

George Lintner

Church Government



LutheranLibrary.org ● S72

Church Government

Also Available from LutheranLibrary.org

- *When Gentiles First Entered The Church* by Charles William Schaeffer
- *Church and State* by John Edwin Whitteker
- *The True Church* by Emanuel Greenwald

About The Lutheran Library



The Lutheran Library is a non-profit publisher of good Christian books. All are available in a variety of formats for use by anyone for free or at very little cost. There are never any licensing fees.

We are Bible believing Christians who subscribe wholeheartedly to the Augsburg Confession as an accurate summary of Scripture, the chief article of which is Justification by Faith. Our purpose is to make available solid and encouraging material to strengthen believers in Christ.

Prayers are requested for the next generation, that the Lord will plant in them a love of the truth, such that the hard-learned lessons of the past will not be forgotten.

Please let others know of these books and this completely volunteer endeavor. May God bless you and keep you, help you, defend you, and lead you to know the depths of His kindness and love.

Church Government

By Rev. George A. Lintner
Originally Published in *Evangelical Review* Vol 8

Gettysburg
EVANGELICAL REVIEW
© 1856 / 2019
(CC BY 4.0)

LutheranLibrary.org

Contents

[Also Available from LutheranLibrary.org](#)

[About The Lutheran Library](#)

[Contents](#)

[Church Government](#)

[Submission to Christ's Authority](#)

[The Church Must Be Kept Separate And Distinct From the World](#)

[Unity and Harmony Must Be Preserved By Excluding Disorderly and Unworthy Members](#)

[The Church Must Maintain The Pure Doctrine of the Gospel](#)

[Applications To the Lutheran Church](#)

[The Church Council](#)

[The District Synods](#)

[The General Synod](#)

[Copyright Notice](#)

[How Can You Find Peace With God?](#)

[Benediction](#)

[More Than 100 Good Christian Books For You To Download And Enjoy](#)

[About Rev. George A. Lintner, D.D.](#)

Church Government

By Rev. George A. Lintner, D. D., Schoharie, N. Y.

IT is of fundamental importance to the salvation of men, that they should understand the principles on which God has established his church, and the authority with which he has invested it, for accomplishing the ends of its institution. That the church is a divine institution, placed on a rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, is an established fact, which can no longer be questioned. All past history proves it. Through all the changes and revolutions in which so many of the institutions of this world have disappeared, the church has been preserved. She has survived the rage and persecutions of her enemies and after all her conflicts and trials, she stands at this day stronger than ever, on the basis which has always sustained her.

But although the church is a divine institution, placed under the care and protection of the Almighty, she is to be preserved, and extended through the earth, by human instrumentality. The principles on which God has established his church, lie will always maintain, by the exercise of his sovereign authority; but there is an authority, which he has committed to men, to teach the doctrines, and administer the ordinances of our holy religion, according to his will and purposes, revealed in his covenant with his people. This authority, with which God has invested his servants, for the instruction, government, and discipline of his church, must be well understood, and faithfully exercised by those to whom it is committed. Without the exercise of such authority, by ministers and other officers of the church, the pure and holy principles of true religion cannot be sustained against the corruption and wickedness to which they are exposed in this world.

The church, as a visible body, is not entirely free from human corruption and depravity. Sin has invaded her borders, and shows its sad effects in the evil and disorderly conduct of many who belong to her communion. And the church cannot exist as a body, separate from the world, holy and

acceptable unto God. She cannot be preserved from the degenerating influence of corruption among her own members, and the evils to which she is exposed from the world, without the wise and judicious exercise of that government which God has prescribed in his word. In the discussion of this subject, I propose,

1. *To inquire into some of the general principles of that ecclesiastical government, which Christians should exercise in their spiritual connection and fellowship with each other; and*
2. *Consider those principles in their application to the government and discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church:*

There are some who suppose, that the church should never exercise *any* authority over her members. They have an idea that Christians should be left to govern themselves by the religious principles which they profess, without any restrictions of ecclesiastical authority. This theory is more specious than practical. It might be sustained, if all connected with the church were as holy and perfect in their characters and lives, as they should be. Then we should need no law to regulate the conduct of Christians. They would be a law unto themselves, and the church would be a paradise on earth. But such a state of perfection cannot be attained by the church in *this* world. She has always had some in her visible connection, who were unholy, and she will be subject to the evil influences of unworthy members, until she reaches her glorified state in heaven. Those even, who are real Christians, and come nearest to perfection, are still imperfect, and need the care and government of the church, to make greater advances in piety. The idea, therefore, that Christianity can exist without law; and that we can dispense with all authority and government in the church, is fallacious. It is inconsistent with all human experience, since the church was established in the world.

The apostle Paul, in his interview with the elders of the church of *Ephesus at Miletus*, refers to this subject, and requires them to exercise the ecclesiastical authority which they had received from the Holy Ghost, for the sustenance and edification of the church. “Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his blood.” Those ministers, or bishops, as they are called in the original language of the New Testament, did not derive their authority from an exclusive episcopal ordination, or any official

preeminence, conferred by the title of bishops or priests, as is sometimes contended for in our day. They received the pastoral office, and the authority connected with it, from Christ, through the Holy Spirit, and they could exercise it only so far as he had directed them. The inspired apostle also instructs the people, to obey their spiritual overseers, whom Christ had invested with authority for the government of his church. “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves.”— Hebrews 13:17.

Submission to Christ’s Authority

This principle of submission to Christ’s authority, as exercised by his servants, who had the care and government of his church in the days of the apostle, is the *basis* upon which all ecclesiastical authority must rest in our day. Christ has never authorized any of his servants to exercise an independent power in his church. The church has no right to exercise any authority which she did not directly derive from Christ, or irrespective of the rights of conscience. Men, as spiritual rulers in the church, are to execute the laws of Christ. They are not to make their own laws, establish their own rules, and carry out their own views and principles, however necessary and just they may seem. In all matters connected with ecclesiastical government and discipline, we are to follow the direction of Christ in his word. He has given us all the directions which are necessary on this subject. True, he has not entered into particulars. He has not furnished a connected and systematic form, containing specific rules for every case which may occur; but he has laid down fundamental and general principles, covering the whole ground of ecclesiastical government, suitable to all cases, and admitting of universal application through the church.

