

THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY.

VOL. IX.

JUNE, 1929.

No. 6.

Good Works.

Translated from Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Rechtfertigung*, Part IX.

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Faith is a light, and good works are its rays. The Lord said to His disciples: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5, 16; cp. 1 Pet. 2, 12. Good works are testimonies for, and fruits of,¹⁾ faith. Christ says: "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Matt. 7, 17, 18; cp. with v. 21. And Paul calls love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, "the fruit of the Spirit." Gal. 5, 22. See also Titus 3, 14; Col. 1, 10. The fruits stand in a twofold relation to the tree: first, the tree bears them, that is, it puts forth buds and nourishes them with its sap; secondly, seeing the fruits, one can tell the species of the tree. So faith, through the Holy Spirit, brings forth good works and, *vice versa*, is known by them. Matt. 7, 20 we read: "By their fruits ye shall know them." And when the Apostle James wishes to describe "the wisdom that is from above," he says: "It is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits." Jas. 3, 17. Such honor is due good works. But they have nothing to do with our atonement. The tree does not draw nourishment from the soil by means of the fruits, but through the roots. So we at all times apprehend Christ, our Lord, by faith alone and receive from Him forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Therefore Luther is right when he says: "Inwardly we become godly through faith; outwardly we show our faith through works of love. For Scripture speaks of man in a twofold way, first, of the inner, secondly, of the outer man. For Scripture must needs make this distinction

1) 1 Tim. 5, 8, 10: *ἐν ἔργοις καλοῖς μαρτυρουμένη*. Titus 2, 7—10.

THE THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER.

Growth of the Christian Churches in the United States during 1928. — The *Lutheran* submits the figures of the well-known Dr. Carroll on church statistics. He speaks of 55 groups of churches in the United States, having a membership of 49,709,150. The percentage of gain of the Roman Catholics was 2.1 per cent. We are naturally interested chiefly in the figures pertaining to the Lutheran Church. The U. L. C. is credited with a gain of 2.6 per cent. or, in actual figures, of 23,724 members. Similar figures are reported for the Norwegian Lutheran Church (2.6) and the Joint Synod of Ohio (2.3 per cent.). Missouri's showing in the table is not so good, its percentage of increase being given as 1.7 per cent. 11,407 is the number of members representing our increase in 1928. Whatever we may think of statistics, the low figure placed after our synodical name must be a challenge to all of us to examine ourselves carefully as to the way in which we are doing the Lord's work and to vow greater faithfulness and zeal to our Savior for His work. By the way, according to the *Lutheran* the Lutherans are again in third place by a margin of 75,000 over the Presbyterians. A.

A Four-Hundred-Year-Old Text-Book. — Under this heading the *Lutheran Church Herald* comments: "This year we are commemorating the quadricentennial of Luther's Small Catechism. A text-book four hundred years old! According to Dr. Tanner's investigations it has been translated into 135 languages and is still used in the Lutheran Church in many countries as the best text-book for children. . . . But how is it possible that a text-book written four hundred years ago can be of any value at the present time, with our advanced ideas of methods of education? In our public schools we change text-books nearly every year, even text-books dealing with so-called dead languages, where we might expect more stability. This any one can discover who will visit our schools to-day, after a few years' absence, and study conditions. . . . The material for a religious text-book was at hand when Luther prepared his book. If he had written a book on medicine, agriculture, or sanitation, it would not have survived very long. Writing a religious text-book, he did not have such weak authorities to fall back upon as the physician, who would have to consult Aesculapius and Hippocrates. But Luther had Christ, the greatest of all teachers, Moses, Paul, and the inspired Bible. Luther was aware of the illiterate condition of the people and spent at least ten years preparing a popular text-book for religious instruction. He made a selection of what he considered the essentials of the Bible, and in the opinion of the best authorities to-day his selection cannot be improved upon: the Law, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacraments, and the Table of Duties, or applied Christianity."

