

CHAPTER II

Care for Others as Jesus Did

In the last chapter we thought how we as Christians should live toward God. In this chapter we will think how we should live toward men. Between these two, as it were, we stop and remind ourselves that the Old Testament contains a list of our duties to God and men which has been guiding Jews and Christians for many hundreds of years. It is the Ten Commandments. These come down to us from a time long before our Lord lived. Probably, to begin with, some of them were shorter than they now are. The fact that there were ten of them would make them easier to remember—one for each finger of the two hands. Taking only the key phrase of each, we have the following:

- | | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| DUTIES
TO GOD | { | 1. You shall have no other gods before me. |
| | | 2. You shall not make yourself a graven image. |
| | | 3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. |
| | | 4. Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. |
| DUTIES
TO MEN | { | 5. Honor your father and your mother. |
| | | 6. You shall not kill. |
| | | 7. You shall not commit adultery. |
| | | 8. You shall not steal. |
| | | 9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. |
| | | 10. You shall not covet. |

When we arrange them in this way, it is easy to see that they fall into two groups of four and six each. It is easy to see also how our Lord could sum them up in love to God and love to our neighbors (Matthew 22:37-40).

The Ten Commandments should be committed to memory by every Christian. You will find them in Exodus 20:2-17. (A slightly different wording is given in Deuteronomy 5:6-21.) Or you can find them under

question 92 in the *Heidelberg Catechism*, and on pages 5 and 6 in the *Evangelical Catechism*.

A few of the words and phrases may not be quite clear.

To take the name of God in vain means to use it lightly, jokingly, irreverently. This we should never do.

The seventh commandment means that the deepest love between men and women must be kept for husband and wife, and never given to another.

To bear false witness against a neighbor means to say something untrue about anyone.

The tenth commandment is somewhat like the eighth, but goes far beyond it. "Covet" means "want." So this commandment means that we must not even want something that belongs to another person; we must not even *want* to steal.

For more detailed study of each commandment, see questions 33-51 in the *Evangelical Catechism*, or questions 91-113 in the *Heidelberg Catechism*.

Jesus believed in knowing and obeying the Ten Commandments (see Matthew 19:16-19), but he also gave a deeper meaning to many of them (see Matthew 5:21-37). So every Christian should know these ancient laws and keep them in the spirit of Jesus.

How Did Jesus Care for Others?

Jesus cared for everyone. There were no exceptions. He saw in every person a child of the heavenly Father, and his own brother. It is amazing to go through the Gospels and see the different kinds of people whom he helped, or to whom he was friendly. He cared for the Samaritans, whom the Jews despised as foreigners and half-breeds. He cared for the tax-collectors (publicans), whom everybody disliked. He cared for lepers full of ugly sores, and for insane people (those who had "demons"). He cared for his worst enemies. All this will mean more to you if you will see for yourself a few instances of our Lord's great love for all people.

To whom was Jesus showing friendship in

✓ Mark 10:17-21? _____

✓ Luke 5:12-13? _____

✓ Luke 7:12-13? _____

✓ Luke 7:37-38? _____

✓ Luke 8:35? _____

- ✓ Luke 18:15-16? _____
- ✓ Luke 19:2-5? _____ 2000
- ✓ Luke 23:34? _____
- ✓ John 19:26-27? _____

How *much* did Jesus care for people—all people? The answer is in John 15:13: “Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” This our Lord did. More than this no one can do.

We Too Should Care for Others

The Christian way of life is to care for others as Jesus did. Our Lord has left us in no doubt on this point. He has given us a new commandment, not ten, but one, and it is this: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35). Ever since, the followers of Jesus have been trying to care for others as he did. Let us look briefly at the lives of several of these true followers.

Theirs Is the Christian Way of Life

1. *Jean Frederic Oberlin* was born in the year 1740 in the strip of land which lies on the border between France and Germany. He studied to become a minister.

One day a visitor came to his room and challenged him to become the pastor of a group of people in five villages in the Vosges Mountains. The visitor painted a dark picture. The winters there were cold and long. The people were scattered in the mountain forests. They were very poor. They were ignorant. The roads were not good. The visitor offered nothing to draw Pastor Oberlin, except the need of these people. But that was enough. Pastor Oberlin went there in 1767 at a salary of \$200 a year.

Quite soon he built two schoolhouses, each of which cost him a year’s salary. He built a road to connect his valley with a main road, working on it with his own hands. He brought in new crops—flax, clover, potatoes. In fields near the parsonage he developed a fine orchard of fruit trees, and laid down a rule that no boy could be confirmed in his churches until he had grown two fruit trees. He trained his young people to be mechanics, and got a factory established in the community. All this time he carried on the regular work of a minister faithfully. Fifty-nine years he spent in this pastorate. This is the Christian way of life.

2. *Albert Schweitzer* was born in the same strip of land on the border between France and Germany as Oberlin was. His birth date was 1875. From childhood he could not bear to see any living thing suffer. For example, he would not shoot birds with a slingshot, as other boys did. Neither could he be comfortable when he saw people all around him who were unhappy. As a youth he made up his mind to continue his studies and his music until he was thirty; then he would go to some place where people needed him, and would serve them the rest of his life. He was blessed with abilities such as few men have. He became the president of a theological seminary, the author of books known around the world, a great pipe-organist, and a student of pipe-organ building—all of this before he was thirty years old.

In 1905 he decided to study medicine and go as a medical missionary to Africa. The people there needed him. In 1913 he arrived at Lam-barene, where he was to be the doctor. The need was great. Patients came to him suffering from tropical diseases or from great open sores. His equipment was scanty. For a while he had to work in a made-over chicken house. To keep his spirits up, he played on his beloved piano. When through medicine or an operation he succeeded in putting a stop to pain, he would tell the patient about Jesus, in whose name he had come to Africa.

During the First World War, because he was a German, he was taken to France as a prisoner. When it was over, he went back to Africa to continue to care for others. This, too, is the Christian way of life.

3. There was a time when no self-respecting English woman would be a nurse. Sick people had to endure untold suffering without a nurse's help, or at least without a trained nurse's help. This was bad enough in peacetime, but it was worse in war. The person who changed this was *Florence Nightingale*. She was born in 1820 of a wealthy English family. As she grew to womanhood she could not shut out of her thoughts the sufferings of the sick. When she was seventeen, Florence nursed her neighbors through a siege of influenza. That same winter she felt definitely called by God to a life of service to the sick. In due time she became head of a nursing home.

Then came the Crimean War. There was no Red Cross. There were no women nurses for the English wounded. Florence Nightingale went to the Black Sea, along with others. She found row on row of beds of wounded and dying soldiers, actually stretching for several miles. Everything was dirty. There was no soap. There was not even a broom. The food was poor. Few of the men had knives or forks to eat with. Florence set to work with courage and energy, and brought some

comfort to these miles of patient soldiers. They called her the Good Lady. Queen Victoria sent her a piece of jewelry with the words, "Blessed are the merciful." After the war Florence Nightingale continued her work of training nurses who would care for the sick. This, also, is the Christian way of life.

4. *Howard Thurman* is a Negro whose grandmother had been a slave. His father died when Howard was a boy. He greatly wanted an education. After much hard work he arrived at an academy with an old trunk, a few clothes, and a dollar. His first year there he lived on a single meal a day. Winter and summer he worked, selling peanuts, scrubbing floors, doing anything he could. By his hard work and with the help of friends he secured a splendid education, finally studying for the Christian ministry. He is now a professor in a university. The students there seek him out constantly for advice. He is also in great demand throughout our country to talk to students and others. After an informal tea at which he spoke, one girl wrote:

He sat—
His black, black face
Fading into the shadows of the room,
We sat—
The white masks of our faces
Trying to hide our thoughts
As his quiet voice
Spoke simply—humbly—of a Lord he had found.¹

Many people have been helped to find themselves and to find God through this man, for he has caught something of Jesus' love for people. This, too, is the Christian way of life.

What Can We Do?

Jesus has told us plainly what we can do. To begin with, we can follow the Golden Rule in our dealings with everyone about us. You will find it in Matthew 7:12.

- How would you like to be treated
- if you were your mother with a lot of housework to do?
 - if you were your father when money was running low and each member of the family was asking for more?
 - if you were a younger brother or sister who felt neglected?
 - if you were a Jew in a community made up mostly of non-Jews?

¹ Reprinted from *Twelve Negro Americans* by Mary Jenness, by permission of the Friendship Press.

- if you were a Negro in a community where white people held the positions of influence?
- if you had been lying sick in bed for the past month?
- if you were a prisoner in a penitentiary?

The first step in caring for other people is to try to put ourselves in their places, to see life as they see it, and to try to treat them as we would want to be treated.

Jesus also said that we are to treat people as the good Samaritan did. (See Luke 10:25-37.) We must show mercy and give help to anyone anywhere who is in need. Is there anything that you could do as individuals or as a class to follow our Lord's teaching and example?

Will your congregation be receiving an offering soon for a children's home, or for a home for the aged, or a hospital, or a mission station, or a relief fund of any sort? If so, what part could you take in it?

Does your community have a Community Chest drive? If so, what part could you take in it?

Are there any families in your congregation who are in actual need? If so, what could you do to help? Ask your pastor.

Are there any sick or shut-in members of your church who would appreciate a visit regularly? Could you read the Bible to them? or sing some hymns for them? Could you take them a copy of your church bulletin or *The Messenger*? or some flowers?

Is there a children's ward in a hospital nearby? Do the children have toys, pictures, and scrapbooks enough to make the time go a little faster? Could you supply some? Check with the hospital.

Are there any groups in your community—Roman Catholics, Jews, Negroes, recent immigrants—who feel somewhat out of things? Could you have a joint meeting with their young people sometime? Could you invite them to your church?

The Ten Commandments and You

Write in your own words what each of the commandments means to you. Put all your statements in a positive form (what you should do if you keep the commandments). Make the statements brief.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

A Quiz on the Ten Commandments

- ✓ 1. Where in the Bible are the Ten Commandments? _____
- ✓ 2. Into how many groups may the Ten Commandments be divided? _____
What are they? _____
- ✓ 3. What is meant by the sabbath day? _____
- ✓ 4. What day do most Christians think of when they say the fourth commandment? _____ Why do they? _____
- ✓ 5. What two Old Testament verses did Jesus use to summarize the Ten Commandments?
 - a. Deuteronomy 6:5 _____
 - b. Leviticus 19:18 _____
- ✓ 6. What additional commandment did Jesus give? (John 13:34) _____

CHAPTER 12

Master Yourself as Jesus Did

The picture on the opposite page is part of a very large painting in which there are many people besides our Lord. In direct line with his look sits Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor before whom Jesus is on trial. Behind him are a Roman soldier with his spear, a man waving his arms wildly above his head, and others. But our concern is with Jesus, and so we are showing only his figure.

Our Lord is on trial for his life. Even now he is a prisoner. (See how tightly his wrists are bound together.) The man before whom he stands has the power of life and death over him.

How would you describe Jesus' thoughts and feelings at this moment? Look at the picture. Is he frightened? angry? strong? weak? sure of God? doubtful of God? Is he master of himself? What makes you think so?

Does Jesus, as the artist has painted him, look to you like the kind of person who could lay out a plan of action and follow it through to the end? Or would he quit when difficulties arose? Or would he change to another plan if somebody disagreed with him?

Does he look like the kind of person who would master his appetite? Or would he let his appetite master him?

Is the spirit you see here master of the body, or is the body master of the spirit?

The picture we have studied shows our Lord mastering himself in a situation of great danger. It is only rarely that we meet such a situation. Our own self-mastery must usually be shown in quite ordinary, day-by-day places. It involves the stewardship of everything God has given us—our bodies, our money, our time, our life.



CHRIST BEFORE PILATE (detail)

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Be Master of Your Body

A speaker once said: "I am not my body. I am more than my body. I can boss my body. I can tell it to go this way, and it goes." (Here he walked across the platform to the right.) "Then I can tell it to go the other way, and it goes." (Here he turned and walked to the left.)

What the speaker said is true. We *are* more than our bodies. God

has so made us. We are persons, meant to live forever. That is the important fact about us. Our bodies are worth a great deal, but they are to be mastered, and made to serve good purposes. This is the Christian way of life.

We can master our bodies by what we do, or do not, put into them. Let us think of this for a bit.

1. *Food.* Three times a day we have a chance to show that we are masters of ourselves. Many Americans shorten their lives by overeating. They place a great strain on their digestive organs and also on their hearts. It is unhealthful to overeat. Is it unchristian? If so, why is it?

Some people purposely undereat in order to reduce. Can this be unhealthful? Can it be unchristian? If so, why is it?

What rules can you lay down for Christian self-mastery in the matter of eating?

2. *Drink.* The body needs a certain amount of liquid each day, but the kind of liquid taken in may show whether a person has mastery over his body or not. We are thinking, of course, of alcoholic drinks—beer, wine, whiskey, and the like. The human race has been having trouble with strong drink for quite a while. The following was written more than two thousand years ago:

Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler;
and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.

—Proverbs 20:1

Why do people drink? Is it because liquor tastes good? or because it makes them forget their troubles? or because it is the fashionable thing to do? or because their bodies demand it after they have become accustomed to it?

What is the chief wrong in the use of alcoholic beverages? Is it the harm they do to the body? Is it the cost, which takes money that should be spent on necessities for the family? Is it the damage that is done to lives and property when people under the influence of liquor try to drive cars or run other machines? Is it the effect on the personalities of people who drink, which makes them do things when under the influence of liquor that they would never think of doing if they had use of all their faculties?

Think back over the movies you have seen recently in which there were drinking scenes. Was the drinking pictured as the "thing to do," or the thing not to do? Did the results of drinking seem to be pleasant or unpleasant? Was anybody hurt by the drinking? Were the movies true to life at this point?

Think back over the liquor advertisements you have seen recently. Did they show "drunks," or respectable people who seemed alert and happy? Were the advertisements true to life?

Is it unchristian to use alcoholic drinks to excess? Is it unchristian to use them at all? What rules can you lay down for Christian self-mastery in this matter?

3. *Drugs.* When we are sick the doctor prescribes drugs to make us well. Taking them into our bodies in well-regulated doses does much good. But taking in more than is needed does much harm.

Some people have developed a craving for such drugs as marijuana, heroin, opium. The more they take of these drugs the more they crave them, until they become sick, and at times wild, unless they can get more.

Do these people have mastery over their bodies? Can you imagine Jesus permitting himself to get into such a state? (Read in Matthew 27:33-34 what Jesus did when they offered him a drug before they crucified him.)

What rule for self-mastery would you say Christians should follow in this matter?

4. *Tobacco.* Very many people smoke. They light one cigarette after the other. They develop a craving that demands satisfaction in another smoke.

How many people do you know who have so much control over the craving of their body that they can give up smoking or even cut down considerably in their use of tobacco?

Why do people start smoking? Is it because "everybody does it"? Is it because their nerves are frayed and they need to bolster them up? Is it because they want to reduce, and smoking takes away the desire for food?

Is it unchristian to smoke to excess? Is it unchristian to smoke at all? What rules would you lay down for Christian self-mastery in this matter?

Be Master of Your Money

Money is a good thing, but it may also be harmful. Read what Paul says about the love of money in 1 Timothy 6:10. We can show our self-mastery through our use of money. Let us look at a number of uses that are made of it.

1. *Gambling.* There is a great deal of gambling in the world. It is carried on with punch-boards, pinball machines, slot-machines, in the "numbers" racket, by crap shooting, putting up money in a card game, betting on horse races, and the like. If you were to drop into a

downtown poolroom, you would probably hear a number of arguments in favor of gambling. On the other hand, in a church you would probably hear arguments against it. Which of the following arguments are strong, and which weak? Which is the stronger set of arguments?

ARGUMENTS FOR GAMBLING

Gambling isn't dishonest at all. If I bet you five dollars, and you're willing to bet, and everything is open and above board, what's wrong about it?