The Church Must Be Kept Separate And Distinct From the World

One of these principles is, *that the church, as a spiritual body, must be kept separate and distinct from the world.* The church is the body of Christ, which he has purchased with his blood, and purified by his spirit; that it may be kept unspotted from the world. It is the spiritual family of God,

which is to be distinguished from all worldly connections and associations, by a strict conformity to the spirit and precepts of the Gospel. This is the design of the church, and the character it should always maintain before the world. But it is to be lamented, that the church does not always sustain this high and holy character, and that among many of her members, there is such a disposition to conform to the world. Hence the apostle says: “Be ye not conformed to the world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may know what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” — Rom. 12:2. He reminds Christians of their high calling, and exhorts them to “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them.”— Eph. 5:11. Speaking of the corruptions prevailing among the children of this world, and the danger of Christians participating in them, he urges the disciples of Christ to “come out from among them, and be separate.” — 2 Cor. 6:17. And Christ himself, the founder of his church, and the great teacher sent from God to instruct us in the nature and design of his spiritual government on earth, has told us, “My kingdom is not of this world .”— John 18:36. He said also to his disciples, “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you .”— John 15:19.

These declarations of scripture show that the kingdom of Christ in this world, is designed to be holy and heavenly in its character, and can have no fellowship with the works of darkness. They establish the principle that, the church must be kept separate from the world; and this principle must be faithfully carried out by those who administer the government of the church. They are bound to watch over the purity of the church, and endeavor to guard it against the introduction of a worldly spirit. They are to manage its affairs according to the principles and spirit of the Gospel, and not stop to consult the views and feelings of worldly-minded men, when God commands them to go forward in the path of duty, which he has marked out for them.

Men, who in their hearts are strangers to true religion, and opposed to its real interests, are always ready to exercise a controlling influence over the church. In almost every religious community, there are some such men, who would carry the spirit of the world into religion. They have an idea, that the church cannot be sustained without bringing in this worldly influence. Let ministers and officers of churches beware of such an

influence. The men who would exert it, are often of high standing in community. Their property and rank in society give them the power of creating schisms, and raising disturbances which are not easily quelled. Let Christians beware how they throw themselves into the power of such men; for there is nothing that will so soon destroy a church, as such a worldly spirit and policy. God has separated his church from the world, and there can be no compromise between them; no communion between light and darkness; no fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness. This principle God has established in his word — and on this principle the government of the church must be administered, if she is to be preserved pure and unspotted from the world. Irreligious persons should have the compassion, and sympathy, and kind feeling of the church. They are entitled to her labors and sacrifices for their spiritual good; but under no circumstances should they be allowed to exert a controlling influence in her councils, or interfere with her government and discipline.

Unity and Harmony Must Be Preserved By Excluding Disorderly and Unworthy Members

Another principle which Christ has established in the scriptures for the government of his church is, *that her unity and harmony must be preserved, by excluding from her communion, disorderly and unworthy members.* A house divided against itself cannot stand. An association which is not bound together by congenial principles and harmonious action, must soon be broken up. So the church, which is an association, formed and established on the principles of the Gospel, must be united in those principles, or she cannot stand. Her unity is essential for her success and efficiency in the great work to which her energies are to be directed. Hence she is commanded by divine authority to withdraw herself from every brother that walks disorderly; to separate from her communion, such as propagate error, break their covenant engagements, create dissensions, or in any other way bring dishonor on the Christian profession. The apostle speaks of the church as *one* body in Christ, and members one of another. He exhorts them to “keep the *unity* of the spirit in the bonds of peace.” — Eph. 4:8; to “walk by

the same rule and mind the same thing.”— Phil. 3:16; and that this holy fellowship, which binds them together, may be preserved uncorrupted and unimpaired, he directs, “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to the doctrine of Christ, from such withdraw thyself.”—1 Tim. 6:3. “Mark them which cause divisions, and avoid them.” — Rom. 16:17 “I have written to you not to keep company with any man that is a brother, if he be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner — put away from yourselves that wicked person.”—1 Cor. 11:13.

These apostolic directions were given, to prevent the body of Christ from being rent asunder by unholy and refractory members. For this purpose Christ gave to his ministers the keys of the kingdom of heaven, of which he speaks in Matt. 16:19. They give authority to ecclesiastical rulers, and all religious bodies, to exclude from their communion, persons whose disorderly and wicked conduct have rendered them unworthy of Christian fellowship. This was the original design of the “power of the keys.” In this sense it was exercised by the first Christians, and is still retained in the church. Every church must determine for itself, when it is necessary to exercise such an authority; and when it does become necessary, Christians should proceed to acts of discipline with caution, moderation, and in the spirit of their Master. They should treat offenders with forbearance and charity. But when the honor and interests of religion are assailed, when they are suffering from the defection and wickedness of those who profess to be the friends of the Redeemer, and stand identified with his cause, the church has a duty to perform. She must wipe from her skirts the shame and reproach that have been brought upon her. She must wash her hands of the sin, of tolerating such iniquity. She must make an example for her own members, and before the world. And to shrink from her duty in such cases, or show any hesitation or fear, would be to prove faithless to the trust which her supreme Head has reposed in her. It would make her a participator in the sin lying at her door, and expose her to the judgments of the Almighty. When men are suffered to transgress the rules of Christian discipline, and trample on the order and authority of the church to which they belong, they become hardened in sin. One such disorderly member may spread his evil influence through a whole religious community. The whole camp of Israel was troubled by one such sinner. The judgments of God fell upon the entire congregation, for tolerating such an abuse, neither could that judgment be

removed, until the sin of *Achan* had been visited, and a public example made before the people.

There can be nothing more offensive in the sight of God, than the professed disciples of Christ wounding him in the house of his friends, and harboring and upholding his enemies, by the neglect of Christian discipline. The church must not suffer such a reproach to rest upon her. She must deal faithfully and promptly with every offender. Whatever may be his standing and influence, he must be brought to account, and if guilty, not screened from punishment. He may be professedly a moral man, and even assume the garb of holiness, in his endeavors to sow the seeds of disaffection and disunion in the church; this is no reason why he should be indulged in his wicked work. A factious and unruly spirit is often concealed under a sanctimonious covering, and it is sometimes difficult to tear away the veil, and expose the guilty offender. But it must be done; for such professed friends are more dangerous, and do more evil to ministers and churches, than the open enemies of religion. No church can exist in order, it cannot be kept in harmony, and live in peace, where such factious and troublesome spirits are at work. Disunion, corruption, and eventual dissolution, either in the church, or between the minister and his charge, must be the consequence. The church has the power of protecting herself against errorists, schismatics, and disturbers of her peace, and unless she faithfully exercises this power, which God has committed to her for her own preservation, she cannot expect to be sustained by his divine approbation and blessing.

