ARTICLES

Lutheran Schooling: Ten Theses and Some Antitheses
Mervyn Wagner ................................................................. 3

In Defense of Humanism
Ulrik Vilhelm Koren, Erling T. Teigen, trans. ......................................................... 13

Promoting Dialogue in the Christian Academy
Angus Menuge ................................................................. 19

Why Should I Learn Latin When Everything Has Been Translated into English?
John G. Nordling .............................................................. 27

When in Our Music God Is Glorified: Referentialism, Formalism, and Expressionism in Lutheran Choral Pedagogy
Brian Hamer ................................................................. 35

Toward a Distinction between Lutheran and Secular Approaches to Education
Timothy J. Pauls ............................................................ 43

REVIEWS ................................................................. 47

Review Essay: Baptism in the Theology of Martin Luther. By Jonathan D. Trigg. Edited by Heiko A. Oberman
Review by Jonathan C. Naumann

Church Unity and the Papal Office: An Ecumenical Dialogue on John Paul II’s Encyclical Ut Unum Sint (That All May Be One).
Edited by Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson. Review by Ralph M. Rokke

With Tongues of Fire: Profiles in Twentieth-Century Hymn Writing. By Paul Westermeyer. Review by Heidi Mueller


Care for the Soul. Edited by Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips. Review by Dr. Beverly Yahnke


LOGIA FORUM ................................................................. 61

No Finer Gift  •  Walther on Education  •  Primary Assumptions  •  On Change in Theology
Wisdom and Doctrine  •  Learning for Life  •  Techniques of Classical Teaching
Wisdom, Eloquence, Piety  •  Tyranny Retained  •  The New Education
The Lord’s Prayer  •  Reu, Luther, and Education  •  Erskine’s Law and Gospel
Bad Training  •  Controversies in the Church

ALSO THIS ISSUE ................................................................. 34

A Call for Manuscripts .............................................................. 34

Inklings by Jim Wilson .......................................................... 56
Why Should I Learn Latin When Everything Has Been Translated into English?

JOHN G. NORDLING

Thank you for inviting me to address the North Texas Classical Lutheran Education Conference this year. I come from a family of Lutheran church workers, and am married to a woman who was trained as a deaconess at Concordia, River Forest, Illinois. I also have a younger sister and brother who are both Lutheran educators in "the system," and two brothers-in-law who are Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (hereafter LCMS) pastors. Whenever we get together as a family, I hear about their joys and struggles as church workers in today's world. At such times I wonder if what I do—teach classics in the academy—pertains in any way to what most Lutheran church workers go through on a daily basis "in the real world." Or have I truly become, after all, a living fossil in contemporary America? Is Latin just a quaint relic from an earlier "age of innocence"? Such will be for you to decide, by the conclusion of this address. At any rate, I am honored to have this opportunity to speak to you today.

THE TITLE

The title, "Why should I learn Latin when everything has been translated into English?" sprang quickly to mind when I received the invitation last spring to read a paper at this conference. As you might suspect, I have had many versions of this question put to me over the seven years I have taught classics, first at Valparaiso University, and now at Baylor. Undergraduate education has become horrendously expensive nowadays, so today's students are under constant pressure from their parents and from our market-driven economy to have lucrative jobs and careers all lined up by the time they graduate and leave the ivory tower.

"Why should I learn Latin when everything has been translated into English?" really means something like the following: "Why should I learn Latin when everyone knows that Latin is a difficult subject, and the only thing I could possibly do with such a course of study is teach high school Latin myself someday?" As I get to know my students, and they me, I answer this question in its various guises daily. I have thought long and hard about the question, of course—and what classicist hasn't? Hence it should not surprise you to know that, in my opinion, lots and lots of people should be studying Latin nowadays, in spite of the fact that "everything has been translated into English."