Yet even this hardly explains everything. Great leaders, such as Luther was, are vessels of divine grace, which are filled to overflowing with grace for every assigned task. As Luther's whole work of reforming the Church reveals divine grace made perfect in weak-

ness, so in his Catechism we perceive that special divine grace which is given to heroes of faith and prayer whom God calls and appoints for the purpose of accomplishing work of abiding value to his Church. It is doubtful whether the Reformation would have won its wondrous victories had it not been for the Catechism. With the exception of the Bible no book has done as much as Luther's Catechism to write the Gospel into the hearts of the people.

MUELLER.

What the Ordination Vow Means. — The *Lutheran*, January 24, 1929, publishes an article by Prof. Leander S. Keyser, D. D., entitled "Our Solemn Ordination Service," from which we clip the following paragraphs:—

“. . . Fifteen young men, thirteen of them graduates of the Hamma Divinity School, were ordained at that time, and that fact added an element of personal interest to the service. . . . Of course, the order for ordination in *The Occasional Services*, published and copyrighted by the three merged bodies in 1918, was used in the service to which I have alluded. Let us note some items in this solemn order of our Church. . . . Then follows the obligation itself. The officiating minister says to the applicants:—

“I therefore ask you, dear brethren, before Almighty God and this congregation: Are you now ready to take upon you this holy ministry and faithfully to serve in it? Will you preach and teach the pure Word of God in accordance with the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church? Will you adorn the doctrine of our Savior by a holy life and conversation? To these questions each applicant makes the response: ‘Yes, with my whole heart, the Lord helping me through the power and grace of His Holy Spirit. Amen.’ The candidates then kneel, and the officiating minister lays his hands on each in succession and speaks these impressive words: ‘I now commit unto thee the holy office of the Word and Sacraments; I ordain and consecrate thee a minister of the Church, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.’ Each candidate responds, ‘Amen.’

“Thus the Lutheran minister enters into solemn engagements by promising to preach and teach the pure Word of God according to the principles of the Lutheran Confessions. He is not a free lance. He cannot rightly occupy a Lutheran pulpit or a professor's chair in a seminary of the Lutheran Church unless he is loyal to the Lutheran doctrine and fulfils his ordination vows.

“Let it not be thought that this principle interferes with any one's freedom, when the term ‘freedom’ is rightly defined. No one is under compulsion to be a Lutheran minister. He can choose one out of scores of other occupations. Therefore, when he does become a Lutheran minister, it is understood by all honest people that he takes upon himself the vows and obligations voluntarily and not by coercion. That is where he has perfect liberty. But after he has made his voluntary promises, it surely would be a travesty on the principle of liberty for him to suppose that he could teach doctrines contrary to his obligations and opposed to the confessional basis of the Church which he has solemnly declared that he would serve.”

E.

The Situation in China. — The death of our pioneer missionary in China, the Rev. E. L. Arndt, called an intrepid and versatile leader in the *N. L. C. B.*, has served to focus attention again on the work Christian denominations are doing in China. Drawing on an article in the *International Review of Missions*, the *Lutheran* analyzes the situation in China and describes the course events have taken as follows: —

“Since 1911, that is, since the Sun Yat-sen republic, a revival of both Confucianism and Buddhism has been undertaken by leaders of each. The Confucianists undertook to make theirs the state religion, but they failed. Their next move was to establish it in the schools. This also was denied them. The Buddhists sought to intrench themselves by engaging in educational work and in open propaganda. Prior to 1910 their avenue of influence was by retirement into a monastery. Besides advocating attendance at their schools, they have adopted a ‘social service’ program not unlike that in vogue among Western nations who are familiar with the teaching of Jesus.

“Christianity was attacked from both sides as a ‘foreign faith.’ The exploiters of the Chinese were from nations claimed to be Christian, and hence Christianity is an exploiting cult, they reasoned. Finally the antireligious group denied the need of any church or cult, and quite a number of attacks were made on Christian churches and Christian people by mobs aroused by the ‘intelligentsia.’