The Church Must Maintain The Pure Doctrine of the Gospel

There is another important principle laid down in the scriptures, which the church should always keep in view in the exercise of the spiritual authority committed to her, and that is, *she must maintain the pure doctrine of the Gospel, and suffer no departure from those great fundamental truths which the scriptures reveal as essential to salvation.* One great design, and it may be said, perhaps, the chief purpose for which Christ established his church and ministry on earth, was, that he might make known to them the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and give them authority to teach and

maintain the truth. He has revealed the truth to his people in various ways, through successive generations, and made it their sacred duty to preserve it pure and uncorrupted. This duty was enjoined by our Savior on his apostles, when he commissioned them to go forth and teach all nations, to observe all things, whatsoever he had commanded them.— Matt. 28:20. The same duty is urged by the apostles on the ministers and churches who succeeded them in the work of preaching the Gospel through the world.”Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard.“—2 Tim 1:13.”Take heed unto thyself, and thy doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt save both thyself, and them that hear thee.“— 1 Tim. 4:16.”It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.“— Jude 3.”Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel.“— Phil. 1:27.”If any man preach any other Gospel than that ye have received, let him be accursed.“— Gal. 1:9.

Such is the language of the apostle in regard to the Christian duty of steadfastness in the truth.¹ And Christians would do well to give earnest heed to these apostolic injunctions; especially in this day, when the interests of truth, and sound doctrine, are so easily sacrificed to what is termed the progressive spirit of the age. This spirit is making wonderful progress. It is unsettling the fundamental doctrines, the pillars of the church, breaking down the ramparts of truth, demolishing the fences round the enclosure of the fold of Christ, and letting in the enemy like a flood. It is a spirit professing to have a very tender regard for the rights of conscience and freedom of opinion, and under this specious pretense it would drive out of the church all doctrinal standards and forms of government, which are indispensable for the preservation of the truth. Men who are opposed to the truth, are impatient of restraint. They wish to cast off the order and government with which Christ has invested his church; and *this* is the reason why they are so ready to fall in with the spirit of opposition to all ecclesiastical authority, and join in the clamor against confessions and creeds, which has of late become so popular.

When such a spirit prevails, Christians cannot be too often reminded of the established principles of church government and discipline, which the scriptures teach. The church is the pillar and ground of truth. She has a sacred trust committed to her, not only for herself, but for those who come after her. And she is bound to deliver to future generations, as well as hold

fast for herself, this sacred deposit of truth, pure and undefiled as she has received it from her divine Head. If the truth revealed in the scriptures is essential to salvation — if all men are to believe and practice it, it is right that the church should seek to preserve it in her standards, and forms of government. No one who has correct and enlightened views on this subject, will consider such an authority, when it is exercised within the limits which the scriptures prescribe, any *infringement* on Christian liberty; but rather regard it as a means of preventing that liberty from being *abused*. Take away this authority from the church, remove her confessions of faith, and her forms of government, and what security have we that we shall not be launched on the broad sea of error, to be driven about by every wind of doctrine, without a compass or a chart? Who would abandon the order and government which Christ has established in his church, and leap into the dark gulf of human expedients, where so many souls have been lost? What Christian who loves God, and regards the honor of religion, would venture on such an experiment?² Let the ministers and officers of the church, who are to instruct and govern it according to established principles, which they have solemnly promised to observe, beware how they are led away by the temptations of the times from those principles. Let them stand by the church, in the exercise of her legitimate authority for the maintenance of the truth, and God will bless them in their labors for the instruction and edification of the people.

Such are the purposes for which Christ instituted his church, and the principles he has established for her government. He has provided that his *spiritual kingdom shall be kept separate from the world*; that the *unity and harmony of his church should be preserved, by excluding unworthy members*, and that her authority should be exercised for the *maintenance of the pure doctrines of the Gospel, which are essential to salvation*. Let us now proceed to apply these general principles, laid down in the scriptures, for the observance of all ecclesiastical authorities, to the government and discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Applications To the Lutheran Church

The Lutheran church in this country, is organized upon the fundamental principle, that the church can exercise no authority but that which is derived

expressly from Jesus Christ, her supreme Head. Her ministers and officers are bound by the constitution, to carry out this principle, in all their ecclesiastical relations and proceedings. They have the power to rebuke, censure, and exclude from Christian fellowship, such as act disorderly, or refuse to submit to the government which Christ has instituted in the church; but in the exercise of this authority, they are to be careful not to exceed the limits to which Christ has restricted us in his word.

Our system of church government is wisely adapted to promote the unity, peace, and edification of the spiritual body of Christ; and if all our ministers and members had faithfully adhered to this system, we would not now have to deplore the divisions and disorders, which in some portions of our Zion, have had such an unhappy influence.³ Such evils, however, will arise under the best regulated systems. Our ministers are all equal in rank and authority, and there is no cause for jealousy or strife. Our lay members are admitted to our ecclesiastical councils; and in all matters relating to the general interests of the church, they are entitled to participate in our deliberations. Their rights are secured to them in the *church councils*, the *district synods*, and the *general synod*; all so constituted, that the people, though their representatives, can exercise with the ministers, that wholesome authority and influence, which are desirable to secure the order, the harmonious action, and full cooperation of the whole church.

