Earlier Sept-May

The Florida Group
c/o Mr. Robert C. Schroeder
2036 Eclipse Place
Chuluota, FL 32766 407.977.1240
*Please call for time
and place of worship*

**Good Shepherd
Evangelical Lutheran Church**
*Please call for time and
place of worship*
New Ulm, MN 56073
507.388-7103

**Faith Evangelical
Lutheran Church**
C/O Pastor Mehlretter
Sanborn, MN 56083 507.388.7103
Worship– May-Oct Sunday 10:00 am
(*Summer*) –Jun-Aug Sunday 9:00 am
Nov-Apr Saturday 10:00 am
Bible Class – One hour Earlier Sept-May

Pastor

Pastor Robert Mehlretter
715 South Avenue
North Mankato, MN 56003
507.388.7103
mehlretter@juno.com

Officers

Chairman

Dan Greve
336 Nicollet Avenue
North Mankato, MN 56003
dangreve@hickorytech.net

Secretary

Tim Eibs
107 E Street
Marshall, MN 56258
507.532.3546
tceibs@chartermi.net

For more information about our church body,
take a look at the web site of the LCCF.

<http://LutheranLCCF.org>

The Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship



THE PURPOSE OF OUR CONFERENCE:

To preach the Gospel within the context of upholding all of Scripture;
To establish and provide for a godly fellowship among congregations and
pastors.

THE CONFESSIONS OF OUR CONFERENCE:

We accept without reservation the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the verbally inspired Word of God, and therefore as the sole and only infallible rule of doctrine and life. We also confess the following:

The Apostles' Creed

The Nicene Creed

The Athanasian Creed

WE CONFESS THE SYMBOLS OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH AS PUBLISHED IN THE BOOK OF CONCORD OF 1580, BECAUSE THEY ARE A TRUE EXPOSITION OF THE WORD OF GOD:

Luther's Small Catechism

Luther's Large Catechism

The Augsburg Confession

The Apology of the Augsburg Confession

The Smalcald Articles

The Formula of Concord

WE SUBSCRIBE TO THESE MORE RECENT CONFESSIONAL STATEMENTS

The Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod of 1932

Concerning Church Fellowship (Church of the Lutheran Confession, 1961)

Concerning Church and Ministry (Church of the Lutheran Confession,
1962)

Concerning the Theology Involved in the Fraternal Benefit Society Issue
(The LCCF, 1983)