A person has a right to do what he wants with his own money. What's the difference between using seventy-five cents in a slot-machine and spending it on a movie?

All life is a gamble. When you go into business, you take a chance. When you get married, you take a chance. Each morning when you get up, you take a chance that an accident will happen to you.

Gambling is in the blood. It's human nature to take a chance. You can't stop it.

Gambling has helped many good causes. Hospitals, schools, and the like have been built with the money governments have gotten from their percentage or tax on gambling.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST GAMBLING

Gambling is trying to get something for nothing. One of the worst things you can do for a person is to lead him to hope he can get something—not by hard work, but by a lucky break.

Gambling uses money that ought to go for food and clothing. Whenever gambling is made legal in a city or state, grocery-store sales fall off.

Gambling leads people into dishonesty. They bet and lose. Then "something good" comes along. If they could bet "just once more," they would recover their losses. The temptation to steal is great. The end is usually the penitentiary.

Most gambling machines are crooked. They can be set so the players get only a certain percentage. The owner gets the rest.

Gambling, like liquor-selling, gets tied up with politics. It isn't a good combination.

A person does not have the right to do what he wants with his money. Everything a person has belongs to God and should be used in God-approved ways.

Gambling is not in the blood. Life does not require it. Many people have no urge to gamble, and many others have the will power to overcome it.

Good causes that depend on income from gambling do not long stay untainted. Making the poor suffer by taking money that is needed for other things does not improve the world.

Is it unchristian to gamble? What rules should a Christian follow in this matter? How does self-mastery come in?

2. *Everyday Use of Money.* In a junior high church school class the teacher asked each member how much money he had to use, where he got it, and what he did with it. Which of the following answers do you think comes closest to the Christian way of using one's money? Did any of these young people seem to have a feeling of Christian responsibility for spending their money wisely? Did any feel responsibility to God for using some of their money to help others?

Ralph got no allowance, but he had a paper route, for which he had to get up at six o'clock each morning. He used a good bit of this money on the movies, and had just bought a new bicycle. He was not getting along any too well at school, and he thought the reason might be that he often went to the movies at night and then got up early for his paper route. Hence he didn't have much time for homework and was often sleepy at school.

Edith had an allowance of seventy-five cents a week. She spent it in any way she chose. Every Saturday her father gave her the allowance. Sometimes he didn't have the change. Then he would give her a dollar, and let it go at that. Edith said she thought people generally made too much of a fuss over money.

Dick lived on a farm. He said he got no allowance, but his parents gave him a chance to earn money on the farm. Each spring they gave him a half acre of land to use as he pleased. This year he had it in sweet-corn, which he would sell to a canning factory. He also had a little pig of his own to raise. He thought if everything went well he might have fifty or sixty dollars clear at the end of the year. He was saving a good bit of it to go to college some day. He said his parents insisted that he take his church and Sunday school offerings out of his own money. He didn't like this so well, but he supposed it was the thing to do.

Harry was the money-raiser of the class. To begin with, he had an allowance of fifty cents a week. He saved much of this. Then he got two dollars for every good report card he brought home. He put this in his savings account. In the summer he mowed the lawns of half a dozen neighbors, and this money too he saved. He wasn't quite sure what he would do with it all, but he liked to see it mount up. He had a hundred dollars in his savings account now.

What rules should a Christian follow in regard to the use of his money? What does the church teach about stewardship of money?

Be Master of Your Time

Time is what life is made of. We have only so much. When it is gone, nothing can bring it back. Therefore we must learn to master ourselves in the use of it. There are many questions that young people should face regarding the Christian use of time. Here are a few:

1. Most of your time is taken up with sleeping, dressing, eating, and attending school. Suppose that there are 44 hours left each week—12 on Saturday, 12 on Sunday, and 4 each weekday evening. How should these 44 hours be divided among the following:

- | | |
|--|--|
| (<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>) helping in the home | (<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>) church services and activities |
| (<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>) working outside the home for pay | (<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>) self-improvement—music lessons, etc. |
| (<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>) school studies | (<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>) having a good time |
| (<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>) hobbies | (<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>) loafing, doing nothing |

2. Some ways of having a good time are better than others. How much time a week do you spend on each of the following? How much time should you spend? D S

			D	S
Attending movies	(0)	(2 ^h)		
Listening to the radio	(14 ^m)	(10 ^m)		
Watching TV	(21 ^m)	(16 ^m)		
Taking part in athletic sports	(10 ^m)	(12 ^m)		
Watching athletic sports	(24)	(5 ^m)		
Reading papers, magazines, and books	(20)	(22 ^m)	D	S
Visiting with friends	(64)	(9 ^m)		
Walking or hiking	(10 ^m)	(6)		
Going to parties	(24)	(24)		
Hobbies	(4 ^m)	(44)		

3. With some of these the important question is not how much time we spend on them, but what they are like. Consider movies, for example. There are all kinds of movies—horror movies, crime movies, mystery movies, romance movies, great books turned into movies, musical comedy movies. It may be good to spend time on a good movie, and bad to spend time on a bad movie. What movies that have come to your community recently would help you to live the Christian way? Which ones would hinder you?

There are also all sorts of radio and TV programs—classical music, cheap music, great dramas, cheap dramas, good news reports, prejudiced news reports, good sports, brutal sports. What are your favorite programs? Weigh them from the Christian point of view.

The same is true of reading. There are the comics, the “pulp” magazines of crime and love, trashy books, and there are church papers,

magazines such as the *Reader's Digest*, and great books that have lived for years and will live for many more. What do you read for the most part? Is it good reading from the Christian viewpoint?

4. What rules should a Christian follow in regard to the way he spends his time?

Be Master of Your Life

When you grow up, what do you intend to do with your life? Have you any idea about what kind of work you will be doing? What would you like to do?

Many boys and girls of confirmation age already know what vocation they want to follow, and they are working toward it. Ted loves music. It is his very life. So he spends every available minute practicing. He is looking forward to the time when he can go to one of the summer music camps. He is finding out about the various schools and colleges that specialize in music. He hopes to become a member of a great orchestra some day. Ruth has always enjoyed designing clothes ever since she can remember. Her dolls and paper dolls always were the envy of other little girls. She has already designed several dresses for herself, her mother, and a few of her friends, and people have complimented her on her good taste. She is planning to take all the sewing work she can in high school home economics courses, and to go to the state college for women where she can get both dress designing courses and art work.

But there are many boys and girls of confirmation age who do not know as yet what their lifework will be. They are dreaming about various fields, imagining themselves as typists, insurance salesmen, detectives, reporters, lawyers, ministers, teachers, and in other vocations. They may be reading up on all the vocations they can to see if one is the work for them.

There are still other boys and girls who just drift along, giving no thought beyond the day with its pleasures. Someday they will take any job that opens up to them, whether it is the work that can make them happy or not, and they may drift from one job to another.

How can you be master of your life, as Jesus was? What rules can you lay down for choosing your lifework in a Christian way? Does the matter of stewardship enter in here too?

Christians Get Back More Than They Give Up

Some people have the idea that to be Christian means principally to give up pleasures that non-Christians can enjoy. They say, "Chris-

tians can't do this" and "Christians can't do that" until the Christian way of life begins to look like a dark and gloomy way.

As a matter of fact there are some things that Christians cannot do or will not do. There are some things that Christians give up. But why? In order to achieve more true happiness than they could if they continued in the old way. If a Christian gives up going to see movies that are contrary to the teachings of Christ, it is because he is sure that he cannot be the finest type of Christian he ought to be if he lets movies drag his thoughts into the mire of evil thoughts. He knows that would be contrary to God's will, and so he finds good times that will leave a good taste in his mouth and that will truly re-create him in body, mind, and spirit.

A Christian masters himself not merely to prove that he can. He does it for a purpose. He wants to get the most out of life, and to see that others have a chance to do the same. He wants to be fit for his Father's work. He is in training—not to run a race or play a game, but to live a full and useful life.

The Christian way of life is the most joyous of all. Christians should not be long-faced, but happy and smiling. Their inner happiness should reflect in their faces.

A Good Resolution

The following words were written by a young man named Howard Arnold Walter who went to Japan to do Christian work among students. A letter from his mother set him thinking, and he wrote a poem of resolution that has been of great help to many young people. Can you make it your own resolution?

I would be true, for there are those who trust me;
I would be pure, for there are those who care;
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.

I would be friend of all—the foe, the friendless;
I would be giving, and forget the gift;
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and lift.

CHAPTER 13

Seek the Kingdom as Jesus Did

Many, many times in the New Testament we find the words: "the kingdom of God," "the kingdom of heaven," or simply "the kingdom." They all mean the same. All look forward to a day when God's rule is accepted by all men, and his will is done "on earth as it is in heaven." Perhaps "reign" would be a better word than "kingdom," which is likely to make us think too much of so many square miles of land. The main idea of the kingdom is God's reign.

This phrase, the kingdom of God, is nowhere to be found in the Old Testament, but its central idea is there. People even then hoped for the day when God's rule would go into effect more widely. Such a hope is seen in Micah 4:1-4. Turn to this passage in your Bible and see what Micah wrote about the reign of the Lord.

It is still our hope—the greatest hope of Christians. God's kingdom has been coming through the years, but oh! so slowly. We look for its continued coming—more and more people accepting God's rule in their lives; more and more persons yielding their lives to him; more and more kindness and sympathy and unselfishness in the world; less and less hatred and poverty and war and cruelty.

It is God's kingdom, but it comes in us and we can help its coming. We shall never see it fully, but we shall see more of it than we do now. For it Christians work and pray. For it the Church works and prays. It is the noblest dream that ever entered into the mind of man. But first it was in the mind of God.

Jesus Sought to Bring in the Kingdom

All of Jesus' life centers in the kingdom of God. One does not realize this until he takes, for example, the Gospel of Matthew and

pages through it to see how often Jesus speaks of the kingdom. Underline lightly in your Bible every time Matthew reports that Jesus spoke of the kingdom. Then look up the following passages and answer the questions listed. All this will help you to understand what the kingdom of God meant to our Lord.

Matthew 4:17. What was Jesus' message when he began to preach?

.....

Matthew 6:10. For what did he teach his disciples to pray?

Matthew 10:7. What was the central theme that Jesus gave his disciples for their preaching?

Matthew 18:4. Who is the greatest in the kingdom?

.....

Luke 17:21. Where is the kingdom?

Many of Jesus' parables were told to help people understand what he meant by the kingdom. He compared it to many things. Read the following comparisons and write what you think Jesus meant by them.

Matthew 13:3-8.

Matthew 13:33.

Matthew 25:1-13.

From your research in the Bible you can get some idea of the importance to Jesus of the kingdom. He himself was living in it, and he wanted everyone else to have the joy of living in it also. Therefore the bringing in of the kingdom was on his mind and heart constantly. He

preached about it. He taught about it. He worked for it. He lived for it. He died for it.

We Should Seek the Kingdom

Our Lord has made this clear—so clear that we cannot possibly misunderstand. In Matthew 6:33 we have his command to seek first the kingdom of God. What does this mean?

1. *It means that we are to think more about the kingdom than anything else.* How much time do you now spend thinking about sports? clothes? movies? the kingdom of God? Is it too much to expect of young people that they should spend more time thinking about the day when God's rule will be acknowledged over all the earth than about their own needs and pleasures? Do you think that Jesus meant for young people to obey this command, or was it only for older people?

2. *It means that we are to work harder for the kingdom than for anything else.* How much time do you now spend working for the kingdom? A good many things can come under this head. All church work can be counted, if one is trying to do God's will in it. All school work can be counted, if one is trying to do God's will in it. Athletics can probably be counted, if one is trying to do God's will in it. Is it too much to expect of young people that they should work harder for the kingdom than for their own pleasure? Or is the kingdom for older people only?

3. *It means that we are to put the kingdom at the top of the list of things we want in life.* What do you want? A good time? popularity? success? money? What do you want more than anything else in the world? Is it too much to expect of young people that they should put the kingdom at the top of the list of their interests and desires? Do you think that our Lord meant for young people to do this, or only for those over forty?

4. *It means that we are to bear the kingdom in mind as we meet the ordinary situations of life.*

An examination comes along in school, and the temptation to cheat is strong. What way of acting will be most in keeping with God's will? What way of acting will bring nearer the day when God's rule will be acknowledged by all?

Probably, there are in your community people of another race or nationality than your own. The young people may come to your school, or your church, or you may pass them on the street. How should you act toward them if you are trying to do God's will? How should you act to bring nearer the day when God's rule will be acknowledged by all?

Is it asking too much of young people that they should bear the kingdom in mind as they meet ordinary situations in life?

5. *It means that we are to bear the kingdom in mind as we choose a lifework.* Which of the following occupations could a person follow with the feeling that he was doing God's will and was bringing nearer the day when God's rule would be acknowledged everywhere?

Storekeeper	Owner of gambling house	Owner of cotton mill
Physician	Schoolteacher	Liquor salesman
Housewife	Army officer	Worker in steel mill
Farmer	Minister	Railroad engineer
Insurance salesman	Coal miner	Drug peddler
Auto mechanic	Gangster	Baker

Are any of these in keeping with God's will only if done in a certain way? Are any always in keeping with the will of God? Are any never in keeping with it? Give reasons for your answers.

6. *It means that we are to have the kingdom in mind when we join the church.* The church is where God's will is already being done in part, and where people work for the day when it will be done everywhere more perfectly. To become a full member of the church means to seek the kingdom more than one has ever sought it before.

Is God's will being done more fully in the churches of your community than in the schools, the factories, the places of amusement? Give reasons for your answer.

Do the churches of your community do more than the schools, factories, and places of amusement to bring in the day when God's rule will be acknowledged everywhere? Give reasons for your answer.

7. *Seeking first the kingdom of God means that we are to find our greatest joy in losing ourselves in some good work.* The "good work" may be something truly big, like seeking world peace, or working for a better feeling between white people and Negroes, or between Mexicans or Japanese and citizens of the United States, or doing away with slums in our large cities. It may be teaching little children, or making a happy home, or tending the sick people of a community. At any rate, we never know what true happiness is until we have forgotten ourselves completely in some good work. The truth of this is clearly seen in the four persons whose lives we looked at briefly in chapter 11: Jean Frederic Oberlin, Albert Schweitzer, Florence Nightingale, and Howard Thurman. Think over their lives, and see for yourself.

This is not the easiest way to live, nor the easiest way to find happiness; but it is the best way. It is the Christian way of life.

The Cost of the Christian Way of Life

There is no use shutting our eyes to the fact that the Christian way of life costs something to those who follow it. The Christian must give up some things that others can do. He must do some things and take some stands that others will not like. He may not make as much money as some others. He may not be as popular as some others.

Time and again our Lord warned his disciples that the Christian way is not an easy way. Here is what he said: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). This is a strange way to win followers, but our Lord believed in facing all the facts. The Christian way led him to an actual cross. Sooner or later all true followers of his will find some kind of cross in their path.

But it is worth it! Hebrews 12:2 says that our Lord "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross." That is a great saying. The prophets, the martyrs, the saints of all ages have found it true in their lives. The Christian way of life is always worth more than it costs.

On Being a Christian

Write here a description of a person who is practicing the Christian way of life. Make this positive by saying what he is or does rather than what he is not or what he doesn't do. If you would like to express yourself in poetry rather than prose, that will be all right.