“The outstanding result of the confusion and competition has been the placing of religion within the choice of the individual, as far as general governmental rulings are concerned. Dr. Rawlinson remarks that the Chinese are now engaged in the task of selecting a religion for themselves; in the old days they were directed toward the observance of fixed national rites. We quote: ‘Out of this decade of changing religious interests and emphasis in China, then, the following things are apparent concerning religion: 1) Its national status has changed. 2) The mind of China has reawakened to its significance. 3) On the one hand, China is striving for a new political status and organization, and, on the other, the people are reaching out, to some extent, for a new religious experience. 4) The claims of the religious life have not lost their hold on the hearts of the Chinese people. 5) While religion faces great and new problems in China, it also faces its greatest opportunity.’”

A.

Why Go into the Union? — The *Evangelical Herald*, the official English organ of the Evangelical Synod of North America, writes concerning the proposed union with the Reformed Church in the United States and the Church of the United Brethren in Christ: “By this time our readers have all the essential facts concerning the proposed trilateral organic union of the Reformed Church in the United States, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, and our own synod, so that it should not be hard to come to a decision in regard to it. . . . The proposed organic union of these three bodies is also directly in line with the program of our fathers, who, in order to help realize their Lord’s great ideal of one flock and one Shepherd consistently gave real diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond

of peace with their fellow-believers in other communions. And the first thirty years of the Synod's history witnessed successive organic unions with no less than four kindred organizations. This new project is just a long stride forward on the path so boldly marked out by our fathers nearly ninety years ago."

Judging from this appeal, the Evangelical Synod is either absolutely indifferent to doctrine or in full accord with the doctrinal standards of the Reformed Church. The unionistic disposition of the Evangelical Synod is well known, so that the proposed merger is not surprising; yet it is a far step away from the position which the founders of that Synod took ninety years ago. MUELLER.

Just "a Friendly Gesture."—On July 12, 1927, Dr. Cornelius Woelfkin, pastor of the Park Avenue Baptist Church and predecessor of Dr. H. E. Fosdick, wrote to Dr. I. M. Haldeman, of the First Church, New York City, a cordial letter, in which he said: "I trust in that infinite, redeeming grace which forgives my sins through the merits of the Cross and cleanses my soul through the blood of Jesus Christ. I acknowledge Jesus as being my divine Savior, my Lord, my God and my All. I walk by faith in the light of that eternal hope which shines brighter and brighter till the perfect day." This expression of the Christian faith was not in accord with the liberal theology which Mr. Woelfkin had preached in the snug and *blasé* Park Avenue Church, and the *Watchman-Examiner* printed it in its March 7 issue of this year, rejoicing that "in this letter Dr. Woelfkin voluntarily and joyfully took his place again with them" (the Conservatives). In the next number, however, it was obliged to publish a letter from Mrs. Cornelius Woelfkin "in as conspicuous a position as that in which you published the article." In her letter Mrs. Woelfkin avers that her husband's letter was meant to be only a "courteous and friendly gesture." She writes: "When you consider his friendly letter as a repudiation of the scientific and liberal interpretation of the Scriptures, you are reading into it something which I know Mr. Woelfkin did not intend to convey. For he often expressed his contentment and happiness in the ministry of Dr. Fosdick, his successor; and this he did unto the end."

And now the *Watchman-Examiner* is asking its readers whether its interpretation of the Dr. Woelfkin's letter was not the only one which could have been made of it. Surely conservative Christians who remain in church-bodies where they must continually guard themselves against not offending outspoken Liberalists have a hard time of it. Our view of the matter is: Either Mrs. Woelfkin is altogether wrong and the *Watchman-Examiner* entirely correct in its interpretation of that letter, or Dr. Woelfkin was lacking in sincerity and in strength of character. MUELLER.

A Voice against the Unionism of the Federal Council of Churches.—It is heartening to see that the unscripturalness of the practise of those churches which, while maintaining that they stand on the Bible, are affiliated with the Federal Council of Churches, is recognized and castigated here and there by members of these churches. The *Presbyterian* of February 7 deplors that Dr. S.