Or has it? In fact, not everything has been translated into English, as this paper's title presumes. In central Texas I live not far from Repristination Press, whose goal is to locate, translate, publish, and then disseminate as many of the hoary old Lutheran texts as possible—works that, in many cases, generations of Lutherans have not read, let alone known anything about, for hundreds of years. When I had the privilege of studying Latin with Father Reginald Foster in Rome, I was amazed to discover that Latin remains to this day an important language for many in the modern world, and not just for pedantic monks or high church officials, although a lot of them pursue Latin too! Latin truly is the scarlet thread that has united untold millions of people in western Christendom over the past two thousand years. It was a wonderful privilege to encounter just a few of the texts that remain, for the most part, untouched, unread, unknown about—and, of course, untranslated—more Latin verbiage than any one person could possibly read.

LEARNING LATIN: THE INITIAL STAGES

This argument will scarcely make much headway with most American undergraduates nowadays, many of whom could care less about the Lutheran devotional materials written in Latin and German, to say nothing about the ponderous papal tomes. It would be best to stick to those documents that have been translated and are right beneath our noses, yet are so little appreciated. Take a common text—the Bible, for example. This has been translated into English, of course. "Yes," the typical Christian undergraduate student will respond: "But we all know the Bible. We've had to memorize it from childhood on. There was church and Sunday school, and obligatory doctrine courses at Christian High. What more could there be to learn about such stuff in college? I'm here to fulfill a requirement, then move on." This is the mindset that I and most professors face on opening day at the university.

For such students, then—and for their parents and for vast segments of American society—what must be learned and what Latin will surely teach, is that language is more than mere data transmission—passing message A on to hearer B. I submit that learning something priceless and beautiful like the Latin language is first of all an inner process, a profound change in one's soul, that most of the students have never experienced before. From the very beginning there has to be a submission to the holy paradigms of the Latin language and an internalization of them, so that novice...
Latin students become—in effect—walking incarnations of Wheelock's Grammar.

By now I have taught enough first- and second-semester Latin students to understand how the process works. The first thing I tell my students is that Latin is intended for very intelligent students who have already completed algebra and a year of the time. It is not for students who are so smart that they don't have to study—to say nothing about intellectually disadvantaged students, which every teacher knows. Latin is for disadvantaged students who know they are disadvantaged, but are willing to overcome this defect by concentrated effort and diligence over time—for divitias amnis vincit. The gospel, and what our dear Lord Jesus Christ has to say about the value of his own sacrifice to his church every other Sunday, is true, and I believe this and hope they do too; but this is not Sunday school. We are gathered to submit to the glorious Latin language itself. This is the greatest class in the entire university. There are not very many other classes to study Latin—something that not everyone gets to do. After this, or a similar spiel, I talk briefly about grades, and tell the students that they can expect to study Latin four to five hours a night—every hour including weekends—for Friday evenings, when they should ask someone of the opposite gender out for a date. The two-hour-per-night rule works pretty well, unless there is a midterm examination the next day, in which case it may be necessary to "pull an all-nighter" to be sufficiently prepared for whatever exam they will face the next day. Then we begin, orally, the first declension of the Latin language: -A -AE -AE -AM -A; -AE

And so it goes for the rest of the semester. Learning Latin in the initial stages is a wearisome process—kind of like lifting weights with the mind. Right when the students have got about one para­digm mastered, Wheelock's Grammar runs on and introduces another bewildering form or paradigm. Mastering all that Latin vocabulary in the dictionary form, as I force my students to do, is an onerous task in the initial stages, but Latin is very much like submitting to the Nautilus machine at the weight room. The goal is to create strong Latin muscles in the head: celer­bus musculus est et laborandum. While we're on the topic, I would not recommend that you Lutherans educatecata to, or teach, your students in the manner just described. University students between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two, and Lutheran elementary and high school students, too, are usually much more interested in studying the language requirements were scaled back in the mid-to-late '60s, no one objected too strenuously, supposing that being a Christian and learning Latin and Greek really do not have that much in common. I suspect that some well-intentioned adminis­trators believed that they were doing future generations of pastors and church workers a huge favor by sparing them the pain­ful ordeal of learning the languages well and by just scrapping the whole antiquated system. Obviously, I do not know the full story here, and so speak from a dangerous ignorance. Take what I say about past educational requirements in the LCMS's magna cum laude tuition. Nevertheless, I would like to try to placate both sides. The hidebound old fogeys can hold out; the young hipster Christians can sleep in, go to contemporary services later that same morning, and feel good about themselves and their "happy, happy Jesus." Just as everybody is happy, gets along, and contributes generously to the offering plate.