PART IV

The Christian Church

CHAPTER 14

The Story of the Christian Church

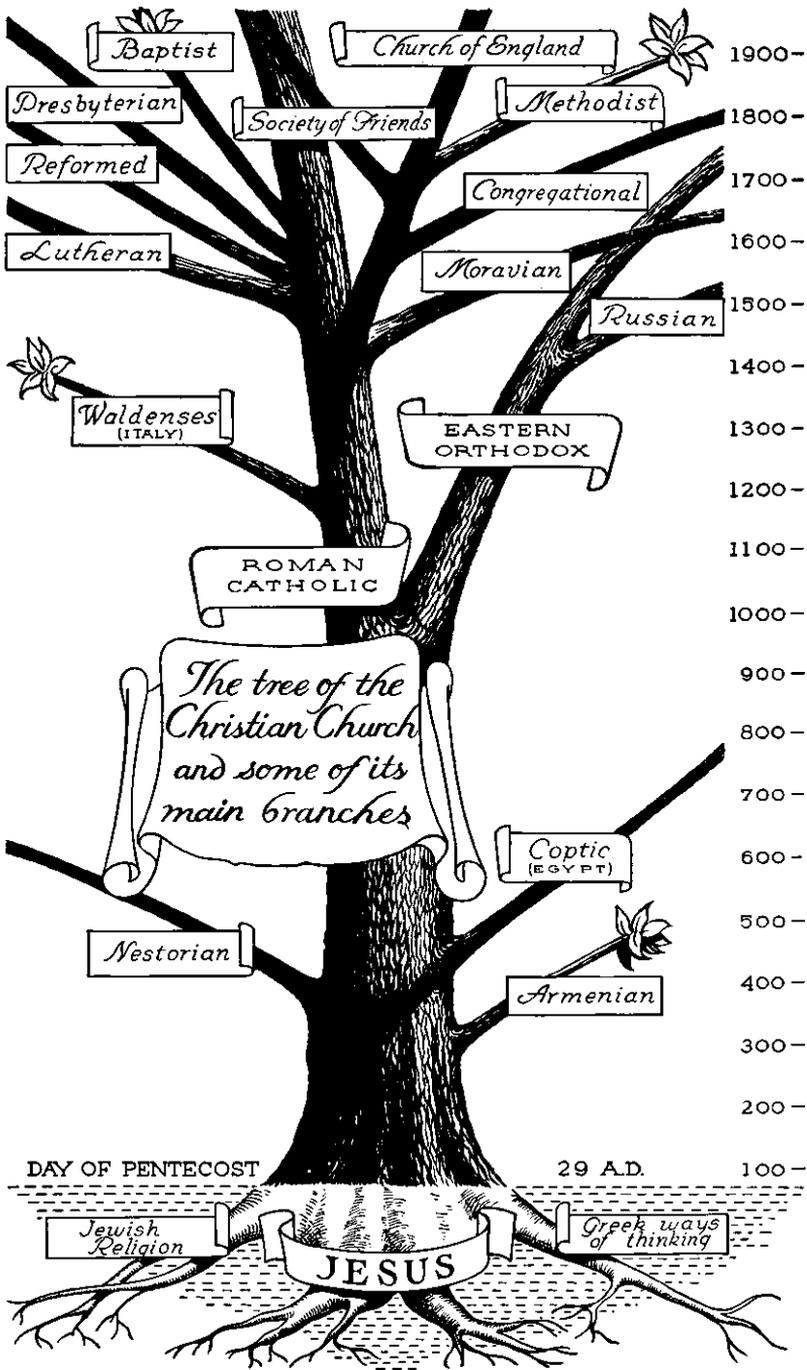
The Church is more than a building, or any number of buildings. It is more than your home congregation. It is more than our Evangelical and Reformed Church. We are only one denomination, and there are many others. It is more than all the Christians in the United States. The word *church* comes from a Greek word meaning "belonging to the Lord." The Church is all those in every land and in every age who are the Lord's.

How many Christians are there in the world now? No one knows exactly, but a man who has traveled and seen the world-wide Church with his own eyes puts it at about 700,000,000 people—one-third of all the people on the earth. Can you picture them? They are young and old, rich and poor, white and black and yellow, ignorant and educated. All of this does not matter. The nations in which these people live may even go to war with one another, but they still belong to one Church. The Church, then, reaches all around the earth. It reaches back into the past to Jesus himself, and it will reach, we believe, far down into the future.

You will find statements about the Church worth studying and memorizing in question 54 of the *Heidelberg Catechism* and question 87 of the *Evangelical Catechism*.

The Long Story of the Church

There was a time when there was no Evangelical and Reformed Church, or Roman Catholic Church, or any other kind. There were no church buildings, no Christian ministers, no Christian Bible, no Christian hymns, no Christians. How did it all come to be? For the sake of convenience we will divide the story of the Church into four periods



of about five hundred years each. The tree of the Christian Church on page 95 will help you to picture the Church's growth.

PERIOD I

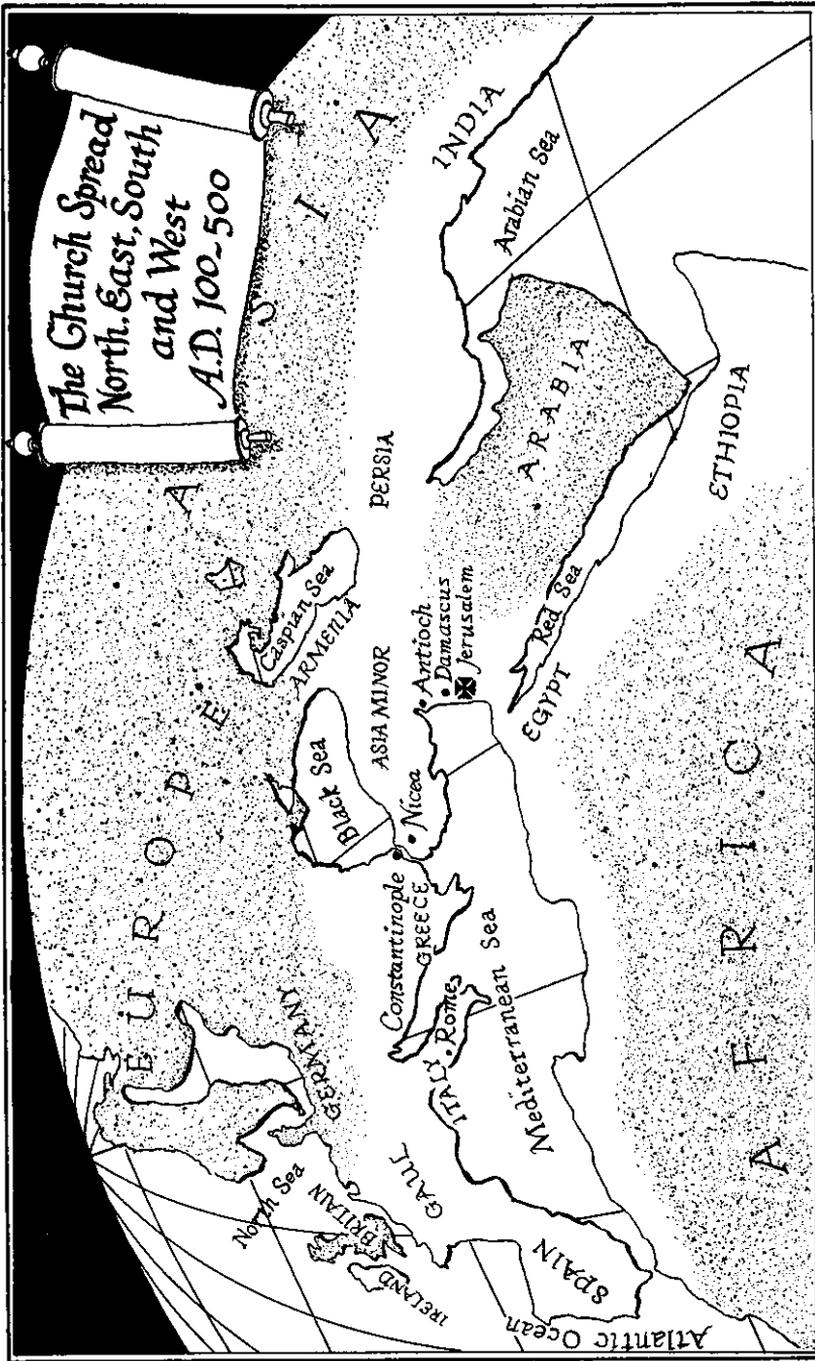
*(The Church took shape and spread through
the Roman Empire.)*

The Church began, of course, with Jesus. He gathered about him a few disciples. They found God through him. Their whole lives were changed by him. For a little while he was with them in the body, and then he was gone to be with his Father.

On the fiftieth day after that first Easter Sunday came Pentecost. (The word *pentecost* means "fiftieth.") This was the birthday of the Christian Church. On this great day the disciples were together, talking no doubt about Jesus. Then something happened to them and in them. They were convinced beyond all doubt that the God whom they had seen so clearly in Jesus was still present with them. They called this Presence the Holy Spirit. They were almost beside themselves with joy. You can see this for yourself as you read the second chapter of Acts. On this day of Pentecost many were added to the fellowship of the disciples of Jesus Christ. This fellowship held everything in common. They had the same beliefs about Jesus and God. They met together for worship in the temple, as other Jews did, but they also met in one another's homes to pray and to break bread as Jesus had done at the Last Supper. They even put all their money into one common treasury. It was a happy Christian fellowship, but as yet it was in only one city—Jerusalem.

Soon the Christians began to scatter because of the persecutions in Jerusalem. They went north, and east, and south, and west. Some went north to Antioch, which became the second center from which Christian teaching went out. Some went east to Persia and beyond. (The Mar Thoma Church in India claims as its founder the Apostle Thomas.) Some went south to Egypt and Ethiopia. Others went west across Asia Minor, into Greece, and on to Italy, France and Spain; and others went across northern Africa until the Church had spread all around the Mediterranean Sea and even as far as Ireland.

By A.D. 200 there was a church organization running from southern France to the Tigris and Euphrates valleys in Asia. Across northern Africa half the people were Christians. About the year 250 a letter was written about the church at Rome. It said that there was a bishop at Rome, with 46 presbyters and 7 deacons under him. In addition, there were more than 100 other officers and 30,000 church members.



The church was strong enough and rich enough and good enough to care for 1500 poor people. What a marvelous growth from the little beginnings by the Sea of Galilee!

How did this take place? We believe that God had much to do with it, and that he worked through missionaries, chief of whom was Paul. A large part of the book of Acts tells of his life and work. Next to our Lord, he is the greatest person in the history of the Church. At first he persecuted Christians with all the strength he had. But the way they lived and died made a great impression on him, so great that when Christ called him to become his follower he was ready to give his life to his new Lord. (See Acts 26:12-18.) For about twenty years Paul told the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ across Asia Minor, in Macedonia and Greece, and finally in Rome. Read his own account of the hardships of those years in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28.

But the Church spread in other ways also. Ordinary people—slaves, soldiers, merchants—became Christian and told the good news. Strange as it may seem, the Church spread also through persecution. If a group of Christians had to flee for their lives, they carried the good news wherever they went. One chief reason for the spread of the Church was the way the Christians lived. Not many were people of high

standing. Most were just ordinary people, but they lived fine lives and died noble deaths, and that was an argument hard to answer. Then, too, the Roman world was hungry for good news about life, and Christianity spoke to the longings of many a heart.

All this sounds as though these early centuries were easy ones for the Christians. They were not. Time and again the Christians were persecuted. Some Jews began it, and took the life of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Then Rome continued the persecution. It was hard to know what to do with these Christians. As a rule they would not worship the emperor, or



serve as soldiers, or attend the shows where men had to fight each other to the death, and they treated slaves with a strange kindness. So the Romans persecuted them. They took their wealth. They took their church properties. They forbade them to meet together. They sent them into exile. They killed them by the thousands. During the first two hundred years there were persecutions here and there, but in the third and the beginning of the fourth centuries there were persecutions that ran from one end of the empire to the other.



All this came to an end with the Emperor Constantine. The story goes that in a battle just above Rome on October 28, 312, he saw a cross in the skies with the words (in Latin), "In this sign conquer." The next year, 313, he signed an order that put Christianity on a level with any other religion of the empire. Christians no longer had to be afraid. They could say anywhere that they were followers of Christ. Their "Lord's Day" was made a holiday by law. The Christian cross was stamped on Roman coins. From now on it was much easier to be a Christian, sometimes too easy.

During these early centuries there were many things to be decided and settled. We have already seen how the books of the New Testament were chosen, and how the Apostles' Creed came to be.

A form of worship had to be worked out also. In the earliest days Christians simply came together each Sunday in one another's houses. They read from the Old Testament, and later from Paul's letters and the Gospels. They heard a sermon. They prayed. Then they ate a meal together, which included a service of communion as their Lord had instituted it on that last night in Jerusalem. Little by little the Lord's Supper was separated from the meal and became the main part of their worship.

The early Church also had to find officers or leaders. In the first church at Jerusalem the leaders were the twelve apostles, who had been closest to the Lord and would be best able to guide the church.

In Acts 6:1-6 you will find the beginning of a new office, that of deacon. (A deacon serves by helping church members.) In Acts 11:30



elders are mentioned. (An elder is an older leader in a church who assists the pastor in the running of the church.) In time the leading elder in a region began to oversee the work of the whole area. He be-



AUGUSTINE

came known as bishop. (A bishop is an overseer of a number of churches.) The bishop of a strong church in a large city had more influence than other bishops. The bishop of Rome came to have the most influence because people had long been used to thinking of Rome as the center of the world. So the bishop of Rome became in time the head of the whole Church. He was called "pope," which means "father" (similar to our word *papa*).

The early Christians also had to decide exactly what they believed. They knew well enough that in Jesus they had found God and all that made life worth while, but to put that into words was another matter. And so they thought hard, and argued a good deal. Constantine wanted good feeling throughout his empire. So he called 300 bishops together at Nicea (near Constantinople) in the year 325 in the first great council. The Nicene Creed (given as an alternative to the Apostles' Creed in our communion service) contains about what this council agreed upon. (Look up this creed in the *Book of Worship*, or in *The Hymnal* if your edition contains the Order for Holy Communion.)

It was during these early centuries that the practice of slipping away from the evil in the world and living alone began. The people who did this were called monks. The first real monk, named Anthony, was born in Egypt about A.D. 250. He read what our Lord said to the rich young ruler in Matthew 19:21: "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor." So Anthony went out into the Egyptian desert to live alone, fasting and spending much time in prayer. Many other sincere Christians did likewise in the years that followed.

There were many great names during these years. There was Ulfilas, who in the fourth century went as a missionary to the Germanic tribes along the Danube River, in what is now Bulgaria. There was Patrick, whom we think of in connection with St. Patrick's Day, but who was

a missionary to Ireland in the fifth century and a real saint. There were wise teachers, great preachers, and able bishops. Perhaps the greatest of them all in this period was Augustine. He was born in northern Africa in the year 354. As a youth he was brilliant, but not at all serious. One day while he was sitting in a garden he heard a child saying, over and over, "Take up and read." He saw a New Testament on a bench, picked it up, and his glance fell on two verses in Romans which seemed to fit him exactly. (Read Romans 13:13-14 and see if you can tell why these verses had a message for Augustine.) They set him to thinking about his life and he decided to become a Christian. One of his books is *The City of God*. By this he meant the company of God's faithful people in the Church. It was this City of God which Augustine was sure would grow in strength. He was right. In 476, not many years after Augustine's death, the city of Rome fell; but the City of God was strong, and becoming stronger.

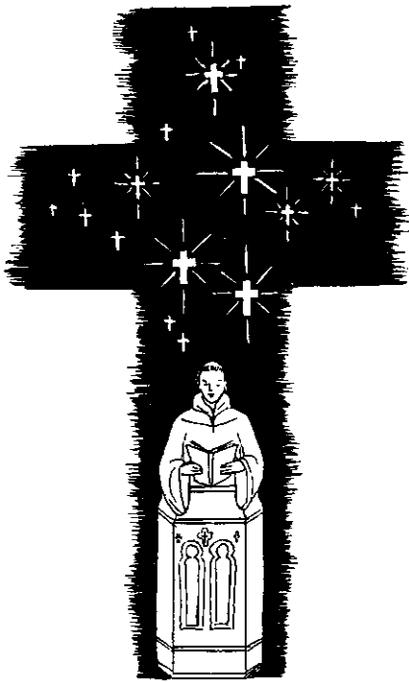


PERIOD II

(The Church spread farther and kept the light shining in the darkness.)

