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FAITH AS CONFIDENCE.*

When the concept of faith is studied as a soteriological factor, as *fides salvifica*, saving faith, the conventional divisions of its aspects: knowledge, assent, and confidence, merge into one another. In any true act of saving faith, none of these three aspects ever exists without the other two. In those Scripture-passages which express the act of faith in terms of knowing or of approving, we recognize merely metonymical statements, the element of confidence, or trust, always being connoted. So Baier, who describes saving faith as "assensus cum fiducia, seu fiducia cum assensu conjuncta." From what he has stated in the preceding paragraphs concerning the knowledge of faith, we are justified in extending this description, so as to include the element of knowledge, which Baier presupposes, and describing faith in Christ as "notitia cum assensu et fiducia, seu fiducia cum assensu et notitia conjuncta." Saving faith consists of all these acts "in their union" ("velut unitis"), says Baier, and is now called knowledge, now assent, now confidence, the other parts, however, being implied in each case. (III a, 145.) Savingly to know Christ, savingly to assent to His evangelical offer of grace, is not possible without an act of the will which places reliance on the facts apprehended by the intellect when knowing and assenting to them. Strictly speaking, there are no parts of faith. "Faith," says Quenstedt, "viewed in its entirety (materialiter considerata) is divided into certain parts,

* Conclusion of the study in THEOL. QUART. X, 1 ff. 65 ff.; XI, 219 ff.

A SERIES OF TALKS AT LUTHERAN NOONDAY SERVICES.

During the last two Lenten seasons a society of Lutherans in the city of St. Louis has conducted brief services during the noon hour in a theater in the down-town district. A number of inquiries have been made regarding the matters discussed at these services, and the manner of discussing them. We are trying to satisfy this just desire for information by submitting the five addresses delivered this year by Prof. M. Graebner, of Winfield, Kans., on February 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, and March 1st. There is no particular reason why just this series has been selected in preference to any other; it merely happened to be available, and was released for publication in this periodical by the committee in charge. D.

I. CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

Text: If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. *1 Cor. 15, 19.*

When the Lutherans of your good city desired to hold a series of noonday services during this Lenten season, they did not have in mind to institute a campaign against other Christian Churches, or denominations. The Lutheran Church is no proselyting Church, and never seeks to entice a member away from any Christian Church

with which he has united. We intend to place before you in simple language the cardinal doctrines of the Bible, and declare to you the position of our Church regarding some of the great evils of the times. The first among their number is Christian Science. Now immediately there will be some one to cry out: "There is the usual hypocrisy; first the statement that you do not desire to destroy other Churches, and then an entire sermon devoted to a tirade against one of them." In preaching a sermon against Christian Science, we are not antagonizing a Church, for Christian Science is no Church, and does not claim to be a Church. It claims to be a science, distinguished from other sciences in this that it is Christian Science. The name Christian, derived from Christ, is the sweetest, the holiest, and most honorable which can be applied to any system of teaching. If this system (call it a science if you don't know any better), deceitfully, sinfully, usurps the right to use the name Christian, then Christ is assailed, and that so-called science deserves to be publicly reprov'd in language as strong as the Bible and the dignity of the pulpit permit of. We intend to be perfectly just to Christian Science and bring but one witness against her, that witness being the official handbook of Christian Science itself, called, by a most remarkable conglomeration of misnomers, "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures," being neither a science nor imparting health, and being a key to the Scriptures only inasmuch as it will lock the Scriptures to one's understanding.

I hope now to show you that Christian Science is senseless, Christless, hopeless, a real evil of the times. The Bible is written in words and language of the people. It addresses itself to men, women, and children of average intelligence. So we read in Ps. 119, v. 130: "It giveth understanding unto the simple." It contains nothing nonsensical or illogical. I wish I had time to parade before you all the nonsensical statements contained in the book called "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures." But a few must suffice. Christian Science claims the power to heal sickness by denying its reality. "Sickness," it says, "is a delusion and all matter is unreal. The blood, heart, lungs, brain, etc., have nothing to do with life." (p. 45.) Here is another: "You say a boil is painful, but that is impossible," says Christian Science, "for matter without mind is not painful. The boil simply manifests your belief in pain through inflammation and swelling, and you call this belief a boil." (p. 47.) Mrs. Eddy, the author of the book, seems to realize that in case a limb is lost, her position to call that unreal becomes somewhat difficult. However, her effrontery is equal to the occasion. Here

is what she says: "When the unthinking lobster loses his claw, it grows again. If the science of life were understood, it would be found that the senses of mind are never lost, and that matter has no sensation. Then the human limb would be replaced as readily as the lobster's claw, not with an artificial limb, but with a genuine one." (p. 485.) And try to believe this, found on page 549: "It is related that a father, anxious to try such an experiment, plunged an infant babe only a few hours old into water for several minutes, and repeated this experiment daily until the child could remain under water twenty minutes, moving and playing without harm like a fish. Parents should remember this, and so learn how to develop their children on dry land." These are but a few of the absurd statements in which "Science and Health" by Mrs. Eddy abounds. For why should we multiply examples?