Not just Latin, but the type of gifts that Latin bestows may help to counterpostmodernism.

These are the two extremes in our church right now, and everyone in the academy is forced to deal with every aspect of the postmodern climate. Under such circumstances it is very tempting for us, let us say, a congregational board of elders or a church council sim­ply to try to placate both sides. The hidebound old fogeys can count on finding the good old days of the past, the easy way to slip into the traditional service where the minister adheres to page 5 or 15, no matter what; and the young hipster Christians can sleep in, go to contemporary services later that same morning, and feel good about themselves and their "happy, happy Jesus." Just as everybody is happy, gets along, and contributes generously to the offering plate. It is sobering to see how many congregations have split in just this way. The feeling seems very much to be: I will wor­ship my Jesus way, and you can worship Jesus your way, but how dare you try to inflict your Jesus on me!

This divide, my friends, is a good example of postmodernism in our congregations, postmodernism at its worst. There is no unity even within Lutheran congregations anymore, but we must all adhere to our preferred worship styles, and must respect, listen to, and plaster over diverse worship practices that are in fact poles apart.

PAUL'S CONCERN FOR UNITY IN WORSHIP

I see very little in such an attitude that is genuinely Christian, that really does show love and respect for the entire body of Christ that is to be of "one heart and mind in Christ Jesus." In order to convey this point, I would like to offer you a few passages that

WHY SHOULD I LEARN LATIN . . . ? 29

I submit that these are not very good reasons either for teach­ing or for learning Latin. This approach often backfires, and unwilling learners often turn out worse than if they had no encounter with Greek from Doctor Reinisch at Concordia, or with the type of gifts that Latin bestows may help to counterpostmodernism.
Latin students become—in effect—walking incarnations of Wheelock's Latin Grammar.

I have taught enough first- and second-semester Latin students to understand how the process works. The first thing I tell my students is that Latin is intended for very intelligent students who work very hard and come to class every day, all of the time. It is not for students who are so smart that they don't have to study—to say nothing about intellectually disadvantaged students who won't study, which is an even worse combination! No, Latin is for disadvantaged students who know they are disadvantaged, but are willing to work hard to be successful at it. The initial stages is a wearisome process—kind of like lifting weights.

Wheelock's two-hour-per-night rule works pretty well, unless there is a very much like submitting to the Nautilus machine at the weight gym. You can see that allowances have to be made to bring both types of students to understand how the process works. The first thing I tell my students is that Latin is intended for very intelligent students who work very hard and come to class every day, all of the time. It is not for students who are so smart that they don't have to study—to say nothing about intellectually disadvantaged students who won't study, which is an even worse combination! No, Latin is for disadvantaged students who know they are disadvantaged, but are willing to work hard to be successful at it. The initial stages is a wearisome process—kind of like lifting weights.

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suggest that Christians in the New Testament cared deeply about unity in every matter, including, I submit, unity in worship. Consider the first passage. After Paul learned from God's people about their "factions" (I iekeis) that were now dividing the congregation at Corinth, he wrote:

I appeal to you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all say the same thing in order to show that there is no division among you, but what is shown in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 1:10)

This high regard for congregational unity is presupposed in a context where the church at Corinth was known by us, and that is through the godly preaching and teaching of the apostle Paul. The Corinthians certainly would maintain its distinctive "psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs" (1 Cor 14:26). Although it was certainly that, at the very least. No, Paul seems to have envisioned a high standard in every matter—an absolutely pure spiritual life for the congregation at Corinth. He wrote: "For though we live in the world, we are not carrying on a worldly war, for the weapons of our warfare..." (2 Cor 10:3ff).