Parkes Cadman, who so often wounded the feelings of evangelical Christians by his utterances, is succeeded as president of the Federal Council of Churches by Bishop Francis J. McConnell, who, if this is possible, is still more loose and liberal in doctrinal matters than his predecessor. Referring to Bishop McConnell's practical rejection of the doctrine of the deity of Christ, Dr. Grant, writing in the *Presbyterian*, says: "If that is Bishop McConnell's position, then the thing that concerns me, being a Presbyterian minister, is, How can our Presbyterian Church consent to remain in the Federal Council of Churches while such a man remains president thereof? I know there has been some talk for quite a while as to whether our Church should retain its place in this Council or not. It seems to me that the time has come when we should not only withhold from the Council all financial support, but refuse to have anything to do with it. I have read somewhere in the old Book these questions: 'What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?' With such a man, whose utterances will be quoted far and near, as head of the Federal Council, there is only one course for the Presbyterian Church to pursue; for I cannot think that any considerable number of our ministers would be willing to subscribe to such a creed as he has announced,— I am all the while presuming that he has been correctly quoted,— and if so, I for one wish to enter a most emphatic protest and shall at the earliest possible moment take such steps as I can to see that our Church shall do one of two things: either set in motion an effort that will speedily rid the Council of such dangerous leader or, if that cannot be, then to insist upon our Church's absolutely withdrawing from the Council." The question arises, Will Dr. Grant be satisfied with merely deposing Bishop McConnell as leader and continue to fellowship with him as a Christian brother? A.

Unitarianism Has No Consolation. — "It is noteworthy," writes the *Sunday-school Times*, "how many Unitarians seem to desire in death the shelter of the Cross. James Russell Lowell, who in his last days declared that he had become a strong Calvinist, was buried from St. John's Episcopal Church, Cambridge; Mrs. Josephine Shaw Lowell from Grace Church, New York; Joseph H. Choate from St. Bartholomew's. Justice Miller of the Supreme Court renounced Unitarianism in his last days and united with a Washington Presbyterian church. W. C. Bryant in his late seventies, while in Naples, made a formal confession of his faith in Christ. Prof. Barrett Wendell of Harvard was wont to tell his students how his relative, Oliver Wendell Holmes, expressed regret at the way he had slurred his father's Calvinist faith. In his last years Dr. Holmes attended the Baptist church in Beverly and seemed to have lost all interest in Unitarianism.

"A well-informed correspondent writes me of A. Bronson Alcott: 'Alcott's mind to the end was unimpaired, and his most fruitful efforts were made in the last ten or fifteen years of his life. During these years he came into close contact with evangelical people, clergy and

others, who gave him a new bent to the old faith. He became a pronounced evangelical and returned to the church of his youth. In 1870 a meeting was called at the house of Dr. Withrow of the Park Street Church, Boston, — April 14, evening of Easter Monday, — on Mr. Alcott's own request. Dr. W. F. Warren, president of Boston University, was in the chair. Present were Evangelicals, Unitarians, Swedenborgians, Free Religionists, Universalists. The meeting was called to hear Alcott's personal confession of faith in Christ and His atonement, a deeply interesting and convincing statement, made in perfect self-command, in the clearest language, followed by many questions and most satisfactory answers. The whole was reported by President Warren in the *New York Christian Advocate* of that week, April 17, and, so far as I know, has never been reprinted. Alcott's biographer, Frank Sanborn, was present on this occasion, but not a hint of it is made in the biography, although there of all places it should have been reprinted in full. In vain the radicals said that Alcott was in his dotage. It was the strongest and best hour of his life.'"

To the names of these prominent thinkers and writers may be added those of the great German rationalists Schleiermacher and Ritschl, whose confession in life was practically Unitarian, but who, when death came, also sought the shelter of the Cross. MUELLER.