The Church Council

The *Church Council*, consisting of the minister and officers of a particular church, are entrusted with the care and government of the congregation under their immediate supervision. They admit to the communion, all such persons as they may deem qualified for a public profession of religion. They also have the power of excluding those whose conduct is inconsistent with the Christian profession. It is their duty, first, to labor in the spirit of Christian kindness with offenders, to rebuke and admonish them, as circumstances may require; and when they find these measures ineffectual, to suspend, or finally cut them off from the church. This authority, however, they are to exercise under the supervision of the District Synod to which they are attached, and which, in cases of appeal, has the right to review and

pass judgment, or give advice on acts of discipline performed by church councils.⁴

The District Synods

The *District Synods*, composed of ordained ministers, licensed candidates, and lay representatives from the churches within their bounds, are authorized to transact all business relating to the general interests of the churches in their district, reserving to the ministers the exclusive right of examining, licensing, ordaining, and receiving into their connection ministers, according to the provisions of the constitution. In all synodical business, the lay representatives, who come as delegates from churches, are entitled to the same rights and privileges with the clerical members. They are to consult together on the interests of the churches whom they represent, and execute such measures as they may deem necessary to promote their prosperity. Ministers are amenable for their conduct, to the Synods with whom they stand connected, and members of churches have the right of appealing to these ecclesiastical bodies⁵ for redress of any grievances which they may suffer from the action of church councils. The District Synods are charged with the duty of preserving purity of doctrine, and an evangelical ministry in the churches under their care. They are to watch over the conduct of their members, and see that the rules of government and discipline prescribed in the Formula, are duly observed by all the ministers and congregations within their limits.⁶

The General Synod

The *General Synod* consists of clerical and lay representatives from the District Synods which are connected with it.⁷ This body acts as a general convention representing all the district Synods and churches, constituting a bond of union, for promoting the interests and prosperity of the whole church. It reviews the proceedings of the district Synods, and gives direction and advice in all cases of appeal from district Synods, ministers, or churches. It exercises a general supervision over all the churches that are represented in it, for preserving sound doctrine, and uniform order and

discipline among them. The principal duty of the General Synod is, to endeavor by advisory and conciliatory measures, to heal divisions, correct abuses, aid the cause of evangelical religion, and maintain the doctrines and worship of the church, according to the word of God and our ecclesiastical usages and standards.

Such is our ecclesiastical system. It is a well-ordered, compact system; consistent in all its parts, and efficient in its operation, if faithfully carried out. But as in all systems of government, efficiency and success depend much on the manner in which they are executed, so also the utility of this system can only be tested by practical application.

Without disparaging other forms of ecclesiastical government, we conscientiously believe that this system, when judiciously and faithfully administered, is adapted most effectually to carry out the ends and purposes of Christ's kingdom on earth. We hold, that it is *scriptural*; and on this ground, we claim for it the respect and observance of all our Synods and churches. It is a system fully recognizing that principle, which is regarded as fundamental in the church of Christ, that it must be kept *separate and distinct from the world*. "The true church of Christ is a spiritual body, consisting of members whose qualifications are spiritual, and who are associated for spiritual purposes." Such is the language of our Formula. It lays down a principle, which cannot be too deeply impressed on the minds of all, whose duty it is to administer the government and discipline of the church. We need an able and educated ministry. We want men of good understanding and sound judgment, for church officers. Such qualifications are indispensable; and no minister or church officer can expect to become permanently and extensively useful without them. But more than all this; we need spiritual men to rule and govern the church, from the lowest to the highest judicatory; men who are sound in the faith; deeply imbued with the spirit of piety; holy men, tried men, men of established religious characters, to be placed at the helm of government, and give a spiritual tone and character to our churches. Wealth is desirable in all churches, as a means of doing good. Money is needed in every congregation, to aid in its operations; but let them not be brought in to rule the church. When money rules the church, the Spirit of God can no longer dwell in it. He will be driven out, and the world come in and take possession. And whatever may be the standing of that church with the world — however numerous and respectable her membership, she is shorn of her strength, she is doomed to

languish and die, because her *vitality* is gone. The life and power of religion, by which alone she can be sustained, are lost; she has sold herself to the enemy, to accomplish her own degradation and ruin.

Churches sometimes seek to gain influence by admitting worldly and irreligious men into their councils. They try to make friends of the enemies of true religion, by courting their favor, and flattering their prejudices. It is even sometimes thought good policy to bring back wanderers and backsliders, by making them officers. We all know that such shameful abuses have been practiced. Such a course is not only dishonoring to religion, but it is the worst policy a church can pursue. It is folly to think of building up the cause of Christ, by a compromise with its enemies and the world. God will not bless a church which has forsaken the standard of Christ, and gone over to his enemies. It is only when the church is in her right position, when she stands on the ground of true, uncompromising spirituality, separate and distinct from the world, that God will own and bless her. He will then set his seal on the church, and mark it with his glorious presence and blessing; and whether its members be few or many, rich or poor, they will exert an influence which even the enemies of religion, with all their opposition and hatred, cannot withstand.

Another principle which Christ has established in his word, and which must be faithfully applied in the government and discipline of our church, is, that her *unity and harmony be preserved, by excluding unworthy and disorderly members.*

Our form of government is as favorable to Christian liberty as any one who regards the true interests of religion could desire. It makes every allowance for human imperfections, and differences of opinion among Christian brethren, which do not affect fundamental points; but on the great doctrines of our religion, which are essential to salvation, it requires unity of sentiment and action among the ministers and members of our churches; without which they cannot live in harmony together. It makes it the duty of church councils and Synods, to exercise discipline against all who are guilty of fundamental errors, or disturb the peace of the church by disorderly conduct; and no church can prosper without the exercise of such discipline, when circumstances render it necessary. "When persons have offended, and are willing to acknowledge their fault, and return to their duty in the church, they should be treated kindly and tenderly; but incorrigible offenders, who

set themselves up against the authority and rules of Christian discipline, must be cut off, lest they corrupt the whole church.

And if it be the duty of the church to exclude unworthy members, we ought to be very careful how we admit persons of doubtful character. Synods and church councils are often too easily prevailed upon to receive into their connection, applicants who are not sufficiently indoctrinated and established in the truth. They are usually admitted without much scrutiny, without that thorough examination, which is necessary to guard the church against the errors and abuses so prevalent in our day. In our ministerial sessions, we usually attend to the examination of candidates near the close, when we are anxious to expedite business, and pass over, in a hurried manner, this, and other subjects, which are most important, and require the greatest deliberation. How can we expect to preserve the order and purity of the church against the corruptions and desecration of the times, unless we are more careful? If we suffer our churches to be overrun with opinions and practices, borrowed from other denominations, unadapted to our condition, and at variance with our constitution and standards, we cannot expect to remain long a united and harmonious body. Such innovations cannot be introduced without producing divisions and contentions in the church.

It is not uncommon, under the practice lately introduced in some of our churches, for persons who profess to have received some religious impressions, to be confirmed without going to the communion; or to be called out from a promiscuous assembly, to make a public profession of religion, without previous instruction or examination. The church gains nothing by such hasty and indiscreet admissions, but lays herself open to difficulties and troubles which ought to be avoided. It seems to the writer, that we are cutting loose from the moorings which have held our ecclesiastical ship safe and sound for many years, and that we are fast driving on the rocks and quicksands, where our vessel is in danger of being stranded. The good old practice of preparing candidates for confirmation, by a regular course of preparatory instruction, was one of the best safeguards of the church, against the defection of unworthy members; and if we would avoid the frequent recurrence of this evil, we must return to this practice, which should never have been suffered to go into disuse.⁸ If we would preserve the church from the bad influences exerted by disaffected and disorderly members, we must go back to the old established order to which ministers and members religiously adhered. It was a part of their

religion to love the church; and that feeling of love and veneration for the church and her institutions, which was once manifested, and is now in a great measure lost, must be restored; that deep-toned religious sentiment, which binds to our origin, our history, our ecclesiastical standards, the faith and customs of our fathers, must be revived. The love of order, and reverence for religious ordinances and church regulations, which Lutherans once cherished, must again be awakened in our hearts, if we would be preserved from the evils and disorders which threaten our Zion.

The last general principle we shall notice in the application of this subject, is, that the government of the church must be faithfully administered, to *defend and maintain the true doctrines of the Gospel against the inroads and assaults of their enemies.*

We ought to be thankful that our lot is cast in a church which is founded on the truth. Our fathers laid this foundation deep and solid, in that revered system of doctrine which is contained in our standards; and we owe it to the truth, to adhere to that system, and resist every attempt to change, misrepresent, or bring it into disrepute.⁹ Let us not countenance that loose theology which, under the false notion of modern improvements, would *discard* our scriptural and orthodox confession of faith. Let us not suffer the rage for new things to deprive us of all that we deem precious and sacred in the doctrines and institutions of our evangelical church. In all our councils and deliberations for the prosperity of our Zion, let us labor that she may become more firmly established in the truth. Let not her interests be sacrificed or brought in jeopardy, for the sake of gratifying a morbid taste for the novelties of the age. Let us not try to build up her walls with untempered mortar, or burn incense unto the Lord in his holy temple, with unhallowed fire. Let all the ministers and members of our churches, with one accord, seek to carry out the principles which Christ has established and recommended for the government of his church. Let them watch over the interests of the churches committed to their care, and never think of promoting their prosperity by compromising any of those principles which are essential to true spiritual religion. We profess to be protestants, and to adhere to the principles of the Reformation, not with a bigoted and servile submission to human authority. We have not blindly adopted the faith of Luther, or that of any other man. We hold that it is the duty and privilege of all men, to exercise their judgment in matters of religion. We claim this right for ourselves, and are willing that it should be exercised by others; but

as protestants, we feel bound to maintain and defend those evangelical doctrines and principles, which the Reformers so nobly asserted and vindicated in our confession of faith. Let us remain true to that confession, and not abandon it for new expedients.¹⁰

Let us *study* it more closely, that we may become better acquainted with it, and feel more deeply the duty of preserving inviolate the great cardinal doctrines which it teaches.

I do not say that our standards and forms are perfect, but I do maintain that they are scriptural and evangelical. No other standards are more so. None comprise more of the doctrines and principles of the Bible, as taught and exemplified in the Reformation. None are better adapted to promote the order and edification of the church of Christ. I venerate the doctrines of our standards, because they are prominent and essential features in that faith which was once delivered to the saints. I love them, because they reveal to us the way of life; they show us the love and sacrifice of Christ; the preciousness of the believer's portion, and the foundation of his hope. I consider them identified with the interests, and necessary for the prosperity of every branch of the Redeemer's kingdom, and especially of our own. Then let us see to it, that these doctrines be preserved among us in their purity; and that our form of government and discipline be administered in conformity to them, and the principles which Christ has established and recommended to us in his word.

The ministers and members of the Lutheran church, at this particular crisis, have a high trust committed to their hands, and they labor under weighty responsibilities. From the divisions and dissensions which have distracted other denominations, the changes and revolutions which they have undergone, we have been mercifully preserved, until recently, when we have been threatened with similar indications. Attempts are making to introduce changes among us, which strike at the *foundation* of the present order and institutions of the church. We are in a transition state. What the issue of this state of things may be, is known only to him who, in his wise providence can overrule all things for the glory of his name, and the interests and prosperity of his church. If our beloved church is to be agitated by fierce contentions, if she is to be split into hostile parties, if she is to be stopped in her prosperous career, and all the fond hopes with which so many of her friends regard her future prospects, are to be blasted; a dreadful responsibility must rest somewhere. It cannot rest on those who stand on the

old orthodox platform. They have not been the aggressors, however severely they may have been censured. They have provoked no controversies. They have introduced no new platforms. They have held no secret consultations, to change our doctrinal basis, and undermine our whole ecclesiastical system. With the charges of ultra Lutheranism, Puseyism, and Romish errors and superstitions constantly ringing in their ears, they have acted only on the *defensive*. They have steadily adhered to their principles, and honestly and faithfully discharged their duty — a duty which they owe to themselves and the church — they love and venerate. They hold a position, for which posterity will honor them. When the agitation and excitement of the day shall have passed away, their fidelity to the truth will be remembered, and gratefully acknowledged by those who shall share in the results of their present labors.

Let the friends of our Zion ask God for wisdom and grace to direct in this important crisis. Let us “buy the truth and sell it not.” Let us hold fast the form of sound words, delivered unto us in the sacred scriptures, and the venerable standards, which the founders of our church transmitted to us, as a *sacred legacy* for those who shall come after us. When we are called to stand in the holy places of the sanctuary, or fill the responsible offices of professors and teachers in our Seminaries for the education of ministers, or occupy seats in our ecclesiastical councils, to exercise the government and discipline of God’s house, let us do it in the fear of God, and with a conscientious regard to the great interests of truth and righteousness. Let us remember that the Great Master Builder of his spiritual temple, has prescribed to us our work, given us his orders, laid down the rules, and furnished us with the materials for carrying on his work. Let us follow his directions, and never substitute our own wisdom for the wisdom and truth of God. Let us labor diligently, that the kingdom of God may be more fully established in our own hearts, that it may be built up in our churches, and throughout the world; and when our day of labor shall have ended, we shall be admitted to the full fruition of the joys of the church in heaven, where all our troubles and cares shall be swallowed up in praise.

-
1. There are too many in the church, who are continually crying peace, and seem willing to make any sacrifice to retain it. Peace certainly is

desirable, but the church should never think of purchasing it at the expense of truth. The duty of Christians is, first, to hold fast the truth, and seek peace afterwards. In the Christian warfare there are always some who are tempted by their fears to remain neutral, to halt between two opinions, scarcely knowing which side to join; or trying to reconcile differences, by surrendering their principles and convictions of duty. And this kind of neutrality, or rather compromising spirit, is by many considered an amiable and praiseworthy trait in the Christian character, while those who stand up in defense of the truth, unwilling to surrender it, are branded as ultraists and bigots, devoid of all Christian charity. It has almost become a reproach in our day, for a man to be so orthodox, or symbolical, as to be unwilling to change his views with every new improvement in religion or theology. If these new discoveries and improvements go on at the rate they have for some time past, it will not be long before the commands and exhortations of scripture, requiring Christians to remain steadfast and immovable, contending earnestly for the faith, will be out of date; the Bible become a dead letter; the church may dispense with all government and discipline, and let every man exercise his liberty of believing and doing what may seem right in his own eyes. We shall then have a practical demonstration of the beauties of the new system; and whoever will be unwilling to acknowledge its superiority to all the systems that have preceded it, must expect to be denounced as a bigoted opposer of the light, and an enemy to liberty. ←

2. Many of the Lutheran churches of Germany have been overrun with rationalism and infidelity; but not till after their ministers, under the influence of modern notions of liberty, began to dispense with the confessions and formularies introduced by the Reformation. It was this departure from the symbols of the Reformation, together with laxity of Christian discipline, that opened the door for the flood of error and corruption, which subsequently spread through the churches. Hence, when the friends of evangelical religion made an effort to bring the churches back from their apostasy, and reestablish them in the principles of the Reformation, they found it necessary to return to the old standards. This was done at a late ecclesiastical convention (Kirchen-Tag) in which most of the German protestant churches were represented. The Augsburg Confession was reaffirmed, and adopted as

- the symbol of the Reformation, embracing the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel, in which all evangelical Christians can unite.↵
3. In the year 1837, a number of ministers and members belonging to our churches in the State of New York, became disaffected, withdrew from the Hartwick Synod, and formed themselves into a separate body. They renounced the Augsburg Confession, published a new Declaration of Faith, and organized under a constitution, requiring *new tests* of admission into their association, and abolishing *old established* rules of church government, under which they had been ordained and received into the church. This secession produced a division in the churches, which led to controversies between ministers, congregations, and members of churches, that had to be settled by the courts, after a long course of litigation. The churches where these difficulties occurred, have not yet recovered from their disastrous effects. Though much of the bitter feeling, which once existed, has passed away, we can still trace the unhappy influence of this division in the feeble and crippled state of the churches it has torn asunder.↵
 4. “The church council consists of the pastor, elders and deacons of a particular church. It shall be the duty of the council to administer the discipline of the church. To this end, they shall have power to cite any of their church members to appear before them, and to endeavor to obtain other witnesses, when the case may require it. It shall be their duty, when any member offends, first privately to admonish him, or, if necessary, to call him to an account; and when they shall deem these measures ineffectual, to suspend or excommunicate him. It shall also be their duty to restore those subjects of suspension, or excommunication, to all the privileges of the church, who shall manifest sincere repentance.” — *Form. Gov. and Dis. Ec. Luth. Church. Chap. 4.*↵
 5. “Any member being dissatisfied with, the decision of the church council, relative to himself, may appeal to the Synod. In every such case, the applicant shall give notice to the church council of his intention, and shall specify to them the reasons of his dissatisfaction, and the grounds of his appeal. — *Chap. 5.* In cases of appeal, the council shall take no further measures grounded on their decision, until the sentence has been reviewed by the Synod, and send a detailed and correct account of their proceedings in the case.” — *Chap. 4.*↵

6. “It shall be the duty of each Synod to see that the rules of government and discipline, prescribed in this formula, are observed by all the congregations and ministers within its bounds; to receive appeals from decisions of church councils, and special conferences, when properly brought before them, and review, reverse, or confirm said decisions; to examine and decide on all charges against ministers and licentiates, that of heterodoxy alone excepted (which belongs to the Ministerium); to form and change ministerial districts, and attend to any other business relative to their churches, regularly brought before them.” — *Chap. 8.*↵

7. The General Synod consists of deputies from the several Synods, who have joined themselves thereunto, and have been duly acknowledged as members. All regularly constituted Lutheran Synods, holding the fundamental doctrines of the Bible, as taught in our church, may at any time become associated with it, by adopting the constitution, and sending delegates according to the ratio prescribed.

“The General Synod may give their opinion and advice, when complaints shall be brought before them by Synods, Ministeriums, Congregations or individual ministers, concerning doctrine or discipline.

“The General Synod shall apply all their powers, their prayers, and means, towards the prevention of schisms, carefully regard all the circumstances of the times, in order that the blessed opportunities to promote concord and unity, and the interests of the Redeemer’s kingdom, may not pass by neglected and unavailing .” — *Constitution Gen. Synod, Art. 2—3.*↵

8. In our church, it is considered the official duty of every minister to give *catechetical instruction* to the youth of his congregation, with a view of preparing them for the communion of the church: and this duty we consider so necessary and indispensable, that it should never be neglected where it can be performed. We are aware that some denominations of Christians differ from us in their views on this subject. We know that there are pious and well disposed people, who have adopted a course in the religious education of youth, different from that which we pursue in our church. We know too, that there are some, who consider it the minister’s duty to receive converts into the church, without previous instruction. If they have only experienced

what *they* call religion, if their minds have been excited by strong emotions and feelings, no matter how ignorant and inexperienced in the *first principles* of Christianity, they consider themselves entitled to church membership. They claim the right of being admitted; and this claim is often sanctioned by ministers, who are too ready to abandon old established principles of order in the church, and fall upon new experiments, which are attended with danger and difficulty. Instances may occur, especially in seasons of revival, when it is proper to receive converts into the church, who have not had much previous instruction. Ministers must exercise their judgment and discretion in this matter; but they should never dispense with catechetical instruction, when it can be given. — *Luth. Mag.*, 1830.↵