For though we live in the world, we are not carrying on a worldly war, for the weapons of our warfare (I say the weapons of our warfare) are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every pretense that is raised up against the knowledge of God, taking down every high thing to bring it into the dust by the knowledge of Christ. (2 Cor 10:3-4)

And this passage is extremely significant in the context of Paul's letter to the Corinthians: "For I say that a man who is not married is better off than the man who is married. For it is better to marry than to burn. (1 Cor 7:9)

I cannot imagine on the basis of such a passage that Paul would have been content to say, in effect, "Well, that's just your opinion, Corinthians, and I'll respect that and keep my opinions too!" No, one always has the sense that Paul was involved to the death in a combat against the devil and many doctrinal antagonists at Corinth, Galatia, and other congregations that just did not like Paul so much, challenged his apostleship, and harmed him mercilessly throughout his entire ministry.

There are more than surface similarities between learning Latin well and submitting to the historic Christian faith as lifelong learners of the world.

How is it that Paul "destroyed arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God?" How is it that he "took every advantage to obey Christ"? What weapons does he use in (and did) Paul use: submachine guns, perhaps? Did he scream or yell at them? I submit that he did not. Instead, he presented the word of God to them in all its fullness, Christ-centeredness, and sweetness, in the sure confidence that some of those stiff-necked Corinthians would have to yield and so eventually would become willing captives of Christ Jesus through the gospel. Why, Paul was even gentle with the Corinthians in his own, gruff, St.-Paul sort of way! Did you catch that statement at the end of the last sentence: "being ready to punish every disobedience..."? That means that he could not punish them without it would have been premature—until they were fully formed in Christ and so mature in the faith. To be, to be sure, he would punish them! I suspect that we have a flash here of the Paul who came out so well and so gloriously in the original Greek.

So the strong are not to tyrannize or terrorize the weak. Elder brothers should not beat up on younger brothers. Learning the true faith should be an ongoing and lifelong process, St. Paul seems to be saying, and there are many fits and starts along the way. On the other hand, repentance and maturity are highly valued commodities in the church. No one can claim to be a Christian without a share in the historic Christian faith. And so, as often happens, attempt to twist the plain meaning of Scripture to suit a particular culture—a particular American mentality, for example. No, it is the American mentality that must be transformed. Even the original text allows that grace set the agenda and pull a largely reluctant body of Christians from the rot of the fallen world into Christ's glorious kingdom, though we all fight and struggle every inch of the way.

LATIN: A GIFT FOR GROWING AND MATURING CHRISTIANS

What does any of this have to do with Latin? The Jesus we worship, the stories he tells, are not just taught in Latin. Sometimes I've heard people say that learning Latin is important because it is the language of the Bible, or because of the heavens (theos kosmou). Yet we deign to dwell with us sinners, right here on earth. This is true literally, in the Divine Service, as I have just attempted to show. Exposing ourselves from that foundation, our Inerrant Scripture provides other indications of himself, even within this fallen world. This truth expressed quite profoundly in the three enormous stained glass windows in the Chapel of the Resurrection at Valparaiso University: the Father witnessing, his Son, the Holy Spirit. In addition to expressing the traditional iconography of the three Persons of the Godhead, the artist also incorporated symbols of several learned disciplines that typically are characteristic of the Age of Renaissance: artist's palettes, textbooks, test tubes, compasses and protractors, musical scores, harps, corollas, and much more. I used to think that all those extra things were like the gifts that the gentle kings offered to the Christ Child when they came in joyful search of him, guided by the star. Forgiven sinners, they were the offerings to the Savior, in joyful obligation to his lordship. Unfortunately, a scroll representing Homer, or a toga representing Cicero, was not part of the Valparaiso depiction, but you see, they could have been nothing but the best for the Lord.

I submit that Latin is one such discipline wherein our incarnate Lord reveals himself to growing and maturing Christians in a special way. There are more than surface similarities between learning Latin well and submitting to the historic Christian faith as lifelong learners of the world—never content with mere surface meaning and shallow understanding, but always running on ahead to learn more and deeper and better. This, in fact, is a process that has only just begun in this life for a Christian and will never be brought to full completion—no, not even in the life to come.

