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Ein Prediger muss nicht allein weiden, also dass er die Schafe unterweise, wie sie rechte Christen sollen sein, sondern auch daneben den Wölfen wehren, dass sie die Schafe nicht angreifen und mit falscher Lehre verführen und Irrtum einführen.

Luther

Es ist kein Ding, das die Leute mehr bei der Kirche behält denn die gute Predigt. — *Apologie, Art. 24*

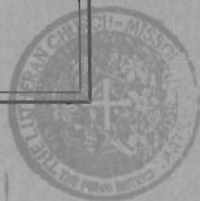
If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? — *1 Cor. 14:8*

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ARCHIVES

Homiletics

Outlines on the Nitzsch Gospel Selections

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

JOHN 1:35-42

Christ wishes to be revealed to all men (Matt. 28:19-20; Luke 24:46-48). He wishes this to be done today through us. This is the message of our text, the message for us during the season of Epiphany, particularly now as throughout our Church the "Each One Reach One" Home Missionary Expansion Program is emphasized.

MANIFESTING CHRIST TO OTHERS

I. How is this to be done?

II. To whom is Christ to be manifested?

I

A. Christ is to be revealed (vv. 35-36). John the Baptist, whose very task was to reveal Christ, saw Christ walking by as he talked with two of his disciples, and John revealed Christ to them by saying: "Behold the Lamb of God." Andrew revealed Christ to his brother Simon (v. 41 b). Those who have found the Savior are to manifest Him unto others.

B. Christ is to be revealed to others through the act of preaching. The sermon of John the Baptist is very short: "Behold the Lamb of God," but we know that John had told his disciples about Christ before (John 1:29). Only through the preaching of the Word can men really come to faith, can men really understand that Christ is their Savior (Rom. 10:14). It need not be preaching in the accepted sense of delivering public discourses. Our text plainly indicates that even crisp sentences are a potent testimony to the Christ of the Cross. The testimony of Andrew was very short (v. 41), but it brought Peter to the Savior. Even a brief but kindly invitation like that of Christ (v. 39 a) may bring wonderful results (v. 39 b).

The entire text breathes the spirit of personal service as we see John directing two of his disciples, as we see Christ directing these same two disciples, as we see Andrew making

personal efforts that Christ might be revealed unto others. Every time we tell others of Jesus, every time we invite others to come to church or Sunday school or to Bible class with us, we are carrying out God's mandate and the Savior's plea to manifest Christ unto others. Every effort which we make to bring people to a Christian church, children to the baptismal font, children and adults to a Lutheran Sunday school, is an effort to manifest the Savior. This is also accomplished through the reading of Scripture, through family devotion in the quiet of our home. As we study our text, we, indeed, learn how our wonderful Savior is to be manifested to others, in order that there may be a real epiphany in the hearts of men.

C. We are to reveal Christ not as a mere man, not as a model teacher, not as the best man who ever lived, not as the carpenter's son, but as the Son of God, of whom John said: John 1:14. It is just this definite revelation of the Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world which is so sadly lacking, and therefore so important, in our day and age.

II

A. To whom are we to manifest Christ? We find that He is to be revealed to our associates (v. 35). Two of John's disciples saw Jesus, and to these associates John revealed the Savior. The Savior is to be manifested also to our relatives (v. 41). Andrew found his brother Simon. He went out of his way perhaps, to look him up, and to this his very brother he revealed Christ. Christ is to be revealed unto chance acquaintances (vv. 37-38). Jesus invited these two men, whom apparently He had not met before, but who followed Him, to come and see Him, to find out where He lived and what He was.

B. We are to carry on the work of personal invitation and personal mission work in like manner. We who are Christians certainly owe it to our relatives who have not as yet found Jesus to reveal Christ unto them. We owe it unto our friends and our associates, our fellow workers, the people in our social group. We have this same obligation as far as chance acquaintances are concerned. You may meet a person in a doctor's office, or in a hospital room, or on a train or on a plane, and all of a sudden a glorious opportunity will be given unto you to speak in simple and plain language of Him whom you love and who loved you even unto death.

C. We may do this by means of a spoken word; by means of a tract or booklet; by means of an invitation to listen to the Lutheran Hour, to Radio Station KFUE; an invitation to come to our church or a special service, mission festival, anniversary, etc.