If Christian Science were only senseless, we might dismiss it from our mind. It is not our duty, as a Church, to deliver people from their foolishness. Many a good Christian is ignorant on a great number of subjects. But Christian Science has emblazoned on her banner the name Christian, and thereby deludes Christians into believing that it is derived from Christ. Now, what really is Christianity? What is its fundamental teaching, and wherein does it differ from other religions? Is Christianity only a code of morals instructing us how properly to conduct ourselves toward God and our fellow-man? What would then be the use of Christianity? What does it help us if we are told that, if we do what is right, we shall be saved? We know all of that. Why shouldn't we be saved if we do what is right? But what will that help us when our conscience calls to us with the voice of thunder: You have not done what is right? If a thief is in prison, what good will it do him if you prove to him that, if he had not stolen, he would not be there? He will tell you: "That is not my problem. My problem is this: I have stolen; how can I get out of here in spite of this fact?" That is the exact position of the human race. Therefore the question which true Christianity must answer is this: How can humanity be saved in spite of the fact that man has not done what is right? The answer to this question, is the heart of Christianity. Whosoever takes that out leaves the rest a lifeless corpse. The Bible tells us as plainly as human speech can state: "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3, 16. Whoever looks upon Christ as but an example for us, whom we must become like in order to be saved, has again made matters worse in place of better, for

again our conscience will tell us that we have not become perfect and holy as Christ was. To understand Christ, we must know that He, as the Son of God, died and fulfilled the Law for us, in our stead. That is the kernel of Christianity. Destroy it, and you might as well discard the empty shell that remains.

Now, what does Christian Science teach? Listen, Mrs. Eddy will tell us. She says, on page 471, that "sin is unreal," that "man is incapable of sin, sickness, and death." While the Bible and your own conscience both tell you that you have sinned and are not perfect, Mrs. Eddy tells you, on page 96: "The great truth that man was, is, and ever shall be perfect is incontrovertible." Of course, if we are perfect, we need no Savior. We are not surprised, therefore, that we read on page 327: "Final deliverance from error is not reached by pinning one's faith to another's vicarious effort." The Bible says: "Christ gave Himself a ransom for all." 1 Tim. 2, 6. "Christ died for the ungodly." Rom. 5, 6. Mrs. Eddy says, on page 329: "If erudite theology receives the crucifixion of Jesus as chiefly providing a ready pardon for all sinners who ask for it and are willing to be forgiven, then we must differ." The Bible says Christ offered up Himself as a sacrifice for the people. Heb. 9. "He was given for us an offering and a sacrifice to God." Eph. 5, 2. Mrs. Eddy says, page 328: "One sacrifice, however great, is insufficient to pay the debt of sin." The Bible says: "The Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Is. 53, 6. Christian Science says: "That God's wrath should be vented upon His beloved Son is divinely unnatural. Such a theory is man-made." (p. 328.)

Thus Christian Science denies the central doctrines of Christianity. It even denies that Christ really died. (p. 351.) It speaks of the Trinity to deceive Christians and to catch the unwary. Examined more closely, it defines Trinity as love, truth, and life. When Mary conceived Jesus, Christian Science says, she conceived the *idea of God*. (p. 334.) And when Jesus promised His disciples that a Comforter, the Holy Ghost, should come, Mrs. Eddy puts the crown upon her blasphemous insolence by saying that this Holy Ghost, this Comforter, who was to come and lead the world into all truth, is "Christian Science." This ought to be enough to show that there is nothing Christian about this so-called science.

Where there is no Christ, there is no hope. This truth is borne out by a perusal of the Christian Science handbook. The utter hopelessness of Christian Science is actually appalling. What is religion for, if not to show the way to future happiness? Our text says: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most

miserable." Viewed in the light of our text, Christian Science certainly is hopeless. Even the Indians on the plains looked forward to the Happy Hunting-grounds. All false religions try at least to hold out the hope of a blissful hereafter. And now comes Christian Science and tells us there will be no final judgment. (p. 187.) God says: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment." Heb. 9, 27. Does not this word find an echo in your heart? Is there no voice within you telling you that you are more than a horse or a dog, that you are a responsible being and must some day give an account of yourself? Resurrection, that queen of hopes, resurrection to a new and better life, is flatly denied by Christian Science. (p. 216.) Their resurrection is only spiritualization of thought, a new and higher idea of immortality. Again only an idea! That is hopeless. There is in Christian Science no resurrection of the body, no Judgment, no looking forward to bliss in heaven. It says: "Material life ends in nameless nothingness." (p. 542.) Christ's salvation is described on page 356: "The Consummate example was for the salvation of us all, but only through doing the healing work which He did." There you have it again—hope of salvation for this life only. We say with St. Paul: We have "a desire to depart and to be with Christ; which is far better." Phil. 1, 23. Christian Science calls it a suicidal belief that a soul is in the body, and that death is a friend and a stepping-stone to immortality and bliss. Christian Science tells us that life is God, God is mind, and if we have life, our life is simply God. At death our body decays, never to rise again. What is left? Christian Science says: "Mind, that is, God." And where is man? He has vanished. Again, hope only for this life! Thus these poor deluded Christian Scientists are, according to the Bible, the most miserable of men.

Here is a real evil of the times, denying all doctrines of the Bible, teaching that there are no rules of health to follow, that there is no sin. No wonder it gains adherents! Man likes to believe that there is no sin, and that, no matter what he does, he always remains perfect. Christian Science appeals to the natural conceitedness of man. It tries to appear as something for the more intelligent class of people. Christian Scientists consider themselves very superior, and when the inconsistencies of their systems are pointed out to them, they answer in their superior way: "The chief difficulty in conveying the teachings of Divine Science accurately to human thought lies in this that, like all other languages, English is inadequate to the expression of spiritual conceptions and propositions through the use of material terms." (p. 295.) English is my language. That is the

language that I can understand. English has more terms and words than any other language the world has ever had. God in the Greek and Hebrew tongues found enough words to make His doctrines plain to the simple. Stick to that simplicity of the Bible, and don't run after this knowledge that fills the head and leaves the heart an aching void! Remain a simple Christian and keep singing what no Christian Scientist can sing:

My hope is built on nothing less
 Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
 I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
 But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
 On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
 All other ground is sinking sand.

