

16. The Gospel Imperative — A Call for World Missions

Eugene R. Bertermann, Ph.D., LL.D

Under the theme "God's Harmony and Man's Discordant Notes" the Reverend Elmer Reimnitz has set forth various aspects of the disharmony which natural man has injected into the missionary endeavor as the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ addresses itself to the task of world-wide evangelization. On the basis of God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions Reimnitz has rightly rejected the errors of universalism, syncretism, false ecumenism, indifference, social Gospel, naturalism, materialism, secularism, rationalism, and relativism.

Against this background I should like to speak to you on the theme: "*The Gospel Imperative — A Call For World Missions.*"

The Statement of Purpose of this Lutheran Congress, emphasizing "loyalty to the Scriptures and Confessions," and constituting "a forum for strengthening Scriptural and Confessional Christianity in Lutheran Churches," has declared: "In worship of the Triune God and in obedience to His infallible Word for effective proclamation of the saving Gospel, the Congress seeks: . . .

"To motivate and involve all Lutherans in keeping truly faithful to their Gospel heritage and relate it to the entire task of missions, its message and methods.

"To activate all loyal members for effective and constructive involvement in the decision-making processes to strengthen and unify us all in our only and infallible source of Christian knowledge, Holy Scriptures — and to send us on our mission aggressively to take the Gospel to all people in the world."

In keeping, therefore, with the purpose to "relate" the Gospel heritage" to the entire task of missions, "its message and methods"; and "to send us on our mission aggressively to take the Gospel to all people in the world," I should like to speak to you on the theme:

"THE GOSPEL IMPERATIVE — A CALL FOR WORLD MISSIONS"

I. The Imperative Of Our Savior's Great Missionary Command

It seems not only appropriate but indispensable that we should be concerned with the Great Missionary Command which Christ our Lord has given us. We engage in mission work today, not because we want to, or because we choose to, or because we like to, but because we have been told to. The Church is under orders. The risen Lord has commanded us to "go," to "preach," to "make disciples," and that is enough for us. Inactivity in missions is disobedience. It is, therefore, right for us to go back to the very beginning and reexamine our marching orders.

The so-called "Great Commission" or "Great Missionary Command" occurs five times in our Bibles, at the end of each of the four Gospels, and once at the beginning of the Book of Acts. These need not necessarily be regarded as five versions of a single occasion. It is quite likely that, during the forty days which elapsed between our Savior's resurrection and His ascension, our Lord repeated the same Commission various times, with different words and different emphases.

Perhaps the best known version of the Great Missionary Command is set forth in the well known words of Matt. 28: 16-20: "*Then the eleven disciples*

went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Some time had passed since the first Easter Day. The disciples of Jesus had returned north to Galilee. And there on the mountain, and by appointment, Jesus met them again. It was probably the occasion also mentioned by Saint Paul when Jesus appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time. (I Cor. 15: 6)

When they saw, at first evidently some distance away, their reactions varied between extremes of adoration and of unbelief. Some "worshiped Him," but "some doubted." Jesus then came to them and spoke to them. First, He made an announcement (v. 18). Next, He issued a command (verses 19 and 20a). Lastly, He gave them a promise (v. 20b).

1. The Announcement

"All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth," our risen Savior declared. It is of more than passing significance that this affirmation precedes the Great Missionary Command to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

We note that the "power" was "all authority in heaven and on earth." Different prepositions are used, as if deliberately to distinguish the two spheres, the earthly and the heavenly, over which authority is extended.

Our Savior has authority first of all "on earth." And since He has authority on earth, He has authority over us. His total authority extends over the lives of His servants. He has authority to say to anyone, "Go!"

Since Christ has all authority "on earth," it extends to all nations to whom He sends us. This fact asserts unequivocally that the religion of Jesus is not Palestinian or Jewish, Semitic or Asiatic, let alone "western," but a world religion, indeed the world religion intended to embrace all the nations then in existence and those that might yet be. It transcends all barriers of language and culture, nationality and color, race and rank.