Have you ever wondered how the Church made its way to England and Germany and Sweden and Russia? The inhabitants were wild and uncivilized peoples who had recently come out of Asia. How did the Church come to them?

A king had much to do with the conversion of the Franks, from whom France gets its name. The wife of King Clovis was a Christian, but he was not until on Christmas day, 496, he was baptized at Rheims. In those days, when a king was baptized, many of his followers also were, whether they really wanted to be Christians or not.



Augustine (not the man who came from northern Africa) was sent as a missionary to England by Pope Gregory. The story is told that in the slave-market Gregory saw some fair-haired youths. He asked who they were. The reply was "Angles" (Englishmen). "Not Angles, but angels," Gregory is supposed to have said. The story may or may not be true, but it is certainly true that he sent Augustine to England in 596.

Boniface, an Englishman of the eighth century, was a missionary to the Germans. In the region that we now know as Holland he was killed by unfriendly people.

Ansgar, in the ninth century, became a missionary to the Norsemen. He preached in Denmark and Sweden.

Christianity came to Russia in the tenth century from the eastern part of the Church in Constantinople. The real beginning was when the Grand Duke Vladimir I was baptized in 988. Many years later the Russian Church became independent, as the "tree" on page 95 shows.

But this is not the end of the story. As far back as the seventh century one branch of the Church carried the good news of Jesus to south India and even to China. About the time the *Mayflower* sailed to America workmen in China discovered a stone which was then at least 800 years old. The carving on it speaks of the Trinity, the birth of our Lord, the visit of the wise men, the sacrament of baptism, and even mentions that there are twenty-seven books in the New Testament. It is truly wonderful—is it not?—how the Church spread.

In Europe these were dark days. They are called the Dark Ages. The Roman Empire was gone, and the new peoples were only slowly giving up some of their crude ways. The Church's buildings and monasteries were points of light in this darkness, like stars in the sky. Imperfect as it was, the Church shed much light. The worship of God was carried on. Children were taught. Books were copied. The sick were cared for. Some efforts were made to stop the constant warring. The light that came into the world with Jesus was kept burning.

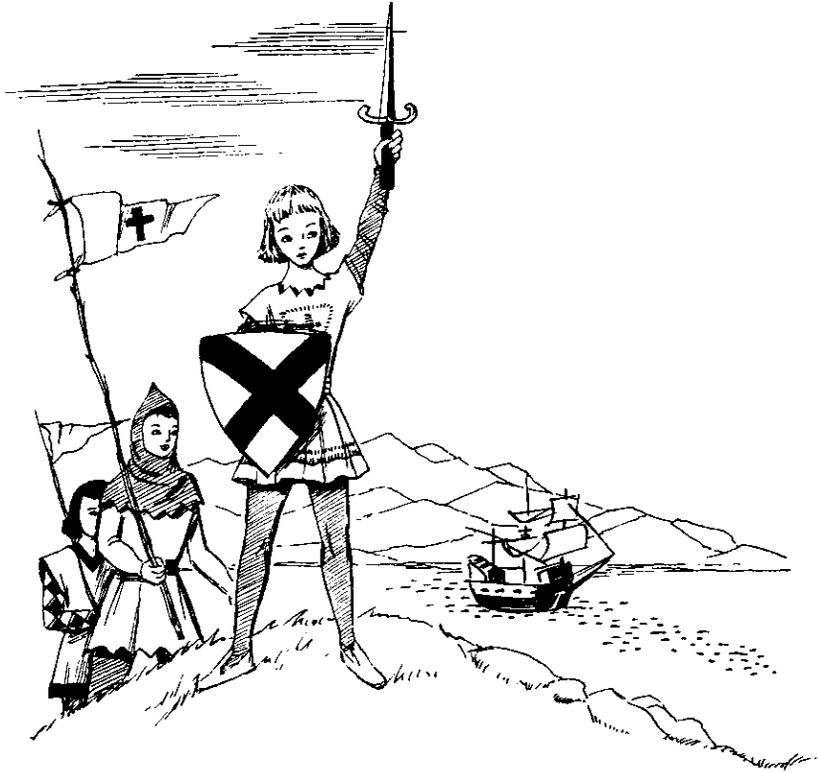
PERIOD III

(The Church reached the peak of its power and began to decline.)

The eastern half of the Church and the western half had been drifting apart for some time. They could not agree on the use of images in the churches, nor on many other matters. In 1054 the pope in Rome declared that the eastern half of the Church was no longer a part of the true Church. Of course, the Church in the east did not agree. From that time on the Church has been divided into the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. (There had been a few smaller splits, as the "tree" on page 95 points out, but the great majority of Christians had belonged to the one great Church up to this time.)

The Church of the west grew in power, and the pope came to rival the emperor. When Gregory VII was pope and Henry IV emperor, there arose a dispute over who had the right to appoint bishops in the Church. The pope ruled that the emperor was no longer in the Church, and all his subjects could rebel against him. So powerful was the pope in 1077 that the emperor came to northern Italy to the town of Canossa, where the pope was staying, and stood before the gate three days in his bare feet during the cold of winter to make peace. The Church had come a long way from the lowly Jesus. This marked almost the peak of the Church's power—but not quite. Innocent III, one hundred years later, was probably the most powerful of all the popes. He actually made the king of England pay taxes to him, as though England belonged to the pope.

One of the best known periods of the Church's life during these years was the time of the Crusades. The Turks had taken the Holy Land, and Christians were kept from going to see the places where our Lord had walked the earth. Gregory VII received a call from the eastern emperor to help him against the Turks. All through Europe people gathered together for the task of setting the Holy Land free. In the two hundred years from 1096 to 1272 there were a number of crusades. By land and by sea they made their way to the Holy Land. They captured Jerusalem but did not hold it. Many thousands of people were killed in the battles. In fact, the Crusades did little good except to bring the people of Europe in touch with new places and new ideas. The saddest part of the story of the Crusades is that of the Children's Crusade. A boy in France and another in Germany called children together for a crusade of their own. Slave-traders got the French children into ships by offering to take them to Palestine, but instead they sold them as slaves in Egypt. Most of the children from Germany perished as they crossed the Alps into Italy, and the remainder were turned back by the pope.



On the "tree" on page 95 there is a branch called the Waldenses. They were a group of Christians named for Peter Waldo, a rich merchant in southern France. Like Anthony years before, he read Jesus' words to the rich young man, and followed them. This was in 1176. He and his followers aroused the displeasure of the Roman Catholic Church, and then suffered severe persecution for their beliefs and deeds. The men who examined these people were called Inquisitors. The organization that did this work was called the Inquisition. In the years that followed many others besides the Waldenses suffered at the hands of the Inquisition.

One of the truest Christians of this age or any other was Giovanni Bernadone, better known as Francis of Assisi. He was born in 1181 or 1182, the son of a well-to-do merchant. Like Augustine he was a gay young man, and like Augustine he changed into a great Christian. One day he took some cloth from one of his father's storehouses and sold it to rebuild a church near his home. This was the beginning of a life which made little of money and made much of brotherly kindness. He thought of himself as a brother to every living thing, even birds and

animals. Hymn 15 in *The Hymnal* was written by him and shows his spirit. His followers were called Franciscans. They pledged themselves to a life of poverty and service to others.

At about the same time another famous order of monks was started by a Spaniard named Dominic. Hence they were called Dominicans. Many of them were great preachers and professors in universities.

The great pope, Innocent III, was in power when the thirteenth century started. The Crusades were in full swing. Francis and Dominic were carrying out their work. Thomas Aquinas, the greatest thinker of the Roman Catholic Church, lived in this century. Uni-



FRANCIS OF ASSISI

versities began to spring up in Europe about this time. Great cathedrals had already been started, with whole communities joining in the work of building these beautiful houses of God.

It is difficult to remain humble before God and kind to all men when things are going well. The Church was strong, rich, powerful, but not as good as it had once been. In the fourteenth century men began to think of righting some of the wrongs in the Church.

John Wyclif tried to do this in England. He believed that the Bible should be the one guide that the Church should try to follow. Because the people could not read the Latin Bible in use in the churches, he translated the Bible into English. He also said that the Church was not its high officials only, but all of Christ's followers.

At about the same time there lived in Bohemia another John. John Huss read what John Wyclif wrote, and held many of the same views. He also opposed the sale of "indulgences." The Roman Catholic Church held that the goodness of Christ and the saints was stored up as in a bank, and some of it could be checked out to save sinners from punishment they would otherwise receive. One could get this stored-up goodness by paying money to the Church. Huss thought this was wrong. His views did not please the Roman Catholic Church, and he was burned at the stake.

New ideas were stirring. The Renaissance, or "rebirth" of interest in man's life here and now as over against salvation for a future life, was

starting. Before long Columbus would discover the New World. The Middle Ages were over for the Church, as well as for everything else.

PERIOD IV

(The Church divided into many branches and spread around the world.)

Did it not seem strange to you when you looked at the "tree" on page 95 that so many churches branched off from the Roman Catholic Church at about the same time? These branches are all Protestant churches. (They protested against the practices of the Roman Catholic Church.) The followers of Martin Luther were the first to break away and form a new church. Luther had been a monk in the Catholic Church but could not seem to find peace of mind no matter how much he tried. He had studied the writings of Augustine and also the Bible. Gradually he had come to understand that men are not saved by their good deeds but by God's gracious love. He believed that Christians should put their faith in this great love of God. When John Tetzel came to Germany to sell indulgences and said that as soon as the money hit the collection box some soul would be saved, Luther nailed on the church door at Wittenberg a paper on which were ninety-five theses (statements) which he was willing to debate. This act started off the Protestant Reformation (a period of reforming or making over the Church).



MARTIN LUTHER

Meanwhile to the south in Switzerland, a man named Ulrich Zwingli was saying about the same thing. He too was a priest. He too went back to the Bible as the only rule of faith and life for Christians. He too believed we are saved "by grace through faith." By 1522 he was preaching his ideas in the town of Zürich so that all could hear. In 1523 he prepared sixty-seven statements of his own. As Luther was the founder of all Lutheran churches, Zwingli was the founder of all Reformed and Presbyterian churches. A new branch of the Church was begun.



ULRICH ZWINGLI

These two men are of great interest to us, because our Evangelical and Reformed Church can be traced back to them. They met once at



JOHN CALVIN

Marburg in 1529. They could agree on most things, but not quite on the Lord's Supper. So the two branches went their separate ways. The Lutheran Church grew in Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and America. The Reformed Church grew in southern Germany, France, Holland, Scotland, and America.

In some places this latter branch was called Presbyterian (governed by presbyters or elders). All Reformed and Presbyterian people owe much to two other men besides Zwingli. Both were named John. John Calvin worked out the Reformed and Presbyterian beliefs better than any other person has ever done. John Knox was a fiery Scotchman who served nineteen months as a galley-slave because of his Protestant beliefs. In Geneva he became a follower of Calvin, and later did much to make Scotland Protestant.



JOHN KNOX

Now a word about the other branches! The Baptists came from some friends of Zwingli in Zürich who felt that he did not go far enough. They did not believe in baptizing children. They felt it was better to wait till people were old enough to make promises for themselves. The Baptist teachings spread in Germany and Holland, but mostly in England and America.

For many years the English people had not cared to be ruled by the pope in matters of religion. About this time Henry VIII, king of England, wanted to divorce his wife and marry another. The pope would not agree to the divorce, so in 1533 Henry broke with him. The next year Parliament set the English Church entirely free of the pope and placed it under the English king. Out of the Church of England came our American Episcopal churches. ("Episcopal" means ruled by bishops.)

Meanwhile in England there were those who wanted more than just to be free from the pope. They wanted to make the Church "pure" of many Roman Catholic practices. These were the Puritans. For example, they did not like the fine robes of the priests, because they seemed to set the priests apart from ordinary members. From among the Puritans came the Congregationalist branch of the Church. The first Congregationalist church was started by Robert Browne in 1581. The Pilgrim Fathers on the *Mayflower* were Congregationalists.

The chief founder of the Methodist branch was John Wesley. He was the son of a minister of the Church of England. While studying at Oxford, he with his brother Charles and others formed a club. They were nicknamed "Methodists" because they planned their daily lives with such detailed method. On May 24, 1738, at 8:45 P.M., John Wesley was sitting in a meeting in London. Some of Luther's writings were being read. Suddenly he felt sure that he was saved by Christ. The next year he organized the first real Methodist congregation. The Meth-



JOHN WESLEY

odist Church like its founder, has made much of how a Christian feels in his heart. It reached the middle-class people of England with the Christian gospel, and has become strong in America.

Many other branches of the Church were started in Europe, such as the Quakers and the Moravians, and some of their members came to America. Here new branches were added, such as the Disciples of Christ (also known as the Christian Church). Now there are more than two hundred Protestant denominations in America.

When all these branches began to appear in the sixteenth century, the Roman Catholic Church increased its own efforts. It purified itself from within. It persecuted the Protestants. It sent out missionaries into the far corners of the earth that Christopher Columbus and others had discovered. It remains strong today in many lands.

About the year 1800 the Protestant churches began their own missionary work with a will. Many societies were started, money was raised, brave men and women left their homes for the dangerous work of carrying the Christian faith to the uttermost parts of the earth. The work is by no means done, but the Church has gone wherever people live and the sun never sets upon it. We hope and work and pray for the day when all men will become Christian and will try to do the will of God.

The History of the Christian Church

Underline the answer that completes the sentence correctly.

1. The birthday of the Christian Church is: (a) Christmas
(b) Easter (c) Pentecost.
2. The first Christians worshiped in: (a) each other's homes
(b) churches (c) fields (d) the temple.
3. Whenever they met together the first Christians: (a) sacrificed an animal
(b) ate together.
4. The first great missionary to Europe was: (a) Peter
(b) Thomas (c) Paul (d) Philip.
5. The early Christians: (a) placed all their money and possessions in a common treasury
(b) kept them for themselves
(c) gave a tenth to the church.
6. The first officers in the Christian churches were elders and:
(a) preachers (b) deacons (c) popes.
7. The early Christians would not worship: (a) the emperor
(b) God.
8. The first emperor to become Christian was: (a) Julius Caesar
(b) Marcus Aurelius (c) Constantine.
9. The council of churches and bishops meeting in the year 325 formulated the: (a) Nicene Creed (b) Apostles' Creed.
10. The bishop of Rome came to be called: (a) presbyter
(b) pope (c) elder.
11. The Church was taken to England by: (a) Augustine
(b) Patrick (c) Gregory the Great.
12. A great missionary to the Germans was:
(a) Ansgar (b) Boniface.
13. The man who pledged himself and his followers to poverty and service was: (a) Francis of Assisi (b) Innocent III
(c) Ulfilas.
14. The man who was burned at the stake because he wanted to reform the evils of the Catholic Church was: (a) John Wyclif
(b) John Huss (c) Martin Luther.
15. The chief founder of the Reformed and Presbyterian churches was:
(a) Zwingli (b) Calvin (c) Luther.
16. The chief founder of the Methodist Church was:
(a) Robert Browne (b) John Wesley (c) Henry VIII.
17. A denomination that grew up in the United States is: (a) the Disciples of Christ (Christian Church)
(b) the Quakers
(c) the Episcopal Church.