Amen.

II. THE SIN OF DRUNKENNESS.

Text: For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

Rom. 14, 7. 8.

The subject of to-day's discourse is one with which you, as American citizens, have long been familiar. It is safe to say that the use and abuse of intoxicants has been more thoroughly discussed than any other great problem which engages the attention of serious-minded people, and nearly every oration, sermon, or speech which you hear on that subject finally turns out to be a plea for prohibition. Now I hope you have not come here to-day to hear a sermon on prohibition; for if you have, you will be disappointed. The Lutheran Church preaches God's Word and nothing else. Our Church is not in politics, nor does it believe that it is the true function of the Church to influence legislation. The good Lord, when preparing to take final leave of this world, called His disciples together and commanded them to preach the Gospel to all creatures, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded unto His disciples. But He failed to add the words: And it shall be your further duty to see to it that all nations make and enforce the laws necessary to compel all people to live according to My commands. I am not here to tell you what laws, in my judgment, man ought to make, but the laws that God has made. Neither do I wish to outline to you the whole position of the Lutheran Church as respects the liquor traffic, but my remarks shall be strictly limited to a presentation of the subject as stated: The Sin of Drunkenness.

Is the excessive use of intoxicants a sin? To make this matter clear to you from the Holy Scripture, I might have selected one of the numberless texts wherein this sin is expressly condemned, and further on we shall hear one of that nature. But our text is a verse from Scripture which, while not directly dealing with the sin of drunkenness, gives us in bold outline the general rules of Christian conduct. "None of us liveth unto himself." We ourselves are not the only ones who come into consideration when rules of conduct are to be prescribed. On this truth let us dwell a moment. There can be no question about the truth of the statement that drunkenness has a very bad influence both on the body and on the mind of the drunkard. Some drunkards, as a sort of excuse for their habit, say: "I am the one who must suffer the consequences of drinking, and I am injuring no one else." The last statement is usually untrue. As a matter of fact, the drunkard is not even the foremost sufferer from his sin, but his wife and children suffer more bodily, mentally, and socially than the drunkard himself. But let us, for the sake of argument, accept the statement as true that the drunkard hurts no one but himself, and let us see whether that would exculpate him, or take away any portion of his guilt. Have I the right to commit acts and form habits which are harmful to my own body and mind? There is an ancient saying: "Nothing is so much our own as our body." Our text denies that statement: "None of us liveth unto himself." It holds good of our body and mind and our possessions that we have no right to do with them whatever we please. Of all temporal blessings, the health of our body and the vigor of our mind can certainly be classed among the greatest. In one sense these, as well as our other possessions, are our own, but in a larger sense our ownership is qualified by that superior ownership which God has in all earthly things. We control them in a measure, but only as stewards of God, the real owner, and should employ them in the manner provided therefor in God's own Word. If once this fundamental rule of conduct penetrates and sinks into your heart, you will be prepared to judge clearly this sin of drunkenness as one of those really great sins both in themselves and in their consequences. Think of the wonderful human body which God has given us, the marvel of the scientist, its functions even now, after ages of study, imperfectly understood, able to brave the rigor of the arctic blasts as well as the burning rays of the tropical sun; a body with the most astounding harmony of faculties, and endowed with that glorious mind which under God has produced all that you see about you. Has man a right to destroy it? Has the drunkard the moral right to take the bloom of youth, the strength

of manhood, and the glory of age, and to impair, waste, dissipate, and destroy them in the debauch of drunkenness? If he has, then the cashier of a bank has a right to gamble with its funds; then the custodian of a trust fund has the right to squander the estate of the beneficiary: for both are unfaithful to their trust. No! even if the drunkard would hurt no one but himself, even then he would stand convicted of a great sin before God and man.

“We live not to ourselves alone, but whether we live, we live unto God.” Thus our text proceeds. We should live unto God, should devote our life to His service. Can the drunkard serve—really serve—God? Can the embezzling cashier really serve the bank whose funds he converts to his own use? Can a man who persistently practises a vice that tends only to impair his usefulness be said to live a life of service to his Maker? Put it to the test. Imagine a drunkard praying that God might let His blessings rest upon his next excess. See him reeling in the streets on his way to his home of misery. Do you think he is going home to serve God? Do you think when, assisted by strangers, he finally reaches his home, he will gather his family around him in worship, sing a hymn, read a page from Scripture, utter a prayer, and pronounce a blessing? Or will oaths take the place of prayers, curses be pronounced in place of blessings, and the general scene be a delight to the devil?—Come, put your theory that a drunkard can serve God to another test. Where are the drunkards in church-work? Count them! See how many you can find among the teachers of your Sunday-school, among the pillars of your congregation, in the ranks of zealous missionary workers! The result of your search will give you the answer to the question, Can a drunkard serve God?

I have not tried, nor shall I try, to paint you any gloomy pictures of the true ugliness of this vice. The old Lacedemonians had a way of drastically teaching their children the degradation of drunkenness. They gathered a number of slaves in a large room, and, in the presence of the children, gave them their fill of wine and strong drink, until they were fully under the influence of the liquor. Then these parents pointed to the slaves as object-lessons for their children, showing them what horrible spectacles these slaves were making of themselves, how they gave vent to most abominable language, singing lewd songs, finally growing quarrelsome and fighting among themselves, until at last they reached the swine stage and fell prone upon the floor, which they had covered with the squalor of their own filth. Thus man, the highest of God’s visible creatures, made in His image, becomes the most disgraced and disgusting of beings, fallen almost

below the level of the beast. See the drunkards lying in the gutters of your own city, and then answer my question: Can they, in that condition, serve God? Enough of this; that point is clear. Let us go on.