9. A pamphlet has lately appeared among us, entitled, “*Definite Platform, doctrinal and disciplinarian, for Lutheran District Synods,*” purporting to give the views of a number of our ministers, who “desire a more specific expression of the General Synod’s doctrinal basis.” It has been circulated through the church, with a view to its adoption by the churches connected with the General Synod, instead of the present basis of that body. It is indeed strange, that an overture on a subject of so much importance as *changing our doctrinal basis*, and introducing a *new standard* into the church, should come to us without any names, or ecclesiastical authority, to recommend it. When changes are proposed “doctrinal and disciplinarian,” affecting the interests of the whole church, they are generally recommended by synods or conventions, who are duly authorized so to do; but here is a project, got up by a few individuals in secret conclave, and then thrown out upon the church like a torpedo, to make an explosion, without any one being willing to assume the responsibility. Perhaps it was deemed the wisest course by those who were engaged in the plot; but it looked suspicious on the very face of the platform. It showed that its projectors lacked confidence in the undertaking, and it was regarded by many, perhaps most of the readers of the pamphlet, as *prima facie* evidence that there was something wrong in it. This platform professes to be a review of the Augsburg Confession, to adapt it to the circumstances of the times, and make it more acceptable to the churches; but it looks more like a labored attempt to stigmatize it, and make it odious. It does not treat the subject fairly. It takes isolated passages, separates them from their

connection, and puts constructions on them, which are not warranted by the general sense; and by this *dissecting* and *mutilating process*, it presents us with a *caricature* to bring that honored and sacred instrument, which has been so long regarded with veneration, into disrepute and contempt. The attempt, however, if such has been the design, has failed, and may teach a useful lesson to others, who in future might be disposed to engage in similar attempts to break down the hedges which the wisdom and piety of our fathers have placed round our evangelical Zion. ←

10. Ministers sometimes involve themselves in difficulties, by attempting to introduce new expedients, in the place of established standards, which have been long used and approved in the church. To illustrate this, I will relate the following incident, which occurred not long since, in one of our churches: An honest, conscientious old elder, well instructed in the doctrines of the Lutheran church, and cherishing a high regard for the Augsburg Confession, was one day told by his minister, that he was going to introduce a new *Platform*, which would do away the necessity of adhering any longer to the Augsburg Confession. The elder asked him to explain the new platform, and show wherein it was so much better than their old confession of faith, which it was to supersede. "I cannot now enter into the subject as fully as I wish," said the minister; "but if you will come to my house on the day before our next communion, I think I shall be able to convince you that we need something different from the Augsburg Confession, and that the proposed change will remove the difficulties under which we have hitherto labored."

On the day appointed, the elder repaired to the house of his minister, who labored hard to persuade him that the Augsburg Confession was an old relic, that had grown out of date, and that in this enlightened age, and advanced state of theological science, we needed something more adapted to the spirit of the times, to keep pace with the improvements that were going on all around us. The elder listened attentively to all this, and then asked, "What *is* this new platform you are speaking of, and how will it *work* in our congregation?"

"O," replied the minister, "it points out all the errors of the Augsburg Confession, and it will have a good effect in relieving us

from the imputation of holding to those errors. Besides, it will show us what parts of the confession we reject, and what we believe.”

“I consider the Augsburg Confession,” said the elder, “correct in all fundamental points of doctrine. I always regarded it as *scriptural* and *evangelical*. Under this impression I was received into the church. I believe so still. Such is the belief of the body of our church. You were called to be our pastor with this belief, and if you are going to introduce a new platform, and throw away the Augsburg Confession, I must frankly tell you, though it grieves me to say so, that you had better throw up your call, and leave us.”

“I did not know,” said the minister, “that you were such a strong old Lutheran. I am sorry now, that I said anything to you about the matter. But let us leave it where it is, and prepare to go to the communion tomorrow without having our minds disturbed by it; for on the day of Judgment, it will not be asked of us whether we have stood on the *old* or *new* platform.”↵

Copyright Notice

This book was published 2019 by The Lutheran Library Publishing Ministry LutheranLibrary.org. Some (hopefully unobtrusive) updates to spelling, punctuation, and paragraph divisions have been made. Unabridged.

Originally published 1856 in the *Evangelical Review*, Vol. 8.

This LutheranLibrary.org book is released under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license, which means you may freely use, share, copy, or translate it as long as you provide attribution to LutheranLibrary.org, and place on it no further restrictions.

The text and artwork within are believed to be in the U.S. public domain.

s72 – v5

ISBN: TBD

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)

More Than 100 Good Christian Books For You To Download And Enjoy

The Book of Concord. Edited by Henry Eyster Jacobs and Charles Krauth.

Henry Eyster Jacobs. *Summary of the Christian Faith*

Theodore Schmauk. *The Confessional Principle and The Confessions of The Lutheran Church As Embodying The Evangelical Confession of The Christian Church*

George Gerberding. *Life and Letters of William Passavant*

Joseph Stump. *Life of Philip Melancthon*

John Morris. *Life Reminiscences of An Old Lutheran Minister*

Matthias Loy. *The Doctrine of Justification*

Matthias Loy. *The Story of My Life*

William Dau. *Luther Examined and Reexamined*

Simon Peter Long. *The Great Gospel*

George Schodde *et al.* *Walther and the Predestination Controversy. The Error of Modern Missouri*

John Sander. *Devotional Readings from Luther's Works*

A full catalog of all 100+ downloadable titles is available at LutheranLibrary.org .

About Rev. George A. Lintner, D.D.

"GEORGE AMES LINTNER was born in Minden, Montgomery Co., N. Y., February 15, 1796. His parents were Albert and Elizabeth (Westerman) Lintner, both of whom were of German descent, and among the earliest settlers near the Mohawk River. At ten years of age, George was sent to a school near the village of Cooperstown, and after his return home, in about a year, he remained in his father's family, working on the farm until the fall of 1818. He was then placed in grammar school at Schenectady, under the tuition of the Rev. John S. Mahon, where he remained until the fall of 1815, when he entered the sophomore class in Union College, and graduated in July, 1817. While there he took high rank, and at the Commencement one of the highest honors was assigned to him. During his college course he also devoted some time to the study of theology under the instruction of the Rev. Peter W. Domeier, a man of profound learning and of great eloquence, but whose later life was sullied by irregular habits, and the sun of whose mortal day went down under a dark cloud, thus differing — oh, how widely! — from his honored pupil. He continued his studies in theology with this divine until September, 1818, when he was licensed to preach by the Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of the State of New York. After he was licensed, he preached occasionally in the village of Little Falls and other places, until he was called, in January, 1819, to the pastoral charge of the Evangelical Lutheran churches of Schoharie and Cobleskill.

"On the 3rd of March, 1849, he was married to Maria Waggoner, removed to Schoharie two months later, and was then ordained and installed as pastor of the Lutheran church, to which he had been called, at a special meeting of the New York Ministerium, his ordination and installation taking place on the 16th of June, 1819. Here, in the midst of families whose names had been long and honorably known throughout that region of country, he commenced a long and prosperous pastorate, during which he enjoyed the

unbounded respect of all who knew him, and exerted an influence over a widely-spread community, in his own and the adjacent counties, such as has been accorded to few ministers of the gospel in modern times.

"His wife died Oct. 27, 1830, leaving him two children, a son distinguished as a naturalist, and a daughter, the accomplished wife of the Hon. P. S. Danforth, of Middleburg. He was married again May 30, 1832, to Mary Eliza Campbell; of this second union there has been no issue.

"In September, 1835, the degree of D.D. was conferred upon Mr. Lintner by Pennsylvania College. He soon occupied, in various ways, a very prominent position in the Church. During four years he edited, with decided ability, the *Lutheran Magazine*, a religious monthly. In the palmy days of the General Synod, the high estimation in which he was held, and the confidence which his brethren reposed in him, were made manifest by their electing him thrice, in 1841-2-3, to the presidency of that body, the duties of which office he discharged with great dignity, efficiency and acceptance.

"On the first of May, 1849, he resigned the pastorate of the church at Schoharie, and now devoted himself to the work of preparing a liturgy for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in this country, which was published by order of the General Synod. Besides several other minor productions, he published, in 1853, the memoirs of the Rev. Walter Gunn, who had been a member of Dr. Lintner's church, and one of the fruits of his ministry, and was the first foreign missionary sent out by the Foreign Missionary Society of the Lutheran Church in the United States.

"He was possessed of sound, solid learning, and when the active duties of his sacred calling permitted, he spent much time in his study, not among, but with his books, of which he knew how to make good use, as sundry published productions of his pen serve to show. In the discharge of his pastoral duties he was indefatigable, and the affectionate fidelity with which these duties were performed is vouched for by the warm personal attachment entertained for him by his parishioners. His preaching was decidedly textual, clear, convincing, persuasive; while never disfigured with the tawdry tissues of a gorgeous and vapid rhetoric, but never, in his faithful and earnest deliverances from the pulpit, despised the more modest graces of sacred eloquence. But, as a general thing, his pulpit performances created at once the impression that the preacher was most solemnly in earnest in his efforts to win souls to Christ, and it cannot be doubted that many such were given him for his hire.

"Dr. Lintner was a Lutheran who loved the great Confession of his Church, and in various ways contended 'for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.' Some of his published writings prove that he had none of that *mixtum compositum* in which it is difficult to discover where diluted Lutheranism ends and undiluted Methodism or Puritanism begins; in his confessional status he entertained none of that insipid mixture of milk and water which defies the acutest palate to discover whether it is dealing with milk, or with water, or with neither. He was not a feeble, undecided, negative character; he was a strong and a positive man; a man who readily and clearly discerned the truth, and then adhered to it and stood up for it; not a halting rationalist; not a man of religious opinions which are as liable to change as an April sky; but a man fully 'persuaded in his own mind;' a man of firm, decided, and solid religious convictions, which he boldly avowed on all suitable occasions, and which afforded him a safe vantage-ground amid the bickerings that often disturbed the repose of the Church, and clothed him in impenetrable mail amidst the religious conflicts that harass and trouble the present age.

"He was ever active in the work of the ministry, preaching regularly at divers places not connected with his parish, and by thus doing the work of an evangelist, laboring in season and out of season, he organized, while he was pastor at Schoharie, three new churches, one at Summit, one at Middleburg, and one at Central Bridge. Besides preaching the gospel, he labored constantly and earnestly in promoting temperance and sound morals wherever he could make his influence felt. After he had resigned his pastorate, in 1849, his active habits of mind and body and his zeal for the good of mankind forbade his resigning himself to a life of rest and ease; he accepted, at once, the appointment of agent for the Foreign Missionary Society of the Lutheran Church, and spent three years in visiting Lutheran churches in New York and New Jersey, presenting the claims of the Society, and collecting funds to aid in carrying on its operations. He was thus greatly instrumental in giving a new impulse to the cause of missions among us, awakening everywhere a deeper, livelier, and more liberal interest in that great cause. While carrying on this work he also preached to the Germans, who had formed settlements in that part of the state where he dwelt. And when he had been relieved of the laborious duties of his agency for the Foreign Missionary Society, he devoted himself at once, with his accustomed energy and zeal, to the greatest cause of all, the circulation of

the sacred scriptures, and was unceasingly active in supplying Schoharie county with the Bible — establishing societies auxiliary to the American Bible Society, continuing untiring in this work, in the prosecution of which he visited the towns and villages to address large audiences on this important subject, nearly to the close of his life. In acknowledgment of his valuable services in the Bible cause, the parent society presented to him a copy of their most expensive and beautiful Bible.

"This ceaseless activity, this noble life, terminated on the 21st day of December, 1871. At his funeral the Rev. Mr. Heck preached an eloquent, feeling, and peculiarly appropriate discourse. Eight clergymen, assisted by a venerable neighbor and life-long friend, officiated as pall-bearers; and at twilight on Christmas eve, the body of the good man was borne from the church in which he had for more than fifty years preached Christ and him crucified, to the beautiful cemetery on the hillside, during singing of a hymn by the throng of clergymen, surrounded by the graves of those who had gone before him, and to whom he had been a faithful pastor and beloved friend.

H. F. SCHMIDT, D. D.

From Jens Jensson. *American Lutheran Biographies*, 1890.