Christ, however, declared that He has been given all authority "in heaven" as well. No doubt this means, in part, that the authority which our Savior claimed on earth was recognized in heaven, and that the disciples won on earth accordingly would be acknowledged and accepted in heaven.

But it also involves much more. It signifies that Jesus Christ has supreme authority also in those "heavenly places" in which evil "principalities and powers" still operate and wage war. Writing to the Ephesians, Saint Paul declares: "What is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand and in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." (Eph. 1: 19-21) The authority of Jesus Christ thus extends over all creatures, whether human or super-human, over the church, over the nations, over the devil and all his works.

It is significant to note, too, that the power "is given," has been given as an accomplished fact. For it was at our Savior's ascension that "God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

The fundamental basis of all Christian missionary enterprise, therefore, is the universal authority of Jesus Christ "in heaven and on earth." Because

Christ holds in His hands all authority on earth, we dare to go to all nations. Because Christ holds in His hands all authority in heaven, we have the open promise of success. It must have seemed ridiculous in the tiny nucleus of disciples to win the world for Christ. Today, too, Christ's Church is hopelessly outnumbered by the hundreds of millions who neither know or acknowledge Him. The task is equally gigantic.

2. *The Command*

The announcement of Christ's universal authority was an essential preliminary to the Great Commission. The imperative "Go ye therefore!" immediately followed the indicative statement, "All power is given unto Me."

We "go" because we are ourselves under authority. We go to "all nations" because they are under authority also. The Commission is no longer to seek "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Saint Matthew 10: 6), but to make disciples of "all the Gentiles."

As we go, we have precise instructions to fulfill. Christ used three verbs: "Make disciples," "baptize," and "teach."

a. We are to make disciples. The New English Bible renders this passage, "Make all nations My disciples." The addition of the possessive "My" brings out the sense. One cannot "*make disciples*" in the abstract, for there can be no disciples without a teacher whose disciples they are. To "make disciples of all nations" means to win disciples for Jesus Christ out of all the nations on earth.

Other versions of the Great Commission make plain how this is to be done. It is to be done by preaching the Gospel. For in preaching the Gospel, we preach Christ, so that men are converted to Him through the Holy Spirit's power and become His disciples.

b. We are to baptize. Converts who have become disciples of Jesus are to be baptized "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The theological implications of this statement are plain: Discipleship to Jesus Christ involves relationship to the Father, and to the Holy Spirit as well. Although the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct persons, they possess but one name into which disciples are baptized.

Christian baptism is conducted not just in the name, but into the name of the Trinity. It signifies union with God, the God who has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

c. We are to teach. People are not only to be discipled and baptized; they must also be taught. A life-time of learning and obeying follows conversion, until disciples are conformed to the image of their Lord.

The substance of such teaching is given in these words, "All things whatsoever I have commanded you." We are to teach converts not what they may want to hear, nor what we may want to say, but what Christ Himself has taught. And these teachings they are to "keep," that is, to believe and to obey.

Such teaching of Jesus Christ includes the Old Testament (for He set a seal upon its truth and its authority), the Gospels (in which His own words are recorded), and the balance of the New Testament (which contains the teaching of the Apostles through whom He continued to speak, in order to complete His revelation).

Such is the risen Lord's concept of mission: Jesus sent His followers forth to make disciples, to baptize, and to teach. It is important that converts from the very beginning understand that the Bible teaching is Christ's teaching. Converts have become disciples of Christ; they have been baptized into Christ; and are to be taught what Christ commanded. They must learn to submit their minds to all, not just to some, of Christ's teachings. They may not pick and choose from His teachings, selecting what they like, rejecting what they dislike. They are not at liberty to disagree with Jesus, or to disobey Him, for Jesus is their Teacher and Lord, and they are under His authority and His instruction.