Our feeling toward God can best be judged by our behavior toward our fellow-man. God Himself would have us put our Christianity to this test. Christ tells us: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." John 14, 15. And furthermore: "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13, 35. The Christian's love to others is, and should be, a test of his Christianity. And the first of our fellow-men who come into consideration are the members of our immediate household, our wife and our children. Try to imagine a man asking a woman to be his wife, promising to love her, honor her, and cherish her, and promising further, in order to show his love toward his spouse, that he would become beastly drunk at least once a week. You know without being told that such a protestation of love is nothing but idle mockery, and there you have the answer to the question: Does a drunkard love his wife? He does not. If he did, how could he persistently make her miserable, and his children, to whom he sets the worst possible example, whom he neglects most shamelessly, squandering the means of their sustenance, reducing the place that ought to be a home to a den of torture for the children, which they are happy to exchange for the evil associates of the street and the alley, the pool-room and the brothel, and the jail! Oh! how grandly these drunkards are serving God; and oh, how they love their family! Shame on those who try to excuse drunkards! How many fortunes are squandered, how many prospects blighted, how many homes destroyed, how much happiness turned into misery, by this sin going on unceasingly, filling the prisons, crowding the poor-houses, burdening the courts, ruining the families, and wrecking the influence of the Church! O no; the drunkard harms no one — no, none — excepting himself, his family, the Church, and the community.

But here comes the rich drunkard and says: "All this is not true in my case. I am causing no misery. I am denying my family nothing. I have no children, whom my example might lead into the paths of dissipation." Now, aside from what has been stated as to the sin you are committing against yourself, I have another word for you. What has been stated is bad enough, but it is not all, not even the worst. Our text says that we should also die unto the Lord. You drunkards, can you do that? If you think you can, perhaps you don't know that the Bible says that a drunkard will not

inherit the kingdom of heaven. The Bible plainly states that the drunkard's grave is not the worst for him, but that he has no hope of eternal salvation. He enters upon his career with his eyes open. No one can say that he has not been warned. For a long time, seduced by Satan, the drunkard makes himself and others believe that he is not really addicted to the habit, that by exercising his will-power he can quit drinking. Will-power, bah! A drunkard has no will-power. He has thrown away that God-given power of will. Willingly he has entered the service of Satan, and now he has become his slave. Oh! and he finds him a hard master, driving him, lashing him, torturing him, until he does his will and follows him through a miserable life into an awful eternity.

Oh, thank God that I am permitted to add a word of hope, that the drunkard has a friend who comes in when the world goes out. Oh, it is so easy for a minister to tell a drunkard to quit drinking; for a minister has been saved by the power of God from most temptations that have brought about the downfall of the drunkard. Come, let me introduce you to your Friend. It is none other than your blessed Savior, who calls to you still in accents of love and words of tenderness: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11, 28. Have you tried this cure—to come unto Him, to believe in Him, that, though your sins are red as blood, they shall be whiter than snow, to love Him and trust Him, to pray to Him? When next temptation comes over you, oh, ask Him to give you power to overcome, and it shall be given unto you. Let your thoughts dwell upon His love to you, when He died that you might live, and who is to-day ready to forgive and blot out your past and give you strength for a better future, so that, whether you live, you might live unto the Lord, and that when you die, you might die in the Lord, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

III. SINS OF THE TONGUE.

Text: I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

Ps. 39, 1.

One of the greatest gifts with which God has endowed man is speech; and it suffers the same fate as the other divine blessings showered upon mankind in such profusion and abundance. Man takes the glorious gifts of God and subjects them to the service of sin. "Sins of the Tongue" is the subject for our deliberation to-day.

What is a sin? Sin is every transgression of God's Law. It is idle folly for us to deduce by human reason what is right and wrong.

Human conscience, it is true, is some sort of guide, because the Law of God was originally graven upon the tablets of man's heart. But by the fall of man this natural knowledge of God's Law has become greatly impaired, until to-day conscience is no longer a safe guide to follow. If I wish to find out the law of the State of Missouri, "The General Statutes of Kansas" is not the proper book to consult. And if we would learn what use God asks us to make of our tongues, let us not pass by the original source of information. Let us not ask human reason whether in a given case we are sinning or not, but let us go to God's Law, the highest authority.

God has devoted two commandments of the Decalog to the sins of the tongue: the Second: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain," and the Eighth: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Thus the sins of the tongue are naturally divided into two classes, the first comprising those which concern God only, and the second, those which concern also our neighbor. We have but a few moments to devote to our text. Permit me, therefore, to touch the grossest sins with but a brief remark, and to draw your attention to those so frequently overlooked. Sins which you at once recognize as such are, for instance, cursing and false swearing; and on account of its prevalence and importance, it will be necessary to devote a few words to the latter.

