

The Assistant Pastor

April, 1931

*"I believe in a power that is in ourselves that makes
for righteousness"*

These are words from a monthly periodical that seeks to influence the moral and religious thought of our communities. Let us expose the words to the search-light of the Word of God.

Gen. 6, 5. "God saw that every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was *only* evil continually."

Ps. 51, 5. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Rom. 7, 8. "I know that in me — that is in my flesh — dwelleth no good thing."

Rom. 8, 7. "The carnal mind is enmity against God."

Eph. 2, 1. "And you hath He quickened, who were *dead* in trespasses and sins."

The power to quicken, to bring to life, is not inherent in anything that is dead. That power can come to the dead from without only. And so it did come to the bodily dead Lazarus, and so it does come to every spiritually dead mortal who is quickened, namely by the power and work of the Holy Spirit through the blessed means of grace.

The quoted statement is simon-pure falsehood.

"DON'T BE A BIGOT, CO-OPERATE WITH ALL FAITHS FOR THE SALVATION OF SOULS." This warning and advice is printed in the same sheet. What does the Word of God say?

2 Peter 2, 1. "There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in *damnable* heresis."

Math. 7, 15. "*Beware* of false prophets."

Matth. 16, 6. "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."

Gal. 5, 9. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

Rom. 16, 17. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; *and avoid them.*"

Gal. 1, 7, 8. "But there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But even though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

There is only one faith unto salvation and that is faith in Him who "is the way, the truth, and the life," the crucified and resurrected God-man, the Son of God and of the virgin Mary. There is only one prayer that reaches the throne of God, and that is the prayer that is made direct to the triune God in Jesus name. With those who believe and pray otherwise we cannot co-operate for the salvation of souls. If this is bigotry then our Savior and the holy writers were bigots and we are bigots.

The Assistant Pastor

Published and edited by the pastor of the Jerico and Saude Lutheran churches affiliated with the Norwegian Synod of the Synodical Conference.

Church Directory

H. M. Tjernagel, Pastor

SAUDE

Trustees: Iver Ellingson, H. Larson, Theo. Vaala.

Treasurer: A. G. Vaala.

Secretary: John Natvig.

Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Iver Natvig, president; Mrs. Carl Miller, secretary; Mrs. Henry Borlaug, treasurer.

Cemetery Committee: Martin Borlaug, Muns Munson, Chris. Treider, Miss J. Ellingson, Mrs. C. O. Natvig.

JERICO

Trustees: Alvie O. Knutson, O. Firkenstad, Carl O. Knutson.

Treasurer: J. A. Robinson.

Secretary: Alfred N. Anderson.

Ladies' Aid: Mrs. J. A. Knutson, president; Mrs. C. O. Knutson, secretary; Mrs. A. N. Anderson, treasurer.

Standing Services

JERICO

First Sunday, Norwegian, 10:45 a. m.

Third Sunday, English, 10:45 a. m.

Saturday School every Saturday, 9:30 a. m.

Confirmation class, 2 p. m. Fridays.

SAUDE

Second Sunday, Norwegian, 10:45 a. m.

Fourth Sunday, English, 10:45 a. m.

Saturday School, 2 p. m.

Confirmation class, 9:30 a. m. Fridays.

Fifth Sunday by special announcement.

A CORRECTION

It was October 20, 1869, that the first class was confirmed at Saude, not 1860 as stated in our last issue.

PALM SUNDAY will be remembered as the day that the pastor was snow-bound eighteen miles away from home and the church stood empty.

EASTER SUNDAY was beautiful, the roads offered no obstacles to church goers, the pews were well filled, and we know and doubt not that the Holy Spirit was active in the pulpit and in the pews, through the wonderful message from the empty grave, to quicken all to songs of victory, praise and thanks.

OUR YOUNGEST member joined us by baptism March 15th. Her name is Ardys Jeanne and she is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Anderson. The sponsors were Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Anderson, and Mr. and Mrs. Peter Ronnei. God grant that parents and pastor and members may realize what it means that another immortal soul is entered upon our records.

ONE OF OUR OLDEST members, Mrs. J. L. Natvig, nee Anna Hoffland, left us March 9th. All things were as usual at the Natvig home on the date named. Each member of the household was attending to daily routine when mother felt a sharp pain in her left temple. She went to lie down on her bed in an

adjoining room, and the next minute the soul took its flight leaving the form we all knew so well and thought so much of, a mere empty shell.

Mrs. Natvig was born in Aardal, Sogn, Norway, June 2, 1847. At an early age she started working out. In the year 1867 she came to our Saude community. June 10, 1875, she married Jens L. Natvig, one of our pioneer boys. They immediately set out to develop a farm and build a home. The well known Jim Natvig farm gives evidence that they were eminently successful in their effort.

Their paths were not always lined with roses. Of the seven children born to them, two died in infancy and three died as adults. Mr. Natvig died eighteen years ago. Since then the farm has been ably managed by the widow and the capable daughter Carrie and son Louie.

Mrs. Natvig had that rare gift of creating a home atmosphere in which all who learned to know it loved to linger. Her presence wrought a wholesomeness, a simplicity, yet dignity and reserve that one cannot soon forget. She was of that type of Catechism Christians that uses the Word of God on week days as well as Sundays. Though a large, proud looking woman, she was regularly seen at the Altar of her Lord with bowed head confessing her sins and seeking the grace and forgiveness offered at the Lord's table. May her splendid example be a blessing to many.

THE FUNERAL SERMON. John 19, 28-30.

March 12, 1931.

This is the Lenten season. We see in faith the Cross on Golgatha. A tortured criminal hangs there. Over His head we read the accusation: Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. After hours of terrible torture His parched tongue says, "I thirst." They fill a sponge with vinegar, put it upon a hyssop, and reach it up to His mouth. Then He said, "It is finished," and He bowed His head and gave up the ghost.

Let us, dear mourners and friends, first speak of this death somewhat further; this can, and we pray that it will, by the grace of God, dry the tears of all mourners today and turn the grief into rejoicing.

We said a moment ago that as we stand before the Cross on Golgatha we see a tortured criminal hanging there and that the superscription tells us that it is Jesus, the King of the Jews.

"O horrors," says one, "do you mean to say that my Jesus was a criminal?" Yes, and it is your fault and mine that He was. "He who knew no sin is made to be sin for us." He hangs upon the accursed tree with all the sins and crimes of the whole world as His. No crime is of His own doing. "He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." But, deliberately and willingly, because He loved us so, He took upon Himself all of the sins of all mankind: Jew and Gentile, heathen and civilized, savage and cultured, thus "being made a curse for us."

As we see him on the cross, all sin, the crimes of the whole world, are heaped upon Him and He suffers full punishment for every individual sin of every individual sinner. The count or enumeration is exact, no sin of yours or mine was overlooked. And he drinks the bitter cup to its very dregs; after hours of torture, He

is not released but "bowed His head" in death, accursed death, for "cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

At this someone may say: "If every sin of every sinner was laid upon Jesus, and if He suffered the full punishment for every sin of every sinner, then the only logical conclusion is that I have no more any sin for which to be punished."

Would to God that every redeemed soul would so conclude and so believe for the conclusion is not merely entirely logical, it is Scriptural as well. Dear friend, *whoever* you are and *whatever* you are, it is that very truth that Jesus seals with His words, "It is finished." The redemption of the world is *finished*; full atonement for everyone's every sin is *complete*. The propitiation, expiation, satisfaction for the sins, not only of a choice few, His disciples, His believers, "but also for the sins of the whole world" is *finished*, and that includes you and me, and, dear mourners, it includes the deceased.

But, did she know it and, knowing it, did she believe it? Her eternal fate hinges upon the answer to these questions. Death came to her suddenly; her heart stopped without warning. There was no time for her to speak. The mourners have no last word to cherish and which might have answered the important questions just asked. Is there no way now that they may seek and hope to find answer? Yes, hold the life of the deceased as you knew it up before the Word of God as before a mirror and the answer will be reflected there.

Did she in her life give evidence that she knew Jesus Christ the Son of God and of the virgin Mary, the Savior of the world? Did she say or did she show in any way that she needed a Savior and, if so, did she accept him as such, or did she reject Him or neglect His salvation?

Did she make use of the means of grace, through which the Savior is freely offered and strength given to accept Him? Was she baptized? Did she partake of the Lord's Supper as a means of strengthening her faith in the forgiveness of sin through Christ Jesus? Did she use the Word of God? Did she care to go to church to worship her God and Savior together with fellow believers? Were her devotional books, if she had any, such as the Bible, Hymn book, "andagtsbog," laden with dust, or were they often seen in her hands, or on the sitting room table with her glasses left on top of them? Did she or did she not show concern for the welfare of her church and the church at large?

And over against her children, you who are living and those who have passed on ahead of her, did she show any care whether or not they learned to know and to believe in and serve the crucified Savior?

If you find evidence along the long trail she traveled through this life that she knew and believed and sought Jesus as her Savior, then I declare unto you, you have reason to believe and to rejoice in the sure hope that she, as the wise virgins, had oil in her lamp when the bridegroom came and has entered with Him to the marriage feast; and this I dare say, though you may find many an indication along the trail that she had stumbled and fallen.

If, on the other hand, you find little or no such evidence, then you are doomed to mourn her as one who came after the door to the marriage feast was shut and who calls, "Lord, Lord open to me," but who receives the answer: "Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

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You fathers and mothers who are assembled about the remains of this departed mother, may I ask you: When your children shall examine your trail, will they find that you have tarried in the tents of wickedness; that you have wallowed in the mire of sin; that you have loved and sought the world and the things of the world to the exclusion of heaven and heavenly things? Will they look in vain trying to find your footprints leading off the broad way and over onto the narrow path?

When you leave them will they find your devotional books on your bedroom dresser, or on the sitting room table, or on a special shelf near the head of the dining room table? Will you leave them without evidence that you watched and waited for the bridegroom and that you believed, confessed, and prayed:

"What thou, my Lord, hast suffered
Was all for sinners gain:
Mine, mine was the transgression,
But thine the deadly pain:
Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve Thy place;
Look on me with Thy favor,
Vouchsafe to me Thy grace."

As you love your own soul and as you love those whom you expect will mourn at your bier, cease not to pray that you may with ever clearer vision "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," and that you may be fruitful in good works to the glory of His name and a blessed example within the radius of your influence. Amen.

WHO IS NEXT?

It may be a rosy cheeked, playful child, it may be one of our splendid, promising youths, it may be a strong young father, or the mother of a flock of little children; it may be one of our aged ones, or it may be you or I. "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

THE EVIL DAYS spoken of in chapter 12 of Ecclesiastes have drawn nigh to many of our dear members. Mrs. Offerdal can no longer worship with us in church neither can Mrs. Landsverk, Mrs. Paulson, Mrs. Swennumson nor John Treider. Mrs. Nels Anderson has also been confined to her bed and couch for many months. Let us all go out of our way to be good to the aged. Above all let us not forget to pray that His rod and staff may comfort them.

Don't wait till the day they rest in their casket to go to see them. You, an old friend, can make one long day very much shorter for them by a friendly call. Don't leave it all to the pastor. He has more than enough to do trying to do his own duty to the aged and infirm. Furthermore, you cannot perform such brotherly, Christian acts by proxy. Don't save all the flowers for the day of the funeral. Strew roses literally and figuratively, if you can, on the last lap of our aged trail blazers journey. They have tramped so many weary miles through bogs and sloughs, over hills and valleys—difficulties and hardships—and have made the way so much easier for us.

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