And as he spoke he no longer looked to them like a lion; but the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them. And for us this is the end of the world, and we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after. But for them it was only the beginning of a lifetime gone by, and never to be brought to full completion—no, not even in the life to come.
suggestion that Christians in the New Testament cared deeply about unity in every matter, including, I submit, unity in worship. Consider the first passage. After Paul learned from God's people about various “factions” (Hypoteonia) that were now dividing the congregation at Corinth, he wrote:

I appeal to you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, according to the instruction which I gave you. (1 Cor 1:10)

This high regard for congregational unity is presupposed in a cata or Scripture passages that we cannot consider here thoroughly. Nevertheless, the category reveals a clarity in Paul's mind about the desirability of congregational one-mindedness, in spite of the fact that he penned his epistles for diverse congregations which, at the time, widely scattered throughout the far-flung Roman empire. The churchly unity to which Paul aspired was surely a lot more than a minimum standard of doctrinal agreement to which the individual congregations would con form, although it was certainly that, at the very least. No, Paul seems to have envisioned a high standard in every matter—an organic unity throughout the una Sancta—by which the individual congregation would maintain its distinctive “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (Hymna, Psalmi, and Cantica). This Christ-centered worship over against the tawdry tunes and ditties of this world, the world that is passing away (1 Cor 7:31).

The churchly unity to which Paul aspired was surely a lot more than a minimum standard of doctrical agreement to which the individual congregations would conform, although it was certainly that, at the very least. No, Paul seems to have envisioned a high standard in every matter—an organic unity throughout the una Sancta—by which the individual congregation would maintain its distinctive “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (Hymna, Psalmi, and Cantica). This Christ-centered worship over against the tawdry tunes and ditties of this world, the world that is passing away (1 Cor 7:31).

WHY SHOULD I LEARN LATIN...

We have time only to consider 1 Cor 1:10 in any depth, although all the passages listed in the cata function similarly. Notice that Paul comes to the Corinthians “through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Hypoteon τοῦ Κυρίου Χριστοῦ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς Χριστιανικῆς ἐκκλησίας).” Name” calls to mind how God allows himself to be known by us, and that is through the godly preaching and teaching of the word.19 There is a process at work here that liturgical scholars have called the synaxis of “factions” (Hypoteonia) that were now dividing the congregation at Corinth, he wrote:

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There are more than surface similarities between learning Latin well and submitting to the historic Christian faith as lifelong learners of the word.

How is it that Paul "destroyed arguments and proud obstinate pride to the knowledge of God"! How is it that he "look every thought to the standard of Christ"? What is his hope for Corinthians (2 Cor 10:12)? Did Paul use: submarine guns, perhaps? Did he scream or yell at them? I submit that he did not. Instead, he presented the word of God to them in all its fullness, Christ-centeredness, and sweetness, in the sure confidence that some of those stiff-necked Corinthians would have to yield and so eventually would become willing captives of Christ Jesus through the gospel. Why, Paul was even gentle with the Corinthians in his own, gruff, St.-Paul-of-sort's way! Did you catch that statement at the end of the text "being ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete"? That means that he could not punish them yet—it would have been premature—until they were fully formed in Christ Jesus and so mature in the faith. Then, to be sure, he would punish them. I suspect that we have a flash here of the Pauline humor that comes out so well and so gloriously in the original Greek. The Jesus we worship is truly Lord—Lord over everything as he rules far above all its fullness, Christ-centeredness, and sweetness, in the sure confidence that some of those stiff-necked Corinthians would have to yield and so eventually would become willing captives of Christ Jesus through the gospel. Why, Paul was even gentle with the Corinthians in his own, gruff, St.-Paul-of-sort's way! Did you catch that statement at the end of the text "being ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete"? That means that he could not punish them yet—it would have been premature—until they were fully formed in Christ Jesus and so mature in the faith. Then, to be sure, he would punish them. I suspect that we have a flash here of the Pauline humor that comes out so well and so gloriously in the original Greek. The Jesus we worship is truly Lord—Lord over everything as he rules far above...
Both in being a perpetual learner of Latin and of the "one true faith," repetita mater discendi et eucharistiae is American need for us to accept the truth communicated to us through the pure doctrine and the liturgy. We praise Thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, we praise Thee. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.

CONCLUSION

"Why should I learn Latin when everything has been translated into English?" This provocative title outlined a problem I myself have been wrestling with for quite some time. I am happy to have had opportunity to present this paper to you, simply because it helped me to consider whether what I now do as a classicist has any bearing upon what each one of you does anecdotally. To return to the title once more: why should I learn Latin? Is it already the wrong way for a Christian to consider the question, since, "should" is a word of law, obligation, and necessity. I have tried to demonstrate throughout my talk that Latin represents a wonderful—and indeed, life-changing—opportunity for such students as have been properly motivated to learn. Of course, Latin can boost SAT scores, get people into medical school who would not get there otherwise, and looks good on a resume for some future employer to notice. Nevertheless, I have tried hard to suggest that Latin is in its own reward, and so should be studied and submitted to as if it were there otherwise, too. People ought not to be forced on anyone, so no one "should" study it at all; however, by God's grace, "many" could once again submit to this magnificent language, and this could make all the difference in our church and in our world.
Both in being a perpetual learner of Latin and of the "one true faith," *repetitio mater discelest*? Americans need to accept the fact that repetition in learning is not necessarily a boring and stultifying enterprise. Instead, the "loop approach" to learning allows maturing students to see the same old things at ever-deepening and more sophisticated levels.

The phrase "life-long learner" is an enticing buzzword in the educational community nowadays. I usually tell my students sometime during the first semester that Latin is one of those few things in life that cannot be taken away the more one submits to it, the more one yields to its clutches. So many other pursuits in life are seasonal, by contrast—that is, they can, and will be taken away. Take basketball, for instance: today's Latin professor [the author is speaking of himself—ed.] could dunk a basketball with both hands behind his head when he was nineteen years old.

Getting to teach such authors as Catullus, Lysias, Appian, et alii means getting to share these personalities with others.

Thank God, however, he learned that in time, Latin, not basketball, is a precious gift that remains, no matter how my other joys are taken away with the passing of the years. Catullus, however, improves with age the more one is privileged to read him. There is so much worth, so much profundity packed into a typical epigram that no third- or fourth-semester Latinist can possibly understand. Catullus, however, means getting to share these personalities with others—hopingly, with many others. That is exactly how the Christian faith works.

### 2. For my adventures in Rome in the summer of 1997, see

*Faith*; sometime during the first semester that Latin is one of those few and more sophisticated levels.

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**WHY SHOULD I LEARN LATIN...?**

1. This essay was presented originally on October 8, 2005, at an address spoken before the North Texas Classical Lutheran Education Conference. This year the conference was hosted by Faith Lutheran School, Plano, Texas, at John Calvin Lutheran Camp in Pilot Point, Texas. The conference has the goal of promoting quality Christian education: "In a day when privatization dictates what happens in our public and Lutheran schools there is a need to return to an educational philosophy and pedagogy that has stood the test of time, namely, classical education."

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1. For my adventures in Rome in the summer of 1997, see *A Lutheran Goes to Rome*; *Logia* no. 1 ( Ephesians 1999) 39–49.

2. Dilletance conquers everything.

7. "Amen" assumes the setting of corporate utterance, namely, the content of faith as revealed by God, objectively considered. To be distinguished from *fides qua credit*, "the faith by which (it) is believed;" *fides qua credatur*, "the faith of the believer that receives and holds the revelation of God,* that is, the faith of the believer that is objectively considered." To be distinguished from *fides qua credit*, "the faith by which (it) is believed;" *fides qua credatur*, "the faith of the believer that receives and holds the revelation of God,* that is, the faith of the believer that is objectively considered.

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