The sin of false swearing is a real evil of our time. An oath is one of the most solemn acts that a man can possibly perform. When you take an oath, you swear to the truth of your statements and add, "So help me God." You call upon God to help you only in the event that you tell the truth, and that you will perform what you promise, and, by necessary implication, you call upon Him to withhold His aid from you in case you break your oath, or swear to an untruthful statement. An oath is a prayer. Your solemn prayer to God that He withdraw all His help, all His grace and love from you in time and eternity if you swear falsely! What an awful thing! asking God no longer to be your Father or Redeemer or Comforter — what a prayer! How lightly is an oath nowadays considered! Certainly it behooves a Christian not merely to refrain from swearing falsely, but to refrain from swearing at all, unless the law of the land makes it your duty, and the love to your neighbor makes it a necessity. Needless swearing and false swearing are twin brothers. It is not surprising that in an age where swearing has lost its solemnity, where men take the most blood-curdling oaths merely to have the doubtful privilege of joining some society, — it is not surprising, I say, that in our age an oath is considered of little moment, and

that men will take a false oath with utter disregard of their own salvation. How often have Christian men left the court-room with a heavy heart after hearing numberless lies on the witness stand, where lying is such a frequent occurrence, when they thought of the terrible fact that all these false witnesses were asking God to destroy them, both body and soul! And, oh, what transcendent kindness of God that He does not at once hear their blasphemous prayer and immediately respond with a thunderbolt! False swearing has become a curse to our country, and all who have a part in, or know anything about, the administration of the criminal laws are fully aware of the conditions prevailing in the court-room, how this sin turns the evil-doer lose, increasing crime, and bringing with it many consequential evils.

But let us hasten on. We pass over the sins of lying, slandering, deceiving. We stop but a moment at the sin of soothsaying, fortune-telling by mediums, and whatever they may call themselves. We have little time to-day to dwell on those who preach doctrines contrary to the Word of God. All these are sins of the tongue important enough to devote a sermon to each. We pass over them because I feel that one sin in particular ought to be mentioned and dwelt upon more fully. It is the sin of backbiting—speaking evil of persons in their absence, behind their backs, whence the sin derives its name.

Can it ever be a sin to tell the truth? Let me answer this question by another. Can it ever be right to act contrary to love? Is not love the fulfilment of the Law? Now, therefore, whatever is out of harmony with love is not consistent with God's Law. If the telling of a story, even a true story, is contrary to love, then the telling of that story is a sin. The Bible very plainly tells us: "Speak not evil one of another, brethren." Jas. 4, 11. The story is told of a man who in his youth placed a coin into his pocket, making a vow that he would devote it to charity as soon as he would be present at any social gathering at which this commandment would not be transgressed. He lived unto a ripe old age, and died with the coin in his pocket. So prevalent is this sin, both among children and adults, and, by the way, adults of both sexes, that it must be classed among the great evils of the times. We hear the children speaking about their school-mates. Are they talking about their virtues or about their shortcomings? You know the answer. A number of clerks meet during the dinner hour. They see a mutual acquaintance, and begin saying things about her which they would not say in her presence. Remember the words: "Speak not evil one of another, brethren." And when

God says "brethren," He does not wish to exclude the sisters. Not even the meetings of Christian men and Christian women are free from this vice. Gossiping has become a downright obsession and a public nuisance in many localities. Instances could be told of Christian communities where the sin of backbiting has become such a curse that social meetings have become almost an impossibility — where every one suspects his friend; where the church-life of congregations is at low ebb, and spirituality stagnant; where the labors of a pastor are rendered unsuccessful; and where the unbridled tongue, like an untamed beast, has destroyed every reputation for miles around; until a feeling of uncertainty and suspicion pervades all.

Let us go along. We are at war, our country is at war, and one of the aims we all ought to have is this, that our country receive that united support which all citizens owe to their Government. Loyalty to our country is part and parcel of our Lutheran faith and practise. Now, is it not true that an enemy within is more dangerous and harder to overcome than the foe without? And should we not, as loyal Americans, studiously avoid and assiduously guard against anything and everything that would spread ill feeling, contention, strife, sedition, and disloyalty? Here is where the sins of the tongue are liable to play a prominent part. Let us not cast ungrounded suspicion and unpatriotic criticism upon those in authority. But let us be charitable in our thoughts and moderate in our language. The unbridled tongue of foolish and disloyal citizens can easily change our fair land into a field of carnage, blood, and riot. The power of the spoken or written word in tranquil days and in stormy times is truly portentous, both for good and for evil.

A little word, how lightly spoken! and it is forever beyond control. An unkind word to husband or to wife, just enough to ruffle the waves on the smooth and serene matrimonial sea, has often brought on a tempest, wrecking the happiness of the family, throwing the parents into the divorce court and the children into the street.

To bridle our tongue is, therefore, a duty which we owe to ourselves, to our family, our friends, our enemies, our church, and our fatherland. Here we have a work that taxes the powers of the strongest; for truly does the Bible say: "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. Every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea is tamed and hath been tamed of mankind; but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." Jas. 3, 6—8. By God's power alone can the tongue be bridled. Who are we to speak ill of our neighbor? There is no one of us who has lived a life so pure and sweet that his reputation would not

suffer were the full history of his life be published from the house-tops. Whenever your mouth would open to words of slander, remember how severely God arraigns the tale-bearers, the venders of secrets, destroying reputations of others. Are your neighbors really so bad and wicked that you cannot find any good thing to relate concerning them? Then, in the first place, you ought to remain silent, and in the second place, you ought to leave their fellowship because the Bible tells us to shun the association of the wicked.

Christians, bridle your tongues! But how? Nothing is quite so easy as to give advice, and no advice seems quite so difficult to follow as the admonition to guard your speech. But permit this season of Lent to help you. How can the Lenten season help me to bridle my tongue? Thus you may well ask. The answer is that our Savior is a shining example of all Christian virtues, and the Passion story especially depicts the Savior as a teacher of the proper use of the tongue. The sins of the tongue, the slanders, the vilifications, and lies of the rulers of the Jews brought about that enmity of the people against their greatest Benefactor, which culminated in the cries, "Crucify Him." And what did Jesus do? Jesus was silent. If Jesus was silent amid such trying ordeals, why can we not learn from Him when He tells us to bridle our tongues? If seemingly our tongue runs away with us, and our temper gets the better of us, and our mouth blares forth its curses and harsh words before we know and can prevent it, let us ever think of our silent Savior. Let us pray to our God that by this example we may receive strength to overcome our own peculiar evil propensities, until by His grace we shall arrive at the portals of everlasting righteousness, where also the sins of the tongue are blotted out by the blood of the Savior and have given way to everlasting praise. Amen.