3. *The Promise*

Our Savior concluded: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." We should never isolate the Great Commission from its context. The Great Missionary Command is preceded by the announcement of Christ's authority, and followed by the promise of Christ's presence. Without these we would hesitate to obey Christ's Commission. How could we go forth to make disciples for Christ, to baptize them and teach them, if we did not have the assurance of His authority behind us and the assurance of His presence beside us?

Earlier in the same Gospel (18: 20) Christ had undertaken to be in the midst of the disciples when only two or three were gathered in His name. Now, as He repeats the promise of His presence, He attaches it to their witness, rather than to their worship. It is not only when we meet in His name, but when we go in His name, that He promises to be with us. The emphatic "I" who pledges His presence, is the One who has universal authority and who sends forth His people.

To those who go into the world as Christ came into the world, who sacrifice their ease, comfort and independence, to them the living Christ promises His presence. He is with them "*all the days*," in days of safety and of peril, of failure and of success, of freedom to preach and restriction and persecution, of peace and of conflict in war. And Christ's promise continues "*even unto the end of the world.*"

We note the comprehensive sweep of the Great Commission: *First*, Christ claimed to have been given *all* authority in heaven and on earth; *second*, therefore He sends us to make disciples of *all* the nations; *third*, He bids us transmit to these disciples *all* His teaching. Finally, *fourth*, He promises to be with us *all* the days, even "*unto the end of the world.*"

II. The Imperative Of The World's Need

Our nation and world stand on the threshold of a new decade, hailed by some as "the soaring seventies." At the same time, however, we are confronted by a time of terrifying tension, an era of unrest, a century of crises as ominous and foreboding as ever before in all of human history.

First, we are confronted by the challenge of crisis internationally. When the astronauts of Apollo XIII looked down upon our world from deep and outer space, they beheld a planet which had shrunk into a global neighborhood, without becoming a brotherhood; a world united as never before by technology, but divided as never before by ideology. Great barriers stand between nation and nation: a Berlin Wall, a Thirty-eighth Parallel, a Seventeenth Parallel, a Jordan River, a Suez Canal.

The war in Viet Nam drags on. However, conflict in Indo China may prove to be only a side-show compared to what is building up in the Middle East. The real confrontation which could trigger World War III is in danger of taking place there.

Second, we are confronted by the challenge of crisis racially. A decade ago it seemed that integration was "just around the corner" in the United States; but in the past five years polarization between racial extremists has been such that some feel the issue now is not, "Can we end racial segregation?", but "Can we avert racial war?"

Third, we are confronted by the challenge of crisis ecologically. Ecology has to do with the balance within nature; and man has already seriously dis-balanced the processes of life to such an extent that, if we continue what we are doing, our physical environment will soon make this planet uninhabitable for man.

The new Jeremiahs of our day are the ecologists who are pronouncing judgment upon the technological age that has gone mad with greed. They tell us that we can no longer count on earth's dwindling resources to sustain its exploding population. We can go to any large metropolitan area and see

the smog which hovers over the city and the ill effects it creates in the life of mankind, as well as in plant and animal life. The explosion of atomic bombs in the atmosphere disperses radiation. The use of pesticides, like D.D.T., destroys the balance of nature, described eloquently in Rachel Carson's book, *The Silent Spring*.

We have exploited and raped nature. We have poisoned our lakes, our rivers and our streams. We have destroyed marine life. We have extinguished animal and bird life. Now even the air that we breathe, the water we drink and the food that we eat is no longer safe. All this violates the mandate of God in the Book of Genesis. Man was given the privilege, as well as the responsibility and the obligation, of subduing nature. We have not only subdued, but corrupted it, and if we continue at the rate we are going, the planet will be uninhabitable. One pessimistic Californian placed by the Pacific Ocean a tombstone engraved: **CREATED BY GOD; KILLED BY MAN, 1970.**

Fourthly, our nation and world are confronted by the challenge of crisis morally. There have always been those who have rebelled against moral standards. Pornography, sexual freedom, fornication, adultery, homosexuality, rape, prostitution abound everywhere. The real moral crisis of our day is not pot or pornography; it is the widespread assumption that no moral standard is really binding. Wickedness and sinfulness often characterize the motion pictures, the legitimate theatre, certain magazines and books. The abnormal and illegitimate are depicted as representing freedom of expression, thus becoming legitimate and normal. They seek to herald a "new morality," which is immoral, under the banner of an undefined and content-less law.

