

The **LUTHERAN** **CLARION**



Lutheran Concerns Association

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Should Diversity of Doctrine be Tolerated in the Church?

The term “diversity” as used in the **secular** world today is virtually a shibboleth, especially in the areas of education, employment, and most recently, even in the military service whereby feminists (under the guise of gender equality) urge that women should be stationed in the front battle lines with men. But this alleged diversity in the secular world is not generally extended to include Christian views and values, which the atheists and other non-Christians seek to eradicate and exclude from the public square. This duplicity of the proponents of diversity is exemplified by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), an organization that professes to be a “great defender of free speech” yet takes legal action to deny such freedom to Christians in the public square.

However, this essay deals with diversity in the **church**, not with diversity in the secular area. So then is diversity acceptable in the church? That may seem like a loaded question, and to some extent it is because it depends on how the terms in the question are defined. On the one hand, true Christians would agree that diversity of “spiritual gifts” is acceptable and good in the church, for the Apostle Paul writes approvingly of such gifts: “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:4,

KJV). On the other hand, true Christians would agree that diversity of “doctrine” is not acceptable or good in the church. In His church, Christ would have us be of one faith, one doctrine, for he warned against diversity, discord and division (Luke 12: 49-53). So in

“The doctrine is not ours, but God's, whose ministers we are; therefore we may not change or diminish one tittle thereof...”

Martin Luther on Gal. 5:9-10

the early church “they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship...” (Acts 2:42, KJV). But due to the inroads of false doctrine, for example, in the Roman Catholic Church under the papacy, the visible church needed cleansing. But instead of cleansing itself of false doctrine, the papacy excommunicated God’s chosen vessel, Martin Luther (1483-1546), and the Reformation era thus took hold. This raises the principal issue and provides the title of this essay: “Should Diversity of **Doctrine** be Tolerated in

the Church?” To resolve that issue the essay will consider what is the only source of true doctrine for the church, and how should the church respond to and deal with false doctrine.

True Source of All Church Doctrine ¹

As confessed by true Lutherans, the source of all church doctrine is Holy Scripture. That is, the Bible is the **sole** source and norm of Christian Doctrine. Thus, the Lutheran Confessions state: “We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and the New Testaments alone.” ²

Although the Bible is a collection of books written by different men at different times, there is but **one divine** Author. As the Apostle Paul writes: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Tim. 3:16), and “when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God” (1 Thess. 2:13, NIV).

Because Holy Scripture is the Word of God, it is the position of confessional Lutherans that it is **inerrant and infallible** as clearly and plainly taught in numerous Bible texts, e.g., “Thy Word is truth” (John 17:17); “The Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35); “God, that cannot lie” (Titus 1:2); and “Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all is fulfilled” (Matt. 5:18, KJV). ³ Thus, to deny that Scripture is inerrant and infallible is to call God a liar.

Luther and Walther Teach Inerrancy of Scripture

Luther’s teachings are consistent with the aforesaid Bible texts and include many instances which, although they do not specifically recite the term “inerrancy,” nevertheless clearly and unambiguously support inerrancy of Scripture. For example, Luther teaches: “God has said this, he cannot lie;” ⁴ . . . “God cannot lie or deceive;” ⁵ . . . “This much is sure: Scripture does not lie;” ⁶ . . . “God’s word cannot lie;” ⁷ . . . “the Scriptures cannot err;” ⁸ . . . “God cannot lie, nor can the church;” ⁹ . . . and the apostles “by a sure decree of God were sent to us as infallible teachers.” ¹⁰ In his

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comments on Gal. 5:9-10, Luther warned:

The doctrine is not ours, but God's, whose ministers we are; therefore we may not change or diminish one tittle thereof... One little point of doctrine is of more value than all besides, and therefore we cannot abide to have the least thereof corrupted.¹¹

Luther also quoted with approval the statement on the inerrancy of Scripture, in contrast to the fallibility of church councils, written by the great church father, St. Augustine (354-430), in a letter to St. Jerome (340?-420): "I have learned to hold the Scriptures alone inerrant."¹²

Confessional Lutherans also note agreement with Luther by Dr. C. F. W. Walther (1811-87), the leading founder of the Missouri Synod, who wrote that: "Whoever believes with his whole heart that the Bible is the Word of God, cannot believe anything else than that it is inerrant,"¹³ ... and "Whoever thinks he can find an error in Holy Scripture does not believe in Holy Scripture but in himself."¹⁴

Doctrine Based on Human Reason is False

Since the Bible is the sole source and norm of Christian doctrine, it follows that doctrine based on human reasoning is false. Even if some teachings of Scripture may be hard to understand or conflict with human reasoning, e.g., creation *ex nihilo* (made out of nothing) in six days as taught by Moses (Gen. 1 & Ex. 20:11), they are included in the teachings (doctrine) commanded by Christ. The Scriptures are not silent or ambiguous on this as contended by theistic evolutionists, for Christ said that the teachings of Moses were the "word of God" (Mark 7:13); and as taught by Moses: "at the beginning of creation God made them male and female" (Mark 10:6, NIV); and "if you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?" (John 5: 46-47, NIV). Therefore, rejection of the truth of the Genesis account of creation is rejection of what Christ clearly and plainly taught. Moreover, the "Word of God" was taught not as doctrine to be understood only by a doctor of theology, but believable by a little child. This is a serious matter and not to be taken lightly, for as Christ warned: "anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it" (Mark 10:15, NIV). Accordingly, it is childlike faith, not human reasoning, that Christ commands of us. An opinion from the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) or Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) should not be necessary to decipher what Christ commands of us. Furthermore, **all** Scripture is divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit; there are no degrees of inspiration. As succinctly stated in *A Summary of Christian Doctrine* by Professor Edward W. A. Koehler:

If, then, the Holy Ghost had not controlled the very words the holy writers used, we might as well ask: "Did God really mean what the words of these men say?" . . . Unless we accept "all Scripture" as given by inspiration, we have no foundation whatever for our faith It is

either all or nothing. If the record of creation is a myth, then there is no reason why the Gospel of our salvation is not likewise a myth.¹⁵

In the final analysis, the acceptance of false doctrine (false teaching) comprises a challenge to the authority of Scripture. Reliance upon Scripture is thereby replaced with human reasoning or logic that leads one to cast doubt upon Scripture by asking the question: "Did God Really Say That?" This in essence was the first doubt upon God's Word cast upon Adam and Eve by Satan in the Garden of Eden, Gen. 3:1. This doubt upon the teachings of Scripture and the concurrent replacement of those teachings with human reasoning is evident today especially by acceptance or toleration of the pernicious errors of abortion, evolution, homosexuality, same-sex marriage and ordination of women. In other words, Scripture is revised¹⁶ and made subject to human reasoning such as, e.g., the historical-critical method of interpretation, or textual criticism. Denial of the truth that all of Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, is inspired by the Holy Spirit, damages biblical faith and promotes sliding down the slippery slope of unbelief. Therefore, the determination of what is either true or false doctrine must be based solely on the clear and plain teachings of the Bible without any addition thereto or subtraction therefrom, even in one little point. In the words of Luther: "doctrine must be as straight as a plumb line."¹⁷ For when the authority of Scripture is denied in one point, it is not long thereafter before it is denied in another point, and then another and still another. This is seen in mainline Protestant churches today by the successive toleration of abortion, evolution, homosexuality, same-sex marriage and ordination of women, though not necessarily in that sequence. Therefore, the history of the "Battle for the Bible" that occurred in the LCMS during the 1960's – 1970's should be taken seriously and not forgotten, lest we too slide down the slippery slope of unbelief.¹⁸

The Church's Response to False Doctrine

So with respect to toleration of diversity of doctrine, what should be the response of the church? There are at least two general approaches to consider when false doctrine is **openly** advocated or tolerated in **public**:

- One approach is based on the teaching that a little leaven (yeast) leavens the whole lump; therefore the old

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leaven must be purged out lest the whole lump become contaminated (1 Cor. 5:6; Gal.5:9).

- Another approach is based on the teaching of separating the tares (weeds) from the wheat; let both grow until harvest, then first gather the tares in bundles for the fire and then gather the wheat for the barns (Matt: 13: 25-40).

According to the first approach, when one of the members of a congregation continues in an open and flagrant offense, it taints the entire congregation. It is likened to the old leaven that can sour the entire lump if it is not first purged out. So as the Corinthians were admonished by the

“...the public toleration of false doctrine, whether among clergy or laity, needs to be consistently and continuously exposed and refuted, lest it spread like a virus. The church cannot remain silent on the matter of false doctrine.”

apostle Paul, the persistent, non-repentant offending member should be purged out of the congregation.

According to the second approach, it is known that the roots of the tares (weeds) can become entwined with those of the wheat with the consequent danger that both would be uprooted together if separation were attempted before harvest (“while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with

them,” Matt. 13: 29, NIV). At first, the tares (such as cockle or darnel, which have been known to contaminate wheat fields) resemble the wheat so closely that it is not possible to distinguish the tares until the ears begin to form (“When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared,” Matt. 13:26, NIV). This is analogous to caution against a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Doctrinal Discipline is Necessary in the Church

In this layman's opinion, when false doctrine is **openly and persistently** taught, advocated or tolerated in public, or when a stage or forum is provided for presentation of false doctrine in public, the above approach to purge the false teaching needs to be followed. The steps of Matthew 18 for resolving a **private** matter (e.g., between two persons) are not required. Thus when false doctrine openly appeared in the Reformation era, Luther denounced it publicly and vigorously. But today, when false doctrine is openly taught, advocated or tolerated, whether it be abortion, evolution, homosexuality, same-sex marriage, women's ordination or other such teachings where human reason replaces the authority of Scripture, the pertinent question can be asked: Where are the Shepherds whom Jesus expects to protect His sheep ? As commented by Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann, in his *Popular Commentary of the Bible, New Testament*: “The fact that very many congregations are neglecting this important part of the duties imposed upon them by the Lord of the Church argues for the increasing worldliness of the Church, [but the neglect] is, in

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We can't rest yet; much work remains to be done to return our Synod to the Church of our Grandfathers and Reformation fathers! The Lutheran Concerns Association is dedicated to the effort to reclaim our full Lutheran heritage for the LCMS. We cannot do this alone. We need your continued help so that a truly Lutheran church body will be there for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We at the LCA desire to be helpful in preserving our faith, under the Lord's blessing, so that the treasure of pure doctrine and right practice will be known for generations to come. Would you prayerfully consider assisting us in this ongoing effort with your tax deductible donations?

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fact, in many cases an indication of disintegration. The teaching of Scriptures on this point is very plain.”¹⁹ The delegates to the 1973 LCMS Convention at New Orleans understood the problem of tolerating false doctrine in the church during the “Battle for the Bible.” Thus, they adopted Resolution 3.09 and quoted from the *Formula of Concord* (Solid Declaration, Preface 9), to charge that the false doctrine running contrary to Holy Scripture as expressed in the opinion of the faculty majority at Concordia Seminary “cannot be tolerated in the church of God, much less be excused and defended.”²⁰ Resolution 3.09 was reaffirmed at the 2010 LCMS Convention at St. Louis.²¹

This layman writer is not aware of any disciplinary action taken by the Synod in recent decades pursuant to said resolution. Despite the considerable notoriety of a rostered and ordained minister of the LCMS who openly and persistently advocates acceptance of evolution as a fact and the ordination of women, contrary to Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, apparently no disciplinary action has been taken as of the 2013 Delegate Convention.²²

When doctrinal discipline is wanting, whereby the Shepherds do not protect their sheep from false doctrine and permit it to remain, laymen must persist in disapproval but, as taught by the apostle Paul, be ready to recognize that: “Of course, there must be divisions among you to show clearly which of you are approved” (1 Cor. 11:19, AAT). Nevertheless, in the church at large, laymen and clergy must fight together to expose any and all false doctrine that can corrupt the church. That is, the public toleration of false doctrine, whether among clergy or laity, needs to be consistently and continuously exposed and refuted, lest it spread like a virus. The church cannot remain silent on the matter of false doctrine. As so aptly stated by Dr. Kurt Marquart (1934-2006), “The doctrinal confusion in our Synod requires energetic public discussion, not secret diplomacy and confidentiality.”²³

Conclusion

In this writer's opinion, the following statement by Dr. Kurt Marquart, who is one of Synod's most ardent recent proponents of doctrinal unity, is most relevant to the subject of this essay. He was a member of the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary for over three decades and a member of the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) for 22 years. He said: "The single most crucial issue facing our Synod, in my view, is the progressive loss of doctrinal unity. There is, for instance, the acceptance of evolution by some within the Concordia University System."²⁴ In other words, in response to the title issue of this essay, diversity of **doctrine** should not be tolerated in the church, since toleration of diversity of doctrine is equivalent to loss of doctrinal **unity** contrary to the teachings of Christ and His apostles as recorded in Holy Scripture. In the cited example, acceptance of evolution or toleration of its teaching as a fact contrary to the biblical record of creation is equivalent to denial of the authority of Scripture from the very beginning of Genesis and divine creation, the fall of man into sin and the need for a Savior of fallen man.²⁵ For presentation on these and other current issues on Holy Scripture, including opportunity for questions and answers, the reader is invited to attend the forthcoming LCA Conference on the Bible, at Ft. Wayne, IN, January 19, 2015. See information on the Conference in this journal.

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- 1 For a brief, yet clear and plain summary of the confessional Lutheran teaching of doctrine as cited in this essay, see: J. A. O. Preus, *The Second Martin: The Life and Theology of Martin Chemnitz* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1994), in Ch. 9, "Scripture and the Theological Task," pp. 217-56, esp. the topics on: Scripture and the Word of God; Scripture and Inspiration; Scripture is Supreme and Sole Authority in the Church; and Scripture is Truthful and Inerrant, pp. 218-227. [Note: Concordia Publishing House is cited hereinafter as "CPH"]
- 2 *Formula of Concord, The Epitome*, in *The Book of Concord*, ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), p. 486.
- 3 For a modern tr. of the words "jot and tittle" as "an iota (*apiculum*)" and "one little point (*apex*)," resp., see: *What Luther Says* (St. Louis: CPH, 1959), ed. Ewald M. Plass, Vol. III, selection 4404, Vol. I, selection 1221, resp. See also RSV: "not an iota, not a dot," and NIV: "not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen."
- 4 Luther, *Commentary on Peter and Jude* (Grand Rapids: Kegel Publications, 1982), ed. John N. Lenker, 1904, combined and ed. Paul W. Bennehoff, 1982, p. 96.
- 5 Luther's *Large Catechism*, under "Explanation of the Appendix to the First Commandment," in *The Book of Concord*, ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), pp. 390-92, at p. 392.
- 6 *Luther's Works*, Amer. Ed. 2, Lectures on Genesis, Chap. 6-14, tr. George V. Schick (St. Louis: CPH, 1960), Chap. 11, under "The Lineage of the Ancestors of Christ from the Flood to Abram," pp. 228-35, at p. 233.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 47, The Christian in Society IV, tr. Martin H. Bertram (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), "On the Jews and Their Lies," pp. 121-306, at p. 202.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 36, Word and Sacrament II, tr. Frederick C. Ahrens (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), "The Misuse of the Mass," pp. 127-230, at p. 137.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 41, Church and Ministry III, tr. Eric W. Gritsch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), *Wider Hanswurst* (Against Hanswurst), pp. 179-256, at p. 216.

- 10 *Ibid.*, 34, Career of the Reformer IV, tr. Lewis W. Spitz (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1960), in "Theses Concerning Faith and Law," pp. 105-32, "On Faith" Thesis 59, at p. 113.
- 11 Luther, *Commentary on Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Kegel Publications, 1979), tr. Erasmus Middleton, ed. John Prince Fellows, Reprint of 1850 ed. Harrison Trust, London, pp. 318-20.
- 12 *Luther's Works*, Amer. Ed. 41, Church and Ministry III, "On the Councils and the Church," tr. Charles M. Jacobs, rev. Edward W. Gritsch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), pp. 3-178, at p. 25.
- 13 *Lehre und Wehre* 13 (April 1867), p. 103. Quoted in English by Raymond F. Surburg, "Walther's Hermeneutical Principles," in *C. F. W. Walther: The American Luther* (Mankato: The Walther Press, 1987), ed. Arthur H. Drevlow, John Drickamer, and Glen F. Reichwald, p. 98.
- 14 C. F. W. Walther, *Was lehren die neueren orthodox sein wollenden Theologen von der Inspiration*, *Ibid.* at p. 90.
- 15 Edward W. A. Koehler, *A Summary of Christian Doctrine* (St. Louis: CPH, Rev. Ed. Reprinted 1971), pp. 7 and 9.
- 16 For a recent example of revision of Scripture, see, e.g., the Presbyterian Church (USA), redefinition of Christian marriage as the union of "two people" instead of "a man and a woman."
- 17 *Supra*, note 8, at p. 217.
- 18 For a recent, cogent summary by a first-hand witness of the "Battle for the Bible" during the 1960's – 1970's, see the commentary by Walter Dissen, Esq., in this journal, September 2012, Vol. 5, Issue 6, pp. 1-8
- 19 Vol. II, under 1 Cor.5:1-13, excursus on "Church Discipline," p.112, CPH, 1923.
- 20 *LCMS Convention Proceedings*, 1973, pp. 133-139, Reprinted in *Heritage in Motion*, ed. August R. Suelflow (St. Louis: CPH, 1996), pp. 444-453.
- 21 *LCMS Convention Proceedings*, 2010, p. 173, Omnibus Res. B, Overture 2-03, Authority of Scripture.
- 22 See "CTCR Response to Matthew Becker Dissent of 6/29/11" in *LCMS Convention Workbook*, 2013, pp. 84 and 399-400. In an ALPB Forum on the Internet, Professor Daniel Gard, Ph. D., rebuked Matthew Becker: "You stand in clear and absolute opposition to the teachings of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod," as reported in *Christian News*, June 9, 2014, p. 5. See Becker's persistence before the CCM as reported, *Ibid.*, July 14, 2014, p. 10. See also, David O. Berger, "An Open Letter to Dr. Matthew Becker," in this journal, January 2014, Vol. 6, Issue 3, pp. 4-5, on the matter of creation vs. evolution.
- 23 Rev. Kurt Marquart, Letter to the Editor, *Reporter*, October 2005, p. 5.
- 24 Response to question asked of the candidates for president of the LCMS, *Lutheran Witness*, May 2004, pp. 17-19. See also *Christian News*, June 7, 2004, p. 2, and June 28, 2004, p. 22, for similar response to question in the *Reporter*, June 2004.
- 25 For an excellent recent and brief comment on the absurdity and fallacy of Darwinian evolution, see the book review by the late Rev. Dr. Paul A. Zimmerman in this journal, July 2014, p. 7. For an easy to read, theologically sound work on the historical truth of Genesis creation vs. the fallacy of Darwinian evolution, the reader is encouraged to read *The Wonders of Creation*, by Professor Alfred M. Rehwinkel, long-time member of the faculty of Concordia Seminary. This book, originally published in 1974 by Baker Books, was recently reprinted in 2013 by Lutheran News.

Why be Liturgical Today?

Before tackling this question, I must first debunk the idea that being a liturgical church simply means using a liturgy. For today a host of churches in and around Lutheranism give form and order to their gatherings with something they often call "a liturgy," but that form does not make those churches liturgical. So....what does this specific part of our Lutheran identity *really* mean?

A liturgical church will be led in almost every word spoken and every note sung by – **a lectionary**. Pastors will study and preach on the texts that are a given for that particular day from either the historic one year lectionary or the three year lectionary found in the very front of *Lutheran Service*

Another Worthy Opportunity for Missouri Synod Christians

In September 2013, the Board of **Concordia Theological Foundation, Inc.** (CT Foundation) established an endowment fund to provide support for women enrolled in the Deaconess Program at Concordia Theological Seminary.

CT Foundation is a 501(c)(3) corporation recognized by the IRS so gifts are tax deductible. The primary purpose of CT Foundation is to assist in preparing men for the Office of the Holy Ministry by providing financial support to Concordia Theological Seminary. From its inception CT Foundation has been doing just that.



The CT Foundation also recognizes the need for deaconesses and deeply appreciates the wonderful services deaconesses have provided our beloved Synod for many, many years. Our readers are encouraged to provide support for the **Concordia Theological Foundation Deaconess Endowment Fund**. Checks should be marked for that fund and mailed to the following address:

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All donors will receive an acknowledgement meeting IRS requirements.

Book, pages XIV through XXIII. Those assigned biblical texts will then guide the pastor's hymn choices as well as the organist's and choir director's musical choices to fit that unique day in the church's year of grace. This results in a day of clear proclamation based on a specific theme that is then beautifully manifest throughout the service.

This is not true in a non-liturgical church, for there pastors and musicians are totally free to decide what a Sunday will look like. So while we as a liturgical church rejoice in the beautiful discipline of the lectionary and see it as something that unites us as a church, a non-liturgical church rejoices in being free from such a "restrictive discipline" that can only stifle the creativity of their worship leaders in their attempt to be fresh and different from other churches.

It has been observed that when a Lutheran church decides to spread its wings and do its own thing, the first thing to be set aside is the lectionary. The second thing to go is the hymnal, for *Lutheran Service Book* is truly "liturgical" through and through, as it was designed to fit a liturgical church. So, rather than seeing life in a liturgical hymnal as one of the greatest strengths of the Lutheran identity, they tend to see it as a barrier to growing the church because it is so filled with substance that it is not visitor friendly, and therefore should be set aside. (*The subject of visitors, liturgy and hymnals is a whole different article - for a different time.*)

So, on a given Sunday, our Lutheran lectionaries live beautifully in a liturgy and there give shape to Services of Holy Communion as well as to Offices such as Matins and Vespers. In other words, this is what happens regularly: Lutherans gather around God's gifts of grace in Word and

Sacrament as they hear the same biblical texts read and preached as other liturgical churches, and as they sing and speak the same words as found in liturgies from the same hymnal. This describes quite a wonderful liturgical Lutheran prayer life.

Unfortunately, the real crux of the issue today within Lutheranism concerning our prayer life is much bigger than lectionary, liturgy, and hymnal – rather it is about what it means to be confessional and sacramental. That, too, is another article.

Rev. Richard C. Resch - Kantor and Professor Emeritus, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Christians in the United States Military

RADM Luther F. Schriefer presented the following paper on January 20, 2014, at the 2014 LCA Conference in Fort Wayne, IN. We are publishing Part I of the paper in this issue; Part II will be published in the January 2015 issue of the Clarion.

It is a pleasure to be here and there is no question that for me the topics discussed today have been very educational, thought provoking and clearly a challenge calling for action on the part of every one of us.

Today I want to discuss with you what the subject matter suggests, Christians in our country's military. This is not going to be a deep academic or even scholastic presentation but a straightforward thought provoking address. Everyone here today should have an understanding and a sincere interest in the issues presented.

My comments are coming from the perspective of an operator who spent the majority of his naval career on sea duty where when action was required you get on with it and do it. In the first part of this presentation I have purposely slanted my comments towards the development of the military person and the characteristics desired for a successful American fighting man who we expect to win in any conflict and against all odds. That is our heritage, our documented history and the environment we expect our Christians to live in.

After a quick assessment of who I think is in the audience, it can best be summarized in that you are passionate about God and your faith, about the purity of the doctrine and about bringing souls to salvation through Christ Jesus. And I would suspect, resident in this group is the knowledge, academic expertise and the legacy of the conservative Lutheran. (*By the way, my definition of a Christian conservative is that it is our responsibility to declare the Gospel with the clear proclamation of justification by grace alone, through Christ alone, and through faith alone.*) It is in this context, I have asked myself what does this group really know about the military and specifically about Christians in the military – since that is the subject.

Thus my comments are going to directly and succinctly

address what the military is all about, what is going on in today's social re-engineering of the United States Military; the role of a Christian in the United States Military and what is our responsibility in this environment.

My first purpose is to help all of you have a clear and more accurate understanding of who a military person is. In that context, how does the Christian fit into this occupation and in fact should the Christian even be an active part of the military.

First I want to talk with you about the US Military fighting man. I would love to regale you with stories and examples of the American fighter and his reputation of how he has met challenges against overwhelming odds and achieved victory. That would be the fun and glamorous side and what is often highlighted when talking about the historical record. But also, from an historical perspective, what the character of our American military really is.

Let's stop for a minute and look at how we developed the military in the US. In order to understand the military it is worthwhile to remember our country's history regarding conflict – and that is really war.

We have fought 12 major conflicts and numerous (in the dozens) other wars such as the wars against the native American Indians. We are a nation who has not been faint to use force.

- The Revolutionary War
- The War of 1812
- Mexican American War
- The Civil War
- Spanish American War
- WWI & WWII
- Korean War
- Vietnam & simultaneously the Cold War
- Iraq
- Afghanistan

Just think of the progression of our country during this period since 1776 until now and 12 major wars later. If I drew a parallel track of the development of the US military during this time, you would see the transition from patriots fighting to protect their farms and homes to the behemoth that now exists in the Department of Defense - and I might add that the actual number of uniformed military personnel are significantly shrinking while the bureaucracy continues to expand.

The second point to emphasize about the military fighting man is to ask you to think for a moment and question the difference between the military and the rest of the agency of the Department of Defense or for that matter any other government agency?

Here is the answer.

So far I have cited examples of what the military is designed to do – be trained to go into combat and win. Yes there are a lot of support and administrative units but they all support one goal - to go into combat, fight and win. As a result, being part of the military is a 24-hours a day, seven days a week job. I could have just said 24/7 but that term applies to many commercial entities that are 24/7, most gas stations, snack shops, and numerous small fast food stores. For the fighting American military man it is a **real** 24/7. This is an attitude that is developed during pri-

mary training or boot camp and continues until it becomes a way of life. The sole purpose is to physically and mentally train for combat. It is that simple and that straight forward. This means to win and succeed, a military person needs to train as a unit, fight as a unit, eat, drink and sleep as a unit, always working together and protecting your team. This training is purposeful in developing the capability to go into harm's way, sacrifice as necessary even up to and including one's life. This training is not consummated until the individual experiences combat. This is NOT found in any other government agency.

Those are the generalities.

Unless you have just recently reflected on this topic, I would venture to say that if you closed your eyes and then envisioned what the military is, you would probably be influenced by a recent movie you saw, recent news seen on television or a video describing some aspect of the military

“...unless you have been involved in actual fire fights, where you are being shot at, someone is trying to kill you one on one, and you are also trying to kill another human, not just trying to survive – then you don't know combat.”

in our country today. It may very well involve recent documentaries on the wars we have fought in Iraq and are fighting in Afghanistan.

Members of your family or someone you know may be in the military and you have certain impressions, again impressions that are a direct result of what you observed, heard or read. Also there are some in our audience

today who are currently on active duty and may have recently been in these war-fighting environments.

Regardless of your association or relationship to the military, I will flatly state that unless you have been involved in actual fire fights, where you are being shot at, someone is trying to kill you one on one, and you are also trying to kill another human, not just trying to survive – then you don't know combat. Let me add one caveat to that statement: one or two firefights will give you a taste of combat and the fear associated with combat, but prolonged action, days on end, with the constant threat of someone trying to kill you – that is a different story. As realistic as videos games are, even causing the video player to sweat due to the excitement and intensity of playing, it is still a game – combat is not.

Our training in the military is good, it is repetitive to the point our people know how to instinctively respond and that helps us to survive and be successful. Yet there is always a downtime, the after action before it starts again. This sequence is the foundation for creating long-term implications. We should not be surprised with the post combat problems coined in the acronym – PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).

Here is an example of reality in one explanatory note.

Using the USMC training example (which is continuous from enlistment to leaving the service) it is all about teamwork starting with the smallest unit to the largest. This is the foundation to all training. How successful and serious is this? Just take a walk through the recovery, prosthetic and therapy wards of the hospital in Bethesda (Walter Reed National Military Medical Center) and the most common and strong desire from almost all of these *patients* is to get healthy and rejoin their "team" back in country. They have an acute feeling of failing their team by getting wounded and not being there to fight with their team when needed. That "band of brothers" the emotionalism contained in that term can only be understood by those who have experienced it. Others can talk about it (most of us) and a small group of others, skilled in writing, try to capture that emotionalism in words. (The book "War" by Sebastian Junger, New York Times, who was embedded with a team in Afghanistan for a prolonged period — reflects this environment in very raw terms.) Again that band of brotherhood can only be understood by those who have experienced it.

I will revisit this shortly.

Thus ends the first part my comments. Not only a description of the American fighting man but it also serves as the foundation to help in understanding the implications of the "sea change" occurring in today's Department of Defense and how that change is effected. In simple terms, the social re-engineering that is ongoing today.

Over a year ago when initially asked to discuss with you the world of Christianity and the role for the Christian in the military, I expected this discussion would be primarily focused on the individual military person living a Christian life and setting an example by actively demonstrating the character of a Christian and not hesitating to proclaim the gospel within the military circles. I know that sounds pretty basic to all of us. That description of the Christian military character is one that every one of us here today should easily be able to project. That was my explanation a year ago. Today – NOT SO FAST!

Today the military structure is still the same. It starts with leadership at the top – the President (the Commander in Chief) and it flows down hill through the ranks to the troops and that guidance is simply executed. The action is taken and carried out through the chain of command. The military works for and is responsive to civilian leadership. This President, directly or through his staff, issues an order and it is immediately carried out.

Today's world, as we know of it in the United States, is significantly changing. Just consider the social interaction within our society. The electronic media is basic. It is the primary source of communications; instant communication regardless of location...and it is pervasive. Here in the United States, with this level of communication as a backdrop, we, as the US populace, are rapidly adopting social re-engineering of what society accepts as the norm. This includes a significant shift away from the Judeo-Christian

ethical standards on which our country was built. Although, this is a topic for another discussion, it is a fact. We all need to understand the implications.

As you may have noticed, I have modified the title of my comments to specifically define the parameters we will address - that is "Christians in the **US Military**." This is to clarify that we are addressing this issue in the context of what is currently happening in the United States. So far in today's presentations we have had a number of references that directly impact Christians serving in the US military. First, as already inferred, today's military is considerably different from the environment when I left in 1997. Secondly, the military is reflective of society albeit **the military has a history and a record of control, discipline and generally a reputation for compliance with the laws of the land and to a higher degree than found in our society**.

Keep in mind, the training routine mentioned earlier, applies to all members of the armed forces. For those projected to go into combat it will be more intense. However, across the military structure, unit cohesion is fundamental.

For everyone here today, it is essential that we have some understanding of what we are asking our young people to do and the environment they are to live and fight in.

With that introduction, what do we expect of our young Christians in the military? What kind of guidance do we provide them? When does this start? What is the role of our Chaplains? How about those who are Christian and achieve senior positions?

RADM Luther F. Schriefer USN (Ret.)

Falls Church, Virginia

Presenters for 2015 LCA Conference: *Thy Word is Truth*

Rev. Dr. Roland F. Ziegler – Bible Study.

Dr. Roland Ziegler serves as Associate Professor for Systematic Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTS). A native of Germany, he was born in the state of Baden-Württemberg; he studied at the Universities of Tübingen, Erlangen, and at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Oberursel. During his studies, Dr. Ziegler joined the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church. A scholarship enabled him to study as an exchange student at CTS in Fort Wayne. After finishing his studies, he served as a teaching assistant at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Oberursel, as a vicar in Berlin and as a pastor in Konstanz. Dr. Ziegler received his Dr.Theol. from the Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen in 2011.

He is the coeditor of *Hermann Sasse: In Statu Confessionis*, vol. 3 (Göttingen: Edition Ruprecht, 2011) and the author of *Das Eucharistiegebet in Theologie und Liturgie der lutherischen Kirchen seit der Reformation. Die Deutung des Herrenmahles zwischen Promissio und Eucharistie* (Göttingen: Edition Ruprecht, 2013).

Rev. Dr. William C. Weinrich – Opening Devotion

Dr. William C. Weinrich is professor of Early Church History and Patristic Studies at CTS, Fort Wayne, Ind. He is a gradu-

ate of the University of Oklahoma, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (1972), and received his Doctor of Theology degree from the University of Basel, Switzerland (1977).

Dr. Weinrich joined the seminary faculty in 1975, teaching History and New Testament and was Academic Dean 1996-2006. He served as Rector of the Luther Academy in Riga, Latvia, (2007-2010) where he taught extensively and oversaw the pastoral ministry program. He returned to the classroom at CTS in 2011 and is currently writing the *Concordia Commentary* volume on the Gospel of John.

Dr. Weinrich served on the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (1992-2001); Doctrinal Review Commission (1992-1998); Third Vice President, LCMS (1998-2001); Fifth Vice President, LCMS (2001-2004). He also served 30 years in the Indiana Air National Guard, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel in 2002.

Rev. Dr. Cameron Alexander MacKenzie – *Controversy over Translating the Bible—from Jerome to the Present*

Dr. MacKenzie is the Ellis Professor of Historical Theology at CTS in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and chairman of the department. At Concordia since 1983, Dr. MacKenzie has a B.A. in mathematics and history from the University of Detroit, an M.A. in history from the University of Chicago, an M. A. in classics from Wayne State University, an S.T.M. in New Testament from CTS (Ft. Wayne), and a Ph.D. in history from the University of Notre Dame. Prior to coming to Concordia Seminary, Dr. MacKenzie was pastor for eight years of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Detroit, Michigan, where he also served as headmaster of the parish school.

Dr. MacKenzie has published many articles about church history, lectures frequently, and is the author of *The Battle for the Bible in England, 1557-1582*. He is presently the book review editor of the *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*.

Dr. MacKenzie is married to Meg (nee Martin) of Midland, Michigan, who teaches second grade at St. Paul's Lutheran School (Ft. Wayne). The MacKenzies have four grown children and three grandchildren.

Rev. Dr. Jeffrey J. Kloha - *Manuscripts and Misquoting, Inspiration and Apologetics*

Dr. Kloha received his M.Div and S.T.M degrees from Concordia Seminary and his Ph.D. from the University of Leeds. He served an urban congregation in the Cleveland, Ohio, area for six years and has taught at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis since 1999 in the areas of Greek, Biblical interpretation, Pauline Epistles, and the canonical and textual development of the New Testament. He is a Professor of Exegetical Theology and the Provost at Concordia. His area of research and publication is the history of the New Testament text and its manuscripts. He has published articles in *Novum Testamentum*, *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, *Lutheran Theological Quarterly*, and *Concordia Journal*. Dr. Kloha recently published *Texts and Traditions* (Brill) and is completing a book on the manuscripts of 1 Corinthians.

Rev. Dr. Peter J. Scaer - *A Hermeneutics of Meaning: Created to be in Conversation with God*

Dr. Peter Scaer did his undergraduate work in the Classics at Indiana University Bloomington, graduating in 1988. From there he went on to CTS (M.Div., 1992), and to Notre Dame, where he earned his M.A. (1995), and completed his doctoral dissertation on the Lukan Passion Narrative (Ph.D., 2001). From 1996 to 2000, Dr. Scaer served as the pastor of Emanuel Lutheran Church in Arcadia, Indiana. He joined the Exegetical

Department in 2000.

Rev. Dr. Martin Noland – *The Brief Statement of 1932 as a Defense of the Plenary Authority of Scripture Against the Modern Theory of Development of Doctrine*

The Rev. Dr. Martin R. Noland is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Evansville, Indiana. He has been a member of the LCMS clergy for thirty years. He was the Director of Concordia Historical Institute, Saint Louis, Missouri, serving from 2002 to 2008. The Institute, which has been incorporated since 1927, is the Department of Archives and History of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He received his Ph.D. degree in 1996 from The Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York. His dissertation was on the German theologian Adolf von Harnack and the German historicist tradition. He received his S.T.M. degree in 1986 from CTS, Fort Wayne, Indiana, and his M.Div. degree in 1983 from the same school. Dr. Noland has been an associate editor of "Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology" since 1996. He was a member and officer of the Board of Directors of the Luther Academy from 1993 to 2008. He is presently a member of the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Concerns Association. He is the author of over two hundred articles on the Lutheran church, its history, its theology, and related topics. He has been a guest on the radio program "Issues, etc." and other programs on KFJO-AM in Saint Louis. Dr. Noland was born in San Francisco and raised in San Jose, California. His wife is Karla Noland nee Kuhlman; they have three teenage daughters.

Vicar Christian Preus - *The Clarity of Scripture and the Gospel in Philip Melancthon's Loci Communes 1521*

Dr. Christian Preus was born in Grand Forks, North Dakota, in 1985. The son of Pastor Rolf Preus, he grew up in East Grand Forks, Minnesota, and Racine, Wisconsin, where his father served as a Lutheran pastor. He is married to Lisa and they have four children, David, Christine, Abraham, and Martha. Dr. Preus currently attends seminary at CTS in Fort Wayne and is serving his vicarage under Pastor Clint Poppe at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Lincoln, Nebraska. He received his B.A. in Classics from the University of North Dakota and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Classics from the University of Iowa, specializing in Greek rhetoric. He is the editor and translator of the recent CPH publication of Philip Melancthon's *Commonplaces: Loci Communes 1521*.

Rev. Dr. Brian S. Saunders - *Visitation; Contact and Control*

Dr. Brian S. Saunders was born in Sioux City, Iowa 1958. He is married to Karen. Dr. Saunders and his wife have been blessed with four children and six grandchildren. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biblical Languages from St. John's College in Winfield Kansas. His Masters of Divinity degree in Exegetical Studies is from CTS in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He earned a Ph.D. degree in Pastoral/Historical Theology from Trinity Theological Seminary in Newburg, Indiana.

Dr. Saunders was pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, from 1990-92. He was pastor at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Muscatine, Iowa, from 1992-2009. He was elected president of Iowa District East in 2009; he remains in that position. Dr. Saunders has taught for and worked with the Siberian Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kenya, and the Lutheran Church of South Africa.



Watch the **2014 LCA Conference Presentations** at our web site:
<http://lutheranclarion.org/videos.html>

LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Monday, January 19, 2015

Thy Word is Truth

John 17:17

The Lutheran Concerns Association extends a cordial invitation to all Lutherans, especially LCMS, to attend the LCA Annual Conference. We look forward to meeting you and working together to make the LCMS a faithful and strong voice for Evangelical Lutherans.

LCA CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

I Thessalonians 2:13

6:40 a.m. - Registration Opens
7:00 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. - Rev. Dr. Roland Ziegler - Bible Study
8:00 a.m. to 8:10 a.m. - Rev. Dr. William Weinrich - Opening Devotion
8:10 a.m. to 8:20 a.m. - Welcome and Greetings from the LCA (Mr. Walt Dissen, Esq.) and the LCMS Indiana District
8:20 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. - Rev. Dr. Cameron A. MacKenzie - Controversy over Translating the Bible - from Jerome to the Present
8:50 a.m. to 9:20 a.m. - Questions and Answers
9:20 a.m. to 9:35 a.m. - Break
9:35 a.m. to 10:05 a.m. - Rev. Dr. Jeffrey J. Kloha - Manuscripts and Misquoting, Inspiration and Apologetics
10:05 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. - Questions and Answers
10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. - Rev. Dr. Peter J. Scaer - A Hermeneutics of Meaning: Created to be in Conversation with God
11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - Questions and Answers
11:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon - Rev. Dr. Martin Noland - The Brief Statement of 1932 as a Defense of the Plenary Authority of Scripture Against the Modern Theory of Development of Doctrine
12:00 noon - 12:10 p.m. - Questions and Answers
12:20 p.m. to 1:20 p.m. - Lunch Served in the Meeting Room
1:20 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. - Vicar Christian Preus - The Clarity of Scripture and the Gospel in Philip Melancthon's <i>Loci Communes</i> 1521
2:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. - Questions and Answers
2:30 p.m. to 3:10 p.m. - Rev. Dr. Brian S. Saunders - Visitation; Contact and Control
3:10 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. - Questions and Answers
3:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. - Panel Discussion with All Presenters
5:00 p.m. to 5:10 p.m. - Closing Remarks and Closing Prayer
5:30 p.m. - LCA Annual Business Meeting (Paid Members Only)

The conference will be held at Don Hall's Guest House. The rates are **\$89.00** + taxes for a single; **\$99.00** + taxes for 2-4 per room. When making your reservation, mention that you are attending **THE LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE, CODE: GROUP #1185**. To be guaranteed a room, reservations must be made by December 18, 2014. There is free airport shuttle service from the airport to Don Hall's. At the time of check-in, breakfast and dinner coupons (free breakfast and free dinner) will be given for each room (maximum two of each per room). A free lunch will be served in the meeting room (if registration is postmarked by 12/14/2014). You must make your own Guest House reservation.



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Non-member conference registration fee: \$65 if postmarked by 12/14/2014; \$70 if postmarked thereafter. Enclosed _____.

Half day (AM or PM) registration fee is 50% less of above fee. If lunch is desired, add \$10; must be postmarked by 12/14/2014.

Enclosed _____.

Seminary students and personnel will have the registration fee waived, but to receive **lunch for \$10**, registration must be postmarked by 12/14/2014.

I will pay at the door _____.

A free lunch will be served to early registrants who pay the applicable registration fee by 12/14/2014, or at the door.

Make check payable to **LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION**. Please detach this registration form & send to Lutheran Concerns Association · 149 Glenview Drive · New Kensington, PA 15068-4921

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