IV. THE SOCIAL EVIL.

Text: Keep thyself pure. *1 Tim. 5, 22.*

We speak of *the* social evil, not as though there were no other, but because this one overshadows them all in many ways. It is so prevalent and so pernicious that it forces itself upon us for consideration, and it is, therefore, eminently fitting and proper that the Church, too, should take cognizance thereof also in its public utterances. Hence this sermon on The Social Evil.

All of you know what we are talking about. Sexual impurity has been with us so long, has been a problem for so many centuries, that we take it as a matter of course. Some even proclaim it a neces-

sary evil and an excusable practise. If by this they mean to say it is necessary because it cannot be entirely eradicated, we see no reason why we should argue the question. The Church has not been instituted to solve governmental difficulties. Sin cannot be stamped out. There will always be murder, theft, and great numbers of other crimes; but does that fact render them excusable? Will your police department take the stand that, since murder and theft cannot be done away with, let us be somewhat more lenient, and let us not attempt the impossible? Granting, therefore, that the State will never be without the social evil, this renders it no less an evil, and does not excuse those who practise it.

We also believe that those who excuse this sin are hypocrites. They don't mean what they say. The sin of fornication is one well within the knowledge of natural man, that is to say, the conscience of natural man will accuse and convict him when he commits the sin. There is no young man who first yields to the temptation who does not realize that he has done wrong, and who would dare to tell his mother about it. To those who would set up a double standard of morals we would say that the words, "Keep thyself pure," were spoken to a man, and a young man at that. Whatever the opinion of men might condone, the Holy Bible contains no indication that a man enjoys special privileges not shared by the woman. Neither expressly nor impliedly does it accord to the man that wider latitude of morals which society so readily condones. When God had created Adam and Eve, we read that He *blessed* them and said unto them: "Be fruitful and multiply." Gen. 1, 28. This capacity was, according to the Bible, a blessing bestowed upon man and woman, that the twain should be one flesh, and live together in all honor and decency, united as husband and wife in holy matrimony. The intimate relationship which exists between husband and wife God Himself has restricted to the married state. And when Christ came, He did not abrogate this rule, but by His apostle He made it known to all the world that whoremongers and fornicators will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. Is that an excusable act by which its perpetrator is shut out from the bliss of heaven? Can he be a Christian who belittles and condones what God condemns in the strongest terms? Let us, for the nonce, even disregard Christianity. Can a thinking man, Christian or infidel, in real sober earnest actually excuse the commission of acts which have such a trail of loathsome consequences as the social evil? Neither can such an unthinking person be a true patriot. Those whose business it is to be informed, and who actually are informed, about the health conditions among civilians, as well as in the army

and navy, are telling us the facts — of the alarming percentage of men who are unfit at a time when their country stands sorely in need of the greatest possible efficiency. I ask you, is the man who condones and belittles this sin a truly patriotic American citizen? It does not require a Christian to realize that we are engaged in mortal combat with the same dragon who has devoured the nations of antiquity, who is now drinking the life's blood of the modern world, and even laying under subjection generations yet unborn; any man with common sense and love toward his country realizes it. Are you going to help and abet this monster? Shame on you!

“Keep thyself pure!” What a beautiful attribute is purity — how we all admire it! Say what you please in mitigation for the guilty — we all prefer the pure. Who is responsible for so much impurity? Let us rather ask: Who is guiltless? Are you guiltless, you fathers and mothers? Let me remind you of the law of Moses. By the provisions of this law the damsel who had misbehaved was to be stoned — but where? Do you know where? She was to be taken to the door of her father's house, and there receive her punishment. Her father should everlastingly bear the reproach that he was not guiltless of his daughter's downfall. Thus the Bible points out the real seat of the trouble: it lies in the home. Let the parents understand their responsibility, that the virtue of their daughters and the purity of their sons depend primarily upon the training they receive at home. When they wander from the paths of rectitude, don't begin blaming the police department for allowing conditions to prevail which ought not to be permitted; you will usually find the guilty ones by looking into a mirror. Our daily papers not long ago brought an open letter by an army officer, telling of the great number of girls, not bad perhaps, but indiscreet, who were swarming about the army camp. He then addressed himself in language too strong for the pulpit to the parents of these girls, begging, imploring them to keep their children off the streets! This was no minister, but an army officer, who recognized a danger threatening the efficiency of his company! Many men have no idea where their sons and daughters are spending their time. Why should they? Their children can take care of themselves! There never lived the young man or young woman who was able to take care of himself or herself. It is so sad that parents are often the last people in the world to become aware of the dangerous paths their children are treading. Friends hesitate to warn them, lest they be cruelly rebuked as meddlers, and soon another ruined life has blighted the happiness of another family. Parents, are you guiltless?

I ask you women and young women, Are you guiltless — adopting styles so shamefully immodest that they reveal more than they conceal, who make such vulgar display of yourselves — have you no guilt in man's downfall? Why do you also uphold the double standard of morals contrary to God's Law and in violence to your better feelings? Why do you condone the sins of men, instead of letting them know that to demand purity they should offer as much as they demand?