D. The results of this work. Through the testimony of John the Baptist, Andrew, the brother of Peter, and John, the Apostle, were brought to Christ. Through the testimony of Andrew, Peter became a disciple of Jesus. At the time this may have appeared as a simple matter, but when you think of the glorious work these men performed in later years, we can see that the simple manifestation of Christ brought indeed most blessed results. We will gain blessed results, unexpected results, also today. A little child that we may bring to Baptism, that we may help to enroll in Sunday school, may someday be a great worker in God's kingdom. We may have done very little, and yet the results may be far-reaching, extending to hundreds, to thousands, to eternity. The romance of revealing Christ to others is a wonderful story, a stirring tale that ought to move us if we have been laggards in the task to step forward and to say: "Here am I, send me. Use me with my simple gifts and my simple talents to manifest Christ, the Light of the world, unto others!"

E. L. ROSCHKE

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

JOHN 1:43-51

Shortly after Jesus began His public ministry, His followers started an "Each One Reach One" movement. It seemed so natural for them to be engaged in personal soul-winning. Should not the same be said of each one of us?

From our text we may learn some

LESSONS IN PERSONAL SOUL-WINNING

I. The message II. The purpose III. The method

I

Philip had found Jesus and, finding Him, found the Messiah, v. 45. He had not been offended at the poverty and humility of the Man from Nazareth. Having seen Him and heard His word he had followed Jesus in joyous faith. Before

we speak, we also must have found Jesus, must have come to Him as to our only Redeemer. As Philip spoke what he knew from personal experience to be the only saving truth, so we also must be convinced on the basis of Holy Scripture, v. 45, and personal experience, v. 46, that our message is divine truth, saving truth. Then we have the proper message and will gladly bring it to others, Matt. 12:34; Acts 4:20; 26:16; 1 John 1:1, 3.

II

Large crowds had thronged about John the Baptist, Matt. 3:5-6. Now that Jesus had begun His public ministry, John's purpose was to direct everyone, also those inclined to stay with him, to Jesus, John 3:30.

Our purpose: To exalt Jesus in the minds and hearts of those whom we try to win. Let our person retreat into the background that Christ may become their All-in-all.

Philip purposed to bring his friend Nathanael to Jesus. Philip had something wonderful to share, a find which he considered too good to keep for himself; he had to tell others. And his mission was not fulfilled until Nathanael became a follower of Jesus.

Are we conscious of the treasures we have in Christ? Perhaps we ought to take inventory of our spiritual assets, the wonderful things which have come into our life through Him, John 1:16; Eph. 1:7; 3:8; Rom. 5:1-5. All these are ours to share with those who have not yet received them. The Christmas joy — can we keep it to ourselves? The assurance that our Savior is with us every day to forgive and keep, to guide and cheer — is it not something which you want your brother and acquaintance to have? Following Nathanael's example, we shall aim to bring an individual soul into blessed relationship with Jesus.

III

Philip followed Jesus, but was not so absorbed in his own salvation as to forget his fellow sinners. Philip found Nathanael, v. 45, a friend, after a search. Personal soul-winning means going out on a search among one's friends and acquaintances.

Philip beamed with joy and enthusiasm when he said to his friend, v. 45. Let the joy of your heart be expressed in the

tone of your voice and the smile on your face as you endeavor to share the joy of salvation with others, Ps. 51:12-13.

Some will have objections and misgivings. Nathanael, v. 46. Philip avoided an argument and also awakened a desire, a hunger in Nathanael's heart by replying: "Come and see!" Investigate for yourself. — No doubt the best way to meet many a doubt and prejudice is: Come and see. I cannot convince you, but the Gospel will do for you what it has done for me. Look into the matter and find out for yourself. — Jesus knew what a slurring remark Nathanael had just made on His home town, v. 46. Yet He found a commendable quality in Nathanael, v. 47. So we, too, can make good use of sincere commendation if we but try to find something commendable in those whom we approach.

Perhaps also Philip, like Andrew, v. 42, was willing to go the full length and personally lead him to Jesus. — Having witnessed to others, we often do well to go personally with them to church, to the adult membership class, until they have entered into a personal relation with Jesus.