An Instance of Catholic "Toleration." — The following item, which appeared in the *Baptist*, probably will render good service some day — if filed carefully: "Calvert Associates' publishes the *Commonweal*, representing tolerant Catholic tradition in America and pleading for toleration. The very name of their organization consecrates the memory of Cecil Calvert, the Lord Baltimore of Maryland, for whom they claim the honor of having introduced religious toleration in the American Colonies. What is the record? In 1649 Cecil Calvert himself signed as lord proprietary of the colony a law providing that any person who should 'blaspheme God, that is, curse Him, or shall deny our Savior Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, or shall deny the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or the Godhead of any of the said three persons of the Trinity, or the unity of the Godhead, or shall utter any reproachful speeches, words, or language concerning the Holy Trinity or any of the said three persons thereof, shall be punished with death and confiscation or forfeiture of all his or her lands and goods to the lord proprietary and his heirs.' An accompanying provision prescribed severe penalties for 'any reproachful words or speeches concerning the blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of our Savior, or the holy apostles or evangelists, or any of them.' If this is toleration, what would intolerance look like?" A.

The Mouth Speaking Blasphemies. — The *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* declare, in the decree on the "Reformation of Marriage," chap. I, Session 24: "Although it is not to be doubted that clandestine marriages, made with the free consent of the contracting parties, are valid and true marriages so long as the Church has not rendered them invalid, and consequently, that those persons are justly to be condemned, as the holy Synod doth condemn them

with anathema, who deny that such marriages are true and valid, as also those who falsely affirm that marriages contracted by the children of a family without the consent of their parents are invalid and that parents can make such marriages either valid or invalid; nevertheless, the holy Church of God has, for reasons most just, at all times detested and prohibited such marriages." What are clandestine marriages? We read further on: "Those who shall attempt to contract marriage otherwise than in the presence of the parish priest... and in the presence of two or three witnesses; the holy Synod renders such wholly incapable of thus contracting and declares such contracts invalid and null, as by the present it invalidates and annuls them." The *Catholic Encyclopedia*, accordingly, defines clandestinity as meaning the contracting of marriage otherwise than in the presence of the parish priest, etc. Now, why is it that the innocent reader who happens upon this passage for the first time will read it and reread it half a dozen times? Please read it again. It does not seem to give any sense. And it gives sense only when one bears in mind that the Catholic organization blasphemously assumes the right to be the judge of what is right and wrong. The fathers of Trent actually lay down these propositions: Clandestine marriages are valid. The Church has the right to render them invalid. The Church has prohibited such marriages. Or: The Church anathematizes those who declare such marriages to be invalid. The Church declares them to be invalid. Note also that those who on Scriptural grounds declare a marriage contracted without parental consent to be invalid are anathematized. Yet the Church detests and prohibits such marriages. "There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies." Rev. 13, 5.

E.

The Bible in Mexico.—A. B. De Roos, director of the Latin-American Prayer Fellowship, writes in the *Sunday-school Times* of the remarkable success which this league has had in spreading the Bible in Mexico. He writes in part: "During the last ten months nine thousand New Testaments have been distributed, all these bought for cash payment. Then we took courage and asked God, and God alone, for more, and this is the result. The account is very conservative when it comes to the tracts and portions of the Word; the New Testament distribution figures are based on actual count. Gospels and portions, 27,900; Bibles, 473; Bible portions, 5,000; text-cards, 14,000; Latin-American Prayer Fellowship 'Venid,' Matt. 11, 28 (cards), 18,000; New Testaments in circulation, 17,368; New Testaments on the way and paid for, 3,000. We know this much: 'It shall not return void.' Through our *Correo Evangelico* I came in touch with a postmaster who asked for some New Testaments. I sent him fifty. Last week I received a postal card from him, telling me that twelve souls had been brought to the Lord through the reading of these books, and asking for a few more, 'if we could spare them.' We sent him one hundred more this week.

"One of the best-known men in government circles in Mexico, whose speech before the Senate was broadcast all over the world, told me how he found the truth. 'I was out in hiding,' he said, 'with my

troops in the desert of O. . . . One day the men came back from a foraging trip, and among the spoils they had a little book, which they had found in an abandoned hut. It was a gospel. I read this book every day for four months. There was nothing else to read. My brother had an arithmetic and did problems to keep from going mad. I found God in that desert through the Gospel.'” MUELLER.

Glimpses from the Editor's Window.