Someone has said: "If God doesn't judge America, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah."

Fifthly, mankind is confronted by the challenge of crisis scientifically. Never before in the history of the world has man known so much. Within the next twenty years we will double all the knowledge which men have acquired across the centuries of existence.

Yet vast and extensive knowledge has not brought peace and security. Rather, it has brought fear and peril in its wake.

Sometimes the net effect of our scientific advance has been over-kill. Our scientists have produced chemicals, a drop of which upon any part of the human flesh results in death. One of our lethal gases was accidentally loosed in the western parts of the United States; winds carried it over a flock of sheep; and all those sheep died. Not only were these hundreds of sheep killed, but the sheep were so contaminated that if human beings had touched them after their death, they also would have become contaminated and died. In our laboratory we have created a vast array of chemical and biological agents of destruction.

And, as if all this were not enough, we have used biology to alter the human species. They tell us that we have reached the place where we can create the Superman, a scientific monster with a man's brain power, great physical strength and beauty, but with the mind structure and spiritual stature of an idiot. Yes, science has made vast advances; but science has also brought us to a challenge of crises.

Sixthly, mankind is confronted by the challenge of crisis medically. This is the age of the pill. We have aspirins, we have vitamins, we have pain pills, we have sleeping pills, we have birth control pills, we have energy pills. We have pills to stunt growth, we have pills to produce growth, we have pills to control cancer. The world is pill-happy.

We are, of course, grateful to Almighty God for all curative medicine. On the positive side, we have powerful drugs which can cure pneumonia, eradicate poliomyelitis, and knock out many of man's worst maladies. We have heart transplants, kidney transplants, and the use of artificial organs.

On the other hand, however, we have powerful drugs which are claimed

to give meaning to life. We have pep pills when we feel downcast. We have marijuana; and, if you want to "take a trip," we have LSD.

We are able to extend life with medicine, but have brought with it nothing worth living for. In the paradise of socialist Sweden, for example, the state is able to take care of physical man from the womb to the tomb. In this "paradise," however, there is an alarming rise of juvenile crime, widespread alcoholism, increased drug addiction, a high suicide rate, more homosexuality and murder. And at the same time fewer and fewer people go to church; and, more and more, God becomes irrelevant.

Seventhly, our nation and world are confronted by a challenge of crisis theologically. Some churches today have lost their message; others have lost their audience. Some pulpits proclaim a humanism which has no power to redeem; other pulpits present an orthodoxy that is not relevant to life. While the world cries out in the classic question of the Philippian jailer: "What must we do to be saved?", the Church stutters and stammers, and seems to have lost its way.

In many places God is regarded as dead, or He might just as well be. In the anti-theism of the hour, ours is rapidly becoming a homocentric universe in which the measure of everything is the measure of man, not the measure of God. We are told that every religion is a roadway that leads to the celestial city. All we need to do is create the new religion by syncretizing all the good things from all the religions. Even though one teaching contradicts another, we can mesh all of the contradictory elements and march together to the celestial gate. People are affirming that everyone is going to heaven; that it doesn't make any difference who you are, or what you believe. Paul Tillich is quoted as asserting: "Even those who deny God are, by that fact, affirming God and are justified." Here is the paradox of a God who will save everybody — even those who refuse to be saved!

III. The Imperative Of Our Growing Missionary Task

From a percentage point of view, the Church of Jesus Christ is losing ground rapidly. Two-thirds of the world's people live in countries where less than five per cent of the population claims to be Christian. In view of current and foreseeable trends in population, our best efforts represent, perhaps, only a token beginning of Christian presence after all.