CHAPTER 15

What Protestants Believe

What Protestants believe is what Christians believe. Whether a Christian belongs to a Protestant church, to the Roman Catholic Church, or to the Eastern Orthodox Church, there are certain beliefs that are common to all. We have discussed these in detail in Part II. (See pages 29 to 62.) Briefly, all Christians believe in:

God the Father, Maker of heaven and earth;
Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord;
The Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of all life;
The holy catholic (one, holy, universal, Christian) Church;
The communion of saints;
The forgiveness of sins;
The life everlasting;
The kingdom of God.

But there are also certain basic beliefs which Protestants alone hold. Reread the paragraphs on Luther and Zwingli under Period IV in chapter 14. Underline what each one believed that was different from the current beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church.

Protestants Believe in the Bible

Protestants believe that the Bible is the Word of God, the only true guide for our faith and life. They believe that the Bible needs no other interpreter than the Holy Spirit. Believing that Bible study is necessary for Christian living, Protestants are always concerned about having the Bible in the language of the people, in words that they can understand, and they help those who cannot read to learn to do so.

Protestants Believe in the Gospel

The gospel is the good news. It is good news about God, about man, about sin, about life, and about death. The good news about God is that he is our loving Father. The good news about man is that he is a child of God, made in the image of God, free, immortal. The good news about sin is that sin can be forgiven. If we confess our sins directly to God, he will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. His forgiveness is full and free to all who turn to him in sincere repentance. This forgiveness is not conditioned by good works, or merit, or prayers to saints, or the words of pastor or priest. It is God who saves. It is Christ who died for us. No man can save himself. The Church cannot save him. God alone can save him and bring him into the abundant life that Christ has promised.

Protestants Believe in the Church

They believe that the Church was founded by Jesus Christ himself. He is the Head of the Church. The Church is his body. That is, it is through the Church that he carries out his purpose in the world. The Church is not primarily an organization. Rather, the Church is a society of believers, a brotherhood in Christ, a fellowship of the faithful. The Church is the people of God. Wherever Christians are gathered together in the name of Christ, there is the Church.

Protestants believe that every Christian has direct access to God through Christ. They believe in the "priesthood of believers": each believer in God can approach God whenever he so desires. He need not go to any particular place; nor must he worship in any particular way; nor need he approach God through a minister or a priest. This does not mean that Protestants have no need of ministers, but it does mean that wherever the gospel is preached and the sacraments are truly administered, there is the Church.

Protestants Believe in Freedom of Worship

To have freedom of worship requires democracy in the state. Totalitarian countries do not permit people to act as their conscience dictates. Protestants believe that God alone is Lord of man's conscience. They believe that God has endowed men with certain inalienable rights, such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Therefore they believe that such liberty must be extended to all other people, even though those people's religious experience is different from their own. They believe that each Christian must be free to worship God as he desires.

What Our Denomination Believes

Our Evangelical and Reformed Church believes all that has been said above, for it is a Protestant church, a branch of the one Christian Church. Our denomination has its roots in Reformation days and has grown up in the freedom that America has granted its churches. The constitution of our church illustrates this. It says:

The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are recognized as the Word of God and the ultimate rule of Christian faith and practice.

The doctrinal standards of the Evangelical and Reformed Church are the Heidelberg Catechism, Luther's Catechism, and the Augsburg Confession. They are accepted as an authoritative interpretation of the essential truth taught in the Holy Scriptures.

Wherever these doctrinal standards differ, ministers, members and congregations, in accordance with the liberty of conscience inherent in the gospel, are allowed to adhere to the interpretation of one of these confessions. However, in each case the final norm is the Word of God.

In its relations to other Christian communions the Evangelical and Reformed Church shall constantly endeavor to promote the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Congregations are allowed freedom of worship.

CHAPTER 16

The Story of Our Denomination

We all belong, of course, to the one Christian Church, which includes all those who are the Lord's. But the branch in which we hold membership is the *Evangelical and Reformed Church*.

Have you ever thought about the "and" in our name? It means that we are a union of two churches, which until 1934 were separate. That is why the story of our denomination must be told in several parts.

The "Reformed" Part of the Story

We will take the Reformed part first, because it is the older. The beginning of this story is on the other side of the ocean in Europe. You remember that Ulrich Zwingli started the Reformed branch of the Christian Church in Switzerland. Many German people, especially those who lived in the Rhine Valley just north of Switzerland, came to believe the Reformed teachings.

About 1700 these German people were finding life hard and bitter. The Thirty Years' War had caused great suffering. To make matters worse, Louis XIV of France sent his armies into the Rhineland and laid waste to it. To add to the misery of the people, there was a succession of poor harvests for several years. To make matters still worse, the winter of 1708-1709 was unusually severe. To top it all, a Roman Catholic became the ruler of the Palatinate, and Reformed people sometimes had to suffer for their faith. Hence their thoughts turned to America.

BEGINNINGS IN AMERICA

In the spring of 1709, a large number of German emigrants set out. Because of the favorable attitude of the government in Pennsylvania, many of the Reformed people settled in that state.

It was not easy for them to keep up their religious life in the new world, and they wanted to do it very much. Sometimes, when there was no minister in a struggling community, the people would ask a schoolteacher to preach and hold services for them. Such a one was John Philip Boehm. Twenty miles northwest of Philadelphia lived a little cluster of Reformed people at a place called Falkner Swamp. They asked schoolteacher Boehm to be their pastor. Two nearby churches also asked him to be their pastor. He was not an ordained minister, but he agreed to serve these people. He held his first communion at Falkner Swamp on October 15, 1725, with about forty worshipers present. He drew up a constitution for his congregations, and the Reformed Church in the United States was begun.

Other congregations soon sprang up in nearby places. They were small and weak. It was hard to get ministers. Mr. Boehm often had to visit distant churches to give communion, for there was no one else to do it. You can imagine that these trips were not easy, for there were no highways and swift automobiles. He died while making one such trip. We honor him as the father of the Reformed Church.

The scattered congregations had no organization to tie them together. There were no regular meetings where their pastors and elders could come to know one another and lay plans together. The man who changed this was another pioneer, Michael Schlatter. He was Swiss, but was sent to America by the Reformed Church of Holland, which had taken an interest in the little Reformed congregations in the American wilderness. His purpose in coming was to gather these congregations together into one body. This he did in 1747 with the organization of the Coetus (pronounced "seetus" and meaning a "coming together"). This was not a large body. At the first meeting in Philadelphia there were only four ministers and twenty-seven elders from twelve congregations. But the organization of this body was an important step in our history.

The Rev. Schlatter traveled more than Mr. Boehm had done. He was pastor at Philadelphia, but he went into neighboring regions to meet Reformed people. Sometimes he found them so eager for the preaching of the gospel and for the Lord's Supper that they broke into tears when he stood before them. He also made a visit to Europe, and raised \$60,000 for the aid of these churches.

THE REFORMED CHURCH BECOMES INDEPENDENT

The years rolled by. The Declaration of Independence was signed, and we became a nation. The Reformed churches grew in number and membership. A college was begun at Lancaster, Pa., which was named for Benjamin Franklin. Just as the nation had become independent, so

the young church decided to go on its own and separate from the Reformed Church in Holland. In 1793 there was held the first meeting of the Synod (assembly) of the Reformed Church. The pioneer church had grown up and was now ready to ordain its own ministers and make its own decisions.

This was not a large gathering. There were only thirteen ministers at this first synod meeting. But the new denomination did number 178 congregations and 15,000 members. These were scattered from New York to Virginia, with a few west of the Allegheny Mountains. In the years ahead, this church continued to grow. German Reformed people migrated into North Carolina, taking with them their faith and customs and language. At one time, it is said, there were places in North Carolina where even the Negroes spoke Pennsylvania Dutch. Reformed people also made their way across the mountains into Ohio and beyond. Later on, a strong colony settled in Wisconsin.

WIDENING AND DEEPENING CHURCH LIFE

Meanwhile the church was growing in other ways besides numbers. Over in England Sunday schools had been begun, and the first one in our denomination was started in First Church, Philadelphia, on April 14, 1806. A training school for ministers was badly needed; so a theological seminary was opened. A church paper was started, to bind together all the various parts of the church. One of the most important steps was the organization in 1838 of a Board of Foreign Missions. Through its work the Reformed Church in later years was to spread far beyond the United States—to Japan, China, and Iraq.

The several parts of the church now needed to be tied together more closely, if they were to be a real church. Alongside the first synod in the East, another synod had been formed in Ohio with its own seminary, college, and church paper. The two synods were friendly, but they were separate.

A great occasion was chosen for bringing them together—the three hundredth anniversary of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, which had been written in 1563. So in 1863, in the midst of the Civil War, the General Synod was organized. It met in Pittsburgh, Pa., on the border between the two synods.

The Reformed part of our church had now taken shape. There were many later changes, of course. The word *German* was dropped from the denominational name, because most of the people were speaking English. New types of work were begun, and many new members were added as the years went by. This, in brief, is the Reformed part of our story.

The "Evangelical" Part of the Story

We must now go back some years, and cross the ocean to Germany once more. There, both the Reformed and the Lutheran branches of the Church had spread. King Frederick William III of Prussia wanted very much to bring the two together. On the three hundredth anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, he gave an order uniting the two branches into the Evangelical Church of Prussia. ("Evangel" means "gospel" or "good news." The Evangelical Church would be, then, the church of the good news.) The union spread to other parts of Germany besides his kingdom, so that there were thousands of people who held this Evangelical faith.

We are now thinking of a time a hundred years after the first Reformed people came to America. Again the times were hard. Napoleon had all Europe anxious and distressed. Again there were war, poverty, and sickness. So, in the early 1800's, German people turned their eyes once more toward the new land of America. This time few stayed along the East Coast, for the Midwest was opening up for settlement. The new immigrants either landed in the East and then went west overland, or else they went to New Orleans and then up the Mississippi River to St. Louis. These people brought their Evangelical faith with them, and they were the beginning of the Evangelical part of our story.

BEGINNINGS IN AMERICA

Among the readers of a book that spoke very highly of Missouri was a young man, well trained and well-to-do, by the name of Hermann Garlichs. He made his way to this country and settled about fifty miles west of St. Louis. There a little group of Evangelical people asked him to be their pastor, and in 1833 he organized the Femme Osage church. In many ways he holds the place in the Evangelical part of our story that John Philip Boehm holds in the Reformed part. Like Boehm he was not an ordained minister at the time. However, he agreed to serve the people because the need was so great. Like Boehm he organized a first congregation, to be followed by many others. Like Boehm he gave himself completely to his work. He organized seven congregations in this region, gave generously of his own money when a church building was needed, and even sacrificed his health for the work he loved.

Soon other congregations of the same sort sprang up, but each was separate from the rest. The man who brought them together was Louis E. Nollau. He did for the Evangelical part of the story what Michael Schlatter did for the Reformed part. Louis Nollau came to America as a missionary, intending to go to the Indians near the Pacific Coast. But while he and a companion missionary were waiting to set out from St.

Louis into the Indian country, the companion took sick and died. This changed the course of Louis Nollau's life. He became the pastor of a German Evangelical congregation at Gravois Settlement near St. Louis. Soon he saw the need of gathering together the separate churches of the region, and sent out a letter to his fellow ministers, inviting them to his house to consider the matter. Six, including Garlichs and Nollau, met in the log-cabin parsonage at Gravois Settlement, and there on October 15, 1840, banded themselves together into the German Evangelical Church Society of the West. Two other pastors later joined these six. This society was not a synod. It was as yet only an association of pastors. But it was an important step in our history.

Pastor Nollau served the church in many ways. For a while he was a missionary in Africa. Later, when he was a pastor in St. Louis, he saw that German people there needed medical care, and started a hospital. He also began an orphanage during an epidemic. Our church owes much to him.

THE SOCIETY BECOMES A SYNOD

In the years that followed, the Evangelical Church Society of the West grew in many ways. It started a theological seminary to train ministers. It began a church paper. It became much larger by taking into itself similar Evangelical organizations that had grown up in Ohio and New York. During this time it gradually became much more than an association of ministers. It became a real church organization. So in 1866 it changed its name to German Evangelical Synod of the West.

The man who was called to give all his time to this synod as its president was Pastor Adolf Baltzer. He had already served his church well. He had been president of a church college, and later president and teacher in the theological seminary. Now, in addition to being president of the synod, he was for a while its treasurer, the editor of the church paper, and the superintendent of its publishing house. It is no wonder that he often had to work eighteen hours a day. Out of such devotion our church has come.

In due time there were other mergers with a synod reaching into northern Illinois and Wisconsin and with the Synod of the East. In 1877 the name was changed again—this time to German Evangelical Synod of North America. The old wording had to give way to "North America."

In 1884 the work was extended far beyond North America. In that year the Board of Foreign Missions was organized. It took over a work already begun in India, and in 1920 started a new missionary field in Honduras.

The Evangelical part of our church had now taken definite shape. It

too dropped the word *German* in time and added new members and new lines of work as the years went by. This, in brief, is the Evangelical part of the story.

The Evangelical and Reformed Church

There was much in common between the Evangelical and the Reformed groups. The ancestors of both had come originally from Germany. Both had stood through the years for a well-educated ministry. Both shared in the Reformed tradition, although the Evangelical Synod contained a stream of Lutheran influence also. Most important of all, both were thoroughly committed to co-operation and Christian fellowship with other denominations.

The two groups had had dealings with one another in various ways. One of the six ministers who met at Gravois Settlement in 1840 was a missionary of the Ohio Synod of the Reformed Church. For some years members of the two churches (together with others) joined in supporting the same Christian work in India. More than ten years before the union took place a respected minister of the Reformed Church became a teacher in the theological seminary of the Evangelical Synod. Most important of all, the members of both were one in this—they had the same Lord.

It was only natural, therefore, that these two denominations should draw together. Their leaders drafted a Plan of Union, which was adopted by both groups. Then, on the evening of June 26, 1934, representatives of the two denominations gathered outside Zion Church in Cleveland, Ohio, and marched in together, two by two—Evangelical and Reformed, Evangelical and Reformed.

Since then we are the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Our history is in two parts, but our future is one.

Outstanding Features of Our Church

The former Reformed Church was well known for its many institutions of learning, particularly its colleges, many of which have had a long history. This interest in educating young people in the Christian way of life as well as in academic studies extended even to the mission fields.

The former Evangelical Synod was especially well known for its benevolent institutions. These included homes for the aged, homes for feeble-minded and epileptic people, hospitals, homes for children, city missions, and homes for retired ministers. This interest also extended to the mission fields.

Our Evangelical and Reformed Church has inherited both of these

TIME LINE of the *EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH*

(The dates on this time line are a few of the most important ones in the story of our church. The preceding pages tell what happened on those dates. If you write in these happenings opposite the right years, you will be able to see the main points of our church's story at a glance.)

REFORMED CHURCH
IN THE UNITED STATES

EVANGELICAL SYNOD
OF NORTH AMERICA

October 15, 1725-----

1747-----

1793-----

1838-----

1863-----

June 26,

-----1833

-----October 15, 1840

-----1866

-----1877

-----1884

1934

interests. (See pages 202 and 203 for lists of our educational and our benevolent institutions. *The Year Book of the Evangelical and Reformed Church* also carries complete lists.)

Since both churches were greatly interested in foreign missions, the merger brought opportunities for more world-wide work. In addition to continuing the work in the five countries where the two churches had been active, responsibility was assumed for two new fields: in Ecuador, South America, among the Andean Indians; and in Togoland, Africa, among the Ewe people.

CHAPTER 17

The Story of My Own Church

This story you must write yourself—with your pastor's help. Some of the information you will need can be gathered from the record books of your church. Some of it you can get from your parents, church school teachers, members of the consistory or church council, and long-time members of the congregation. Some of it can be secured by visiting the various organizations in your church. It may be that you can find a booklet that was prepared for some special anniversary of the church; or there may be pictures of former buildings, or old communion sets, or pulpit Bibles that come from years back in your church's history.

