

Concordia Theological Monthly



J U N E • 1 9 5 9

Concordia Theological Monthly

VOL. XXX

JUNE 1959

No. 6

Of This Ministry

The graduates of the seminaries and teachers colleges whom the church is sending forth this month are gifts of God. They have divinely appointed offices and have been called into a ministry of the Spirit. The petition of the General Prayer is again being heard: "Send forth laborers into Thy harvest, and sustain those whom Thou hast sent that the Word of reconciliation may be proclaimed to all people and the Gospel preached in all the world."

Preaching and teaching the Gospel of Christ is of the essence of this ministry. These graduates have "obtained part of this ministry" (Acts 1:17). The ministry of reconciliation glories in the cross of Him whom it serves.

Reconciliation with God is brought about by God alone, who reconciled men to Himself. The Word of reconciliation is this good news to men. The ministry of reconciliation, therefore, tells about the Word of reconciliation, the Christ in whom God reconciled the world unto Himself (2 Cor. 5:19). The ministry of reconciliation proclaims to men and women the message of reconciliation, which enables them to accept this reconciliation, for "faith cometh by hearing."

To be part of this ministry is a gift of God's grace. It is of God's mercy (2 Cor. 4:1). Therefore those who are of this ministry let nothing daunt them. As God's mercy is new every morning, so His sustaining grace continually supports His servants. Those coming to this ministry rely on this mercy.

St. Paul writes (2 Cor. 4:1, 2): "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." The things that are hidden out of a sense of

shame, by trickery and the falsifying, or adulteration, of the Word of God, are not of this ministry. On the other hand, the manifestation of the truth, also by walking in the truth, is of this ministry, so that no man's conscience is troubled. His ministers live *coram Deo*, in the sight of God.

The articles in this issue of CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY point out some practical, workaday implications of living before God. One points out that those of this ministry abound in Christian love, that love which calls for "spiritual utterance, sublime knowledge and influence, and heroic sacrifices," as set forth for all Christians in 1 Cor. 13. Another emphasizes sobriety and balance in liturgical matters. A third tells of Athanasius' scholarship, devotion to the truth, the readiness to defend the doctrines once delivered to the saints even *contra mundum*. These, too, are part of the ministry.

To be of this ministry is to be a light which shines forth the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God. For it is Christ Jesus the Lord whom we preach, not ourselves; we are of His ministry for His sake.

CARL S. MEYER

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

GEORGE KLEIN, pastor of St. Martini Lutheran Church, Chicago, Ill.

SAMUEL LAEUCHLI, professor at Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Ill.

CARL S. MEYER, professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

HENRY W. REIMANN, assistant professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

PAUL A. ZIMMERMANN, president of Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebr.