

**George Henry Gerberding**

**Revere Franklin  
Weidner**



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# Revere Franklin Weidner

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# Revere Franklin Weidner

A Character Sketch, Appreciation, and Tribute

By George Henry Gerberding, D.D.,  
LL.D.

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Dr. Weidner's Mother



Dr. Weidner's Father

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# Preface by Lutheran Librarian

In republishing this book, we seek to introduce this author to a new generation of those seeking authentic spirituality.

GEORGE HENRY GERBERDING (1847-1927) studied under Charles Krauth and C. F. Schaeffer and assisted the Rev. Passavant. An indefatigable worker, he established and restored churches in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Fargo, ND. His *Way of Salvation in the Lutheran Church* was one of the most successful books ever published by the English Lutheran Church.

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# Foreword

DOCTOR WEIDNER was a great student of good biography. He highly appreciated its importance and value. He never wearied of urging his students to diligently study this form of history. He claimed that a man who is at home in the biographies of the great men of history, the men who have made history, who have left an impress upon the ages in which they lived and labored, is a scholar in no mean sense of the word.

This booklet is not a biography. It is a character-sketch. It is an appreciation. It is written out of an appreciative and loving heart. The writer of this labored under and by the side of the mighty maker of Chicago Seminary for a full score of years. He had time to study this unique character, to measure him, to understand him.

To be the helper of such a big builder; to be close to him in the privacy of his study, in his little family, in class and lecture room, in chapel-worship, in great assemblies, on long and short journeys, in walks and talks and earnest plannings and sometime sharp discussions; to counsel and pray together in dark days, to rejoice together in bright days, to exchange views on the great subjects taught in the Seminary, on the best methods of teaching, on the responsibility and the difficulty of making the right kind of ministers, soul saving, soul building and age-bettering men out of what seemed so often unpromising material, to have heart to heart talks on times and tendencies and men and measures on hopes and visions of what God might have in store for our school — all this was certainly a precious privilege.

And in this score-long and varied intimacy we certainly ought to come to know each other.



The Old Home where R. F. Weidner was born and brought up

We appreciate the delicacy and the difficulty of sending forth to the public and setting before future generations the portrait of the man, the colleague, the brother, the leader, the master with whom we lived and loved and labored so long. Each writer sees with his own eyes, looks from his own viewpoint and judges with his own judgment.

Viewpoints and judgments differ. It is better so. The world, life and literature would be a dull monotony if all looked through the same eyes. A wise and good God has made us to differ. No one is infallible in judgment or perfect in character. One only was sinless among the sinful.

Doctor Weidner was not perfect. A true character-sketch dare not picture him as perfect. We cannot get a true perspective of his character without seeing his failings. *DE MORTUIS NIL NISI BONUM*<sup>1</sup> is a sweet sentiment and a splendid

rule for private conversation. But it cannot be literally followed by the biographer. The inspired writers of bible biography certainly did not follow it. To follow it literally would never give us a real, true life-picture.

We do not expect to meet a perfect character in this world. And for the same reason we do not expect, except in fiction, to find a full portrayal of a character without finding faults and weaknesses portrayed.

Is it then a reflection on the loved and lamented dead to portray him as he really was? That depends. If his biographer should set down certain flaws and weaknesses in a spirit of malice, make the faults glaring, leave them without charitable explanation and extenuation, then indeed he would be unfit to write a character-sketch.

But if he speaks the truth in love, magnifies the virtues, minifies the weaknesses and speaks of them only where it seems to him to be necessary to a clear understanding, apologizes for his hero, delights to speak well of him and puts the most charitable construction on all his actions, then he who would criticize the writer unkindly would show himself to be lacking in true charity.

And after all is said does it not bring a great and good character closer to all of us to see some of his weaknesses? Can we not love him all the better for his faults?

A good but impulsive and oft impatient woman once said to the writer: "I like Peter better than any other apostle." When asked why, she said: "Because he's so much like myself." Was there not a true philosophy of heart and life in this?

Doctor Weidner ought not to be forgotten. His character, his faith, his work and his whole life ought to go down to future generations and remain as an abiding inspiration. From him let all laborers in the Lord's vineyard learn to expect great things from God and to undertake great things for God.

It is with this hope and prayer that we send forth this tribute of love.

Dr. Weidner was born in Center Valley, Lehigh county, Pa., November 22, 1851. He graduated at Muhlenberg College in 1869, graduated at Philadelphia Seminary in 1873. Married Miss Emma Salome Jones, of Philadelphia, July 10, 1873. Received the title of D.D. from Muhlenberg College in 1894, and in the same year the title of LL.D. from Augustana College and Theological Seminary. He was pastor in Phillipsburg, N. J., from 1873 to 1878. During two years of this time he was also professor of English History and Logic in Muhlenberg College. He was pastor of St. Luke's Church, Philadelphia, from 1878 to 1882. Became professor of Hebrew and Greek Exegesis, Dogmatics and Ethics in Augustana Theological Seminary in 1882 and remained until the

Chicago Seminary was founded in 1891. Since then he has been president of Chicago Seminary, till the Board of Directors, at his own request, released him in October, 1913, and made him President Emeritus. He has been Professor of Dogmatics, Hebrew and Greek Exegesis and Philosophy. He has substituted in practically every course in the seminary.

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1. "Speak only good of the dead."↵

# 1. Dr. Weidner as a Teacher

NO MAN can be a good teacher who has not been a good student. From early childhood Dr. Weidner took to learning, to hearing and asking questions and to books. His father appreciated education. He saw the possibilities that were latent in his only child, Franklin Revere. The first rudimentary schooling, next to what he had received from his farseeing farmer parents, was in the country school of his home district. But he outgrew that in a short time. He was soon sent to a select school in Allentown, and then as he outgrew that to a Collegiate Institute and Military Academy. Doubtless the latter helped to make him so punctual, methodical and exacting with himself and with others. When Muhlenberg College was opened in 1867 Revere entered the junior class and graduated with first honor two years later.



The Church in which R. F. Weidner was baptized  
Center Valley, Pa.

In his academical years he had shown and developed a taste and talent for mathematics. A classmate claims that he was a mathematical prodigy. Students thus gifted are often weak in the study of languages. But young Weidner, the mathematician showed an equal if not a superior liking and aptitude for the an-

cient classics. Under the superior teaching of that eminent scholar and teacher, Dr. F. A. Muhlenberg, Student Weidner soon surpassed all his classmates in Greek. Under Dr. Mann, that prince among teachers in the Philadelphia Seminary, young Weidner ran ahead of all others in mastering Hebrew. There is a tradition that Dr. Mann once said that Weidner had been the best Hebrew student that he had ever had. During his first pastorate Dr. Weidner took a special course in Anglo-Saxon under the celebrated Dr. March, of Lafayette College. Early in life he became a member of the American Oriental Society and of the Society of Biblical Literature and. Exegesis.

Dr. Weidner was gifted with a colossal memory. He rarely forgot anything that he had once known. His memory for names, dates and details was a constant surprise to those who knew him. He had a remarkable talent for absorbing what others had worked out. He could go over a chapter, a discussion or even a book, with unusual rapidity and know its main contents. He would know what he had thus absorbed as if he had originated it. In him was demonstrated to a degree that is rare that "reading maketh a full man." From this came his remarkable ability as a compiler.

Not every one who knows, however, can be a good teacher. The scholar must be able to impart to others what he knows. The good teacher must be able to teach the pupil that he may know so really that he will be able to reproduce what he has been made to know and will want to put it into practice. This and this only is real teaching.

Dr. Weidner could impart to his students what he knew himself. Not only could he make them know, but he made them want to know more. His whole great physical and mental nature was filled with enthusiasm. This always flamed forth in his teaching. His enthusiasm was contagious. His classes caught it. They felt that they too must work. They felt that they wanted to work, and they did work.

There are shirkers in almost every class. With such the Doctor had no patience. His wonderful capacity for work and attainment inclined him to expect too much of his students. Because the Doctor himself could absorb and remember what he heard another read he seemed to think that his students could do so likewise, and was in danger of overtaxing them.

Dr. Weidner began his teaching career while he was still a student. During his senior year in college and for the year following he was tutor in the preparatory department. Even then he put his whole big enthusiasm into his work and put a tonic for work into his students. During his first pastorate he was for two years professor of history, English and logic in Muhlenberg Col-



lege. One of his students was W. A. Passavant, Jr. After many years he informed the writer that it was in Dr. Weidner's classes that he had acquired that love for history that never left him.

In 1881 the Doctor received a call to become the first English professor in Augustana Theological Seminary, Rock Island, Ill. He was only thirty years old. It meant much for him to give up the old Mother Synod in which he had been born and educated and in which undoubted promotions were in prospect. Up to this time he had been a stranger to the great West and to its sturdy Scandinavian Lutherans. Though young, he had a well-trained and matured mind, enriched with a wide range of reading. He was called to teach Greek and Hebrew Exegesis. He had doubtless been suggested by Dr. Passavant who strongly urged him to go. After mature deliberation he accepted the call. It was not long before he was teaching, in addition to Exegesis, Old and New Testament Theology, Dogmatics, Ethics and Theological Encyclopedia. Here he labored with all his indefatigable energy and optimistic enthusiasm for twelve years. He easily overrated the ability of his hard-working students to cover the ground he had mapped out for them. But many caught his enthusiasm and carried it with them through life. His method of teaching Hebrew was unique and different from that generally in vogue. It was the sainted Dr. Mann of the Philadelphia Seminary who had fired him with a love for Hebrew. Dr Weidner afterward changed to the later and more modern method of teaching it. Instead of having the students master the rudiments of grammar first, he introduced them into the text at once and familiarized them with the rudiments as they went along. It was remarkable how much he accomplished in a short time. But he was an accomplished drill-master and made large use of the blackboard. His achievements in teaching Hebrew had become known to Dr. Harper of the Chicago University, who it is said sought to lure him away from Augustana Theological Seminary with the offer of a \$5,000 salary.