At the age of eighty-eight the Rev. Carl Jacob Sandegren, D. D., for sixty years a Lutheran missionary in India, died on January 13, 1929, at his home in Arasaradi, Madura, India. Interment was made in Tranquebar. So reports the *N. L. C. B.* Having first belonged to the Leipzig Mission, Dr. Sandegren, who was of Swedish birth, became the first president of the Swedish Mission when the latter was organized. He was a brother-in-law of the sainted Dr. Zucker.

In Brooklyn a prominent pastor of the U. L. C., member of the New York Ministerium, Dr. John J. Heischmann, died March 1. He was known as an able pulpit orator. Although a minister for more than fifty years, he was pastor of but one congregation.

The *Lutheran Standard* of March 4 announces that the seminary of the Ohio Synod in Columbus will this spring graduate sixteen men. Of these, four are able to preach in the German language.

The marriageable age in England is fourteen years for boys and twelve years for girls. "The House of Lords recently passed a bill that raises the age of consent for both sexes to sixteen years," says an exchange. It is expected that the House of Commons will concur in this bill.

Dr. Curtis Lee Laws, editor of the *Watchman-Examiner*, in a striking editorial on the perpetual babyhood of many Christians, says: "Think how necessary it is to coax, bribe, tease, plead with, the average Christian to do what he freely acknowledges he ought to do. Consider how much of his giving to the cause of Christ must be sugarcoated and served under the form of suppers and fairs. Tickle his palate, and you touch his pocket-book." Sad, but true!

That Modernism leads to paralysis and death is proved conclusively by the lack of candidates for the holy ministry in Great Britain. In the *Australian Lutheran* we find this information: "Whereas in the early years of this century the Church of England had some 21,000 clergy of all ranks at work in England, the present staff is only slightly over 16,000, and whereas during the last ten years, on an average, only 306 new men per year were placed into the field, during the previous decade 624 men per year were appointed." The reason is apparent—the Church of England, as the *Australian Lutheran* remarks, is losing its positive message to men.

A speaker at the Moody Bible Institute recently said: "Specialists in the realm of anthropology and the philosophy of history tell us that our civilization is going the way of the civilization of Egypt, Chaldea, Greece, and Rome, that have preceded us; that we are losing our moral fiber and yielding our self-denial and self-control to self-indulgence." Concerning the various links in the chain at the end of which we find moral degeneracy, he said: "The features of this sequence have been put into this alliteration: 'Law, lucre, luxury, leisure, licentiousness.' This sequence has never failed in the history of any civilization up to the present in Western Europe, and it involves America." He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!

The *Lutherischer Herold* reports that a Norwegian woman theologian, Mrs. Dr. Steinswick, won a lawsuit against a Roman Catholic priest, who had characterized her criticism and exposure of Jesuit morality as lies and perversion of facts. The priest was compelled by the courts to withdraw these charges.

Stanley Jones, missionary in India and now on furlough in this country, pointed out in a recent address that the ancient Hindus had but three gods. Next the number got to be 33, then 330, then 33,000, etc. This statement of Missionary Jones confirms the assertion that the original religion of mankind was monotheism. Here, too, the theory of evolution breaks down.

A great Lambeth Conference is planned for 1930. The Lambeth Conferences are held in England and count as members all bishops of the Anglican communion. Since 1867, when the first one convened, five other such conferences have taken place, the last one in 1920. The great theme of discussion in 1930 is to be Christian union. Unfortunately it is quite safe to predict that the basis of union set forth in the Holy Scriptures will play but an insignificant rôle.

Figures published not long ago show that France has 1,038 Protestant parishes, of which 261 are Lutheran. It is estimated that the number of Protestants is about one million, including women and children, and all this in spite of St. Bartholomew's Night and other horrors.

Newell Dwight Hillis, one of the successors of Henry Ward Beecher in the famous Plymouth Church of Brooklyn, died in New York, seventy-one years old. He was a Liberal in theology. While quite critical in his attitude toward divine truth, he was not critical toward the lies about the so-called German atrocities during the war, which he accepted with more than childlike credulity.