Philip brought one soul to Jesus, the first fruit of his missionary labors, the beginning of greater things. Follow the example of Philip: begin with one individual. Under God's blessings you, too, will see greater things. V. L. MEYER

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

JOHN 3:22-30

Our Christian life on earth is a constant humble and faithful service of God and our neighbor, as both the Gospel and the Epistle for this Sunday show. Such service Christians render in grateful appreciation of the Lord's own perfect service (Matt. 20:25-28). Alas, the Old Adam does not want to serve God and the neighbor; hence the numerous admonitions in Scripture urging us to such service (Rom. 12:1 ff.). Let us learn the lesson anew as we consider

JOHN THE BAPTIST, A TRUE PATTERN OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE

I. In his deep humility II. In his constant faithfulness

I

A. To John was entrusted an exceedingly great ministry; he was to serve the Lord and His people as the way-preparer of Christ (Luke 1:15 ff.). Great men, having great missions to perform, often become proud; not so John. His ministry was drawing to a close (v. 24) when Jesus entered upon His prophetic ministry; but he was not envious of Christ. Called upon to settle a dispute concerning his own Baptism and that of Jesus (vv. 25-26), he witnessed 1) that his ministry with its blessings was truly a gift from heaven (v. 27); 2) that he was not the Christ, but merely the way-preacher (v. 28), and therefore 3) only the rejoicing friend of the Bridegroom (v. 29), who 4) must decrease while Christ increased (v. 30). All this proves John's humility. Tempted by the Jews, he might have arrogated to himself greater honor than was his by God's appointment (John 1:19 ff.), but he did not exalt himself, and so his service was genuinely Christian and valuable.

B. 1) All Christians are to render service to God and the neighbor after the pattern of John's great service (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Pet. 4:10), as the season of Epiphany reminds us. They should, of course, render also bodily service (John 12:3; Rom. 12:13), but the service of glorifying Christ is the greater. 2) For such service humility is required, which a) acknowledges every talent and opportunity for service as a gift of God (v. 27); b) prompts the Christian to remain in the sphere of God's appointment (v. 28); 3) rejoices whenever Christ is glorified and works to this end (v. 29); and 4) desires to be nothing in order that Christ may become all in all (v. 30). May God grant us such humility for true Christian service (Acts 20:19; Eph. 4:2; Phil. 2:3; Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 5:5).

II

A. The humble way-preparer was also a faithful way-preparer; for 1) he carried out his ministry of witnessing Christ not only when he was popular, but also when his witnessing drew the crowds away from himself to Christ (vv. 22-25); 2) he exalted Christ when even his disciples tempted him to self-glory (vv. 25-28); 3) he rejoiced in his auxiliary service as a mere friend of the Bridegroom; 4) he recognized his service merely as a means to an end, not as the end itself

(v. 30). All this proves his faithfulness, and by such faithful ministry he rightly and successfully served the Lord (John 1:29 ff.) and the people of his day.

B. In serving Christ and our neighbor we, too, must be faithful; and such faithfulness should manifest itself especially 1) when our service of Christ and our neighbor does not mean for us any personal gain (vv. 22-24); 2) when our service is questioned, even by our friends (vv. 25-28); 3) when the service which we render is only secondary and seemingly unimportant (v. 29); 4) when, while increasing the glory of Christ and the good of the neighbor, our own personal interests must suffer (v. 30; state suitable illustrations for each point). The faithful Christian will always seek to enhance the praise of the Lord and the spiritual and eternal interests of his neighbor. May God grant us faithfulness so to serve Christ and our neighbor (1 Cor. 4:1 f.). JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

SEPTUAGESIMA

LUKE 6:20-35

This is part of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, addressed to His believing disciples (v. 20). Christ exhorts His followers to love their enemies, a lesson of special necessity and importance in our day, when hatred and bloody revenge against all who have harmed or hurt us are approved, and preached, and practiced.

CHRIST TEACHES HIS CHRISTIANS TO LOVE THEIR ENEMIES

- I. He points out the reason for such love*
- II. He describes the nature of such love*

I

V. 20. "Blessed be ye poor," beggars, not, however, in material possessions, for neither Peter, the fisherman employing a number of people (Luke 5:4-7), nor Lazarus and his sisters (Luke 10:38 ff.), nor Nicodemus and Joseph (Luke 23:50-53; John 19:38-42; Matt. 27:60) were beggars. Christ is speaking of the poor in spirit (Matt. 5:3), who stand as beggars before the Throne of Grace to receive the gifts unmerited by them.