Young men, are you without fault? You say that you have been tempted — but where? You pray to God: "Lead us not into temptation"; but is not your prayer a blasphemous mockery? Is it not a fact that you did not wait to be led into temptation, but that you rushed in with your eyes open? Didn't you find it in the dance-hall — the vestibule of hell? Or didn't you enjoy feasting your eyes on the unchastity displayed on the stage, where you were taught how to overcome resistance? Don't tell me that you are without guilt!

You publishers, are you guiltless — publishing such shocking stuff in your books, magazines, and newspapers as not even an adult can read without blushing; and your humorous periodicals, catering both by word and picture to the lower instincts of man, teaching him such jokes and stories as no decent (let alone a Christian) man should relate or listen to! And how about you who read this filth and delight in it? Tell me, are you not also at fault? You song-writers, what have you to say for yourselves? Aren't many of your popular hits so suggestive that they amount to but thinly veiled invitations to illicit love-affairs?

We can go on and take in others — the employer who pays wages that spell either starvation or shame; the churches who avoid the topic lest they offend; the minister who does not earnestly raise his voice in warning. All, all, are guilty! What a world of guilt! No wonder we are callous. Blushing has become a lost art. O God, have mercy!

Christians, arise! We cannot change the world, we cannot stamp out iniquity, — God does not ask it of us, — but let us be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Let it be said that among the Christians, at least, the word, "Keep thyself pure," is not a dead letter. God has a plan to do away with the social evil. He tells us in so many words that it is not good for man to be alone, and that, to avoid impurity, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Say what you like — it is God's plan, not mine.

Oh, come all, ye guilty, come with me to the mercy-seat, come

to the fountain of love, and be washed of your iniquity; come to the Savior, who hates the sin, but loves the sinner that repents and wishes to amend his ways. Let us repent and say:—

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

Amen.

V. THE LOVE OF MONEY.

Text: One of the Twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

Matt. 26, 14, 15.

Do you know any one by the name of Judas? People often give their children Biblical names, such as John, Peter, Paul, and others. Now, is there in your list of friends or acquaintances any one whose name is Judas? Why do parents never inflict this name upon their offspring? A lasting stigma attaches to the man who betrayed his Master with a kiss. Even the mind of natural man, not enlightened by Holy Scripture, recognizes hypocrisy as one of those fundamental sins which taints everything it touches, and renders despicable the character of men otherwise above reproach.

Judas betrayed our Lord, thus delivering Him into the hands of His adversaries. But—and here is the important point—he did not do it without a price. He received his reward: thirty pieces of silver. Love of money lay at the bottom of this sin; it was in this case, as always, the root of all evil.

If like causes are apt to produce like effects, we have all reason in the world to devote this noon hour to a serious examination of our time and ourselves.

All of us are more or less influenced by our surroundings, and the spirit of our times is reflected to a greater or lesser degree in our hearts and actions. There can be no doubt about one thing—our age is a commercial age, and the demands of business, its growth and expansion, are everywhere considered of the utmost importance in the march of human events. The widening growth of our corporations; the prominent place which big business has in affairs of nations, and the important part it plays in the planning of our laws and treaties; the fact that a very large proportion of legislation, both State and national, turns on the encouragement and regulation of commerce and trade; all these items go to show that business—

commerce—has put its stamp on this age, which will go down in history as the Commercial Age.

What is the mainspring of business? People generally go into business with but one purpose in view—to make money. In itself the desire to get ahead in the world is not wrongful. Scripture condemns neither wealth nor the man of wealth. A man with a family of some size to support must earn a livelihood. It is his duty to earn enough money to keep himself and the members of his household provided with food and raiment. The shiftless man finds favor neither with man nor with God. The Lord tells him that if he does not provide for his family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel; and man despises the loafer.

But riches are dangerous to our Christianity. True godliness and great riches seldom dwell under the same roof. Solomon was a wise man, he prayed that God might give him neither poverty nor riches. Christ, the unerring Son of God, proclaims the everlasting truth that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Matt. 19, 24. These words must be taken as they stand. When the disciples answered and said unto Him, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus did not answer, "Oh, well it is not quite as bad as all that," but He said: "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

Now, if it is a fact which no one will deny that the love of money is a characteristic feature of modern life, then in the light of God's Word men are pursuing a dangerous thing which is an evil, and the Church of God should combat this evil of the times by raising its voice in warning.

Judas was a disciple of Christ and became a betrayer; but he was a thief before he became a betrayer. Scripture tells us that he was the treasurer of the little band of faithful coworkers of Jesus, and since Jesus was, for a time at least, popular with the people, who loved Him for His works of kindness, it is but natural to suppose that the sum of money intrusted to the custody of Judas was not always insignificant. The easy opportunity which Judas had of enriching himself by dishonesty proved too great a temptation for him to overcome. The love of money now took hold of him and became his ruling passion, and to gain more wealth he now shrank from no sin. Subordinating everything to his love of gold, he went to the rulers of the Jews and made that compact to betray his Master into their hands for thirty pieces of silver.

If we look about us, we shall behold the same cause producing

similar effects. Let us discuss but for a moment the great World War now raging in Europe. As to the causes of the war the opinions are widely divergent, and you will not expect me to prostitute the ministerial office, and make of the pulpit a forum for the discussion of world politics. Some day, perhaps, history will tell the true story of everything concerning the conflict; but all who have given the matter their serious attention are of one accord in stating that an intense rivalry for commercial supremacy has long existed among the great nations, and that this rivalry was at least a contributing cause to the ill feeling and the strained relations existing long before the war broke out. It was not so much to be the greatest nation as to be the richest nation that all were striving for. This intense rivalry gave rise to a multitude of petty frictions in the year before the conflict. These were the visible signs of the consuming fires that were burning within. Wherever the feeling of two individuals or two nations toward one another is hostile, the time is ripe for a conflagration to break forth in all its fury. The love of money is the root of all evil, and the smoldering wreckage of a ruined world scattered wide on a hundred battlefields; and the millions of new graves where so many families have buried the joy of their lives and the comfort of their old age, yea, where the nations are burying their future, what are they but monuments to the love of gold?