It was in the earlier years of his western work that Drs. Weidner and Harper had found each other. The latter was a specialist in Hebrew and in Semitic languages, as well as the real maker of the Chicago University and the promoter of summer schools for the study of Hebrew and Greek.

For a number of years Dr. Weidner labored with Dr. Harper in these summer schools at Chautauqua, N. Y., and in different parts of the country. Dr. Harper appreciated Dr. Weidner most highly as a teacher. When he was conducting a Hebrew institute he wanted Dr. Weidner to come from Chicago to Philadelphia and give him one day a week in this winter school. So highly did he rate Dr. Weidner's teaching that he is said to have renewed his offer of

five thousand dollars a year. Dr. Weidner remained with the Chicago Seminary, where fifteen hundred was all he was getting at the time. Dr. Harper also had Dr. Weidner collaborate with him in getting out the five hundred page “Introductory New Testament Greek Method.” It is said that Dr. Weidner did nearly all the work on that book, which is probably more widely used in theological and other schools for beginners in New Testament Greek than any other textbook.



R. F. Weidner, 19 years old

For several summers Dr. Weidner taught Hebrew at the Mount Gretna Summer School. One of the most scholarly pastors in Pennsylvania said to the writer of this that Dr. Weidner at Mt. Gretna had first given him such an intelligent insight into and love for Hebrew in particular and for systematic study in general that he had never lost it.

Mr. Dwight L. Moody had also found Dr. Weidner. He had the Doctor lecture regularly for a whole winter to a group of over a hundred ministers of all denominations in Chicago. We once met two Presbyterian ministers in North Dakota who had attended these lectures and they informed us with emphasis and enthusiasm that they had never seen so much in the Pauline epistles as they did under Dr. Weidner's teaching. They both considered him the best teacher of the Bible that they had ever heard. Mr. Moody had Dr. Weidner give courses in the New Testament at Northfield also. Dr. Harper once told Dr. Jacobs that he had heard Mr. Moody say that he considered Dr. Weidner the most interesting teacher he had ever known.

## 2. Dr. Weidner as a Preacher

IN HIS EARLY MINISTRY Dr. Weidner assisted the eloquent Dr. Seiss in historic old St. John's Church, Philadelphia. As assistant, young Weidner regularly conducted the liturgical part of the service. He also substituted for Dr. Seiss frequently in the pulpit.



R. F. Weidner  
as Pastor of Grace Church  
Phillipsburg, N. J.  
and Professor of Muhlenberg College



R. F. Weidner  
as Pastor of St. Luke's Church  
Philadelphia

The young preacher always coveted earnestly the best gifts. He had that praiseworthy ambition to excel by bringing the very best gifts to God in his vocation. A very different man from Dr. Seiss, he was influenced by him. He learned from him. He assimilated much. He did not become the same preacher that he would have been had he not been the regular assistant of Dr. Seiss.

As we study Dr. Weidner as a preacher we bear in mind that by natural endowment, by earnest desire and by special acquirement, he became a great teacher. But for nine years he served in the regular ministry as pastor of a congregation. Bearing in mind that he always threw his whole great self into his

calling, he wanted to be and became the best preacher it was possible to make of himself. When he preached, the whole big man preached. He preached with all his big force and energy. Those nine years in his own pulpit gave him a style and a method all his own. His style and method became a part of himself, a second nature.

As he was always a student and always studied with a view to imparting to others what he was learning he taught while he preached. Afterwards when he became a regular teacher he could not throw off what had become a part of himself and all his life through he preached when he taught. He never separated the two. So likewise he could not lecture without teaching and preaching at the same time. This doubtless was one great element of his popularity as a platform lecturer. The professional lecturer, as a rule, has a discussion before an audience. The good preacher brings a message, a living message, a message with high aim and purpose, to an audience. Good preaching has in it a human appeal that pure lecturing, however good, does not have. To read or speak before people is one thing, to speak and appeal to them is another. The one instructs and pleases. The other instructs, moves and impels to action.

As Dr. Weidner always had life and living appeal in his lectures, he was welcomed wherever he spoke. He was not much more than a youth when he was requested to deliver a lecture before the Evangelical Alliance in New York.

## **Classed With Best Living Preachers**

That he had a wide reputation as a preacher is evident from the fact that when the Funk and Wagnalls Company projected a ten-volume work of sermons of the best living preachers, Dr. Weidner was selected as one. The full title of the work is "Modern Sermons by World Scholars," edited by Robert Scott and William C. Stiles, editors of the *Homiletic Review*. In Volume X, page 87, we find Dr. Weidner's sermon.

Among the one hundred and seventeen sermons, by as many different preachers, in this collection it might be hard to find a more instructive and more scriptural one than this. Dr. Weidner's sermons were always saturated with Scripture. After a careful reading of this sermon we feel that we know the Old Testament better, that we know prophecy better, that we know the times and peoples better, that we know God better.



**R. F. Weidner**  
as Professor in Augustana Theological Seminary

## Early Pulpit Work

Going back to his first pastorate, we are informed that the older members of Grace Church in Phillipsburg, N. J., still speak most highly of young Weidner's preaching. Mr. Thomas Beckwith was the secretary of the church council during the whole of his pastorate. He writes us that even in those early days the young preacher was "practicing his favorite diversion of doing three men's work himself." He gathered and organized the first German congregation in the town. To this little flock that met in his English church on Sunday afternoons he preached German regularly, while he preached twice to his Grace English congregation. At the same time he was filling a professorship in Muhlenberg College. Both the English and German congregations prospered greatly during his pastorate. People from all over the city flocked to hear him. The German congregation that he founded and fostered into vigor is today the prosperous St. John's German Lutheran Church. Some young preachers of today think they are being killed when they have to preach three times a day. Not so preacher Weidner.

## Pulpit Work in Philadelphia

The editor of *The Lutheran* kindly furnishes this information about Dr. Weidner's preaching in Philadelphia: "He was regarded as particularly strong in making the Bible speak to his people. It was his custom to have a Testament in his hand while preaching. He seldom preached a sermon without first of all making the context entirely clear. He was specially strong in popular exegesis. His vigorous style with his enthusiasm for the truth was always bound to make an impression. He is still very highly spoken of by the older members of St. Luke's Church."

## Popularity at Rock Island

The Rev. Dr. G. W. Sandt, who was a professor in Augustana College while Dr. Weidner was professor in the seminary, writes thus of his preaching in and around Rock Island: "Dr. Weidner had quite a reputation as a forceful preacher among Presbyterians and Congregationalists in that section. He was frequently called upon to preach for them and was enthusiastically welcomed every-



where. I used to hear him preach frequently in the college chapel. These sermons were chiefly exegetical and his exhortations were too much offhand.”

It was after Dr. Weidner had come West that his greatness as a speaker became apparent. His frequent supplying of the principal Reformed pulpits in and around Rock Island brought him into contact with Chicago. Through some of these connecting links D. L. Moody and President Harper found Dr. Weidner. All that the doctor needed to create a demand for his services was a hearing. He was discovered as a powerful preaching teacher. He had made a special study of the Pauline Epistles. On the basis of these thorough studies he had prepared a number of lectures for Y. M. C. A., Sunday-school, Summer School, student and ministers' gatherings. One class of hearers would enthusiastically commend him to another. So it was that during his last Rock Island and his first Chicago years he was in constant demand as a Bible teacher and lecturer.

## **In Chicago Pulpits**

The Rev. A. C. Anda was one of the seven that comprised the student body when the Chicago Seminary opened. He was a member of St. Paul's Church, of which Dr. Weidner was supply pastor. For a time student Anda was the doctor's assistant in St. Paul's. In this way the student was closely and intimately associated with his professor. Pastor Anda has furnished us with a number of the striking incidents here recorded.

It was no uncommon thing for Dr. Weidner to receive twenty-five and fifty dollars for a sermon. Many such offers he had to decline. On one occasion a rich Presbyterian congregation offered him one hundred dollars for one sermon on some phase of the Pauline Epistles. For a time he received one hundred dollars every Saturday for two afternoon lectures in Moody Institute on what became his New Testament Studies in the Book. After one of these lectures on the operations of the Holy Spirit, Mr. Moody got up and said that he had learned more from Dr. Weidner about the work of the Holy Spirit than he had ever known before. Pastor Anda informs us that at about the same time when it is claimed that Dr. Harper offered Dr. Weidner five thousand a year for a few hours a week in Hebrew, Moody also offered him five thousand a year for a smaller number of hours to instruct his students in the contents of the New Testament. Student Anda asked the Doctor: “Are you going to accept?” Dr. Weidner was then lecturing to his little band of Lutheran students in the

rented frame chapel, which was often dark and cold on account of the smoking stoves. To Mr. Anda's question the Doctor said: "How could I go back on my own Church?" How many of us would have done the same? Would not most of us have been tempted to salve our consciences by saying that these offers would bring opportunities for teaching God's Word to so many more, that they opened a far greater and more effectual door and that it was our duty to accept the field of broader influence for good? Dr. Weidner stayed with his feeble, homeless, moneyless, supportless seminary for fifteen hundred dollars a year. During his first year in our Chicago seminary Dr. Weidner had worked out several addresses for synods and general gatherings of Lutherans. One was on "The Model Minister"; another on "The Model Student," and still another on "A Model Course of Study." These addresses were received with interest and enthusiasm wherever they were delivered. They brought Dr. Weidner and the young seminary before audiences that had been strangers to the man and to his new movement.

Many stories are afloat about Dr. Weidner's preaching in St. Paul's Church on the West Side of Chicago. He did more than preach. He could always make his people work. The members of the church council had never worked as they did under Pastor Weidner. The work of the congregation and of every department was thoroughly systematized. Every one who held an office in the church, in any society, in the Sunday-school, was made to realize that it meant a responsibility and conscientious work. Every one had to give an account of his stewardship. The congregation grew in numbers, in per capita contributions and in activity. The Sunday-school became the largest among Chicago Lutherans. St. Paul's was made a power in the community. Four young men were started towards the ministry during that short pastorate.



The pulpit was a veritable dynamo. The vigorous, often vociferous, realistically dramatic, and graphic preaching crowded the church. A large revival tent was set up on a vacant lot across the street from the church one summer. The tent preacher soon heard about Dr. Weidner in St. Paul's. He invited the Doctor to preach in the tent. On a week-night the Doctor went. As Dr. Passavant would express it, there was a great shout in the camp. On a Sunday following there was a great storm and the lot on which the tent stood was flooded so that no evening service could be held. Dr. Weidner sent out word inviting the tent people into his church. They came. They crowded St. Paul's to the doors. The Doctor preached on the Valley of the Dry Bones. That sermon is still talked about on the West Side. The preacher made the people see the valley, the bones, the ghastly deadness that appalled the beholder. He shouted to the people that such were all they who were living their life in sin and in impenitence. Then he made them see how the Spirit of God, through the Word of God, could breathe upon these bones and make them live. He made them realize that that Spirit was now breathing through that Word on the stony hearts before him.

That sermon bore fruit. That tent meeting did not hurt St. Paul's Church. On the contrary, St. Paul's grew and abounded yet more and more.

He preached with his little Revised Testament in his hand and read from it again and again during his preaching. His sermons were not built on strictly homiletic lines.

His colleagues and students in the Chicago Seminary got their main impression of Dr. Weidner as a preacher from his chapel addresses at Matins and Vespers. Most of the time, while making these addresses, Dr. Weidner was preaching. He carried all his pulpit peculiarities into these talks, with the exception that he sat instead of standing. Frequently and unexpectedly he would say the most droll, startling and unusual things. We never knew or heard of Dr. Weidner indulging this habit in the pulpit.

The Doctor often gave these chapel services the form and tone of a recitation. He would have the students bring their Greek Testaments, drill them in form and vocabulary and have them memorize and recite as in a classroom.

The Doctor was an extremist against the use of tobacco. In expounding the pastoral epistles, when he would come to the words: "Flee youthful lusts," he would almost invariably inveigh against tobacco.

The Doctor's prepared chapel addresses were eloquent and impressive in a marked degree. He knew the psychology of the soul. He could portray the process of the workings of sin, of the law, of grace through the Gospel in the soul of man. When thus tracing subjectively the movements of sin and of grace, the Doctor would open up the hidden depths of the heart, would hold up before the hearer his own likeness until that hearer would have to say "yes, that is true; that has been my experience; that means me." In these earnest and edifying moods the speaker would make impressions that could never be lost. A deep spirit of awe, of searching self-examination would often rest upon the student body. They will never forget some of these truly great chapel talks. Students have confessed to the writer of this that they received impressions that changed the course of their after life. We could name men eminently useful in the ministry who hesitate not to say that they were brought to a true conversion through some of these chapel talks by Dr. Weidner. True conversions followed his other great sermons also. This is the crowning glory of the truly great preacher.



Dr. Weidner  
as Professor in Lake View, Chicago

### 3. Dr. Weidner as a Writer

HAD DR. WEIDNER lived to a ripe old age, he doubtless would have become the most voluminous writer that the American Lutheran Church has produced. He was cut off in what is to many the most productive period of books of life. Even so, leaving out published sermons, the Doctor probably heads the list.

He loved his pen. He never used a typewriter. He knew nothing of shorthand. But he never seemed to become weary of sitting at his desk, composing, compiling, translating, editing, reviewing, classifying or tabulating. In his earlier manhood, before he became so corpulent, he would stand at a high desk and write. He commended this habit to his students as conducive to health and as saving time in looking up references and sources. In this he was doubtless correct, provided that the desk is high enough to prevent stooping and to compel an upright posture.

From boyhood up Dr. Weidner was an insatiable buyer of books. His father was a man of sturdy common sense. He saw the possibilities in his bright boy. He took that boy into his confidence, and encouraged him. So young Weidner, before he left home and throughout his student years was a gatherer of books. The habit grew with his years, and remained to the last. It had become a mild mania. Among his fondest recreations was to rummage in new and second-hand bookstores or catalogues, to find bargains and to part with his ready cash all too easily. This is one thing that kept him poor. He thus gathered what is doubtless one of the largest private libraries in our Church. He was an omnivorous reader. He prided himself on being able to get the contents of a book by reading a few lines of each page and here and there a paragraph.



**H. W. Roth, D.D.**  
Dr. Weidner's first Colleague in  
Chicago Seminary

The Doctor took an early liking to history. His earliest teaching was devoted to this subject. The build of his mind inclined and suited him to this study. He loved to tarry in ancient history. This led him into studies in Archaeology. For this again his linguistic attainments were of value. These last two tendencies naturally led him into a critical and exegetical study of the Bible.

His whole range of historical study made him a great lover of good biography. He never wearied of urging his students to study the life stories of great characters. He had no time for fiction, and was interestingly innocent even of novels that were read and discussed everywhere.

Dr. Weidner also had his literary diversions. He did not read much poetry after his student years. But he loved Browning. He would often give readings and characterizations from this abstruse and speculative poet which were enjoyed richly by those who heard, them. He had a great admiration for Ruskin. He had made a study of the man and of his writings. He had prepared several illuminating lectures on this many-sided writer which were highly appreciated wherever he delivered them. We have met ministers in unexpected quarters who ascribed their own interest in and love for Browning and Ruskin to Dr. Weidner.

Dr. Weidner began early to be a writer. In 1869, the year in which he graduated from college with honors, he brought out an original translation of the Prophecy of Daniel which throws much light on that dark book. We could wish that he might have accompanied it with explanatory notes. His general view of the meaning of the Book can be gathered from his Commentary on the Revelation of St. John. While Dr. Weidner was working on Daniel, Dr. Seiss was preparing what is considered by some as his best work, viz., "Voices from Babylon." He called on Dr. Weidner for assistance, and in response he furnished Dr. Seiss with many valuable annotations. Dr. Seiss indeed uses Dr. Weidner's translation throughout his book, for which Dr. Weidner also prepared the index. During the later seventies Dr. Weidner was a frequent editorial contributor to *The Lutheran*.

In those early days Dr. Weidner felt that the General Council ought to have a Theological Review of its own. When it was first projected the writer of this wrote to the committee in charge, suggesting that an earnest effort should be made to combine the forthcoming Review with the *Lutheran Quarterly*, published at Gettysburg. The suggestion was not deemed feasible. And so Dr. Weidner became the founder and editor of the *Lutheran Church Review*, the first number of which was issued in 1881. For five years he remained the editor. As we leaf through those early volumes we note how the young editor



enlisted the strongest writers in the Church as contributors, how varied and timely their subjects and what large space is given to book reviews.

In the first number the editor has a most interesting article on "The Wonders of Oriental Studies." This is a review and discussion of Geikie's "Hours With the Bible." In the same number there are five book reviews from his pen. About the same number of reviews from his pen appear in each of the numbers which he edited. These early book reviews of his strike us as being very careful and thorough. In the volumes for 1886 and 1887 we find three scholarly articles by him on "Studies in Obadiah."

Dr. Weidner's first complete book was his "Commentary on Mark." This was intended for the use of Sunday-school Teachers, Bible classes and all Bible students. It is more than a brief commentary. It contains a good harmony of the Gospels, worked out by himself, a full index and questions at the foot of each page. The comments are brief, suggestive and practical.

In 1882 the Doctor started to work out an "Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism," for the use of several grades of pupils and catechumens. But it grew in the author's hands until he had sixty-nine pages and two hundred questions and answers on the Commandments alone. Whether he saw that to work the plan through the whole catechism would make an unusually large book, or whether he got into other work too deeply, we know not. At any rate, he never finished the Explanation of the Catechism.

While Dr. Weidner was professor in Rock Island he began the preparation of textbooks for students of Theology. This great work he kept up till a few days before he died.

His books are generally based on larger German works or on Translations. In a number of cases he condensed several large books into one, or a big one into one much smaller. He did this with the purpose of bringing them into the compass of usable textbooks. This, however, does not apply to the great work on Dogmatics on which he was working when he died.

Dr. Weidner did not write for the common people. It is a great and valuable achievement, however, that he made available for the Church, for her theological seminaries, and for her ministry, in usable form, the essence of the greatest productions of the greatest minds in the Church. He wove his own thinking and convictions more or less into all these works. His Footnotes, references to other writers and books on the subject in hand. Bibliographies and careful Indexes all added much value to his books.

In 1885 he began his work on Theological Encyclopedia and Methodology. This he based largely on the voluminous work of Prof. Karl Hagenbach, as it

had been translated into English, and edited by Crooks and Hearst. Dr. Weidner worked out his own Encyclopedia in three small volumes. A very valuable part of this work was the many rich quotations from the manuscript lectures of Dr. C. P. Krauth as he had given them to his students in the Philadelphia Seminary. To have these gems from Krauth alone makes the work one that every Lutheran minister should prize. About fifteen years later Dr. Weidner worked the three books over into two larger ones. He added much new, original matter, as well as much from Schaff's valuable and fresh "Propaedeutic," which had appeared in the meantime. The already large lists of books were made much larger. These lists of books that are recommended to the student take up a large part of the whole work.

Perhaps the most widely useful of all his works are his "Studies in The Book." Three volumes cover the whole New Testament. They are unique in their conception and arrangement. They set forth in illuminating systematic order the history and contents of each book, interwoven with much helpful explanation. This matter is divided into "Lessons" for use in Bible study classes. After each biblical study lesson there is a lesson on the Order of Salvation, the Person and Work of the Holy Ghost, and the Means and Methods of Grace. Each book is interleaved with good blank paper. The books were prepared for use in Moody's Chicago and Northfield Bible Schools. Dr. Weidner had outlined a similar series to cover the Old Testament. The volume on Studies in the Book of Genesis is unusually helpful and inspiring. In these studies we have perhaps his most original work and the one best adapted to the reader of average intelligence. We regret that he was not able to complete the series. All the books of the series that are out deserve to be much more widely known and used among students of the Bible.



President Weidner's Home in Lake View, Chicago

Among the best known of Dr. Weidner's larger theological books is his "Christian Ethics." This is mainly a condensation of that invaluable, comprehensive and stimulating three-volume work of Bishop Martensen. It well deserves the wide circulation it enjoys.

His condensation and editing of Day's translation of Oehler's "Old Testament Theology," and his two volume "New Testament Theology," based on Bernhard Weiss, with much original matter, both in the text and in valuable footnotes, make this first English Lutheran Biblical Theology a rich contribution to our theological literature.

Dr. Weidner furnished two volumes of The Lutheran Commentary, one on the General Epistles and the other on Revelation. Both of them are unique and characteristic of their author. In both of them his remarkably wide knowledge of the Bible and of biblical literature are in evidence. They are more than commentaries. The notes, appendices, excursus and other references add much to their intrinsic value and helpfulness. In them the eminent Bible scholar stands forth in his remarkable strength and compass.

The crowning work of his literary life Dr. Weidner was not permitted to finish. He had laid out a twelve-volume System of Dogmatics. Eighteen years ago he wrote the first volume, "Introduction to Dogmatics." It is a veritable cyclopedia of the history, literature and sources of dogmatics. Counting that first book, the Doctor has written eight volumes.

He was working on the ninth volume, "The Doctrine of the Word of God," when the pen dropped from his tired hands. After this one there were still left to be written "The Doctrine of Holy Baptism," "The Doctrine of the Lord's Supper," and "The Doctrine of the Last Things." How eager he was to live to finish this monumental work! But the good Lord willed it otherwise.

It is difficult to characterize this greatest literary undertaking of this great man. We feel safe in saying that in Dogmatics Dr. Weidner was at his best. He loved it more than he loved his necessary food.

Dr. Weidner was never affected by the wanderings and vagaries of liberal Theology. He stood four-square and firm on the old foundations of orthodox Lutheranism. He wanted every point proved by Scripture. He brought in a wealth of learning from collateral literature. He knew the trends and tendencies of the theological thinking of the day. He knew how to compare the new wine with the old. He was convinced and he could convince his students that the old is better. The old is better not because it is old, but because it is what God gave us, and it satisfies the deepest wants of the soul. Not every user of Weidner's Dogmatics will agree with every detail that he worked out. Neither will every one agree always that his way of putting things is the best or the only way. But on the whole his teaching will be accepted as sound and Scriptural by loyal Lutherans.

The value of these books on Dogmatics is greatly enhanced by the Bibliography, the full Table of Contents and the careful Index that are a part of each volume.

Had Dr. Weidner written nothing but this one great work, for this alone the Church would ever hold him in loving remembrance. But when we, in addition to this, look over the whole number of his great books and their encyclopedic range of subject matter, we are amazed that one man could do it all. Truly Dr. Weidner was one of the great men that God has given to our Church in America.



Dr. Weidner's Home  
Lake View, Chicago

Eliza Hall  
Old Administration Building  
Lake View

One of the Double  
Professors' Houses  
Lake View

A further word needs to be said about Dr. Weidner's unpublished writings. We do not believe that there are many. The Doctor had profited by the mistake of Dr. Krauth, who left much valuable material that was unconnected and not ready for the printer. Dr. Weidner, as a rule, made what he had written ready for the printer and had it rushed to press.

We know, however, that he had worked out in part a series of devotional and practical meditations for the inner and outer life of the minister. These papers are based on the devotional meditations of certain Anglican writers whom the Doctor greatly admired. These writings he had recast and worked over to suit the Lutheran minister in America.

In late years he read many of them at chapel services and before ministerial gatherings. Probably his last public utterance, to other than his student group, was, the reading of one of these papers before the Chicago Union Lutheran Ministers' Association, less than two years before he died. It made a deep impression that will never be forgotten. We doubt whether there is in the English language a collection of devotional meditations that is more deep, more devout, more heart-searching and more rich in instruction, admonition and inspiration for a deeper spiritual life.

## 4. Dr. Weidner as a President

LEADERS ARE BORN, not made. If one has in him the gift of leadership, he will lead somehow, somewhere. He may not be able to get a special course of training. Many of the world's best leaders had poor educational advantages. But they found and made the most of opportunities that others would have passed by. They gave themselves the training and discipline that they needed. True, they might have become still greater if they had had a special course of education for their special work. But after all is said young men and women must make themselves and fit themselves for their future.

As we have seen. Dr. Weidner's educational opportunities were not extraordinary. In his day Muhlenberg was an ordinary small college. It was not what it is now. Young Weidner did not study at a great university in the East. He took no special courses in Europe. He got what the ordinary English Lutheran minister gets and no more.

But he always made the most of his opportunities. He found and invented special ways of getting special advantages. Always diligent in business and ever fervent in spirit, he was a leader in his classes and in his schools.

He knew the educational value of travel and of contact with great men. He was blessed with a commanding presence. His build was something like that of D. L. Moody, whose intimate friend and frequent associate he was. While his physical frame was large, it was more finely proportioned than was Moody's. He did not have the short neck of the latter. It is said that he also resembled Joseph Cook, the great Apologetic Monday Lecturer in Tremont Temple, Boston. Dr. Weidner's fine, physical and erect presence would attract attention anywhere. On his trips by rail and in hotels men of position and men of affairs would find him and he would find them. He would learn something from all whom he met.



An Old Group, before Eliza Hall, Lake View, Chicago

In 1884 he took the first of his many journeys to Europe. On every voyage he found the most interesting men on board and gathered and imparted information. On this journey he visited the Universities of Upsala, Leipzig and Berlin. He spent some time in each one studying and comparing the equipment, the curricula, the professors and their methods. These habits of investigation and comparison he kept up on all his future travels. Always unabashed he would introduce himself to and interview professors and other men of note. On this journey he made the acquaintance of Doctors Luthardt, Delitzsch and other notable Lutherans.

On later journeys he felt himself specially drawn to Oxford University. He made a minute study of the plant, the arrangement of the buildings, their outer and inner style of architecture as well as their furnishings. Here he imbibed his love for the quadrangle or community plan which he afterwards carried out on the Maywood grounds. Here he got his idea and plan for our much-admired Commons. And so he was unconsciously preparing himself to become the wonderful president of Chicago Seminary.

He was gifted with executive ability. He had talent for detail. He did not forget or overlook what to others seemed like trifles. He was almost painfully systematic. He had high ideals. Whatever he planned or laid out he wanted to be the most advanced, the very best it was possible to have. In the way of

study courses and curricula he had learned much from Sweden, Germany and England. In the way of practical arrangement, method and application he had learned much from Harper and Moody. From the latter especially he had learned that the teacher and leader must put the deepest spiritual earnestness into all his work if he would win. During his twelve years among the Swedes he had associated with their ablest and most consecrated leaders. He had his own spiritual nature deepened and enriched by the fervent piety of these Augustana men. He received much from them. Doubtless they and their institution also owe much to him. That blessed Rock Island experience did much to fit Dr. Weidner to become the great president of Chicago Seminary.

Dr. Weidner was glad to accept the presidency. He was not ignorant of what it would mean in the way of labor, hardship, disappointment and hope deferred. He knew the story of the small beginnings, the privations and the disappointments of Augustana College and Seminary. He did not rush into the Chicago undertaking blindly. He was in his best years. He was full of ambitions and ideals. He wanted an opportunity to carry them out. He wanted to be an unhindered and an unhampered leader. For the joy of being master and of mastering whatever was under him or in his way he was ready to lay his best service, his very life upon the altar.

Together with Dr. Passavant (see his Life and Letters) and the board of directors appointed by Dr. Krotel, the then president of the General Council, Dr. Weidner carefully worked out the bases and the plans for the new institution. He saw to it that the school which was a creation of the General Council was solidly anchored on the Principles of Faith and Polity of that Body and that its future fidelity and soundness were safeguarded.

When it came to laying out the curriculum of studies, Dr. Weidner took advanced ground. His curriculum contains all the basic theological disciplines taught in the older Lutheran seminaries. Dr. Weidner made a new departure when he insisted that graduation should not depend on the length of time spent in the seminary but on the mastering and the passing of examination on every subject required.

Among the special courses that Dr. Weidner embodied in the curriculum are seventy-five hours in the history, theory and practice of Church Music. A twenty-five hour course in Psychology and Logic. The same in Rhetoric and advanced English. One hundred hours a year in Elocution by a specialist in Expression. Twenty-five hours in Social Ethics, the same in each of these: Pedagogy, Sunday-school Work, Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Inner Missions. Fifty hours in Apologetics. Dr. Weidner believed that a seminary



must above all else train men to preach. He wanted the seminary to send out instructive and convincing preachers, men of God and of spiritual power, men who can bring sinners to repentance and to personal, experimental faith, a faith that will work and serve; men who can meet and challenge an unbelieving world and put to silence the foolishness of gainsayers. The Chicago Seminary students get one hundred hours in the history, theory and practice of preaching, without counting Rhetoric, Elocution and chapel exercises. Such are the requirements for seminary graduation.

Dr. Weidner was sometimes found fault with for taking his students over too much ground. The Chicago Seminary has been accused of being superficial. But it was Dr. Weidner's idea and that of his colleagues that a seminary is only the beginning of the study of Theology. It is only an enlarged Encyclopedia of Theology. It ought to give the student a bird's-eye view of the field, give him the fundamental principles and the essence of every subject, fill him with interest in and a love for it and make him eager to be a systematic student as long as he lives. With this in view Dr. Weidner laid out a fourth year course for advanced work, which is being utilized more and more. He was the first to project and formulate a systematized and comprehensive post-graduate course for both resident post-graduates and for correspondence. Dr. Weidner also planned for student aid. His plan gives the beneficiary student work to do. For this work he is paid by the hour. He thus earns all the help he gets and is not a receiver of charity.



Prof. P. W. H. Frederick  
An Early Colleague  
in Chicago Seminary



Dr. J. F. Ohl  
An Early Colleague  
in Chicago Seminary



Dr. A. T. Clay  
An Early Colleague  
in Chicago Seminary

Dr. W. K. Frick was also an Early Colleague His picture could not be obtained

Another feature of Chicago Seminary work projected by Dr. Weidner is that subjects are studied and recited on consecutive days. For example, instead of taking Church History two or three hours a week for three years, it is taken every day for one year. And so with every other subject except where there is a special reason for keeping a particular subject before the students every week of the year. This method keeps up a continuous interest and is a great improvement over the older plans.

Surely Dr. Weidner had the qualifications for a president. He knew what he wanted to make out of his school and how to attain his purpose. No wonder that his alma mater, Muhlenberg College, some years ago made strenuous efforts to secure him for president.

A man who has a gift for ruling and who loves to rule often becomes autocratic and arbitrary. This is a weakness common to great men, but not confined to them. Some small men are worse than the truly great.

Dr. Weidner in his sphere was a truly great man. He did sometimes show the common weakness. He was set on carrying out his own views and desires. He did dislike to have his plans or purposes crossed. Sometimes he would become indignant when his views were opposed.

But his indignation would soon subside. Then in the spirit of a Christian gentleman, he would confess if he had been unkind and would manfully beg pardon. This also is the mark of a great and good man. And for this reason those who were close to Dr. Weidner and who were sometimes hurt by him could not cease to love him. His kindness of heart was as big as the bulk of his body. He had an undercurrent of feeling as gentle and tender as a woman's.

It was a strong hand, an undaunted will, and an unflinching purpose such as Dr. Weidner possessed that was needed to launch and to guide the new enterprise. After nearly twenty-five years we can say of the seminary which Dr. Weidner, more than any other man, made what it is, what Daniel Webster said of Massachusetts: "There she is, she speaks for herself."

## 5. Dr. Weidner as a Man

DOCTOR WEIDNER was a great man. He deserves and will hold a place among the leaders whom God has given to our Church.

Dr. Weidner was a good man. The impulses of his great warm heart were always toward the good, the true and the beautiful. Whatever he was and whatever he did was always wholehearted. He threw his whole big energy into his self-development into the nurture of his inner, spiritual life, as well as into his labors for the spiritual life of others.

### Influenced by the Swedes

It was a blessing for him that in his young manhood he was thrown among the warm-hearted Swedes. Our German and Pennsylvania-German ancestors belong to a clear-headed, energetic, sturdy stock.

There is an element of solidity, of safety, and of sincerity about them that make them reliable in their character and in their religion. As a class they are above shallow emotionalism, above religious pretense and cant, above sham in their personal and in their church life. They perhaps are in peculiar danger of being formal and cold in their religious life. They need constant self-examination, heart-searching watching and praying against externalism and cold intellectualism.

The Scandinavians, as a class, are more emotional. They live more in their feelings. They are warm-hearted, affectionate and more or less impulsive. Intellectually they are as keen and bright as the Germans. But along with it they have that inner warmth, that deeper feeling, that capacity for and manifestation of abounding love. These characteristics they carry into their religious life. This life thus becomes more expressive of the subjective side, more hearty, more pulsating with love and devotion.



Professor in Lake View, shortly before his stroke of paralysis

Into the center and heart of this religious life the still young Weidner was thrown. He threw himself into it with his whole great nature. It appealed to him. It supplied for him what he felt he needed and what he wanted. It no doubt made him a different man from what he would have been, had he remained in his old home. He fell in love with what he called the “Swedish type of piety.”

## **Reciprocating Influences**

We have often felt that the two national elements that God threw together in the earliest Lutheranism that was planted in America need each other. The Halle Germans and the Swedes mingled freely in the pioneer days. They joined together in organizing the first Lutheran synod. They supplemented and complemented each other. This made better Lutherans of both. They need each other today.

And so Dr. Weidner’s spiritual life was enriched at Rock Island. Here also he became better acquainted with Dr. Passavant, who appreciated that Swedish type of piety so highly. And here Dr. Passavant came to know and appreciate Dr. Weidner more fully.

## **A Whole-hearted Optimist**

As has been said before, Dr. Weidner was a whole-hearted optimist. There was a warmth in his tone and in his words that was heartening to those who came in contact with him. During the earlier, darker days of Chicago Seminary life his buoyant hopefulness never forsook him. This hopeful faith he knew how to instill into others. Many a time when the writer of this felt blue he would go to the Doctor for consolation. He would hear our plaint patiently, would show us the silver lining, laugh in his own hearty way, and send us home with new heart and new hope. Doubtless this is the testimony also of every student who went to him when in trouble. But it is not true of the student whom the Doctor believed to be lazy and unfaithful. Such an one would go away feeling that something had struck him.

When a sincere but perplexed student had come, after his encouraging counsel and his heartening laugh, the Doctor would almost invariably end up with saying: “Don’t be discouraged.” This has practically become the motto of the Chicago Seminary.

Dr. Weidner loved his students. In his earlier days he would take regular walks with them by turns. On these walks he would talk on some instructive subject, determined on beforehand and intended for the benefit of the particular student. And so with his colleagues. The writer of this will never forget his walks and talks with Dr. Weidner.

Dr. Weidner was strong in his likes and in his dislikes. Unhappy the man in whom he had lost confidence.

## **Popular in the Social Circle**

In the social circle Dr. Weidner was always a welcome guest. His wide and varied range of knowledge, his large experience in travel, his interesting way of putting things in these free talk-fests, made him a most entertaining conversationalist. He was not a story teller. But he greatly enjoyed a good story. We recall how at a supper such as the faculty families used to enjoy together a bear story, a really good one, was told. The Doctor was convulsed, and almost collapsed with laughter.

## **The Old Homestead**

Dr. Weidner had inherited the fine farm of his parents at Center Valley, Pa., with its substantial, roomy and many-windowed old homestead. We used to say to him: "Doctor, if we had a farm of our own like that we should never ask 'where shall I spend my next summer'." His answer would be: "I can't stand it more than three days. It's too monotonous for me." After his mother's death he made extensive and expensive improvements, built large colonnade porches and added rooms for library and study purposes. He seemed to want to make himself like it for a possible place of retirement. The neighbors speak of seeing him walk back and forth for hours on his new, big porches. But no. He could not content himself there. He must away to the city, the sea-side, the ocean steamer, the historic sights and intellectual centers of Europe, or the Alps of Switzerland. How he did love the ocean, its winds and waves and salt sea air! On his many voyages he read many books and made the acquaintance of many great men, ever learning and laying up in store for future use.

## **At Home in the Alps**

Few Americans know Switzerland and the Alps as Dr. Weidner did. It was his love of Alpine scenery that was the occasion of his second and severest stroke. Before he left Chicago for that journey abroad he had about regained the normal use of his right leg. His physician had advised him that the leg needed regular exercise. But he did not mean overstraining or violent exercise. On a beautiful summer evening our traveler was resting in a village at the foot of a trans-Alpine pass. He looked up the mountain, and made up his mind that he would climb it and descend on the opposite side next day. After arranging to have his baggage sent to the village on the other side, he gave orders to be called at early dawn and went to bed. Before the sun was up he had had his breakfast and was on the way all alone. It was hot when the sun rose. Steadily he climbed and kept on climbing. At high noon he was still several hours from the top. At this height it was chilling cold. He met a shepherd with a wine skin. From him he obtained a drink of wine. This is all the refreshment he had throughout that long, momentous day. Several hours after noon he reached the summit. Here it was biting cold. He began the descent and kept on, literally dragging himself during the last hours, and arrived after nightfall at a hotel where he was known. He had himself bathed, steamed and massaged, had light refreshments, a tonic and almost fell into bed. He had overdone. There is a limit for physical nature, even where there seems to be none for will-power. That night he had his second stroke. He was removed to a hospital in Nuremberg, Germany. The good Lord and himself only know what he suffered during the weary six weeks in that hospital.

## **True to His Friends**

Dr. Weidner was always true to his friends. His great heart made him capable of being a friend in the true sense and of drawing good men to himself in the bonds of true friendship. Superficial characters are not capable of friendship in the full, deep, mystic sense of that word. There are men whom we like, whom we admire, but cannot love. Dr. Weidner was a man whom his friends loved. The writer of this loved him like a brother. Brothers can differ without ceasing to love each other.



The Chicago Seminary's New Home in Maywood, Ill.



## 6. Affliction And Death Of Dr. Weidner

THOUGH it was evident to all who were solicitously watching Dr. Weidner for months, we might really say for two years, that he was slowly but surely dying, yet the news of his death on the morning of the Festival of Epiphany, 1915, came with a terrible shock to us all. It was nearly ten years since he had had his first stroke of paralysis. Two years later, while in Europe he had a second and a more severe stroke. For weeks he had suffered in a hospital in Nuremburg and his life seemed ready then to flicker out. His whole right side was paralyzed.

But the good Lord spared him. Under the treatment of the very best physicians he recuperated and improved so that he gradually regained the partial use of his right hand. He and his friends hoped that he might recover completely. But he was a broken man. With careful medical treatment and rigid dieting he lived and labored on. God in His great mercy kept his mind clear and active to the last. His eye was not dimmed and the natural force of that marvelous intellect was not abated. During the summer of 1913 he took his last trip to Germany. He had suffered much from heart weakness, shortness of breath and sleeplessness during the previous winter. He had set his hopes high on the treatment under world-famed specialists at Bad Naheim in Germany. But his recuperative powers were failing. On his return to Maywood we saw to our sorrow that he had lost much. But with that indomitable will, that wonderful heroism, that rare devotion and consecration to the institution that he had founded and that he loved more than he loved his life, he took up the burden anew, never lost a class room hour while in Maywood, and kept busy writing and dictating at his desk day after day when all felt that he should have been in a hospital.

During his last summer he rested, read and planned by the seashore, whose waves and breezes he loved so well. From there he went to a sanitarium in Waukesha, Wis., where he felt that the waters, the baths and the treatment were good for him. Rested and stimulated, he was on hand with new hopes

and plans for his seminary at the fall opening. He was happier than a boy on the playground when he saw the incoming new class of thirty men. Again he leaned heavily on His Lord, whom he knew so well and loved so ardently, braced himself and went to work. But he was weary. He was a dying man. As he heavily dragged himself back and forth from his class-room he was an object of pity. Sometimes we could have wept as we saw the pain and the strain written on his face. To the day when he left for Florida he never lost an hour.

He had a hard and painful trip to Tangerine. To relieve the dropsical condition that had been developing for some time, the starving process, to which he had been subjected for several years, had been made more rigid than ever. We actually believe that for two years the poor man was always hungry. And so he suffered on, conscious, cheerful and hopeful to the last. Before us lies a letter, written ten days before his death, running over with that loving kindness, personal affection and childlike frankness so characteristic of the man. In it he asks the writer of this to prepare another article setting forth what manner of men the ministers of Christ ought to be in their private life and personal habits.

On all his journeys Mrs. Weidner accompanied the Doctor. From the beginning of his affliction she was ever at his side. Solicitous, patient, faithful, she attended him at home, on his health-seeking and oft laborious journeys and across the seas. Not rugged by nature, the good Lord to her also made true His promise: "As thy day so shall thy strength be."

What an example of heroism and consecration Dr. Weidner has left to the ministers of his Church! For that example, for its memory, the whole Church will ever be grateful to him. May all of us who had the privilege of living close to him, as students and as colleagues, live our thanks.

When he died a great pall fell over the Chicago Seminary. A great light had gone out in the Lutheran Church. A great man and a mighty had fallen in Israel. Well might we cry:

Help, Lord, for the righteous man ceaseth.

Present Faculty of Chicago Seminary in Order of Length of Service



G. H. Gerberding



Arthur E. Phillips  
Teacher of Oratory and Expression

## 7. Funeral Of Dr. Weidner

FEW FUNERALS have taken place in our Church that were more impressive than was the funeral of Dr. Weidner. In some respects there have been none like it. There probably was none at which there was so varied a representation from all parts of the Church and from the outside. The messages of appreciation and condolence came from presidents of synods, from editors of Church Periodicals, from college and seminary faculties, and from ministers' associations of nearly every General Body and nearly every nationality in the Church. Personal representatives, bearing tributes of appreciation and affection were present from Mount Airy Seminary, from Waterloo, Wittenberg, Augustana and Dana Seminary of Blair, Nebraska. Resolutions were read from the faculties of St. Olaf College, the United Church Seminary and Luther Seminary of the Norwegian Synod. There must have been nearly two hundred ministers present in the great congregation that crowded the Commons to the doors.

Dr. Krauss, the acting president, had charge of the services. Dr. Ramsey, our professor of vocal music, had trained a chorus choir from the student body to sing the beautiful burial service of the Church Book. Dr. Frick, the secretary of the Board of Directors, conducted the liturgical service and read the lessons in his usual clear and impressive way.

Dr. Wagenhals, president of the Board, made the first address. In outline his message was: That no one man is indispensable for the work of the Lord. Yet a certain man seems to be necessary often for the inauguration and founding of some particular work in the kingdom. Such a man was Dr. Weidner. When the hour had struck for the opening of this new seminary, which was started without any synod or other body pledged to support it, without endowment and without buildings, he was the man for the hour and for the work. His great faith, his abounding optimism, his unflinching courage which knew no defeat, but rose above every threatening danger and seemed to glory in difficulties that would have made most men beat a retreat, showed him to be the man of God's choosing. He delighted in facing and overcoming the hardships from which so many shrink back. After his first stroke of paralysis. Dr. Wagenhals found him studying the experiences of victims of such visitations. In a voice

ringing with hopeful courage, he said he had found the account of an eminent man who had labored for twenty years after his stroke and had done his best work during those years. And in a triumphant tone Dr. Weidner said, "I am going to work for twenty years." And even after his second and sorer stroke, he would not admit that he must give up, but pulled himself together, subjected himself to the most exacting regimes prescribed for him, seemingly forced that right hand to write again, and so kept on for more than half of the twenty years he wanted for work. He has his place among the world's worthies who through faith overcame the world, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, out of weakness were made strong.

Dr. H. W. Roth, who was Dr. Weidner's first and, for a time, his only, colleague as a professor, a member and treasurer of our Board from its organization, delivered the second address.

He spoke of his first meeting of Dr. Weidner, of how the Doctor looked him in the eye as if he were looking through him, of the firm, warm grasp of his hand, and of the mastering impression of that first meeting. Dr. Roth soon got an idea of Dr. Weidner's keen mind and encyclopedic scholarship. Ere long he learned of his power as a teacher. And so Dr. Roth was satisfied that Dr. Weidner was the man to make the Chicago Seminary and to make men for the time and for the kingdom out of his students.

The writer of this spoke as the representative of the faculty. He had labored at Dr. Weidner's side for over twenty years. During these years he had sometimes differed from Dr. Weidner and differed sharply, but had never ceased to love him. There was in Dr. Weidner that bigness of heart and mind that he never allowed difference of viewpoint and opposition in idea and plan to affect his personal attitude. When he came to see that he himself had been unkind and had hurt with what he had said, he always made the amende honorable, not only of a gentleman but also of a Christian brother.

But the writer would not follow his heart and speak of Dr. Weidner as a man or as a friend whom he loved as a brother.

He wanted to speak of the seminary, sometimes affectionately called "Weidner's Seminary." In laying out his courses of study Dr. Weidner had taken ground in advance of the usual curricula. He had also laid out the first scheme of post graduate and correspondence work. The seminary would doubtless always maintain the broad and practical scholarship laid down and impressed by Dr. Weidner.

Dr. Weidner was second to no one in his appreciation and love for the doctrines of his Church. The seminary would never be swerved from that sound-

ness of doctrine. Dr. Weidner helped to make the charter, constitution and by-laws, in all of which the faith is so carefully safeguarded.

There might be one danger. Dr. Passavant had one great, deep desire for this school of his founding. It was his heart's desire and earnest prayer that a spirit of deep spiritual life and consecration might ever characterize this institution. This moved him to select Dr. Weidner as his choice for the seminary's head and leader. Dr. Weidner ever insisted on heart experience, on personal consecration in all his students. May the Passavant and Weidner spirit never be replaced by a cold intellectualism and rational orthodoxism.

President Haas, of Muhlenberg College, and of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, said earth was made poorer, but heaven richer by this death. He was glad to lay his palm branch of appreciation on the bier of one whose life had been so rich and abundant. Dr. Haas spoke of Dr. Weidner as a student of Muhlenberg College and of how he did his first teaching there as a mere youth, and there and then showed his wonderful aptitude as a teacher. Dr. Weidner was one of the noblest sons of the old Ministerium of Pennsylvania, in which he had served as pastor of two charges for the first nine years of his ministry. In Dr. Haas' early life he was deeply impressed by that inescapable influence of Dr. Weidner's personality, the unconscious influence of a consecrated life, whose large mind and great heart were filled and elevated by the divine grace that ever accompanied him.

He stands forth as a monument of an unconquerable faith, a faith that would know no such thing as defeat, that removes mountains. The bright, laughing eye, the warm hand, manifested a loving heart that was touched by God. Even his silent presence had a forceful control over others. In times of distress he was like a sunbeam shining forth his faith in God.

He ever had a bright hope, a great optimism. This was not that shallow kind which shuts its eyes to sin and misery. His was born and sustained by his faith and hope in God. His willingness to accept the great charge of building up a seminary, with neither synodical support assured, nor buildings, nor endowment, show his optimistic faith and hope. Is his work done? No. A great leader in Israel has risen today. May the Chicago Seminary go forth in his faith, hope and love until we of the old Ministerium also catch Dr. Weidner's spirit.

Dr. Andre en, president of Angustana College and Seminary, likened Dr. Weidner to Samuel, as the founder of a school of the prophets, as a wonderful leader whom all the people loved and followed, and for whose departure they made great mourning. The whole Church mourns for Dr. Weidner. This

seminary is his Ramah. On this campus he should find his last earthly resting place. The tribute of Dr. Andreen was touching and beautiful.

Dr. H. E. Jacobs, the venerable and scholarly Dean of Mount Airy Seminary, of which Dr. Weidner and all his colleagues, up to the time of his death, were graduates, said he came to testify to his appreciation of Dr. Weidner and his sympathy for the Chicago Seminary by his presence. As a representative of a sister institution which, with Chicago Seminary, constitutes two of a long line of fortresses set for the defense of the truth of the Scriptures, his sympathy goes out to this institution. When one member suffers, all the members suffer. Dr. Jacobs spoke of his personal friendship with Dr. Weidner, which reaches back to the days when he entered the Philadelphia Seminary as a student. As Dr. Weidner was then tutoring a private student in Hebrew, Dr. Jacobs got his impression of his remarkable gifts as a teacher. He noted Student Weidner's joy in teaching, his contagious enthusiasm for Hebrew, which marked him as an exceptional man.

Dr. Jacobs told us how he was associated with Dr. Weidner as the founder and first editor of the *Lutheran Church Review*. Dr. Jacobs knew something of the deliberations which resulted in Dr. Weidner's transfer to the West. Among other things Dr. Jacobs said: "When I look back over the history of the Chicago Seminary and see what God hath wrought, I feel abashed that Dr. Weidner had the faith and courage to undertake to push through, which some of us had not. In my home. Dr. Weidner told me that he was not afraid to undertake it. And what a work it is! What joy, what enthusiasm, his sanguine temperament infused into it! He took no account of the difficulties in the way. If ever there was an example of the divine consciousness of a mission, that example was Revere Franklin Weidner. Resolutely, unflinchingly and unwearyedly, by day and by night, with every breath of his body, he pushed the work on to his own end." Dr. Weidner, he said, was above all else a great teacher. There his reputation will mainly rest. He was not an ecclesiastic. He did not have much part in the conventions of the General Council. His heart was here in the seminary. His work is not done. As we look over this campus we thank God for what is, and for what Dr. Weidner has done here. What God hath wrought!

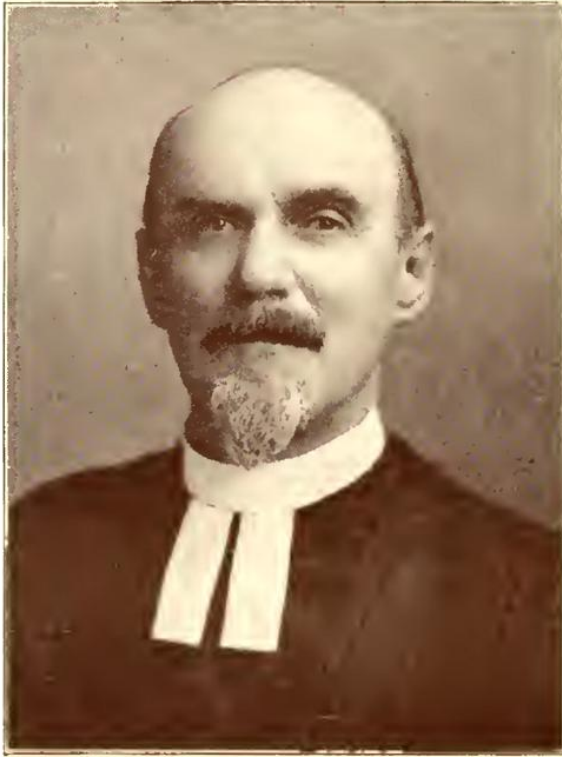
Dr. Bauslin, dean of Wittenberg Seminary, Springfield, Ohio, told us that as soon as word of Dr. Weidner's death was received a faculty meeting was called, resolutions of sympathy and appreciation were drawn up, and he was deputed to bear all this to us in person. To him there is always a pathos in a new-made grave. What different endings graves show! Here the most pathetic

thing is not the coffin and what it holds, but that draped lecture room. That crepe-covered desk and chair from which Dr. Weidner so often spoke his words of wisdom and inspiration, and where his voice will be heard no more. The leader and teacher is here no more. But the work goes on. Dr. Weidner knew how to make the young men work. This was one of his chief characteristics as a teacher. He was a man of magnificent natural endowments, a great heart and an indefatigable industry that never knew how to cease. In him God gave us an ecclesiastical statesman with a vision for the needs of the Church and the opportunities of Chicago Seminary to help meet those needs. He might have become great in the secular world. But how wise his choice of service in the kingdom that knows no end!

Dr. Bauslin also called attention to the great work before our great Church in this great land. Amid the waves of liberalism, unbelief and misbelief that surge around us, we must stand and ever hold aloft the banner of God's truth. Dr. Weidner braved the rage of the storm. But he feared not for the truth. His vision was clear. And now he has seen the King in His beauty and we wait and work and serve the same Christ and his same Church. But we need each other. And at the bier of Dr. Weidner let us draw closer together, so that we may with one mind and with one heart glorify God.

President Laury, of the young Lutheran Seminary in Waterloo, Ontario, brought a brief but beautiful tribute to the departed to whom he is related by ties of blood. Dr. Weidner had influenced him also in his early ministry, had given him a vision of what his church ought to be to the community, and had helped to make that vision in part at least a reality. He said that after this remarkable and inspiring funeral service, he would go back to his young and weak school with new heart, new hope, new courage, and faith that God would make of that still feeble school a great power for God and for His Church.





E. F. Krauss



Alfred Ramsey

President B. F. Hoefler, of the Chicago Synod, spoke a brief word of love and appreciation. That while Dr. Weidner had been too busy with the seminary to take much direct part in the conventions and work of the synod, his counsel, encouragement and personal heartening of the men of the synod had always been of great value and helpfulness.

Dr. Ramsey, the poet of our faculty, read his beautiful original tribute in verse, which is found below.

Rarely if ever has it been our privilege to be at a funeral where so many voices, from such widely separated and different parts of the Church, were so spontaneous, so hearty, so affectionate, so eloquent, and so harmonious as were the voices heard at Dr. Weidner's funeral.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; for they rest from their labors and their works do follow them."

Doctor Weidner was buried in Concordia Cemetery, Forest Park, Ill., within less than a mile from the seminary.

A plain red-stone granite monument marks his grave.



H. B. Reed



Joseph Stump

# 8. Lessons from the Life and Death of Dr. Weidner

## Tied Up With the Kingdom of God

LOOK AT Dr. Weidner's faith. His aspirations, his hopes, his labors abundant were all tied up with the kingdom of God. He would have spurned the very idea of linking himself in with a modern secret society. The Church, the Bride of Christ, this was his society.

He lived in the Word and its teaching. He gladly bowed to its authority. His faith grew out of the Word, fed on the Word, was obedient to the Word. In early youth he learned to believe that faith, true, trusting, leaning, clinging, loving faith can still remove mountains of difficulty and opposition. And so by faith that plain, country boy grew into one of the great men whose memory our whole Church delights to honor. By faith he labored on in every successive field of endeavor, doing with his might what his hand found to do. And so by faith he started the Chicago Seminary, when others said it could have no future. The lack of equipment, the absence of pledged income, the non-existence of buildings, endowment or colleges for feeders, abashed him not. With no assurance except faith in God and faith in God's people. Dr. Weidner began and carried to its present attainment this the last great work of his life.

## The Lure of Gold

Here it is well to recall Dr. Weidner's temptation. To many a minister it would have been too strong to withstand. It did not trouble him. He gave it a passing thought, laughed at it and let it go. Dr. Weidner had not learned to economize in his personal expenses. It required a big salary to keep him comfortable. When he received the big offers named above, he was getting fifteen hundred

a year in cash from the Chicago Seminary, and this was by no means prompt in payment.

Does the Church need this lesson? Are none of our ministers susceptible to flattering offers of big salaries from without their own Church? Should such temptations come, remember Dr. Weidner. His noble example of self-denial and sacrifice ought to make any tempted one say: "Get thee behind me, Satan." All honor to Dr. Weidner that by faith he chose to suffer privation with a good conscience rather than doubtful honor with worldly affluence. His example has given us an undeniable answer to the skeptics and traducers who claim that ministers always go where they can get the highest salary. Not so. Wherever there is a clear conception of the Lutheran doctrine of the call the salary alone does not decide. Doctor Weidner's example was in harmony with the teaching of his Church.

In the midst of Dr. Weidner's planning and struggling to meet the financial needs and the other, even greater responsibilities of making the young seminary go, came the proposition to sell out in Lakeview, Chicago, and move to Maywood. This cost the doctor much perplexity. While the decision to change location was pending he was stricken, sorely stricken with paralysis. Did his faith then fail him? On the contrary, it became clearer and firmer than ever. He only leaned the harder on his God, whose rod and staff stayed him. And when hope of recovery had again become encouraging, in a strange land, with the great sea between him and his seminary, a second and severer stroke fell. During those long, lonely, weary weeks of the sorest suffering he clambered more closely to the Word and the Christ of the Word, and by faith he returned to his own land. He was a broken man. A stricken sufferer. The weary weeks grew into months and the months made years. Dr. Weidner suffered on. He never gave up. He labored on.

His faith never flinched. The hopeful smile was in the face of pain. The cheery tone was in the weakening voice. He suffered on. He was slowly dying, and yet, as the workless night was drawing nearer, he worked with even greater determination, till the last lecture was said, the last sentence written and the pen dropped from his dying hand.

What a wonderful faith, what ardent endurance. What spending and being spent in the service of his Lord and His Church. What a lesson for his students, old and new, what a concrete sermon for every minister, what dramatized warning, caution and encouragement for all of us. In the face of this object lesson, in sight of this weary walking, working while dying and dying while working, seeing this sermon in human form, shall we ever again whine and

complain of our lot, of our labor, of somebody else having a better place and position than we have?



Dr. Weidner in his study in Maywood, Ill.

## **An Ever-living Sermon**

What living lessons lie here for the Chicago Seminary. That Seminary must never lose the Weidner faith and consecration. The Weidner spirit, the deep, living, experimental heart piety that he ever urged on his students as the one prime requisite of a faithful and God-pleasing minister dare never be lost. Should it ever depart from the dormitories and lecture halls of the Chicago Seminary, should a lifeless orthodoxy, a spiritless formalism supplant a true life springing out of true doctrine, then the glory of the Seminary shall have departed and "Ichabod" may be written over its doors.

That Seminary needs to strive more earnestly than ever to train men after God's own heart. We need studious men, life-long students, ever growing in scholarship. Men who cannot be hoodwinked by soft-sounding phrases; men of God; men of the One Book; men mighty in prayer; men who are strong for the overthrowing of the bulwarks of error and delusion. Men who are assuredly convinced that their own Church has the message which the time and people need, convinced that the Scriptural teachings of their own Church are

the sure solvent for the healing of the world's woe. If the Seminary thus, in the spirit of Passavant and Weidner, will continue to train men of such scholarship and spirit as these great founders desired, then her future is assured. Then will she ever be a powerhouse that shall send abroad currents of light and life throughout our land and to the needy lands beyond the sea. So may the Chicago Seminary ever be true to her mission. So may she ever reflect credit and glory on the memory of her first great president. Revere Franklin Weidner.

## 9. As One Of His Students Saw Him

MAY I give you two pictures of a great man? They are so unlike I will not soon forget them.

I saw him first when I was a small boy, inclined to hero-worship. And he was then a great man, in the full glow of his strength. He came swinging up the street with a great stride, a powerful man, broad, square, with a massive head that sat proudly on the great shoulders. He was “the President, Dr. Weidner.” To say he was magnetic is too little. His personality radiated energy, he was compelling, dynamic. A leader in the theological world, writer of books and writing many books — we always heard of him as writing a new book — known among the many professors, doctors of divinity, doctors of law and of letters, presidents of colleges and universities and seminaries in the city where he did his great work — a master among them all, and respected by all, he was truly a great man. So it was I saw him first, as he swung up the street on his way to class in his strength, and took time to inquire of a small boy about his studies.

And I saw him again, after many years; and now it was in his classroom where I had finally come as a student — and in his last class. In the passing years the great body had broken under the demands of the greater will. The body had tired before the soul. Had the soul ever tired? I think not. At least he never showed it, and we know that he never lost hope and faith. But the straight back was now bent, the black hair greyed and thinning a little, the massive head now bowed a little between the broad shoulders. We sat and waited for him in the dusk as he came to teach his last class the great system of faith he had given his life to defend. Waited as he dragged his dying body and useless leg to bring us the message and glow of his living soul. Waited as he took that long, breath-catching walk around the path to the lecture hall, the careful ascent of the step, the stop for rest, and then the heavy drag of the foot along the hall. We saw it daily, we students, an object les-

son in devotion to duty more impressive than the impressive lectures of the heyday of his strength. Still a great man? Yea, though the body was broken and the back bent. A greater man in that heroic fight against death than ever before. When he dropped in his seat he was nearly spent. Yet the brown eyes, deep beneath the heavy brows, glowed with an inextinguishable fire.





One of Dr. Weidner's last good pictures

It was that spirit, that fire, that made him a prince of teachers. Ancient people, summoned by his wand, passed before us in marshalled array, in their pomp and circumstance, with their poets and peasants, their priests and kings; storied halls and columned palaces took shape before our eyes in the magic mirror of his clear and burning vision; languages long dead took life, and in the inflections, conjugations, nay, in their smallest particle and accent we read the thought growth of nations. I think better than any man I ever knew he could impart that which he knew, and he knew much. He imparted what he knew and made us wish to know. He was thorough and demanded thoroughness in others. That keen eye could quickly detect intellectual shoddy. In its light the “bluffer” stood forth in the embarrassed nakedness of his pretense — and ceased to bluff.

But the qualities that won the great love of his pupils were his sympathy and courage. He always had time to hear their troubles, to sympathize with them and to encourage them. “Don’t get discouraged, boys,” was his favorite counsel.

His “boys” were his children. He counseled them in everything from dogmatics to dietetics. His favorite subjects for advice were proper exercise, proper diet, and becoming clerical garb.

A great man, as I saw him in his strength. But a still greater man, as I saw him in his last class.

There was a premonition in all our hearts that this was the last time he would ever occupy his professor’s chair. It was a dark December afternoon, and we waited long as he made his last toilsome trip through the dusk — dragged his heavy way in, and took his seat for the last time as a professor in the chair from which he had shaped the thought of hundreds of men now” preaching the Ancient Truth. It was the last feeble flickering of a torch of light that had once burned with a fierce flame — and too often at both ends. A few closing words on the Doctrine of Man, an exhortation to preach sin and God’s grace only, and he bade his “boys” goodbye, “to go to Florida to rest and get well.” He has gone to the land of eternal flowers and eternal youth, where he shall receive a garland for ashes, and a chaplet of joy shall crown him eternally.

Alexander Maclaren, in one of his sermons, says: “The dead are the living. They lived whilst they died, and after they die they live forever.” Thus it is, and thus it shall be, with our departed President.

PAUL H. KRAUSS.

# 10. The Loving Cup

## The Student Body's Last Token of Love to Doctor Weidner

IT WAS a sad day when we students learned that Doctor Weidner could not be our teacher throughout the whole of this scholastic year. We immediately planned how we best could give material expression to our esteem for him, and we finally decided to buy a loving cup, the best to be had.

On December 4th we presented this cup to him. E. F. Valbracht made the presentation, explaining to the Doctor that, since he was leaving us for a few months, the students, especially those of us who had studied under him throughout our entire course, desired to leave this cup with him as a mark of our love and esteem.



William Eckert  
General Secretary during last years  
of Dr. Weidner

Sitting in his chair, the Doctor thanked us in his characteristic style, telling us his appreciation, but reminding us that we  
[Editor's note: The book ends at this point.]

PRESENTED · TO · OUR · PRESIDENT

THE · REVEREND · PROFESSOR

REVERE · FRANKLIN · WEIDNER, · D.D., · LL.D., · S.T.D.

AS · A · TOKEN · OF · LOVE · AND · ESTEEM

THE · STUDENT · BODY

DECEMBER · FOURTH · NINETEEN · HUNDRED · FOURTEEN

MAYWOOD, · ILLINOIS

L. W. Rupp.

# Revere Franklin Weidner

A Colleague's Tribute

O Church, O School, O brothers, hearken all:—  
Lament and mourn nor be ashamed to weep;  
A goodly tow'r, and high, in Zion's wall  
Is overthrown and made to be a heap.  
A tow'r with rooms where finest flour was stored;  
Where Wisdom's band a feast of fat things  
spread;  
Where Knowledge sat with Scholarship at board;  
Where whoso hungered found abundant bread;  
And firmly founded; builded toward the skies;  
In Zion known, and by the tribes around;  
By her named Strength, and lovely in her eyes;  
But now, alas! laid even with the ground;  
Wherein abode a valiant soldier soul,  
As brave a heart as Courage ever bred;  
And well may Zion's watchmen teil her dole,—  
Her tow'r thrown down, the soul once tenant  
fled.

Preceptor, Praeses, Presbyter in one,  
 Whose lamp gave light to many lamps else dim;  
 The master at whose feet sat many a son;  
 And lo! he is not; God hath taken him.  
 Both armorer of Zion's mighty men  
 And mentor of her messengers of peace;  
 With strength apparelled, e'en the strength of ten  
 Of labors full till called of God to cease;  
 Untiring harvester of upland grain,  
 His garner holding many golden sheaves;  
 'Mongst great ones great, with princes in his  
 train;  
 For him, brought low, in ashes Zion grieves.  
 Beneath these rooves his vanished presence  
 lurks;  
 These haunts and halls his echoed voice record,  
 He rests from labors, followed by his works,  
 Forever, yea, forever with his Lord.

Alfred Ramsey

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# How Can You Find Peace With God?

The most important thing to grasp is that no one is made right with God by the good things he or she might do. Justification is by faith only, and that faith resting on what Jesus Christ did. It is by believing and trusting in His one-time *substitutionary* death for your sins.

Read your Bible steadily. God works His power in human beings through His Word. Where the Word is, God the Holy Spirit is always present.

Suggested Reading: [New Testament Conversions](#) by Pastor George Gerberding

## Benediction

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 1:24-25)

## Basic Biblical Christianity | Books to Download

- [\*The Small Catechism of Martin Luther\*](#)

The essentials of faith have remained the same for 2000 years. They are summarized in (1) The Ten Commandments, (2) The Lord's Prayer, and (3) The Apostles' Creed. Familiarity with each offers great protection against fads and falsehoods.

- [\*The Way Made Plain by Simon Peter Long\*](#)

A series of lectures by the beloved Twentieth Century American pastor on the basis of faith.

- [\*Bible Teachings by Joseph Stump\*](#)

A primer on the faith intended for new believers. Rich in Scripture. Christian basics explained from Scripture in clear and jargon-free language. Many excellent Bible studies can be made from this book.

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- [\*The Augsburg Confession: An Introduction To Its Study And An Exposition Of Its Contents by Matthias Loy\*](#)

“Sincere believers of the truth revealed in Christ for man's salvation have no reason to be ashamed of Luther, whom God sent to bring again to His people the precious truth in Jesus and whose heroic contention for the faith once delivered to the saints led to the establishment of the Church of the Augsburg Confession, now generally called the Evangelical Lutheran Church.”

- [\*The Doctrine of Justification by Matthias Loy\*](#)

“Human reason and inclination are always in their natural state averse to the doctrine of Justification by faith. Hence it is no wonder that earth and hell combine in persistent efforts to banish it from the Church and from the world.”

- [\*The Confessional Principle\* by Theodore Schmauk](#)

Theodore Schmauk's exploration and defense of the Christian faith consists of five parts: Historical Introduction; Part 1: Are Confessions Necessary?; Part 2: Confessions in the Church; Part 3: Lutheran Confessions; and Part 4: The Church in America.

- [\*Summary of the Christian Faith\* by Henry Eyster Jacobs](#)

*A Summary of the Christian Faith* has been appreciated by Christians since its original publication for its easy to use question and answer format, its clear organization, and its coverage of all the essentials of the Christian faith. Two essays on election and predestination are included, including Luther's "Speculations Concerning Predestination".

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## Devotional Classics | Books to Download

- [\*Sermons on the Gospels\* by Matthias Loy](#) and [\*Sermons on the Epistles\* by Matthias Loy](#)

"When you feel your burden of sin weighing heavily upon you, only go to Him... Only those who will not acknowledge their sin and feel no need of a Savior — only these are rejected. And these are not rejected because the Lord has no pity on them and no desire to deliver them from their wretchedness, but only because they will not come to Him that they might have life. They reject Him, and therefore stand rejected. But those who come to Him, poor and needy and helpless, but trusting in His mercy, He will receive, to comfort and to save."

- [\*The Great Gospel\* by Simon Peter Long](#) and [\*The Eternal Epistle\* by Simon Peter Long](#)

“I want you to understand that I have never preached opinions from this pulpit; it is not a question of opinion; I have absolutely no right to stand here and give you my opinion, for it is not worth any more than yours; we do not come to church to get opinions; I claim that I can back up every sermon I have preached, with the Word of God, and it is not my opinion nor yours, it is the eternal Word of God, and you will find it so on the Judgment day. I have nothing to take back, and I never will; God does not want me to.”

- *True Christianity* by John Arndt
- *The Sermons of Theophilus Stork: A Devotional Treasure*

“There are many of us who believe; we are convinced; but our souls do not take fire at contact with the truth. Happy he who not only believes, but believes with fire... This energy of belief, this ardor of conviction, made the commonplaces of the Gospel, the old, old story, seem in his [Stork’s] utterance something fresh and irresistibly attractive. Men listened to old truths from his lips as though they were a new revelation. They were new, for they came out of a heart that new coined them and stamped its own impress of vitality upon them as they passed through its experience...” – From the Introduction

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