By contrast with the rest of the world, the United States appears to be truly "a city upon a hill."

From the deck of the little 350-ton *Arbella*, plowing westward through the angry Atlantic to the Massachusetts Coast in 1630, John Winthrop preached a sermon that struck the theme of what America in all its future years would seek to be. "We shall be," Winthrop prophesied, "as a city upon a hill; the eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with out God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword through the world."

In the eyes of the rest of the world America may well constitute "a city upon a hill."

Let our world of 3.5 billion persons be represented by a small town of 3500. And let our small town be a miniature of our world today. Its population has increased 50 per cent in only thirty years.

In our town of 3500:

200 of us live high on a hill, called the United States overlooking the town.

3300 are on the rocky bottomland called the rest of the world.

The fortunate 200 in the United States have:

over 50 per cent of the wealth of the whole town;

over half of the rooms in the town with two rooms per person.

The 3300 people have fewer than half of the rooms with five persons to a room.

According to the best estimates, the people on the hill have:

- 80 per cent of all the bath tubs of the whole town,
- 75 per cent of all the automobiles,
- 79 per cent of all the radios and TV sets,
- 50 per cent of all the telephones,
- an average income per person of \$3,159 per year.

The rest of the town gets an average of about \$200 per year per person, most of them only \$100 or less.

How does the fortunate group use its incredible wealth? Well, per family it spends:

- \$850 per year to protect itself from some of the other people in town,
- \$83.50 on gambling,
- \$55.50 on alcoholic beverages,
- \$33.30 on instant lung cancer.
- \$1.63 per year per person to share its knowledge of Jesus Christ with the rest of the town."

IV. The Imperative Of Man's Lost Condition Without Christ

On the threshold of the seventies, *Business Week* Magazine devoted 130 pages to a special feature describing "the super seventies" — without a word about the world of religion! *Look* Magazine in its issue for the new year featured an article by John Poppy purporting to demonstrate "why we need a new religion" — not a religion of divine revelation, but a religion characterized by "no more talk about a Lord, an almighty, heavenly Father, who sits in judgment (loving or not) somewhere above and aloof."

The Gospel still proclaims that "there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5). We proclaim "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4: 5-6).

By the grace of God we will continue to be earnestly dedicated to the proclamation of the saving Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, crucified, risen, and coming again. Through the Holy Spirit's power we will declare: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," but the precious, saving name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 4: 12) Again, "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 3: 11). With Simon Peter we declare in tones of ringing assurance: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6: 68-69).

V. The Imperative Of Modern Media Of Mass Communication

As it enters into the "soaring seventies," the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ has at its disposal powerful modern media of mass communication, the twin electronic miracles of radio and television. Their phenomenal growth and development fall virtually entirely within the present twentieth-century.

1. Radio and Television in the United States

Radio and television were in more United States homes than ever before.

Television — A total of 57.5 million homes, or 96.9% of all United States homes (excluding Alaska and Hawaii), were TV-equipped as of September, 1968, according to the A. C. Nielsen Company. The American Research Bureau estimated the total would be 57,522,300 homes (excluding Alaska) as of August, 1969.

Color TV — Homes equipped with color TV sets totaled 17,450,000 as of October 1, 1968, a gain of 41% in twelve months, according to estimates by NBC.

Radio — The Radio Advertising Bureau estimated that 58.5 million United States homes, or about 98.6%, were radio-equipped in 1968.

Radio Sets — The number of working-order radio sets in the United States would be 300 million as of January 1, 1969, according to preliminary

industry estimates. The estimates anticipated this distribution: 216 million in homes, 74 million in automobiles, 10 million in public places. The new total would represent a gain of 33 million, or 12%, over the 267 million estimated for January 1, 1968.