Men have said to fine gold, "Thou art my confidence," and that is idolatry. Not long ago our whole reading public was shocked by the story of a most bloody murder committed in one of our army camps; the prompting cause was the love of money.

The love of money leads to sin against every commandment in the Decalog, and exerts a baneful influence in the life of the family, the Church, and the nation. We have heard so much of corruption in political office that it has become a trite saying: "Every man has his price, and the highest bidder gets him"; and it will provoke a smile of understanding on the countenance of many a politician when an honest man is defined as a man who "stays bought when he is bought." High officials of insurance companies tell us that if there were only honest fires, the insurance premiums could be reduced fifty per cent., which is indicative of the deplorable conditions that many merchants (probably good church-members at that) deliberately set fire to their stock of merchandise to collect the insurance. Once more the love of money! States are adopting statutes that no one shall inherit from any one whose life he has feloniously taken, thus recognizing the terrible fact that the love of

money will so fill the heart of man that he will not shrink from taking the life of dear ones. Cases have been known in which parents have sold their daughters into a life of shame to profit by their prostitution. For the love of money, farmers have taken the savings of a lifetime and lost them in market speculation, reducing themselves to well-deserved poverty, and bringing undeserved hardships on their family. The love of money! I can take you into the oil fields of the great Southwest, where flourishing congregations once did fine work for their Master, until easy wealth suddenly lay within their grasp; then wild speculation took the place of spirituality, and love of money caused a stagnation of all religion. Thus the sin of Judas is prevalent to-day, and now, as then, causes a betrayal of Jesus.

But before you throw stones at Judas, you had better see whom you are hitting; whether, when you condemn Judas, you are not pronouncing judgment upon yourself. You have money; where are the churches and schools that you have built? Here are missionaries imploring you for a few paltry dollars to build a chapel among the negroes, or in other mission-fields; have you done it? Where are the tears of poverty that you have dried? Where are the hospitals which you have built or equipped? Where are the orphans who thank you for a home? Has not the love of money crowded out charity from your heart? Is not your faith a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal? But, you say, I am not rich; yes, if I were rich, oh, how much good would not I do in this world! Stop! How much good are you doing? The Lord may not have given you the opportunities of a Rockefeller, but He has given you some opportunities; "for the poor we have with us always." How can you expect us to believe that you would make use of great opportunities if you make no use of the small ones? Are you not betraying the Master with a kiss? Are you not acting the Christian while the love of money has encased your heart with a coat of icy cruelty to your fellow-men? See whether it is not principally, possibly exclusively, the love of money which prevents you from loving your neighbor as yourself. And in case you are poor, tell me what is your greatest desire? If a poor man were given pencil and paper, and were asked to write down his chief desire, his first answer would nearly always be "Money." What is the difference between the rich man who is cold to human suffering; the man of middle class who makes no use of his opportunities, but brags what he would do if he had more money; and the poor man whose one desire is wealth? All are worshipping at the feet of the modern idol, Money, the lump of gold. Oh, do not throw stones at Judas. O love of money, how many graves have

you opened, how many churches have you destroyed, how many souls have you cast into perdition!

And into this world, steeped in sin and filled with idolatrous worship; the good God has sent His beloved Son, that He might purchase and win us from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death. For those people who refuse to sacrifice the small sums necessary to allay all human suffering and to place the benevolent and missionary undertakings of the Church on a firm basis, the Father now even brings His supreme sacrifice of His only-begotten Son. Oh! let us contemplate this in this season of Lent. Do you know by what name Christ called Judas? Listen, I will tell you. When Judas approached Jesus in order to betray Him, Jesus turned to him and spake these remarkable words: "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" Matt. 26, 50. Jesus called him a friend who for love of thirty pieces of sordid silver was at that instant betraying Him in the hands of sinners. Great was the love of Jesus to the sinners, and often had He shown it, but seldom was that surpassing love of Jesus, our Savior, shown in more glowing colors, in more complete grandeur and beauty, than at that dreadful hour in the Garden of Gethsemane when Judas betrayed his Master with a kiss, and when Jesus still called him a friend. Certainly Judas had lost all other friends; not even the rulers who had given him the money would have any further dealings with him, and the only friend he had in all the world was the man whom he betrayed.

Oh! the Lord is bringing back to our memories the full intent of the admonition: "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content" (1 Tim. 6, 8), bringing us so near the condition that the wealth of the rich cannot buy enough food and fuel to keep himself fed and warm. Oh, let us not lose the lesson of this terrible World War! Let us first bow our heads in deep contrition, shame, and repentance at our lost opportunities for well-doing. And then let us go back to God, whose grace even to-day is undiminished; and let our change of heart be proved by a change of life, and let us not so much desire castles of a day's building and a day's dilapidation as the castle on high, where God has prepared His mansion for us. Let us not so much strive after treasures of the world. "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mark 8, 36. But let us rather accept the treasures of the House of God, which will be ours in all eternity.

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, who hast called Judas Thy friend,

help us to banish from our heart the love of money, the root of all evil; and help us to think in this Lenten season of the endless, boundless, unlimited ocean of Thy incomprehensible love, which Thou hast shown to the world and to us, that by Thy grace we may repent and turn to Thee, and find in Thee a Friend indeed; and save us for Thy mercy's sake. Amen.
