

# **Stand in Awe of Justification**

## **The Diamond Among the Jewels of Divine Revelation**

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[Presented to The Minnesota District Pastoral Conference April 12-13, 1983 at Martin Luther Ev. Lutheran Church St. Louis, MO]

The doctrine of justification is the shining jewel of our faith. Indeed, this teaching of Scripture is the heart and core of Christianity. Luther, as is well known, called justification the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*. Dr. Luther goes on in admiring this jewel by saying:

The article of justification is the master and prince, the lord, the ruler, and the judge over all kinds of doctrines; it preserves and governs all church doctrine and raises up our conscience before God. Without this article the world is utter death and darkness... The doctrine of justification must, as I frequently urge, be diligently learned; for in it all the other articles of our faith are comprehended. And when that is safe, the others are safe too.<sup>1</sup>

The Confessions of our Church echo this regard for the centrality of justification. Each of the symbols of Reformation vintage view justification as "the chief topic of Christian doctrine"<sup>2</sup> or words to that effect. Therefore, since we view this doctrine as the central teaching of our church, by which the church stands or falls, it is not without some trepidation that this paper is presented. I certainly must confess, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

Last year, when first approached to take this assignment, I was under the impression that this paper would be a response to the now famous "Kokomo case." (My only criterion for selection was that I happened to vicar in the same conference back in '78-'79, when the situation first developed. Now I know that vicaring for George Boldt is an honor, but I wonder if I should thank him for being assigned a paper purely by association?!) In the intervening year, the Kokomo case has been dealt with by the proper committees of our church. Yet to read the "august" pages of the *Christian News* one would imagine that the controversy rages on. Such is not the case. I am convinced that our gracious Lord has united the brethren in our Church in a Scriptural understanding of justification. There is no controversy or conflict within the WELS. However, since our position has been raped and plundered by those who put words into our mouths, this paper might prove a beneficial review. One final word of apology before we start in. The subject matter assigned was "objective - subjective justification." I found the assigned topic rather extensive. Where does one begin? In the course of preparing this essay, brethren asked me to review the Kokomo situation. Others wanted me to cover the Maier case at Ft. Wayne. Others asked for an exegetical presentation of pertinent passages. At the risk of trying to cover everything, yet doing nothing thoroughly, I will attempt to oblige all. I hope to present a brief review of Scripture teaching on justification and also analyze the current difficulties men are having with this central doctrine of the Bible. Let us polish the jewel of justification. We need always to stand in awe of this diamond among all of God's revelation.

### **I. Listen to Men Describe its Various Facets**

Lutherans view justification as the key to understanding God's plan of salvation. To paraphrase a popular ad, we could shout "When you've said justification, you've said it all." The term is a catch-all phrase by which we feel confident that orthodox teaching is preserved. But is it? What have we said? What do we mean? Sometimes the pastor in the pulpit uses a handy theological trade word that only confuses the parishioner in the pew. We need to examine how men try to describe the various facets of this brilliant jewel.

Three phrases are usually applied to the teaching that God has forgiven the sins of all men: "Objective justification", "general justification", or "universal justification." Most of the time these terms are interchangeable. Stoeckhardt<sup>3</sup> seems to prefer "general justification," while Pieper<sup>4</sup> talks of "objective reconciliation." Only Dr. S. Becker carefully delineates between objective and universal justification.

"Universal justification" is a term denoting the doctrine that God has forgiven the sins of all men. Strictly speaking, the term "objective justification" expresses the thought that the sins of a man are forgiven by God whether he believes it or not. Objective justification is not necessarily universal, but if justification is universal it must of necessity be objective.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps such a distinction is helpful if it assists us in understanding the glorious Gospel: In Jesus, God has declared the entire world righteous and forgiven, regardless of whether or not the world believes it. Such is the jewel described by objective, universal, or general justification.

Yet Scripture goes on in revealing how God appropriates this good news to the individual. God creates faith in the heart of a sinner, faith which trusts that since I am part of the world, I also am declared righteous for Christ's sake. This personal appropriation is sometimes called "subjective justification" or "individual justification." Perhaps we can keep objective and subjective justification in perspective if we think in terms of the Creed. Objective justification is really the result of Christ's work, and therefore belongs in the Second Article. John Schaller says, "The evangelical preacher will remember that this justification must be the main theme of all Easter sermons, and the Christian teacher in general will recognize that the doctrine of justification is basically and primarily taught in the *second* article of the Creed!" (emphasis original)<sup>6</sup> The individual's appropriation of this truth is a gift of God the Holy Spirit working through the Means of Grace. Therefore, subjective justification would come under discussion in the Third Article.

However, we need always to be on guard against falsely promoting two types of justification. There is only one divine diamond. Trying to separate the diamond will only shatter it. Men, with their puny languages, try to grasp the infinite mercy of God. But just because we use different terms does not mean there are different doctrines. There are three articles to the Creed, but that does not mean that there are three Gods. There is only one God, whom we call the Trinity; human language is attempting to explain the mysteries of the Almighty One. So it is with justification. Do not try to cut the diamond in two. To do so will only result in falsehood. The truth would be shattered. Objective justification apart from subjective justification leads to universalism. A subjective approach to justification apart from an objective basis would lead to synergism. We quote from President Mischke's newsletter of June, 1982.

A word of caution may, however, be in place. It may be well to remind ourselves not to divide "objective" and "subjective" justification as if they were two totally different things which can be treated in isolation from one another. They are rather the two sides of the same coin, and there can be no "saints" or salvation without faith. To teach otherwise would indeed be universalism.<sup>7</sup>

Theological terms can be helpful in describing the various facets of the diamond of all doctrines—justification. Yet terminology might cause confusion or result in controversy. Rather than debate the terms, we need to grasp the Scriptural truth. Dr. Becker gets to the heart of justification quickly. "The crux of the controversy can be summed up in a very simple way: 'Has God forgiven the sins of all men?'"<sup>8</sup> To answer that question accurately, we need to ponder what Scripture reveals about God.

## **II. Marvel at its Mysterious Origin**

The diamond of justification is a revelation of God's eternal plan of salvation. Its origin lies in the attributes of God as revealed in Scripture. He is holy and just, yet also loving and merciful. We need to come to grips with this apparent paradox before we can comprehend justification. (I will make no bones about it. This

portion of the paper will be a brief condensation of an excellent essay given by Professor A. Schuetze at the second Lutheran Free Conference.<sup>9</sup> My apologies to the professor if I mangle his presentation.) Schuetze says, The full scope of man's sin and God's righteous wrath against sin must be recognized as a presupposition to an understanding of the doctrine of justification and an appreciation for it.<sup>10</sup>

God is holy: How little that word can convey to us. We speak that small word "holy" and quickly dismiss it. Yet the infinite God is Holy, Perfect, Righteous. How can we begin to describe His awesome majesty? Scripture says, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: The whole earth is full of his glory." (Is 6:3) And God's holiness expresses itself in wrath over sin. The holiness and justice of God are inseparable. God cannot tolerate sin in any degree, otherwise His holiness would be vitiated, and He would cease to be God.

God demands such holiness of His creatures. "Ye shall be holy for I the Lord your God am holy." (Lev 19:2) Jesus echoes the divine directive: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Mt 5:48) God's holiness cannot be tarnished even by His creation. If it is, justice must be satisfied.

We know from Scripture the sad fact of man's total depravity. Although created in God's image, man rebelled in the Fall. Adam's sin is thus imputed to all men. (Ro 5:12) All men are born sinful. (Ps 51:5, in 3:6) Original sin leads to actual sins. (Mt 15:19) All men are under this verdict. (Ro 3:23, Ps 14:3) The total depravity of the world cannot be questioned, even if the world ignores the fact. God's justice, then, must be satisfied if God is to be holy. This is the message of God's Law. It is immutable. It is eternal.

Yet Scripture also reveals a merciful, loving God. "God is love," the apostle tells us. (1Jn 4:8) God loved the world (Jn 3:16), even the same wicked world that mocks His Word and ignores His Will. How can this be? How can God demand eternal punishment and yet promise merciful love? It makes no sense to the human mind. So man has often caricatured God as a lovey-dovey grandpa who winks at sin. Or it has portrayed God as the Judge who will never be satisfied. Or it has removed God from the picture altogether, and given men the idea that there is no moral responsibility for our actions. Such is not Scripture. God is justice; God is mercy. God is Law. God is Gospel. Listen to the Lord's own description of His nature. He gave it to Moses in Exodus 34.

"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and fourth generation."

In these words God shows Himself to be a God of mercy, and a God of judgement. God forgives sin, God punishes sin. This is the Law-Gospel dilemma that grates against human reason. God forgives - God punishes. As much as it baffles human reason, these two attributes must be true, for God is unchanging. Arndt puts it well; "There were two attributes in God that had to be safeguarded, and in this case there seemed to be a conflict between them. These attributes were the justice of God and the love or grace of God... But, eternal praise be to God, He has a way which safeguards both qualities. He does it through the work of Christ,"<sup>11</sup> The only answer is the cross, for there we hear Jesus say "It is finished!" The Law of God is satisfied by Christ. His active and passive obedience fulfilled every demand. The demand for holiness is satisfied. The demand for punishment is satisfied. The justice of God is met. At the same time, in the very same act, we see the love and grace of God, love for the entire world. For God in love sent His Son into the world to be the Substitute for all. The Gospel is the Good News that every sin is forgiven, every transgression blotted out. The vicarious atonement in Christ is thus the necessary basis for any proper understanding of justification. This atonement is universal, the sins of all are covered, as Scripture clearly teaches. (1Jn 1:3; Jn 1:29) Beware the "tulip" theology of the Calvinists which stresses a limited atonement.<sup>12</sup> Such thinking makes God a liar and will never allow a proper, Scriptural understanding of justification. Justification is grounded in the cross of Christ. It cannot be separated. As a summary, we quote Becker:

And yet to all eternity He remains the same God, the God who punishes and the God who forgives. Unless we understand that we will always have trouble with the doctrine of universal

justification. In reality, no man has a right to believe that his sins are forgiven unless he also believes that his sins have been punished. That is why orthodox theologians who do not merely parrot what they have heard others say so often seem to have difficulty in making up their minds whether the doctrine of vicarious atonement or the doctrine of justification is the central doctrine of the Christian religion.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, this divine diamond of justification finds its origins in the attributes of our holy and merciful God. God has further revealed this good news of justification in His Scripture. Let us proceed to briefly review the inspired Words of our God concerning justification.

### III. Search the Mines from which it is Dug

We traditionally define "justify" as "to declare righteous." Hence the Lutheran Church has historically viewed justification in a forensic sense, a judicial declaration of God. There are those who disagree. Many view justification in a sanitive sense. They feel God is in the process of giving us grace to help or heal ourselves. Our life becomes a process of making ourselves righteous before God. I needn't inform you that this is Rome's basic approach, employing *gratia infusa* and the whole realm of semi-Pelagianism. At the time of the Reformation, Oriander introduced an almost mystic view of justification. We are justified by Christ's in-dwelling. His righteousness is within us, an almost mystical union.<sup>14</sup> In my understanding, Methodism comes closest today to perpetuating this idea. My Sem senior dog professor even referred to a "triumphatorial" view of justification as espoused by Aulen in a book called *Christus Victor*. (I must confess that although I jotted down this school of thought, I must have dozed off when he explained it. I don't have the foggiest idea what Aulen purports.) Anyway, are we Lutherans correct in viewing justification forensically? Scripture leaves no room for doubt.

Our Seminary dogmatic notes present a short word study to support the forensic concept. In the Old Testament we find קָטַב used in the Hiphil, meaning to declare righteous. In the New Testament δικαιούν is used 38 times, in the majority of these instances it is in a definite forensic sense. Rather than take the time and space to enumerate all references in this word study, I'll refer you to that portion of our dogmatic notes.<sup>15</sup> I have no doubt that justification is a forensic act of God.

Scripture also speaks of justification in an objective and universal manner. Since this is the portion of Scripture that proved to be a stumbling block to some in Kokomo, we need to be sure we stand on the Bible. A brief exegetical review follows on several of the passages which we consider as *sedes*. II Corinthians 5:19

ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς

"because that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not reckoning to them their sins, and having placed in us the message of reconciliation."

This is perhaps the clearest teaching of Scripture regarding universal justification, even if δικαίωσις is not specifically used. John Schaller is confident that this single passage alone is clear enough to be binding for our faith. "But it is also possible for a change so clearly to present this doctrine by means of one single passage, that it should suffice as far as certainty of faith is concerned."<sup>16</sup> For this reason we list this Scripture first.

The ὡς ὅτι refers back to verse 18, as Paul now wishes to give the basis for what he had previously said. Thus, verse 19 has a close connection to the previous verse.

Among WELS theologians there is some disagreement about the verb construction. Some (Meyer and Schaller<sup>17</sup>) take ἦν by itself, and thus the participles are appositional adjectives. Others (Becker and Kuske<sup>18</sup>)

take ἦν as a part of a periphrastic construction with καταλλάσσω. What is the difference in meaning? Kuske sums it up for us well. "The first (i.e. ἦν alone) would stress primarily the fact that God was incarnate in Christ; the second would stress that God was reconciling."<sup>19</sup> If taken as a periphrastic construction, it would be an imperfect periphrastic.

The verb καταλλάσσω has a root meaning derived from ἄλλος =change or alter. This verb is understood by F. Pieper to describe God anthropomorphically, as if a change has taken place in God's heart.<sup>20</sup> I see no problem with this approach, especially since Scripture itself speaks of God anthropomorphically. (e.g. After Jonah's mission to Nineveh, God repents and does not destroy the city.) Others view καταλλάσσω with reference to God's immutability. Since God cannot change, the change must take place somewhere else. It cannot be the κόσμον, since Scripture speaks of it as evil, and remaining opposed to Christ to the end of time. Therefore, the change must be in the status of the sinful world. As a result of Christ's redemptive work, the legal status of the world is now changed before God's judgement seat. The world is declared innocent.

This change is clearly defined in μὴ λογιζόμενος. God did not charge our sins to our account. Why not? In verse 21 we read that Christ was made to be sin for us. How clear it is: Christ was made to be sin in our place. Thus, in Christ, God punishes the sins of the world and does not charge those sins to the world. The world is declared righteous. This is the change that took place. God has reconciled the world to Himself in Christ.

Romans 5:18,19 ἄρα οὖν ὡς δι' ἑνὸς παραπτώματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς κατάκριμα, οὕτως καὶ δι' ἑνὸς δικαιοῦματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς. ὥσπερ γὰρ διὰ τῆς παρακοῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἁμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάθησαν οἱ πολλοί, οὕτως καὶ διὰ τῆς ὑπακοῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς δίκαιοι κατασταθήσονται οἱ πολλοί.

"Therefore just as by the sin of one [the result came] to all men for condemnation, even thus by the righteous act of one the [the result came] to all men for the righteousness of life. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the men were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one, the many will be made righteous."

The key to properly understanding these verses is to be aware of the close parallelism that exists. The objection that οἱ πολλοί cannot refer to universal justification is removed if the parallelism is maintained. "The many" are also the "all." Paul is comparing Adam and Christ. A verdict of punishment was declared upon all men because of the sin of Adam. Likewise a verdict of acquittal was declared on all men because of the righteousness of Christ. (note distinction between δικαίωμα and δικαιοσις) . The future κατασταθήσονται is not to be regarded on a temporal future, as if our justification occurs at some future time. Rather, it is a logical or gnostic future. (e.g. If A is true, then it will follow that B is true.) If it is true that by the disobedience of Adam, all were made sinners, and it is, then it will also be true that by the obedience of Christ, all will be made righteous. Permit Stoeckhardt to summarize:

In these verses is taught universal or objective justification. The apostle teaches that justification of life has been obtained for all men, that the many, all men, are righteous before God, that all men have been justified and absolved from all their transgressions. With Paul, justification is identical with the forgiveness of sins. (11Cor 5:19) God has in Christ forgiven the world all its sins. The entire Pauline doctrine of justification and all comfort in justification stand and fall with this article of universal justification. So it is fully clear and evident that justification is altogether independent of man's conduct. And thus alone can the individual be absolutely sure of

his justification. For it is a cogent conclusion: If God has already in Christ justified all men and forgiven their sins, then I also in Christ have a gracious God and the forgiveness of all my sins.<sup>21</sup>

Romans 4:5 τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐργαζομένῳ, πιστεύοντι δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ, λογίζεται ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

..."to the one not working, but believing on the One justifying the godless, his faith is reckoned for righteousness."

This verse is generally not used as a *sedes* for universal justification. However, keeping in mind the distinction between objective and universal justification noted above, this passage strongly shows the *objective nature* of justification. Regardless of man's faith, God declares the world just. Since it is Dr. Becker who notes the distinction in objective justification over against universal justification, we shall let him speak for himself.

In speaking about ἀσεβής, Becker asserts

We are not pressing the word beyond what it can bear if we say that, when Paul says that God justifies the ungodly, he is asserting that God declares the unbeliever just. The fact that the unbeliever by rejecting God's verdict deprives himself eternally of the joy and comfort that this message gives does not make the declaration of God untrue.<sup>22</sup>

Romans 4:25 ὃς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν καὶ ἠγέρθη διὰ τῆς δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν.

He was surrounded over to death because of our sins and raised again because of our justification.

Much debate concerns the preposition *δια* in this verse. *Δια*, "because of," might look back (retrospective) or might look forward (prospective). Who cares about such a little word? We do: Much is at stake! Without a doubt the first *δια* is retrospective. Jesus was put to death because our sins had been imputed to him, and not only ours, but also the sins of the entire world. What about the second *δια*? Sanday and Headlam<sup>23</sup> look upon it as prospective, raised that we might be justified. But such a view robs Easter of its comfort. Following Paul's parallelism, it is imperative we take the second *δια* as retrospective also. Christ was raised because we had been justified. The comfort of the resurrection is knowing that God accepted Christ's sacrifice. Our salvation is an accomplished fact. It is done. It is finished. The resurrection is the proof that God has declared the sinners justified!

1 John 2:2 καὶ αὐτός ἱλασμός ἐστιν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, οὐ περὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων δὲ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου.

"And He is the propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, not for ours only, but also for the whole world's."

John 1:29 ἴδε ὁ ἀμνος τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου

"Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

These two brief passages clearly speak about the universal redemption Christ accomplished. And if Christ died for the sins of the world, are not those sins covered? Are they not forgiven? Do we dare call Christ a liar when He shouted "It is finished"? If Christ died for sins, the sins are forgiven. And we learned in II Cor 5:19 that forgiveness ("not imputing their trespasses unto them") is synonymous with justification.

On the basis of this brief overview of passages, what then is the Scriptural truth called universal justification? Simply this: In Christ, God has forgiven the sins of all men. By reason of Christ's perfect life of obedience and perfect sacrifice for all sins, God declares the world, believer and unbeliever alike, totally innocent. Jesus was the Substitute for all. His death is our death; His resurrection is ours. Although all are totally sinful and totally condemned because of Adam's transgression, yet because of Christ's righteousness we are declared righteous. God's Word proclaims the purest Gospel possible. It is all God's abundant grace. Jesus has done it all. The world is declared innocent. And what is true for the world must be true for me! What comfort! What joy!

Can we then conclude that all the world will be in heaven? Of course not. Those who reject the Glorious Gift of salvation in Christ will be damned, as Scripture states, "He that believeth not will be damned." We must keep in mind that Scripture also speaks subjectively when dealing with justification.

Subjective justification is nothing more than believing that in Christ, the world is forgiven. Since I'm part of the world, I, too, am forgiven. This personal confidence that my sins are forgiven for Christ's sake is subjective justification. We call it "saving faith." In discussing faith we need to constantly remember what Scripture says about faith: faith is necessary for salvation, and faith is a gift of the Holy Ghost.

When we say that faith is necessary for salvation, we simply mean that faith in Jesus Christ will save us for all eternity. The faith itself is not what saves, but the object of faith, namely, Jesus Christ, is what saves. Faith is merely the receiving hand into which God pours out His grace through the Gospel. Our dogmaticians spoke of faith as the *organon leptikon*. Faith does nothing more than receive the forgiveness which is offered in the Gospel. It is not a condition we fulfill nor is it a cause of forgiveness. We are already forgiven. God's message of justification in Christ is there whether we believe it or not. Faith then receives the blessings. Unbelief rejects them, so unbelief will be damned. The reason there is confusion in regard to the role of faith is rather simple. Satan is always trying to get men to pat themselves on the back. The *opinio legis* inherent in every old Adam likes to think that it can somehow assist in working out salvation. The last vestige of this self-pride is the idea, "At least I can believe. I can accept the message." Now is not the place to go into decision theology. Its dangers to *sola gratia* are obvious. As preachers of the pure Gospel we need to continually safeguard the truth that *God* is the author of our salvation, down to every last detail. Faith that accepts the good news of universal justification is the work of God the Holy Ghost. He gets the credit, for "no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost." We need not concern ourselves in preaching about faith. Simply present Law and Gospel. Warn sinners that unbelief damns, and rejection of Christ will bring eternal torment. Then comfort them with the glorious objective reality that all sins are already forgiven in Christ. (Of course, to the impenitent our only message will be Law, to work the contrition so needed.) Leave faith up to the Holy Spirit. That is His work, not ours. He will appropriate the message into the hearts of the elect.

After searching the mines of Scripture, I hope that the jewel of justification shines brightly for all of us. My feeble efforts at presenting this truth no doubt can be misunderstood or misapplied. Yet I hope that the previous discussion refreshes for all of us the glorious truth of full and free salvation in Jesus Christ. We are saved. God declares us just. Believe it.

Despite the shining glory of this diamond of justification, men continually becloud its brilliance. The problems at Kokomo, at Ft. Wayne, and elsewhere, are but the perennial problems of man's reason conflicting with God's wisdom. In reviewing these problems, let us be on guard against dulling the divine brilliance of this jewel of justification.

#### **IV. Avoid Dulling its Divine Brilliance**

Why is there so much problem over this central teaching of Scripture? Even among Lutherans, we hear and read confusion. I feel that the basic problem is man's reason. We cannot begin to rationalize this diamond of justification. As mentioned earlier, if we stress objective justification and ignore the warnings of God's Law concerning unbelief, we result in universalism. This heresy is present everywhere. Even in small Danube one of the villagers told me, "It doesn't matter what you believe. We're all going to the same place anyway." Or that common falsehood, "All churches teach pretty much the same thing, so what's the difference." The other extreme is to stress subjective justification without understanding the objective reality. This error leads to synergism in one form or the other. Stressing faith as the cause of justification makes it a meritorious work. We have then destroyed the *sola gratia* of the Gospel, and cause men to look within themselves for the assurance of salvation. Put very simply, justification is misunderstood if we misapply Law and Gospel.

The Kokomo situation is now quite familiar to all of us. In the year since this paper was assigned, much has been published in various forums. I do not feel it would be beneficial to rehash the entire controversy since the case has been closed for some time. I will try to briefly summarize the controversy as I understand it. (For your personal study, I am attaching in the addenda 1: the open letter sent by the Hartmans and Pohlman; 2: a copy of the "four statements;" 3: a copy of the report of the Kokomo Review Committee; and 4: a copy of the President's Report to the SEW district, June, 1982.)

Three of the four Kokomo statements were adaptations and distortions of statements from Meyer's commentary *Ministers of Christ*. If you read his section on II Cor 5:18-21, especially pages 103-109, you will see the source of the first three Kokomo statements. If one reads Meyer in context, it is clear that he is simply striving to present objective justification as clearly as possible. Let's quote Professor Meyer and add emphasis where we find the basis for the famous four statements.

Paul then, in v. 17, turns to the individual sinners, saying: If any one is in Christ he is a new creation. *Objectively speaking, without any reference to an individual sinner's attitude toward Christ's sacrifice, purely on the basis of God's verdict, every sinner, whether he knows about it or not, whether he believes it or not, has received the status of a saint.* What will be his reaction when he is informed about this turn of events? Will he accept, or will he decline?<sup>24</sup> (Kokomo, number 1)

We thus see that *καταλλαγή* does not denote a change in the nature of the sinner, in the attitude of his heart. That change will take place when he is led by the Spirit to accept in faith the offered *καταλλαγή*. The change occurred in the standing of the sinner before his Judge. Before Christ's intervention took place God regarded him as a guilt-laden, condemned culprit. *After Christ's intervention and through Christ's intervention He regards him as a guilt-free saint.* The nature of the sinner has not been changed. God did not undergo a change, did not experience a change of heart. The status of the sinner was changed.<sup>25</sup> (Kokomo, number 2)

..."God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." We note first of all that Paul extends God's act of *καταλλάσσειν* to cover the whole world. No sinner is excepted. The sins of everyone were laid on Jesus, were imputed to Him. *Forgiveness of sins* was not only secured and provided for the sinners, it was *pronounced over them*. Their sins were non-imputed to them, they were imputed to Christ. *This applies to the whole world, to every individual sinner*, whether he was living in the days of Christ, or had died centuries before His coming, or had not yet been born, perhaps has not been born to this day. *It applies to the world as such regardless of whether a particular sinner ever comes to faith or not.*<sup>26</sup> (Kokomo number 3)<sup>27</sup>

Read in context, there is not one WELS pastor who would disagree with what Meyer says. Perhaps the terminology might be troublesome, but certainly not the content. What the Kokomo couples did was to twist



these statements and try to straight jacket our teaching to fit their four statements. (The fourth statement is from a non-WELS source.) Maybe the easiest way to understand the unfortunate situation is to hear Professor Panning's assessment. Professor Panning was chairman of the review committee, and in a letter to me of 9/13/82, he writes:

Their theology in many respects is quite similar to what Lenski does in his *Romans* commentary, though they have arrived at their position by a connection to Fort Wayne and Walter A. Maier. These people are quick to say that Christ's death has paid for all sins and that God is *willing to forgive* all men, but they stoutly insist that you dare not say that God *has forgiven* all men. That is universalism, they claim, and they take strong exception to the wording in *This We Believe*

The only justification they will accept is the subjective aspect of it (i.e. personal appropriation by faith). Hence "justification" is for them the on-going process of individual sinners coming to faith. That is, of course, very similar to Lenski's approach...

In short, I think they take one aspect of justification (the subjective aspect) and treat it as if it were the whole of the doctrine. Meanwhile they call "universalists" those who hold *also* the other (i.e. objective) aspect that Scripture speaks of, charging them with believing *only* in objective justification. (emphasis original)<sup>28</sup>

So much for the Kokomo case, which leads indirectly to the situation at Fort Wayne. The Kokomo couples during the discussion with the review committee of our synod mentioned several times their close agreement with Dr. Maser. In a letter dated 4/13/82, written to Rev. J. Miller, the Hartmans and Pohlman again imply a connection, even if indirectly. The position of Dr. Maser, at least as I understand it, seems very similar.

It is difficult to ascertain exactly what Dr. Maser is promoting. The forum of *Christian News*, (one of my few insights into the Ft. Wayne situation), is slanted at best. Pastor Curia, in his exhaustive essay,<sup>29</sup> details developments from the past several years in which Dr. Maser is gradually abandoning the historic position of the synodical conference on objective justification. What exactly is he saying? Listen to his own words. "Before faith the sinner is righteous before God only according to the acquisition and the divine intention, but he is actually righteous for his own person, righteous indeed, just when he believes."<sup>30</sup> This statement seems to suggest that justification occurs only after faith. Rev. D. Arndt struggled with Maser's positions and came up with this conclusion. "My conclusion is that Dr. Maser is trying to remove the concept of "objective" from the area of justification and place it in the sphere of atonement and reconciliation only. He seems to separate these terms from justification. Doing that he concludes that there is only a subjective justification in the Bible."<sup>31</sup> In essence that is what Dr. Surburg told me last fall. In response to my inquiry, he simply said that Maser views the traditional *sedes* for objective justification only in a subjective sense. If such is his position, Maser would finally be denying the Scriptural fact that God has accomplished salvation for all men. The Bible says, "God will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." God's will has been carried out on the cross. Salvation has been accomplished for all people. The world is declared just. God's will has been carried out by the work of Christ. Just because men in unbelief reject that salvation doesn't mean it was not effected. Such unbelievers will be damned eternally for turning their backs on Jesus. Yet their unbelief does not nullify the work of Christ. Justification is an objective and universal fact.

Satan will continually try to corrupt this diamond of justification. Errors creep in among seemingly orthodox statements. Let us always be vigilant to protect this jewel. We dare not separate it into two distinctive doctrines. There is but one diamond. Justification is an objective fact for the entire world which the Holy Spirit appropriates for us through faith.

Is our teaching on justification something new? Some would claim so. Yet an examination of our Lutheran forefathers would show that they understood the jewel of justification as we do. Although they did not employ terms such as "objective," "universal," or "subjective," they still confessed the same Scriptural truths. We need to appreciate their appraisals given to this precious diamond.

## V. Appreciate the Appraisals Already Given It

This portion of the paper will simply enumerate several statements from our Confessions. The purpose is to document that we stand on the Confessions, as the Confessions stand on Scripture. We will follow T. Teigen's excellent outline.<sup>32</sup>

### A. *Christ has made satisfaction for the sins of all men and is thus our righteousness.*

*F.C. Art. III* But, since it is the obedience as above mentioned (not only of one nature, but) of the entire person, it is a complete satisfaction and expiation for the human race, by which the eternal, immutable righteousness of God, revealed in the Law, has been satisfied, and is thus our righteousness, which avails before God, which God imputes to faith, as it is written. Ro 5:19; 1Jn 1:7.33

*Apology, Art XIII* We teach that the sacrifice of Christ dying on the cross has been sufficient for the sins of the whole world.<sup>34</sup>

### B. *The whole world has been redeemed and reconciled.*

*F.C. Art. IV* The human race is truly redeemed and reconciled with God through Christ, who, by His faultless obedience, suffering, and death has merited for us the righteousness that avails before God.<sup>35</sup>

### C. *God forgave and justified all men for Christ's sake.*

*Apology, Art. IV* Moreover, the world was subject to Him by the Law for the reason that, according to the command of the Law, all are indicted, and yet, by the works of the Law, no one is justified, i.e. because, by the Law, sin is perceived, but guilt is not discharged. The Law, which made all sinners, seemed to have done injury, but when Christ came, He forgave to all sin which no one could avoid, and, by the shedding of His own blood, blotted out the handwriting which was against us... Because after the whole world became subject, He took away the sin of the whole world, as he (John) testified, saying, Jn 1:29...<sup>36</sup>

### D. *Forgiveness is offered and given in the Gospel as a ready treasure and received by faith.*

*F.C., Art. III* The righteousness of faith before God consists alone in the gracious (gratuitous) reconciliation or the forgiveness of sins, which is presented (*donatur*) to us out of pure grace, for the sake of the only merit of the Mediator, Christ, and is received through faith alone in the promise of the Gospel.<sup>37</sup>

*Apology, Art. XII* For to believe the Gospel is not that general faith which devils also have (is not only to believe the history of the Gospel), but in the proper sense it is to believe that the remission of sins has been granted (*donatum*) for Christ's sake. For this is revealed in the Gospel.<sup>38</sup>

### E. *The promise of the Gospel is universal.*

*F.C., Art. XI* Therefore, if we wish to consider our eternal election to salvation with profit, we must in every way hold sturdily and firmly to this, that, as the preaching of repentance, so also the promise of the Gospel is *universalis* (universal). That is, it pertains to all men, Luke 24:27.

For this reason Christ has commanded that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among *all* nations. For God loved the *world*, and gave His Son, Jn 3:16. Christ bore the sins of the *world*, Jn 1:29, gave His flesh for the life of the world, Jn 6:51; His blood is the propitiation for the sins of the *whole world*, I Jn 1:7; 2:2. Christ says: Come unto me, *all* ye that labor and are leavy laden, and I will give you rest, tit 11:28. God hath concluded them *all* in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon *all*, Ro 11:32. The Lord is not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance, II Pet 3:9...<sup>39</sup>

This brief presentation of confessional quotations should be sufficient to assure us that our position is indeed synonymous with the Symbols of our church.

Justification is the diamond among the jewels of God's revelation. It is the heart of the Gospel message. For our own eternal comfort, let us always treasure its priceless worth.

## **VI. Treasure its Priceless Worth**

The jewel of justification is our sure source of comfort and joy. We dare not teach that faith comes first, or that faith is all-important. Whenever I must examine my faith, I find it weak and full of doubts. Faith gives no solid comfort. It turns man to look inward at his own heart, rather than at the sure promises of God as found in Scripture. There are times when I might doubt that I even have faith. However, there is nothing uncertain in the truth of justification. Sin is taken away, forgiven, and swallowed up in the empty tomb. Christ has accomplished forgiveness and salvation. It is true, even if I doubt it, even if I don't believe it. This is the priceless treasure of the diamond of justification. On my deathbed I need not fear, nor worry, nor doubt. God has declared the world righteous in Christ. I am part of the world. Therefore; I know I am declared righteous. Our preaching, our teaching, our life, all must stand on this jewel of justification. There is no question about it.

As by one man all mankind fell  
 And, born in sin, was doomed to hell,  
 So by one Man, who took our place,  
 We all received the gift of grace.

*TLH, 369, V.5*

## Addenda 1: The Open Letter to the Church

February 12, 1982

Matthew 18:17, "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church."

An open letter to all whom God has declared righteous through faith in the, flood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On June 20, 1979 a special Voters' Meeting of Faith Lutheran Church, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Kokomo, Indiana was called to determine if all of its members supported the doctrine of Justification as practiced by the WELS. The FOUR STATEMENTS (see letter A) were presented to those present as the teachings of the WELS concerning the doctrine of Justification.

We could not with a clear conscience support those statements since they teach universalism and are contrary to the clear teachings of the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. We therefore voted against the FOUR STATEMENTS and on July 8, 1979 received a letter from Faith Lutheran Church saying that we were suspended from fellowship.

We appealed to the Circuit Pastor, Rev. Alan Siggelkow, and met with him on August 7, 1979. He ruled against us and supported the FOUR STATEMENTS. A transcript of this meeting is available upon request.

We then appealed to the District President, Rev. George Boldt, who informed us on January 23, 1980 that he had appointed a commission of review to study the matter. This commission of review, chaired by Professor Armin J. Panning of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Seminary, met with us on June 9, 1980. As you can see by the letter from Faith Lutheran Church dated November 19, 1980 (see letter B), the commission of review recommended that our membership in the WELS be terminated because we refused to "accept the doctrine of Justification as practiced by the WELS." Faith Lutheran Church followed that recommendation. The District President, Rev. George Boldt, gave his blessing upon this decision by announcing at the District Convention in June of 1981 that our case was closed. He informed us of this announcement in a letter to us dated January 25, 1982. This letter is also available upon request.

At each stage of our appeal, we were told that acceptance of the FOUR STATEMENTS was necessary in order to be members of the WELS. In every instance our statement of confession was rejected. That confession has been and remains to be as follows: "Concerning our confession as Christians we believe and confess that Christ, with His perfect life and sacrificial death, has paid for the sins of all people. This payment has been accepted by the Father which is shown in the resurrection of His Son. We believe that God wants all to be saved and come to the knowledge of truth. God works repentance in the hearts of His children, washes their sins away in Holy Baptism, and justifies us through faith in Christ, Thus we have forgiveness of sins, eternal life, etc. This is the Justification known to our Lutheran fathers in the Confessions and to Christians all over the world. We cannot and will not stop teaching this in His Name. Acts 4 and 5."

We now appeal to you, as brothers and sisters in Christ, to study this matter carefully and with much prayer. Can you, in all good conscience, accept the FOUR STATEMENTS as taught and practiced by the WELS? Do these statements represent your understanding and the Scriptural understanding of the doctrine of Justification? St. Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote in II Timothy 1:13,14, "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." We felt that we could not accept the FOUR

STATEMENTS and at the same time "hold fast the form of sound words... that good thing which was committed unto thee."

We earnestly wait to hear, from you as to your decision.

Sincerely,

[Signed]  
Mr. & Mrs. David Hartman  
7645 W. Co. Rd. 00 N.S.  
Kokomo, Indiana 46901

[Signed]  
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Pohlman  
6898 W. Co. Rd. 500 N.  
Kokomo, Indiana 46901

**Addenda 2: "The Four Statements"**

Faith Lutheran Church  
3215 West Judson Road  
Kokomo, Indiana 46901

August 30, 1979

Mr. & Mrs. David Hartman  
R.R. # 1, Box 90  
Kokomo, Indiana 46901

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Hartman,

In response to your letter of August 18, 1979, it is our understanding that your "no" vote on June 20th against supporting the biblical doctrines of the WELS was based at least in part, on your failure to accept the following statements—included in your letter—all of which are in agreement with the teachings of the WELS, namely that:

1. "Objectively speaking, without any reference to an individual sinners' attitude toward Christ's sacrifice, purely on the basis of God's verdict, every sinner, whether he knows it or not, whether he believes it or not, has *received* the status of a saint."
2. "After Christ's intervention and through Christ's intervention, God regards all sinners as guilt-free saints."
3. "When God reconciled the world to Himself through Christ, He individually pronounced forgiveness to each individual sinner whether that sinner ever comes to faith or not."
4. "At the time of the resurrection of Christ God looked down in hell and declared Judas, the people destroyed in the flood, and all the ungodly, innocent, not guilty, and forgiven of all sin and gave unto them the status of saints."

I trust this is the information you desire.

Sincerely yours in Christian love,  
[Signed]  
Michael Liebner, Acting Secretary  
Faith Lutheran Church Voters' Assembly

[The same letter was sent to: Mr. & Mrs. Joe Pohlman]  
[R.R. #2, Box 171]  
[Kokomo, Ind. 46901]

### Addenda 3: Kokomo Review Committee, Final Report

In response to Southeastern Wisconsin District President Pastor George W. Boldt's assignment that the undersigned serve as a panel of review to consider the appeal of the decision by Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kokomo, Indiana, against Mr. and Mrs. David Hartman and Mr. and Mrs. Joe Pohlman, we submit the following report:

After studying the materials submitted to us, the panel on June 9, 1980, met with Mr. Hartmann and Mr. Pohlman at the Ervin Grade School in rural Kokomo, Indiana. A classroom in the school provided a very workable setting for the candid, four-hour afternoon meeting. The panel notes that the appellants appeared to be earnest searchers of God's Word, willing to be bound by it. The immediate advantage of that for our meeting was that very little time needed to be spent in discussing procedural grievances against Faith Congregation, though the appellants feel there were such. The discussion could center almost entirely on the question of whether or not the Bible teaches objective justification in the sense that God has forgiven all men.

Mr. Hartman opened by stating that the problems regarding justification surfaced almost immediately upon the arrival of Pastor Papenfuss. The specific occasion was a discussion of VBS material that Mr. Hartman had presented in a teacher-training session. In speaking on the parable of the prodigal son, Mr. Hartman had stated that the picture of the father illustrates the teaching that God *wishes to forgive* sinners. Pastor Papenfuss indicated that in Christ God already *has forgiven* the sins of all men. Mr. Hartman took exception to that statement and defended his teaching on the grounds that *Christ has indeed paid for the sins* of all men, but *God has never declared all men righteous*. Men's sins remain unforgiven until the sinner by faith accepts God's forgiveness, to teach anything else, he contended, would lead to universalism.

In the discussions that followed during the course of the next year, Pastor Papenfuss tried to show that scripture teaches objective justification as well as subjective justification. Pastor Papenfuss gave Mr. Hartman, among other materials, a copy of Professor J. Meyer's *Ministers of Christ*. Mr. Hartman disagreed with the exposition of justification as set forth in that volume, considering some of the statements in it "unscriptural." Mr. Hartman adapted three statements of the book and added a fourth statement drawn from materials used for study purposes in a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod worker training school. He put these together as a "confession" which he asked Pastor Papenfuss to approve or disapprove. The Four Statements, to which Pastor Papenfuss agreed, are:

1. Objectively speaking, without any reference to an individual sinner's attitude toward Christ's sacrifice, purely on the basis of God's verdict, every sinner, whether he knows it or not, whether he believes it or not, has received the status of a saint.
2. After Christ's intervention and through Christ's intervention, God rewards all sinners as guilt-free saints.
3. When God reconciled the world to himself through Christ, he individually pronounced forgiveness to each individual sinner whether that sinner ever comes to faith or not.
4. At the time of the resurrection of Christ, God looked down in hell and declared Judas, the people destroyed in the flood, and all the ungodly, innocent, not guilty, and forgiven of all sin and gave unto them the status of saints.

The panel feels that these Four Statements without explanation or context are an inadequate presentation of the doctrine of objective Justification. Unfortunately the Statements were allowed to become the basis for testing adherence to or rejection of the doctrine of objective justification. Now the members of Faith Congregation were faced with the awkward situation of having to declare their adherence to the Scriptural

doctrine of objective justification on the basis of these inadequate Statements or surrender the doctrine by repudiating the Four statements.

In the voting which followed, the majority of the congregation agreed with the four Statements as representing their belief in objective justification. The appellants declared themselves unable to accept the Four Statements and thus recorded their opposition to the teaching that God has declared. all men righteous apart from and previous to personal faith.

A complicating feature of the matter is that the congregation resolved, on the ground of the appellants' not accepting the Four Statements, to declare the appellants out of fellowship with Faith Congregation but not out of membership with the congregation. We question whether such a division can legitimately be made. At any rate, as the panel sees it, the appellants' appeal of Faith's decision amounts to the basic question: Can the Four Statements serve as a criterion or measure to determine whether the appellants are still members of their congregation and in fellowship with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod?

Here the panel feels itself compelled to distinguish between form and content. While the form of the Four Statements is inadequate, the doctrine of objective justification that it grapples with is Scriptural. The Four Statements have served to show that there is a doctrinal difference between Faith Congregation and the appellants. A full afternoon's discussion of many Bible passages has convinced the panel that the same doctrinal difference exists also between the appellants and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod—a difference which the appellants themselves recognized and admitted in the closing portion of the meeting. An open, honest assessment of the situation would seem to leave no alternative but to recognize that the break in fellowship which Faith Congregation has declared applies also the appellants' fellowship with the WELS. The real difference in understanding is on key passages of Scripture, e.g., Romans 5:17-19 and 2 Cor. 5:18-20, not just on the Four Statements taken by themselves.

The same might be said about some procedural irregularities. The panel feels that Faith Congregation operated outside of its constitution in having as an officer of the congregation a man who was not a voting member for at least a year, as prescribed in Faith's constitution. Furthermore, there is a question whether at the June 20 meeting of the congregation there was a quorum present.

The panel regrets that these irregularities occurred and urges Faith Congregation to show greater procedural care in the future. The suspension process could, of course, be one over and the procedures corrected, but the outcome would still be the same so long as the doctrinal difference dividing the two groups exists. The panel sees no advantage in opening the case once more at this stage unless there is a meeting of minds on the doctrinal issue involved. To the panel it seems a logical step that Faith Congregation should at this time take formal action to recognize that breaking fellowship also includes the termination of membership in the congregation.

The panel is unanimous in its hope that a change of heart on the part of the appellants may still be possible. As noted before, our impression of the appellants is that they are earnest seekers after God's truth as expressed in His Word. They have agreed to study certain specific passages, notably the Romans 5:17-19 and 2 Cor. 5:18-20 passages. What struck the panel was a statement repeated several times by the appellants. They said that before Pastor Papenfuss and Circuit-pastor A. Siggelkow had explained the doctrine of justification, they had never been taught objective justification in that way.

We do not underestimate the power of the Word. We are unwilling to say that the Holy Spirit, working through the Word, cannot bring about full recognition and acceptance of the Scriptural truth that God has justified all men and declared the sins of all men to be forgiven. At present the appellants do not agree with that teaching, and this fact will have to be recognized. However, if after studying the Scripture passages they would become convinced of the truth of that teaching, we would urge that they at that time apply for readmission to membership in Faith Congregation.

Application would then be with the realization that this teaching of objective justification is not a new teaching of the WELS but a Scriptural teaching which has in fact always been included in Faith's own constitution. Article II pledges members of Faith not only to the pertinent Scripture passages but also to the Confessions which, e.g., in the Large Catechism, state:



Therefore there is here again great need to call upon God and to pray: Dear Father, forgive us our trespasses. Not as though He did not forgive sin without and even before our prayer (for He has given us the Gospel, in which is pure forgiveness before we prayed or ever thought about it). But this is to the intent that we may recognize and accept such forgiveness (p. 723 Triglot)

and to the Brief Statement with its clear declaration:

Scripture teaches that God has already declared the whole world to be righteous in Christ, Rom. 5:19; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; Rom. 4:25 (Article on Justification)

When unity in doctrine has been restored on the basis of Scripture and the Confessions, we would urge the members of Faith Congregation to welcome the appellants back into membership and to extend to them the hand of fellowship, not only in token that past differences have been forgiven and forgotten but also as an initiation once more to share in the means of grace and to work together as brothers in the faith so that God's kingdom may be extended and His name glorified. Such an outcome continues to be our earnest hope and prayer.

[Signed,]

Wayne D. Mueller  
Ralph O. Muenkel  
Armin J. Panning, Chm.  
Ralph E. Scharf, Sec.  
Theodore H. Zuberbier

#### **Addenda 4: President's Report to the SEW District June, 1982. [excerpt]**

Our circuit pastors handled various problems and did not always make the people happy who were involved. Take my word for it. They handled the problems as objectively as they could and made decisions on the basis of all the facts and not merely on what some individuals would have liked to see them decide.

A good example of God reaching out to our district in His grace and mercy was in giving us men of wisdom in the circuit pastors and the appointed commission of review who handled the sad situation in Kokomo, Indiana, where some former members of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod did not agree with the scriptures and the teaching of our synod on Justification. A few months ago letters were circulated stating that these individuals were asked to accept four statements which represented Wisconsin Synod teaching on justification. These statements were not devised by Faith congregation of Kokomo, but were presented to them by the people who had been informed that they did not agree with the scriptural teaching of justification. These statements were not the Wisconsin-Synod's confession of faith on the doctrine of Justification but Faith congregation regarded them as statements which would not militate against the scriptural teaching of justification and stated that they believed they correctly presented what the Wisconsin Synod believed and taught. The first three statements were taken out of Professor John Meyer's exegetical work, *Ministers of Christ*. In the context from which they were taken Professor Meyer emphasized that God forgave the whole world, including Judas, on the basis of Christ's wonderful work of redemption. There was a fourth statement proposed that God looked down into hell and forgave Judas. It was too bad that this statement was ever used, but Faith congregation accepted it in view of the fact that it did state that God had forgiven Judas. There is no question in anyone's mind in that congregation that God does not forgive after a person has been damned. The fact is correct that God had forgiven Judas, but it is equally clear that Judas had rejected this forgiveness and was eternally damned.

It was interesting, indeed, that when these statements were sent throughout the synod that I received calls from many different areas. These calls were not complaining calls, but calls for information from callers who recognized that these four statements were not the problem but that the people who were at variance with Faith congregation simply do not believe the doctrine of justification as it is so clearly taught in the Holy Scriptures. It is impossible to separate objective and subjective justification teachings and claim to accept one without the other.

At all times we have to remember that we have been redeemed to serve. In the second article of our creed, after confessing how Jesus redeemed us with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent sufferings and death, we confess, "that I should be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness." Oh that we would always remember what He has done for us so that we might serve Him in reaching out with the Gospel to a world sitting in the darkness of Sin.

We can reach out to our friends anti neighbors telling them about God's reaching out to us and to the world...

**Endnotes:**

- <sup>1</sup> E. M. Plass, ed, *What Luther Says: An Anthology*, 3 volumes. (St. Louis: CPH, 1959), 2:703-704.
- <sup>2</sup> P. Melancthon, "Apology of the Augsburg Confession," Article IV (II): "Of Justification," *Concordia Triglotta*. (St. Louis: CPH, 1921), p. 121.
- <sup>3</sup> G. Stoeckhardt, "General Justification," O.F. Stahlke, translator. *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, vol. 42, no. 2, April, 1978, pp. 139-144.
- <sup>4</sup> Pieper, F. *Christian Dogmatics*, 4 volumes, T. Engelder, translator. (St. Louis: CPH, 1951), 2:347-350.
- <sup>5</sup> Becker, S.W. "Objective Justification," an essay delivered to the Chicago Pastoral Conference, No. 9, 1982, page 1.
- <sup>6</sup> Schaller, J. *Biblical Christology*, (Milwaukee: NPH, 1981), p. 181.
- <sup>7</sup> Mischke, C.H. *The President's Newsletter*, June, 1982.
- <sup>8</sup> Becker, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
- <sup>9</sup> Schuetze, A.W. "The Presupposition of Justification: The Sin of Man and the Holiness of God," essay number 1 of the Second Lutheran Free Conference, printed in *His Pardoning Grace*, (Milwaukee: NPH, 1966), pp. 3-21.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- <sup>11</sup> Arndt, W. "The Doctrine of Justification," *The Abiding Word*, 3 volumes, (St. Louis: CPH, 1947), 2:243.
- <sup>12</sup> "Tulip" theology = total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, perseverance of the saints. cf. Steele, D. N. and Thomas, C.C. *The Five Points of Calvinism: Defined, Defended, Documented*. (Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1963)
- <sup>13</sup> Becker, *op. cit.*, p. 4
- <sup>14</sup> For a complete discussion, see "On Justification, Osiander's Doctrine of the Indwelling Christ," by C. Lawrenz. Printed in *No Other Gospel*, (Milwaukee: 1980), pp. 149-173.
- <sup>15</sup> Senior Dogmatic Notes, *Ordo Salutis*, p. 110, C.
- <sup>16</sup> Schaller, J. "Redemption and Universal Justification, According to Second Corinthians 5:18-21," translated by C. Hoenecke, *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, vol. 72, no. 4, Oct. 1975, p. 309.
- <sup>17</sup> Meyer, J.P. *Ministers of Christ*, (Milwaukee: NPH, 1963), p. 110.  
Schaller *op. cit.*
- <sup>18</sup> Becker, *op. cit.*  
Kuske, D. "Objective Justification in Our Mission Outreach," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, vol. 77, no. 1, Jan. 1980, p. 13.
- <sup>19</sup> Kuske, *ibid.*, p. 13.
- <sup>20</sup> Pieper, *op. cit.*, 2:348. .
- <sup>21</sup> Stoeckhardt, G. *Epistle to the Romans*, 2 volumes, translator, E. W. Koehlinger, (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press), p. 74.
- <sup>22</sup> Becker, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
- <sup>23</sup> Sanday, W. and Headlam, A. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1977 reprint), p. 116.
- <sup>24</sup> Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 103-104.
- <sup>25</sup> Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 106-107.
- <sup>26</sup> Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
- <sup>27</sup> Special thanks to Pastor R. Curia. In his essay, "The Significant History of the Doctrine of Objective or Universal Justification Among the Churches of the Former Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America," he carefully correlates these statements with the Kokomo statements. See pages 102-103.
- <sup>28</sup> A private letter of Sept. 13, 1982 from Professor A. Panning. Used by permission.
- <sup>29</sup> Curia, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-128.
- <sup>30</sup> Maier, as quoted by D. Arndt in his conference essay, "The Doctrine of Justification and the Controversy Over the Views of Dr. Walter Maier in the Missouri Synod," delivered to the Redwood Falls Pastoral Conference, Nov. 17, 1981.
- <sup>31</sup> Arndt, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
- <sup>32</sup> This presentation was simplified greatly by Torald N. Teigen, in his essay, "the Proclamation of Justification: The Gospel Message of Forgiveness," printed in *His Pardoning Grace*, (Milwaukee: NPH, 1966), pp. 62-88. We follow his outline.
- <sup>33</sup> *Concordia Triglotta*, p. 935.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 311.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1069.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 923.
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1071, 1073.

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