Broadcasting Stations on the Air

671 commercial TV stations
169 non-commercial TV stations
840 total TV stations
4,235 AM radio stations
2,276 FM radio stations
7,351 total broadcasting stations

Total Time Sales, 1966

\$1,840,000,000 for all TV stations and networks
937,075,000 for all radio stations and networks
2,777,975,000 total radio-TV time sales

The Radio-Television Audience

57,522,300 U.S. TV homes
58,500,000 U.S. radio homes
17,450,000 color TV homes
6 hours, 38 minutes, total TV viewing per home per day.

During the year 1968 color became the dominant medium for television with three networks using it almost exclusively. Almost all stations, even those in the smallest markets, had color capability. In October an estimated 17 million homes, 30% of all television homes, had color sets. Color sets, for the first time, were outselling black-and-white. The Electronics Industries Association reported in mid-October that color set sales for 1968 to that point totalled 4,351,681 color receivers and 4,343,243 black-and-white.

Mr. Vincent T. Wasilewski, President of the National Association of Broadcasters, in an address entitled "Broadcasting: A Challenge to Youth," delivered before the N.A.B.'s fall conferences, summarized the distribution of radio and television in the United States as follows: "Ninety-seven per cent of our people have one or more radios, ninety-five per cent have one or more television sets. Every day an estimated hundred million people listen to the radio, a hundred million people watch television. No other communication medium in the history of man can come close to those figures. Newspapers can't touch them. Magazines aren't even in the running. All the books published in a year don't touch a fraction of the people we reach in one day. Broadcasting stands as the most successful and universally accepted business enterprise in history."

2. *Radio and Television in the World*

The rapid growth rates of television and radio world-wide began to decelerate in 1968 as opportunities for further expansion became more and more limited. With television in operation in more than 100 countries, and radio in more than 200, it appeared likely that the costs of setting up new systems would keep future growth rates at more moderate levels than in the past. The latest official report, compiled by the United States Information Agency in 1964, estimated that 162 million television sets and more than 500 million radio sets were in use throughout the world. Private broadcasting industry sources estimated that the totals had reached 213 million television sets and 595 million radio sets by late 1968.

More than one-third, or about 78 million, of the TV-sets were in the United States. The U.S.S.R. had approximately 25 million, Japan 20.5 million, Japan 20.5 million, the United Kingdom 19 million, West Germany 13.5 million, France 10 million, Italy 8.2 million, Canada 6.2 million, Poland 2.5 million and Australia 2.4 million, according to estimates compiled by *Broadcasting* magazine and *Broadcasting Yearbook* in late 1968.

Television stations operating or under construction throughout the world numbered approximately 5,520 in 1968. Western Europe had about 2,000,

the Far East 1,300, the United States, 1,030, Eastern Europe 900, South America 165, and Africa 30.

About 12,250 radio stations were in operation or under construction. Most of these were amplitude modulation (AM) radio stations, but the total also included frequency modulation (FM) stations and the relay or booster operations used in many countries to carry radio programming into remote areas. More than half of the 12,250 radio stations, or 6,828, were in the United States, and more than one-third, or 2,499, of the United States total were FM, according to records compiled by *Broadcasting* in November, 1968. Approximately half of the world's 595 million radio sets, or about 300 million, also were in the United States, with the rest distributed among the world's countries in proportions ranging from less than one set per 100 population to more than one set for every two persons.

Marshall McLuhan of Toronto has declared: "We are today as far into the electronic age as the Elizabethans had advanced into the typographic and mechanical age. And we are experiencing the same confusion and indecisions which they had felt when living simultaneously in two contrasting forms of society and experience." And Brigadier General David Sarnoff, Chairman of the Board of RCA, in the thirty-fifth anniversary issue of the *Hollywood Reporter*, remarked: "Developments are too radical in their nature, and the pace at which they come is too swift, for the past to serve as any effective prelude to the communicating future. We must look for entirely new procedures attuned to the realities of the space age."

Addressing the Convention of the National Association of Broadcasters in Washington, D. C., in March, 1969, Commissioner H. Rex Lee of the Federal Communications Commission declared: "The vast potential of television, radio, film, computers, and communications satellites for helping to solve our problem lies largely untapped." Asserting that there is "no valid reason" for this waste, he stated: "Never before has man had so many tools and methods . . . for improving the quality of life. And yet, man still refuses fully to utilize them."