Theirs is the Kingdom of God, that of grace and glory. Blessed, happy people!

V. 21. Hungering after righteousness, both that earned for them by Christ (Phil. 3:8-11) and that righteousness of life, the fruit of faith (Phil. 3:17-20; Col. 3:1 ff.), they shall be filled; they stand justified before God, and by the aid of the Holy Spirit they live unto the Lord (Rom. 14:8; 1 Cor. 1:8). Blessed people!

Vv. 22-23. Even when ridiculed, ostracized, hated, persecuted, for Christ's sake, they have reason to rejoice, for they are in the company of God's noblest people. Happy Christians!

Contrast these children of God with the children of this world, even when these enjoy all the advantages and joys the world can offer. They are unhappy, being under the condemnation of the Judge of the living and of the dead.

How grateful ought Christians to be even in days of trouble and anguish! God, the eternal Lord, calls them blessed! They have experienced that for which Paul exhorts the Colossians to give thanks (Col. 1:12 ff.). Such gratitude, if sincere, will be expressed not merely in words, but in their actions, in true Christian love, in love even toward their enemies.

II

Christians have experienced the love of God, who loved them while they were still His enemies. As children of the Highest, who is kind even to the unthankful and evil, they must follow the example of their Father and love their enemies, manifest their love by requiting their evil with good; wish them well, bless them, pray for their physical and spiritual welfare, their temporal and eternal salvation (vv. 27-28), as did Christ (Luke 23:34), and Stephen (Acts 7:59), and Paul (Rom. 9:1-3; 10:1). Instead of brooding revenge, of selfishly clamoring for one's own right, we should rather overcome their wickedness with patience, with love, with doing good (1 Pet. 2:11-25), doing to them as we want them to treat us (vv. 27-31). That self-love, which in every human being reaches the point of perfection, is to be in its quality of perfection the standard of our love toward our enemies.

In order to do this, our love must be utterly unselfish (vv. 32-34). A love extending only to those that love us, or

doing good and lending only with the hope of some reward or some favor in return, does not rise above the natural love of sinners. That is not true love worthy of a child of God following His example and receiving from His Savior the strength to strive for such love. Self-examination, prayer for forgiveness, sincere efforts to reach perfection.

TH. LAETSCH

SEXAGESIMA

LUKE 9:18-26

Jesus is the Author of our salvation. Moreover, as our loving Savior He is deeply concerned with the dangers which confront His disciples. For their protection He gives them instruction which may be helpful to them in their journey through life. Today's Gospel lesson is an example.

JESUS PREPARES HIS DISCIPLES FOR DIFFICULT DAYS AHEAD

- I. By strengthening their convictions about His person*
- II. By acquainting them with the nature of His mission*
- III. By impressing on them the importance of patiently bearing their cross*

I

Our text takes us back to within about a half year prior to the close of Jesus' public ministry. He admittedly had taught the doctrine of the Kingdom of God with power, Matt. 7:29. His miracles demonstrated His divine authority, John 3:2. Yet not only did the scribes and Pharisees refuse to believe Him, but many who first were inclined to become His followers ultimately took offense at Jesus' doctrine and fell away, John 6:66. Towards the end of Jesus' ministry His determined enemies sought even to do away with Him.

With unbelief surrounding them, would His disciples remain true to Him when their faith in Him would be put to a test? Jesus had asked them before, John 6:67, and they had given assurance of their abiding faith in Him, John 6:68-69. But sorely trying days were in the offing for the disciples. Only a firm conviction about the Person in whom they believed would see them safely through. Jesus raises the

question in v. 18, and receives the truthful response, v. 19. In contrast, v. 20 brings out the deep conviction of the disciples. Our Lord knew the facts, v. 47. Their restatement was to benefit them and impress the truth about His person more deeply upon them in order to strengthen their faith.

The question in v. 20 Jesus also puts to us. We live in trying times. Jesus is today hated and despised by many. Others hold opinions like those in v. 19. What do *we* think? Only the firm conviction about Jesus voiced in v. 20 will help us to cling to Him in life and death.

II

After receiving the disciples' reassuring declaration, Jesus for the first time spoke of the events which would occur at the next Passover, v. 22. Knowing them in advance was to keep the disciples from becoming offended by the Master's humiliation at the hands of men. The "must" is to reassure the disciples of the fact that all that would take place was in conformity with a divine plan which aimed at the salvation of mankind.

How much the disciples needed to have it impressed upon them that Jesus had come into the world to suffer, die, and rise again is apparent from incidents like Matt. 20:21 and Mark 8:32. How earthly was their conception of Christ's kingdom! If they had understood the true facts, they would have been spared such embarrassing situations as related John 18:10-11. Christ's suffering is a necessary part of the plan of redemption.

Many in our day are offended by the Biblical doctrine of the atonement. Men are willing to regard Jesus as a pattern of upright living or as a martyr for a noble cause, but will refuse to accept 1 John 2:2. Let us, enlightened by God's Word, see in Jesus' suffering and death the divine plan of providing a way to salvation for mankind. Our conviction is 1 Cor. 1:18 and 2:2.

III

As Jesus suffered in this world, so His disciples will encounter suffering, John 15:18. They are to realize this in advance and be ready to bear their cross, v. 23. Following Jesus draws enmity from the world. The Christian must deny himself, v. 23, i. e., subdue the worldly desires of his flesh. This

involves differing with the world and reproaching it by word and life. The resulting unpopularity and hatred may result in persecution. Our present age has produced many martyrs.

Nevertheless it is important that Christians bear their cross patiently and steadfastly. The goal for which they are striving is of infinite preciousness, vv. 24 and 25. And again, not bearing their cross is equivalent to a denial of the Savior, v. 26 a. What the terrible consequences of such denial are, v. 26 describes. These thoughts must have been a mighty stimulus for the disciples, whom Jesus addressed to bear their cross with fortitude.

Do we bear our cross patiently? God grant that we do so in the strength of Him who promised Matt. 28:20 b.

G. V. SCHICK

QUINQUAGESIMA

LUKE 10:38-42

We frequently have to make a choice between several courses of action. Sometimes the choice that is made is evil and leads to disaster, 1 Kings 18:21. Sometimes a choice is a wise one and leads to a great blessing, Ruth 1:16. (Matt. 1:5.)

Our text tells us about

MARY'S WISE CHOICE

I. What it was II. Why it was wise III. What came of it

I

Jesus was an honored guest in Martha's home. Every housewife knows what that meant for Martha. There was much work to do. There was cleaning to do, and shopping and cooking and washing. She was cumbered about much serving. While Martha was working, Jesus sat down and began to speak. He never spoke of frivolous, useless things. When Jesus spoke, it was about God's kingdom, about life and death and heaven, about grace and forgiveness and hope. That is what he spoke of to Nicodemus and Mary Magdalene and Zacchaeus. That was what He spoke of here. And Mary sat at His feet and listened, while Martha worked. That was Mary's wise choice.

There are many today who make this wise choice. There is much work to be done, of course, on the farm and in the office and around the home. But many people leave these cumbersome things and listen to Jesus. They read their Bibles and come to church. Some have to make great efforts to come to God's house (recent *Lutheran Witness* story about family coming 150 miles by train). They bring their children to church. They make Mary's choice their own. It is true, there are also many who do not choose as Mary did. They do not want to listen to Jesus. Other things interest them far more. They are sometimes boastful about their neglect of God's Word: church is for women and children. Let us always make Mary's choice our own, for it will be a wise choice.

II

Why was Mary's choice a wise one? We know how much often depends on the kind of choice we make in the affairs of our life. The text tells us that Mary's choice won the approval of Jesus. He was no friend of idleness, John 5:17, but this was a time for hearing God's Word, and He said: "Mary hath chosen that good part." We like to have the approval of teachers, employers, and friends. We should be happy to have the approval of Jesus. The Bible tells us that it pleases Jesus when people hear the Word of God; Luke 11:28; Is. 66:2 b; John 8:47 a. Simple, is it not? Sometimes we make very great efforts to please someone, and even then we do not succeed. This is so simple — to listen gladly and reverently to God's Word, meditate upon it and apply it to our lives. Anyone can do that and please Jesus — grown folks and children. It is a wise choice to make.

III

What came of Mary's choice? She was criticized by her sister. That happens today that people are criticized and ridiculed for going to church and practicing religion. What should we do when people talk like that? What did Mary do? She said nothing at all. She let Jesus give the answer in His gentle way. Mary might have given her sister a stinging reply that would have cut deeply. But she let Jesus talk for her. That is a good rule for us. If we will answer criticism, not with stinging words of our own, but with words of Jesus, we shall overcome those who criticize us.

But the Savior said of Mary's choice that it would have lasting value. What she chose should not be taken away from her. The blessings which we receive through hearing God's Word will still be ours when everything else has passed away. We shall receive forgiveness of our sins, the favor of God, comfort in our distress, assurance of our salvation, and strength for a good life. These are great blessings that come from making Mary's wise choice our own. And what you gain from that choice will be yours in eternal life. **FREDERIC NIEDNER**

INVOCAVIT

MARK 2:18-22

In Lent the sun of divine grace beams down upon sinful mankind in richest and loveliest splendor. The Lenten Gospel is also a mirror of sin, but primarily a detailed record of the Redeemer's all-embracing sacrifice for sin. Whereas human religions stress rites and efforts as the key to a blessed hereafter, Christianity, in particular the Passion story, exalts the sin-atoning Christ. This suggests an inquiry concerning the value of the rites and practices which are in vogue within the Christian Church.

CUSTOMS AND CEREMONIES IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
Being human arrangements,

- I. *Their observance must always be optional*
- II. *They must ever remain mere handmaids of God's free grace*

I

V.18. This question was raised with reference to the testimonial dinner given by Matthew in Jesus' honor on one of the questioners' fast days. Meaning: "Why is there no agreement among our leaders in these matters?" — Jesus replies with an apt simile, vv.19-20. Weddings are joyful occasions. No one thinks of fasting then, because it is an indication of sorrow over sin or misfortune, or of great solemnity. When such days come, there will be fasting, but not at a wedding.

Christianity is not a religion of fear or gloom, like man-made religions. These know of no accomplished salvation,

hence there is ominous foreboding of wrath to come. This, in turn, prompts the performance of works and sacrifices as an appeasement to God. Christianity is compared to a wedding, Matt. 22:1-14. It brings not only the grandest news ever published, full and free pardon through Christ, but tells of mystical union between Christ and His Church, Eph. 5:25-32. It also gives assurance of Christ's protecting presence, Matt. 18:20; 28:20. Hence fasting does not ordinarily fit into a Christian's life. Conscious of God's forgiving grace, he is, and has a right to be, happy. When soul-trying days come, or days of great solemnity (Acts 13:2,3; 14:23), he may feel urge to practice self-discipline. But this must always be optional with him. The Church cannot compel him.

All this applies to sundry ceremonies and customs practiced within the Church, e. g., church year, liturgy, holidays, tithing, Lenten self-denial offerings, etc. They may serve useful and God-pleasing purposes, but are human arrangements and must not be demanded. We are living in the era described by Christ, John 4:21-24, and St. Paul, Col. 2:16-17. The observance of customs and ceremonies must be voluntary like Mary's memorial service, Mark 14:3-9. Legalism has no place in Christ's Church, Gal. 5:1.

II

The Pharisees fasted in a vain (Matt. 6:16) and mercenary (Luke 18:12) spirit; motive of John's disciples not stated. Jesus points out grave danger inherent in such spirit by two parables, vv. 20-22. A patch of new, unshrunk material sewed upon oft-laundered garment will likewise shrink and cause greater tear. Old, dried-out goatskins cannot bear the pressure of fermenting wine. Both the skins and the wine will be lost. — It is impossible to fit the Christian religion into human religions. There can be no combination of, or compromise between, faith and works, grace and merit, Rom. 11:6; Gal. 5:14. Legalism subverts and destroys grace.

We are at liberty to devise forms and customs in religious life, but must be careful to maintain them as handmaids of divine grace. Nothing meritorious must be ascribed to their performance. Congregations may in Christian liberty inaugurate ceremonies and usages, the minority following in Christian love, but again there must be no legalism nor re-

liance on human performance. All customs and ceremonies in the Church, public or private, must be voluntary expressions of personal faith and love or channels by which divine grace is brought to us through Word and Sacrament for growth in faith and godliness.

It is often difficult to give up ingrained customs. "No man having drunk old wine straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better," Luke 5:39. Cf. converts from Judaism, Acts 15:1-11; Peter, Acts 10. Every trace of legalism and mercenary spirit must be banished. Grace brooks no rival. No compulsion save the compulsion of Christian love. Always, ever Gal. 6:14.

OTTO E. SOHN