There will not be room in this book to write out all you will want to record about your own church. Cut pages the size of this book and insert them here. The questions below suggest the kind of information you may want to include.

What to Find Out for Your Story

1. What is the full name of your congregation?
2. When was it begun? How old is it now?
3. How large is its membership?
4. Who were the charter members?
5. How did your congregation come to be started?
6. What interesting happenings have there been in the life of the congregation?
7. Who are some (or all) of the ministers and prominent members who have served the church during its history?
8. What is the name of the governing body of your church?
9. What committees do the work of the church?
10. How much is the church budget? How is it raised? How is it spent?

11. Who comprises the paid staff of your church? What work does each one do?

12. What are the chief organizations in your church?

13. When was your present church building built? If yours is an old congregation, find out about earlier buildings and locations.

14. What else does your church building contain besides the sanctuary? Does it have special rooms for the church school? for plays? for friendly good times? What else?

15. Does your church have interesting art-glass windows? What can you find out about them?

16. What can you find of interest on the outside of the building? Is there an inscription on the cornerstone? Is there a bell tower? a bell? bells? a carillon? Are there any old tombstones in the church's cemetery where founders of your church lie buried?

17. In what style of architecture is your church built?

Study the Church Sanctuary

Even though you attend the service of worship every Sunday, you have probably not seen everything there is in the sanctuary. Go there when no service is going on and examine every bit of furniture, every square foot of wall. You will probably be surprised to find many things that you had not noticed before. There may be things that you have wondered about. Why are they in the church? What are they used for?

As you enter the sanctuary your eye immediately lights upon the *communion table* or *altar*. From the earliest days of Christian history the bread and wine, which stand for the body and blood of our Lord, were placed upon a communion table. As people thought about our Lord's death on the cross, they saw in it a sacrifice that could be compared to the sacrifices of animals offered upon the altar in the Jewish temple—only much greater. Thus the Church began to speak of the communion table as an altar. Since the Protestant Reformation many churches have used only the communion table because that is what the early Church used. But whichever your church has, it should remind you of Jesus Christ our Savior.

The *pulpit* is the place where the minister stands when he preaches and brings God's word to his people.

The *baptismal font* is used to contain the water for baptism. The word "font" is much the same as "fountain."

Many churches have, in addition to the pulpit, a *lectern*. This comes from a Latin word meaning "to read." It is the stand from which the minister reads the Bible in the service of worship.

Practically everything in the sanctuary has religious meaning of some

sort and is placed there to help people to worship God better. When an object stands for an idea we call it a symbol. The communion table symbolizes Christ's communion with his followers. The pulpit and lectern symbolize the word of God. See what other *symbols* you recognize in your church. Look on page 192 and see if you can find these symbols in your church. What Christian meaning do they have?

Does your church use altar coverings of different *colors* for different seasons of the church year? (See page 190 for a list of the seasons.) If it does, the main colors are probably white, purple, and green, and each color symbolizes a Christian virtue. White represents purity and joy. Can you see why white is used on Christmas and Easter? Purple, or violet, represents penitence or humble sorrow for sin. Can you see why this color is used during Lent? Green is the color of living things in nature. It is also the most ordinary color of all. It is all about us. Can you see why it is used during late spring and summer and early autumn, when there are no great joyous days at church but when there is for us all the ordinary business of everyday Christian living?

There are many other Christian symbols that you may find in your church. What do the following stand for?

A shepherd (John 10:11)

A lamb (John 1:29)

Lighted candles (John 8:12)

A cross (John 19:17-18)

An eye (Psalm 34:15)

A dove (Mark 1:10)

A tongue of fire (Acts 2:3-4)

A Fellowship of Christians

A church is a Christian fellowship, a part of the great fellowship of Christians around the earth. Its members are bound together with many close ties. When you are confirmed, you will become a full member of this Christian fellowship. As time goes on you will appreciate it more and more, and you will have many chances to do your part in it and for it. The more active you are, the more you will feel the closeness of the fellowship.

Is there anything you as a class could do for your church now? Interview leaders in the church as well as your pastor to see what jobs there are in your church that young people of your age can do.

CHAPTER 18

The Church Service of Worship

O come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!
For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.—*Psalm 95:6-7*

How often we have heard these words as the minister opened the regular Sunday morning service of worship! They come to us out of our religious heritage, and they continue to call people to worship as they did back in the days of Hebrew worship in the temple.

The Weekly Miracle

Every Sunday, in big and little churches, in open country, village and city, this kind of miracle takes place: People who are weary, confused, sad—bowed down with burdens of all kinds, tempted, fearful, and doubting—come to worship. In that hour they lay their lives before God and listen to him speak. When they depart for their homes they are changed persons. The burdens have been lifted, the fear is gone, and they face life with new power and direction. Those who have come rejoicing go out with greater joy in God. Those who were tempted receive strength to withstand temptation. Those who were confused see the right way made clear. There is nothing more wonderful in all of life than this weekly miracle.

What Causes This Miracle?

God causes this miracle. God changes these people. Anyone who turns to God and opens his life before God can be changed in just this way, for God is waiting for people to let his spirit come into their lives.

The most glorious thing that can happen to us is to learn how to talk with God in true worship. We speak to God in prayer and hymn; he speaks to us through Scripture and sermon and directly to our minds and hearts.

What Happens in Worship?

People who have given much thought and study to this experience of worship find that most of us are quite alike in what happens to us when we worship. Of course, we may have very brief, simple periods of worship that do not follow this kind of pattern. But when we give ourselves completely for a longer time of worship, we find that the following feelings come over us.

1. We think of God, how holy he is, how mighty he is, how good he is. We recall all that we know about him, and then have a feeling of how great he is—much greater than we can imagine. We call this point in our worship our *vision* of God. Some people call it *adoration*.

2. Next, our thoughts turn to ourselves. Having seen God's holiness, we see more sharply our own unholiness. When we see ourselves in God's light, we see our failures, our weaknesses, our sins. We know that we have not measured up to God's expectations for us. We are filled with humility, and we ask God to forgive us and let us start afresh. We call this point in our worship *repentance* or *confession*.

3. When we come humbly to God, sincerely asking his forgiveness, he always forgives us our past sins and releases us from our old selves. This glorious feeling of being clean again must find expression in our thanking God. This is the point of *forgiveness* and *thanksgiving*.

4. We are now ready to hear what God's will is for our lives. God has a message for us and we are listening and waiting for it. Some call this point of worship *illumination*, for we now see clearly what God wants us to do. Most of us call it *communion*.

5. We accept God's challenge. We promise to be true to the new light he has given us. This is our *dedication*, our acceptance of God's will.

An Old Testament Experience of Worship

One of the finest examples of worship is described in highly poetic language in Isaiah 6:1-8. Isaiah was a young man when King Uzziah died. The old king had ruled for a long time, and he had been a good king. The whole nation had come to depend greatly upon him. His son was a poor person to take his place. So when King Uzziah died, there was a feeling of helplessness and confusion and unrest. Furthermore, the powerful nation of Assyria was threatening the land. With a feeling of fear and concern, Isaiah went to the temple to worship. It was then

1. WE TURN OUR THOUGHTS TOWARD GOD

I saw the Lord, high and
lifted up.
"Holy, holy, holy, is the
Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of
his glory."

Prelude (quiet music that helps us to turn our thoughts toward God)

Opening Sentence—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Also such verses as the one at the beginning of this chapter or—

The Lord is in his holy temple;
let all the earth keep silence before him.

2. WE FEEL OUR UNWORTHINESS AND GOD'S FORGIVENESS

"Woe is me! For I am lost;
for I am a man of unclean lips."

Confession of Sin—Almighty and most merciful God, our heavenly Father; we humble ourselves before thee, under a deep sense of our unworthiness and guilt.

"Your guilt is taken away,
and your sin is forgiven."

Assurance of Pardon—I announce and declare, by the authority and in the name of Christ, that your sins are forgiven.

3. WE PRAISE GOD AND LEARN WHAT HE WANTS US TO DO

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

A Hymn of Praise

The Holy Scriptures (which tell what God does for us, and what he wants us to do)

The Apostles' Creed (in which we join with all who have gone before us in confessing our Christian beliefs)

General Prayer (in which we thank God for his goodness, remember all men who need him, and seek to know and do his will)

Anthem (the words of which are usually taken directly from the Bible)

Offering (in which we offer our money and ourselves to the service of God and men)

Hymn

Sermon (in which the minister explains what God does for us, and what he wants us to do)

4. WE GIVE OURSELVES TO GOD'S WILL AND CARE

Then I said, "Here I am!
Send me."

The Lord's Prayer—Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

Doxology or Hymn (a closing hymn of consecration to God's will)

Benediction—The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

Postlude (whose music sends us out to do God's will)

that he had the experience about which he writes in chapter 6 of his book. Read his words thoughtfully.

The Order of Worship for the Sunday Morning Service

In the very first pages of the *Book of Worship* and of *The Hymnal* of our Evangelical and Reformed Church you will find "The Order of Worship." As you get ready to be confirmed you will want to learn all you can about this order so that you can participate more fully in the service of worship of your church.

One way of understanding this order of worship is to look at it alongside the experience that Isaiah had. On the next page the two are placed in parallel columns. The two columns are not entirely alike, as you will see; but they are enough alike for our purpose, which is to find a helpful way of thinking about the order of worship as you experience it in your church.

It may be that your church does not follow the first order of worship given in the *Book of Worship*. It may follow the second one, or it may have developed its own order of worship. Our churches are free to do this. But the point is, there *is* an order of worship, and if you examine the service used in your church you will find that it will most probably include the four main parts indicated on the preceding page. It may be that a hymn like "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty" will turn your thoughts to God. There may be an invocation (a prayer calling upon God as we draw near to him), such as that fine one that begins: "Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit. . . ." In words such as these you are led to feel your unworthiness and are made ready to receive God's forgiveness.

Study your church's order of worship and think about each part. See if you understand why the parts come in the order they do. If there are any parts of the service that you do not understand, ask your pastor to explain them to you.

How To Enter Into Worship Fully

Understanding the order of worship being used is important if you are to worship fully. But this is not enough. Turn back to page 3 and reread "Going to Church." Then ask yourself questions like the following.

Can I really worship God on Sunday if I have not thought of him during the week? Why?

Can I quarrel with my family from eight to nine on Sunday morning and then worship God well from eleven to twelve? Why?

Why do people *want* to worship God? Because of God's great goodness? Because he wants them to worship him? Because they are made stronger and better by being in his presence?

The writer of Psalm 42 said,

My soul thirsts for God,
for the living God.

When shall I come and behold
the face of God?

Do I feel that way about worship at church? Should I?

Your Church's Service of Worship

Next Sunday notice the different parts of the service, how they follow one another. Try to see why each part is included. For instance, how does the prelude help people to worship God? What purpose does the anthem serve? and so on. Then write the information asked for below.

THE PARTS OF THE SERVICE

THE CENTRAL THOUGHT OF EACH

What part of the service of worship do you like the most?

Why do you like it?

Aids to Worship

How do the following aid you to worship God?

- Prayer
- Hymns
- Music
- Sermon
- Offering
- Bible Reading
- Architecture
- Stained Glass Art Windows
- Pictures
- Symbols

Appropriate Hymns

Select a hymn from The Hymnal that is appropriate for each of the following themes.

- Thanksgiving
- Love
- Faith
- Joy
- Praise
- Prayer
- Consecration
- Confirmation
- Baptism
- The Lord's Supper
- Palm Sunday
- Easter
- Christmas
- Missions
- Pentecost

CHAPTER 19

The Sacraments

You probably do not remember your own baptism. Either it took place when you were quite young, or else you will be baptized just before you are confirmed. But you have seen others baptized. In our church it is only occasionally that a grown person is baptized in the church service. More often a father and mother bring their baby to the front of the church for baptism before the congregation. After prayer by the pastor and several questions which the parents are asked to answer, the minister says the child's name and puts water three times upon its head. Why does he do this? Why the water? Why three times? What does it mean? One boy said he thought baptism was just a way of giving a baby a name. Is that all it is? Some people speak of baptism as "christening." Why? All Christians speak of it as a sacrament. What is a sacrament?

Doubtless you have been in church when the Lord's Supper was being observed. You have noticed that the service is somewhat different from the usual order of worship. The people are especially reverent that Sunday. At a given point all take bread and eat it, and then drink from a cup or small glass. Why do they do this? Why the bread and wine? Why are the people especially reverent? If members of the church are ill, the pastor will give them communion in their homes. Why does he do this? We speak of the Lord's Supper too as a sacrament. What is a sacrament?

What We Mean by "Sacraments"?

To begin with the word *sacrament* meant merely "something sacred." You can see that it is much the same as "sacred" and "consecrate." It was the sacred vow that a Roman soldier took when he joined the army.

It was the money deposited in a sacred place beforehand by the two parties in a lawsuit. It was a sacred ceremony in a certain religion of that old Roman world. In time Christians used it when they spoke of what was sacred to them. Bernard of Clairvaux, the monk who called men to set out upon the Second Crusade, spoke of ten sacraments. Another church leader who lived about the same time mentioned only five. The Roman Catholic Church today speaks of seven sacraments. We in our own denomination, along with most other Protestants, speak of only two—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are truly sacred to us.

These two sacraments have been in the Church from the very beginning. About A.D. 150 a great and good man named Justin Martyr wrote about Baptism and the Lord's Supper in his day. As you read the following, remember that it was written over eighteen hundred years ago.

As many as are persuaded and believe that the things are true which are taught and said by us, and promise that they are able to live accordingly, they are taught to pray and with fasting to ask God forgiveness of their former sins, while we pray and fast with them. Thereupon they are brought to us to where there is water, and are born again in the same manner of a new birth as we, also, ourselves were born again. For in the name of God the Father and Lord of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing in the water.

And on the day called the Day of the Sun there is a gathering in one place of us all who live in cities or in the country, and the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets are read as long as time allows. Then, when the reader has ceased, the president gives by word of mouth his admonition and exhortation to imitate these excellent things. Afterward we all rise at once and offer prayers; and as I said, when we have ceased to pray, bread is brought and wine and water, and the president likewise offers up prayers and thanksgiving as he has the ability, and the people assent, saying "Amen." The distribution to each and the partaking of that for which thanks were given then take place; and to those not present a portion is sent by the hands of the deacons.¹

So you can see that both of these sacraments are sacred with age. Our forefathers have used them for many, many years.

The Sacraments Were Instituted by Jesus

Both Baptism and the Lord's Supper go back to Jesus himself—what he did as well as what he said.

You remember how, when he left his carpenter shop in Nazareth, he went into the river Jordan and was baptized by John. This was the beginning of his ministry. It was then that he consecrated himself wholly to God's will, that he felt surer than ever before of his nearness

¹ Reprinted from *A Source Book for Ancient Church History* by Ayer, by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

to the Father. After he had gone, the early Church remembered him as saying to them: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

You know also how, on Thursday evening of that last week of Jesus' life, just before his arrest, he and his disciples gathered in an upper room for a last supper together. This is a scene that Christians have never forgotten, and never want to forget. Every time we observe the Lord's Supper we call this scene to mind. Our Lord himself began this observance, and he himself told us to keep it up through the years, saying: "Do this in remembrance of me" (1 Corinthians 11:24).

Symbolic Acts

Both Baptism and the Lord's Supper are symbolic acts. That is, they stand for something spiritual. In both sacraments there is something that we see, and also something that we do not see.

In *Baptism* we see the water that is used. But there is much that we do not see. We do not see the repentance and the consecration of the adult person who is being baptized. In infant baptism we do not see the hopes and dreams and plans of the parents as they bring their baby to God and the Church. We do not see the Christian Church of which the child or grown person is becoming a member, for it goes around the world and back through the ages. We do not see God's gracious love reaching out to forgive the sins of the adult and make him clean and pure, or to make and keep the baby pure and good.

In the *Lord's Supper* we see the bread and wine (or grape juice) that are used. But again there is much that we do not see. We do not see the many hearts whose cares and worries grow less as God's love in Jesus becomes real to them in the breaking of the bread. Nor do we see the many hearts in which new resolutions are being made to follow Jesus wherever he would have them go. Nor do we see the countless souls around the world and in the life beyond, who have also eaten of the Lord's Supper and may almost be thought of as sitting down with us at this sacred meal. We do not see the spirit of our Lord himself. We do not see God's gracious love continually seeking us out to make and keep us pure—the love which was made so clear to men when our Lord's body was broken and his blood shed on the cross.

We shall not be far wrong, then, if we think of a sacrament as a sacred observance coming from our Lord himself and combining something seen with something unseen. As question 115 in the *Evangelical Catechism* says, "A sacrament is a holy ordinance of the Church, instituted by Christ himself, in which by visible signs and means he imparts and

preserves the new life." Question 66 in the *Heidelberg Catechism* also defines the sacraments.

What Baptism Means

"In Holy Baptism God imparts the gift of the new life unto man, receives him into his fellowship as his child, and admits him as a member of the Christian Church" (Answer 118 in the *Evangelical Catechism*).

Look back over this statement and notice the three parties involved in baptism—God, man, the Church. When the one being baptized confesses his faith in Christ and resolves to give up whatever is evil in his life, then God through his Holy Spirit opens the way into a new and better and happier life, the Christian way of life. This Christian way of life takes place in the Church, and it is through a minister of the Church of Jesus Christ that the new Christian is received into this great fellowship. So often, as we witness a baptism, we think only of the visible participants—the candidate for baptism and the minister. But unless God is active in the process it is not complete, it is not sacred, it is not a sacrament.

In infant baptism, the baby being baptized is dedicated to the Lord by parents and sponsors, and God receives the little one into his kingdom through the ministries of a Christian pastor. In "The Order for Baptism of Infants" in the *Book of Worship* we find these words, to be spoken by the minister:

Inasmuch as the promise of the Gospel is not only to us but also to our children, let us call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous mercy he may grant unto this child baptism with water and the Holy Spirit, receive him into Christ's holy Church, and make him a living member of the same.

Church Practices in Baptism

The church uses water in baptism to represent the inner cleansing of a person's life. Just as his body is made clean with water, so he is to become clean within as he begins the new life of a Christian. Read Ezekiel 36:25-27 and see how, even in Old Testament times, water had this meaning. John the Baptist, of course, is best known for practicing baptism to help prepare the way for the coming of the Savior. The Christian Church has also used the symbolism of water in baptism throughout the centuries.

In our church it is the custom to sprinkle a few drops of water on the head of the person being baptized. In some denominations the person goes down into a stream or tank of water until he is completely covered.

Do you think it makes any difference how much water is used? Why?

Why does the minister place water three times upon the head of the person who is joining the church? (See Matthew 28:19.)

Read "The Order for Baptism of Adults" in the *Book of Worship* and notice the promises which the candidate makes. Why is he asked to repeat the Apostles' Creed?

In "The Order for Baptism of Infants" the parents and sponsors are asked to make a number of promises in behalf of the child. What are they? What do you suppose a good father and mother are thinking while their baby is being baptized? What are they hoping? Why must one or both parents be members of the Church in order to have their baby baptized? What is the responsibility of sponsors? Does your church usually have baptisms take place before the congregation? What is the purpose of this?

When a child is baptized in a church service the congregation often sings hymn 331 in *The Hymnal*, "This Child We Dedicate to Thee." Read this hymn and notice the various parties involved and what is expected of each.

In some churches the baptismal font is placed inside the main entrance. They say that baptism is a sign of entrance into the Christian Church; therefore, to have the baptism occur at the door of the church makes the act even more symbolic. Most of our churches have it in front, in full view of the worshiping congregation. What is the symbolism of this?

What the Lord's Supper Means

"The Lord's Supper is the sacrament by which we receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ as the nourishment of our new life, strengthen the fellowship with Christ and all believers, and confess that he has died for us. As we eat and drink in the Lord's Supper we receive forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. For so it is written: Broken and shed for you for the remission of sins. We receive the blessings of the Lord's Supper only as we eat and drink with heartfelt repentance and true faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (Answers 125-127 in the *Evangelical Catechism*).

You will want to read for yourself the oldest account we have of how the Lord's Supper was begun. (See 1 Corinthians 11:23-25.) This event took place the night before Jesus was crucified (when his body was broken and his blood was shed on the cross). Ever since that time, the bread and the wine have recalled for Christians our Lord's death on the cross. There his love for men was shown most clearly. There also God's love for men was shown most clearly. Can you see why many people

feel closer to Jesus and to God in the Lord's Supper than at any other time?

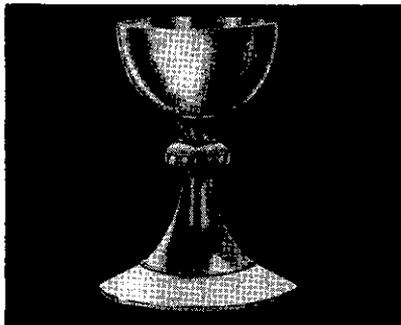
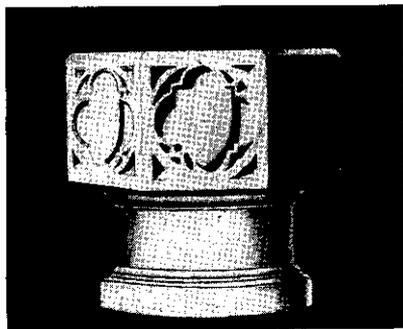
When we eat the bread and take the cup, we are to remember Jesus. What should we remember about him? His life? His teachings? His death? His goodness? Our faith that he is alive today? The first stanza of hymn 338 in *The Hymnal* reads:

According to thy gracious word,
In meek humility,
This will I do, my dying Lord,
I will remember thee.

How would it be to repeat this to ourselves as we prepare our hearts to take the bread and the cup?

Sometimes the Lord's Supper is called the Eucharist. In "The Order for Holy Communion" in the *Book of Worship* you will find "The Eucharistic Prayer." *Eucharist* comes from a Greek word meaning "thanksgiving." For what should we be especially thankful in the communion service? "The Eucharistic Prayer" will help you to answer this question.

We have seen how natural it is to feel our nearness to Jesus and to God in this service. Are there any others with whom we might feel a close fellowship or "communion"? What about the other Christians in the sanctuary who are joining with us in this solemn observance? What about other Christians in America and Europe and Asia and Africa and Australia who at the same moment or at other times join in this observance? What about those who have gone before us, "the whole glorious company of the redeemed of all ages who have died in the Lord, and now live with him forevermore"? (Read the prayer from which these words are taken. It is in "The Order for Holy Communion" at a point just before the bread and wine are distributed.) Can you see why this would be called Holy Communion?



Should there be any difference in our lives after we take part in this service? Should we try to make a difference? What difference? The closing prayer of "The Order for Holy Communion" (just before the "Nunc Dimittis") is made up of two long sentences. The first offers thanks to God. What does the second say?

Some churches use wine, and others use unfermented grape juice. Some use ordinary bread, and others use bread made without yeast into thin round wafers. Do you think it makes any difference which are used? Why?

When you have taken communion, you will afterwards remain in your pew in quiet thought and prayer. What prayer might you offer at this time? Write in the space below a prayer that you could use. Hymn 36 in *The Hymnal* may give you some ideas for writing your own prayer.

Dear God,

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The Christian Sacraments

- ✓ 1. What is a sacrament?
"something sacred"
- ✓ 2. What are the sacraments of our church?
Holy Baptism, The Lords Supper
- ✓ 3. Why do we have these?
Because Jesus started them.
- ✓ 4. What do we mean when we say that the sacraments are symbolic acts?
They stand for something spiritual
- ✓ 5. Who administers the sacraments for God?
The priest, minister & the bible

I. BAPTISM

- ✓ 1. What happens in baptism? water is applied in the name of the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit.
- ✓ 2. What three parties are involved in baptism?
 - a. God
 - b. man
 - c. church
- ✓ 3. What symbol is used in baptism? water
- ✓ 4. Where do we find the words of institution of this sacrament?
Ezekiel 36:25-27
- ✓ 5. What responsibilities rest upon those who have been baptized?
Do not live in evil
- ✓ 6. What is the promise given to us in baptism? (Acts 2:38-39)
Be baptized & you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit
- ✓ 7. Give a definition of baptism in your own words.
It is a sacrament in which we are initiated.
- ✓ 8. Why does our denomination practice infant baptism as well as adult baptism?
Because they can't understand the sacrament until they are older.

II. THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. What is the Lord's Supper?
The Lord's Supper is a memorial of the death of Jesus Christ.
2. Why do we speak of the Lord's Supper as "communion"?
3. The two elements used in the Lord's Supper are:
a. *wine* b. *bread*
4. Of what is the bread a symbol? *26. Body of Christ*
5. Of what is the wine a symbol? *Blood of Christ*
6. How can you prepare yourself to receive the Lord's Supper worthily?
7. In what way is the Lord's Supper a sign of God's love?
Jesus died for us.
8. What benefits do we receive from the Lord's Supper?
It keeps us from sinning.
9. What responsibilities rest upon a Christian after he has partaken of the Supper?
10. About what or whom should you be thinking as you receive the elements?
Jesus and God.
11. Look in *The Hymnal* and find two communion hymns. Write their titles here.
a.
b.
12. How often should a Christian come to the Lord's Table?

PART V

Christianity in Action

CHAPTER 20

The Work Our Denomination Is Doing

There are many things which neither you nor even your congregation could do alone. You could not start a college and support it. You could not build an orphans' home. It would be very hard for you to send missionaries to the other side of the world. There are many tasks belonging to God's kingdom that can be done only through a whole denomination working together.

How Our Denomination Is Organized

Our Evangelical and Reformed Church is one of the fifteen largest Protestant denominations in the United States. It numbers about a million people, including children and older people. They live in thirty-eight states and in the District of Columbia. In addition, there are churches of our denomination in Canada. All these people could not get together in one place to vote on matters of concern to all and to lay plans for future work, so it is necessary to have an organization through which they can work together. The chart on the next page pictures our organization. If you will follow it as we go along, it will help you to understand how we do our work.

To begin with, the approximately one million people form about 2750 congregations. Each congregation is governed by a *consistory* or *church council* made up of *elders* and *deacons*.

These congregations form thirty-four *synods*, somewhat as the people of the United States are organized into forty-eight states. Some synods in Pennsylvania cover only two or three counties. In places where our people are scattered, a synod covers a number of states. For instance, Texas Synod covers five large states. Look at the two maps on pages 142 and 143 and compare the size of the various synods.

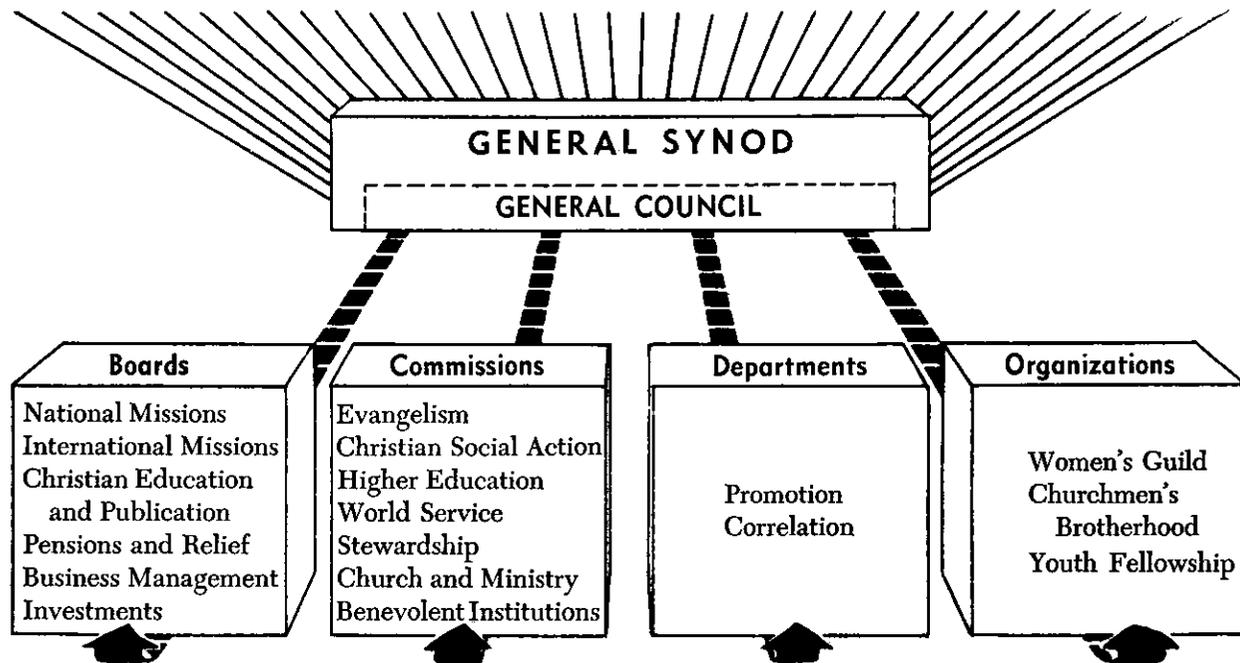
THE ORGANIZATION OF THE EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH

Our denomination numbers about one million adults and children.

These form about 2,750 congregations, each having a consistory or church council.

These form 34 synods, each with its own officers. They send delegates every three years to the

[140]



Once every three years the representatives from the thirty-four synods come together in the *General Synod*. This is somewhat like our federal government at Washington, except that the General Synod meets in a different place every three years for only a week.

Like the federal government, our church has a *president*. He gives all his time to his office. There are other officers, also, who give their full time to their work.

Three years is a long time between meetings of the General Synod, and questions must be decided, and work carried on. It is for this purpose that we have a *General Council*. It is something like the President's Cabinet in our nation's government. It is made up of sixteen people, both ministers and lay members (church members who are not ministers) plus the officers of the church.

But there is much work that cannot be done by either the General Synod or the General Council. Such work is directed by six general boards, seven commissions, two departments, and ten standing committees. Two auxiliary organizations—one for men and one for women—also carry on much of the work of the church.

Near the beginning of the *Year Book of the Evangelical and Reformed Church* you will find listed all the boards and agencies of our denomination together with the names of all the people who are doing this special work. Here too you will find the names of the officers of our denomination.

How do church members know what the denomination is doing? Chiefly through *The Messenger* and the other church papers: *Der Friedensbote* in German and *Reformatusok Lapja* in Hungarian. Here articles are printed about the work of the boards, commissions, departments, auxiliary organizations, the General Council, the General Synod, the various synods, and local churches. These papers help to tie the church together and make it one.

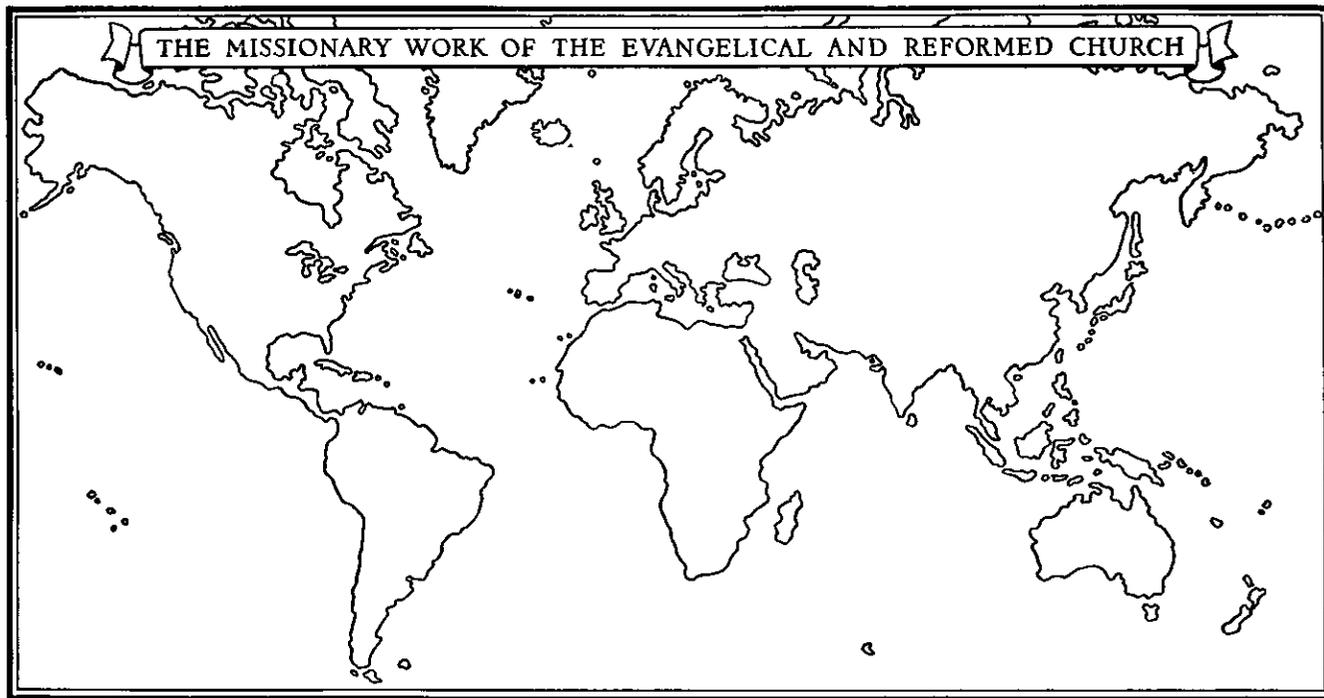
Some of the Work Our Denomination Is Doing

Let us look a little more closely at what is being done by the parts of this great organization. We cannot tell all they do, but we can mention a few of the most important duties of each.

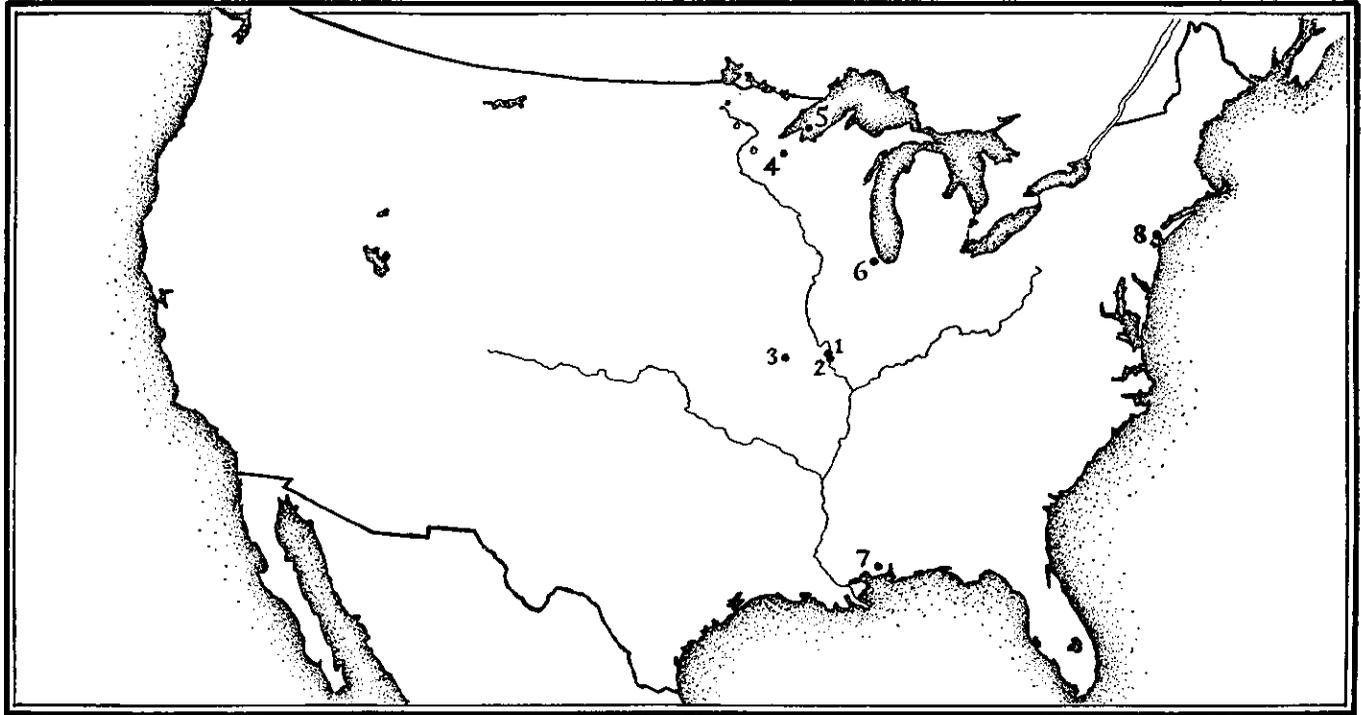
The *Board of National Missions* carries on missionary work in the United States and Canada. It helps to start churches where there are none. It also goes to groups of people that are neglected—American Indians, dwellers in the Ozark Mountains, Mississippi oyster fishermen, city slum dwellers, Americans of Japanese ancestry—and brings them services of worship, medical care, schools, or whatever they need most.

SYNODS IN PENNSYLVANIA





1. _____ 4. _____
2. _____ 5. _____
3. _____ 6. _____
7. _____



[145]

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|----|-------|----|-------|
| 1. | _____ | 5. | _____ |
| 2. | _____ | 6. | _____ |
| 3. | _____ | 7. | _____ |
| 4. | _____ | 8. | _____ |

The *Board of International Missions* carries on missionary work outside the United States and Canada. It sends ministers, doctors, nurses, agriculturists, teachers, and others around the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

The *Board of Christian Education and Publication*, through its age-group directors, field staff, and publications, plans a program of Christian education for the whole denomination, and in every way possible helps each congregation in carrying out its program. It publishes the Church and Home Series of graded lessons, and the International Uniform Series. It also provides papers and magazines for each age-group: *Stories* (for children four to eight), *Trailblazer* (nine to eleven), *Venture* (twelve to fourteen), *Youth* (for young people), *Church School Worker* (for officers and teachers). It conducts summer camps. Have you or any young people of your church been to one of our church camps? Through its Christian Education Press it publishes books for use in the field of Christian education. Through its Youth Department the national Youth Fellowship receives guidance.

The *Board of Pensions and Relief* helps care for ministers who are old or ill, as well as the widows and orphaned children of ministers.

The *Board of Business Management* is in charge of the office buildings, printing plants, and book stores that belong to our denomination.

The *Board of Investments* invests money put in its care by boards and institutions of the denomination.

The *Commission on Evangelism* lays plans which synods and congregations can use in carrying the good news of Jesus (this is what evangelism means) to those who are outside the Church. It also helps those of us who are in the Church to become better Christians. For example, it prepares a booklet with prayers and readings for each day in Lent. Has your family used this devotional booklet?

The *Commission on Christian Social Action* studies such great social questions as war and peace, living conditions in city slums or on run-down farms. It tries to find the Christian answers to these questions, and suggests what our churches can do about them.

The *Commission on Higher Education* brings together the fourteen presidents of the academies, colleges, and theological seminaries of our church, and helps to lay plans for them all. Turn to page 203 for the names and locations of our educational institutions. Have you seen any of these? Are any near enough for you to visit? Do you know young people who are attending any of them?

The *Commission on World Service* renders a ministry of mercy wherever there is need. It is doing for us the kind of work that Christ

described in the parables of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-35) and the Last Judgment (Matthew 25:31-40).

The *Commission on Stewardship* promotes the principles and practice of Christian stewardship. (This means the systematic and proportionate giving of time, abilities, and money in recognition of the fact that these are a trust from God, to be used in his service). It is this commission that promotes the annual Stewardship Project in which some of you have participated.

The *Commission on Church and Ministry* has to do with relations between the church and the ministers and other church workers, helping students for the ministry, recruiting young people for full-time Christian service, and related duties.

The *Commission on Benevolent Institutions* brings together representatives of our hospitals, city missions, homes for children, old people, feeble-minded and epileptic, and helps to lay plans for each. We have forty-two such institutions of mercy. Where are they located? (See page 202.) How many have you seen? Are any near enough to visit?

The *Women's Guild* plans a program of education and service for all women of our church.

The *Churchmen's Brotherhood* does the same for all the men of our church.

The *Youth Fellowship* unites all the youth of our church for personal growth and Christian service.

All this put together does not tell everything our denomination is doing, but it does include most of it.

Our Denomination Works With Other Denominations

With so many Protestant churches in our nation, it would be very strange if our Evangelical and Reformed Church went ahead as though it were the only one. As a matter of fact, we have always worked most closely with other denominations.

In the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America our representatives sit down with those of other denominations to plan joint meetings, to provide chaplains for the armed services, to serve the migrants (workers who follow the crops as they ripen), and to do many other things together. In the Division of Christian Education of the National Council our representatives sit down with others to prepare outlines for courses for Sunday, vacation, and week-day church schools, to develop a program of teacher training, and to do anything that can be better done together. In the same way the representatives of our boards of missions meet with those of like boards of other denominations in the National Council.

In addition, our denomination belongs to the World Council of Churches with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. Thus it is united with the many other churches throughout the world in the great task of bringing in the kingdom of God on earth.

Financing the Work of Our Church

The money for this work comes from the many congregations and members scattered throughout the nation. At each General Synod, after a careful study of all the needs, a budget is made out. This budget is a detailed estimate of the money needed for the church's work during the three years between General Synod meetings. Then it is "portioned out" to each congregation and each member. We call this the "apportionment." As the members pay this apportionment, the treasurer of each congregation sends it in to the treasurer of the whole denomination, who then pays it out for missions, Christian education, the relief of ministers and their families, and all the other good causes of the church.

About the Work of Our Church

1. The name of the governing body of my church is
2. The president of my church is
3. The name of the governing body of my denomination is
4. The president of the Evangelical and Reformed Church is
5. The Board of National Missions carries on special projects at the following places in the United States. (*Ask your pastor to let you see the report of this board in his Blue Book, which is sent out before the meetings of the synods and before the General Synod.*)
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.
 - h.

Under the map on page 145 write the names of the National Missions projects in the proper spaces.

6. The Board of International Missions carries on missionary work in the following countries. (*The Blue Book can give you help on this also.*)

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| a. | d. |
| b. | e. |
| c. | f. |
| g. | |

Locate these on the map on page 144 with numbers, and write the names of the countries in the proper places.

7. The budget for our denomination adopted at the last meeting of the General Synod amounted to \$..... (*Your pastor will help you here.*)
8. My congregation's apportionment amounts to \$..... (*Get the figure from your church treasurer.*)
9. This amounts to \$..... for each member. (*To get the answer divide the figure you have written in 8 by the number of members in your congregation.*)

CHAPTER 21

The Church as Teacher

Long before anyone thought of public schools like ours today, the Church was busy teaching. Let us look quickly at a few facts that show this to be true.

During the early centuries there were catechetical classes that trained people for membership in the Church. There were also higher schools for leaders. The most famous of these was at Alexandria in Egypt.

During the dark Middle Ages there were schools connected with monasteries and cathedrals. The Church did most of the teaching that was done during these years.

In the Protestant Reformation catechisms were written and widely used in teaching. The Lutheran and Reformed churches have made much of such teaching ever since.

Time and again colleges and universities have come from the Church. For example, in our own country Harvard, Yale, and Princeton were all started chiefly to train ministers. We have already seen how many educational institutions our denomination has.

When the founders of the Evangelical and Reformed Church settled in the new world, it was not unusual for a congregation to have its own school (called a parochial school) with its own teacher and a schoolhouse alongside the church.

In 1780 Robert Raikes started the first Sunday school. He gathered together a few children and paid a woman to teach them. Sunday schools spread rapidly throughout the churches of England and America. In our denomination alone there are now over half a million people enrolled in our Sunday church schools.

Vacation church schools began in New York City about 1900. Chil-

dren were idle in the streets of the big city. Teachers were idle. Buildings were idle. These were put together to start vacation church schools. A vacation school meeting three hours a day, five days a week, for four weeks offers as much time as a year of Sunday church school. (Count it up for yourself.)

Week-day church schools were started still more recently. In 1914 in Gary, Indiana, the public school superintendent agreed with the pastors to free the children a short while each week for religious teaching. In some communities week-day church schools reach 90 per cent of the children of the ages for which classes are held. This is better than Sunday schools do as a rule.

This is not the whole story by any means, but it is enough to show that the Church has been a teacher from the very beginning. Sometimes, when there were no other schools, the Church taught everything—reading, writing, and arithmetic, as well as religion. Since there are public schools for all children in our country, the Church has only to teach the Christian faith and the Christian way of life. But this is a big enough task. It includes much more than teaching facts about the Bible and the Church. It includes everything that helps children, youth, men, and women grow in the Christian life.

The Teaching Work of Our Denomination

Our Evangelical and Reformed Church has taken seriously Jesus' commission to go into all the world and teach his disciples to do all that he commanded.

It has established the Board of Christian Education and Publication to do this work in the churches of the United States. It has established the Commission on Higher Education to do this work in the colleges of our denomination. It has commissioned the Board of International Missions to carry on the work of teaching on its seven mission fields. It expects the Women's Guild, the Churchmen's Brotherhood, and the Youth Fellowship to educate their members in the Christian way of life. Wherever our church has gone, the teaching work has gone also.

The General Synod appropriates large sums of money for the work of teaching children, young people, students, and adults how to be better Christians. To do this, many people are employed to:

1. Travel about and meet with church leaders everywhere to train and inspire them to do better work in their local churches.
2. Write, edit, and publish courses of study and books through which the members of the church may learn what it means to be a Christian in our world today.

3. Meet with students and direct their thinking along Christian lines.
4. Conduct training schools for leaders.
5. Set up camps and conferences for children, young people, and adults, where they may learn more about Christian discipleship.
6. Maintain a Service Library from which workers in Christian education in the local churches can borrow books to help them in their work.

How Important Is the Teaching Work of the Church?

A discussion of the following situations may help us to find an answer.

1. A minister did away with his Sunday school. On Sunday morning there was a church service for all his people aged twelve and over. Meanwhile there was something like a Sunday school in another part of the building for those under twelve. On Saturday morning the minister himself taught classes for boys and girls of certain ages. There were the usual organizations for young people, men, and women, but they did not meet on Sunday morning. What do you think of this plan? What might it gain? What might it lose? What would you lose if your Sunday school were closed? If it were closed, would the attendance at the church service increase and decrease? If all people attended church service faithfully each Sunday, would that be enough?

2. Suppose a certain church had five hundred dollars to spend either on paying the fees of its church school teachers at training classes and summer conferences, or on a stained glass window. Which would be the better way to spend it? Why?

3. Suppose a church were to give up all its teaching work—Sunday church school, vacation church school, week-day church school, confirmation class, and everything else. What would happen to it in fifty years? Why?

What would happen to its children and young people? Would most of them become faithful church members? Would their lives be as happy as they would have been if the teaching had been kept up? As good? As useful? Why?

4. Some church schools have separate classrooms for each class, much like public schools. Some have a library of books to which teachers and pupils can go for help on the Bible, the life of Jesus, Christian beliefs, and the like. Some have a Sunday session lasting more than an hour. Some have a board or committee of Christian education, which lays plans much as a school board does for the public schools.