If a member of the Federal Communications Commission can make this assertion regarding radio and television for commercial or educational purposes, what shall representatives of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ say with reference to the utilization of television as a medium for the proclamation of Christ's Gospel? It must be evident to all that they have hardly begun to scratch the surface, and that "the vast potential" of television for Gospel broadcasting "lies largely untapped."

Conclusion — A Call For World Missions

Because we are motivated by:

- the imperative of our Savior's great Missionary Command;
- the imperative of the world's need;
- the imperative of our growing missionary tasks;
- the imperative of man's lost condition without Christ; and
- the imperative of modern media of mass communication, therefore we call for a reconsecration and rededication.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature!" — that is the "call for world missions" which our risen and ascending Savior addresses to everyone of us down through the centuries of Christian history.

It is "the Gospel" which is to be proclaimed, the glorious "Good News" that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." (2 Cor. 5:19)

The Gospel, in its strict or proper sense (*evangelium proprie acceptum*), is defined by the Formula of Concord as "such a doctrine as teaches what man who has not observed the Law and therefore is condemned by it is to believe, namely, that Christ has expiated, and made satisfaction for, all sins and has obtained and acquired for him, without any merit of his, . . . forgive-

ness of sins, righteousness that avails before God, and eternal life." (Epitome, V. 5.)

The distinction between the Law and the Gospel is clear and Scriptural, so that we may describe as divine Law everything in Scripture that demands of man perfect obedience to God, Gal. 3: 12, pronounces His curse upon all transgressors, Gal. 3: 10, renders all the world guilty before God, Rom. 3: 19, and mediates knowledge of sin, Rom. 3: 20; and as Gospel everything that offers grace, peace, and salvation to the sinner, Rom. 1: 16. 17; 10: 15; Acts 20: 24; Eph. 6: 15; 1: 13.

It is true, both terms (Law and Gospel) are used in Scripture also in a wider sense, so that the term Law denotes the entire revelation of God as this is set forth in His Word, Ps. 1: 2; Is. 2: 3, and the term Gospel the entire divine doctrine, Mark 1: 1. This is done by way of synecdoche, so that the whole is named after a part (Gerhard: "ut ex parte digniori et potiori totum intelligatur").

This peculiar use of the term Gospel is recognized also by our Lutheran Confessions; for we read in the *Formula of Concord* (Thor. Decl., V, 3 ff.): "The term Gospel is not always employed and understood by it the entire doctrine of Christ, our Lord. . . . Furthermore the term Gospel is employed in another, namely, in its proper sense, by which it comprises . . . only the preaching of the grace of God."

"A call for world missions," therefore, calls for renewed consecration and rededication to the glorious task of making known throughout the length and breadth of our globe the glorious "name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2: 9-11). on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess

In the name of the Triune God we, therefore, proclaim not the Christ of present-day compromise and concession, not the Christ of twentieth-century indifference and indecision, not the Christ of modern doubt and denial, who has been exalted in His humanity only to be robbed of His deity, but (above all the evasion and distortion, the rank unbelief of our day) the Christ of the Cross. We dedicate ourselves to the preaching of that Cross, — not as a memorial to martyrdom, a glorified symbol of an unselfish ideal, but as "the accursed tree," the cruel, heart-breaking gibbet on which the Savior died the blackest death of all history. That crucified Christ, Son of God, yet Son of Man, offering the eternal mercies of forgiven sins as the free gift of His boundless grace; strengthening our faltering souls with His never-failing Spirit; guiding those who trust in Him from the sorrows of this life to the glories of the next; the Savior for every sin and for every sinner, the unfailing Friend for every moment and for every path; the Christ for our hearts, our homes, our churches, our nation, — this all-sufficient Savior, and Him alone, we offer with the pledge:

"NOTHING . . . SAVE JESUS CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED."