

Translated by Wade R. Johnston

A Sermon by Adolf Hoenecke On Reformation Day

Hebrews 13:7,8

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

We celebrate the festival of the Reformation, as is indeed to well-known to you fellow Lutherans, in memory of the commencing work of the Reformation, that is the cleansing of the Church from corruption, which had been introduced in it by the Antichrist, the papacy.

We celebrate this festival with heartfelt and joyful thanks to God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord and King of the Christian Church, for the Reformation is His work. The Lord Jesus Christ has revealed Himself as the same yesterday, today, and forever, who is always the same in love for His Church and in care for its preservation in faithfulness to His promise that the gates of hell should not prevail over His congregation, to overcome the devil and his antichristian horde with power and might, and to liberate His Church.

However, lets us not all the same forget the man through whom the Lord of the church, the most praised Savior Jesus Christ, the Lord of Hosts, has delivered the Church from the papist corruptions. We today consider cheerfully and commend with thankful hearts our dear Dr. Luther, the true and right Reformer by the grace of God. Indeed, the Calvinists and Sectarrians certainly say concerning us that it is not Christian to ever praise a man. However, that does not make us errorists, for here belongs what the Word of God says to us: "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith (Heb. 13:7). Thus it is entirely Christian and God-pleasing if we today at this festival of the

Reformation hold up our dear father Luther in thankful honor. We must only act according to the instruction of our appointed text and that should occur under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

And that is:

What we commend to the honorable memory of Dr. Martin Luther today on the festival of the Reformation:

1. That he has spoken the Word of God to us.
2. That he remained constant in faith in the Word.
3. That he has always only sought the honor of his Savior through the Word.

I.

That he spoke the Word of God to us.

This blessed remembrance we raise up for him with words of praise and are completely right in doing so. Truly he has spoken the Word of God to us. We speak the most magnificent praise of all on account of the fact that he abandoned himself and in return taught us the beloved Bible, the entire Holy Scriptures. Who at that time knew anything about the Scriptures, about the Word of God, under the papacy? The Bible was forgotten, buried away, concealed, oppressed with all possible force by the Antichrist. Who also could have imagined that the Bible, the dear Word of God, should emerge and again be given to Christendom, yes also to come among the people and be spoken to the people as never before! Now, consider the gracious, merciful God whom the dear Luther himself praises when he says: “Since now the foolish liar also has forced his way in and brought all Scripture to shame, God could no more suffer it and brought me, without any counsel and ideas of my own, into the match, that I should draft some words over the abyss to the devil and exhibit anew the right faith.”

God indeed did not only want a few words from the Bible returned to Christian folk, but the whole of Scripture, and for this reason He again brought Luther also into the fray, without

any of his own counsel or ideas, to undertake this most salutary work. For as Luther went home from Worms in the year 1521, after being placed under the ban and condemnation of the pope and emperor, considering nothing else regarding himself than to return to Wittenberg and there to further contend against the pope and devil, he was, according to the plan of God, brought to the Wartburg under the orders of the Elector of Saxony. And here God not only protected him from the claws of the Antichrist, but also brought him to the most precious and most salutary work of the entire reformation, namely, that Luther began to translate the Bible into German and thus return the Bible, the Word of God, to the German people and, with that, to all Christian folk. While still at the Wartburg, he completed the New Testament, and already in the fall of 1522 it appeared in print. In the year 1534, the first German Bible appeared. Now the dear Word of God itself once again spoke to Christians through Luther's translation, and, indeed, the same as it spoke in the original Hebrew and Greek words inspired by the Holy Spirit. For in regard to these languages Luther's translation is most magnificently well done. It faithfully preserves the original inspired words and in return provides apt, correct, and careful German words, so that one cannot marvel enough at it. We rightly praise that. Indeed, still after 350 years the entire world, whoever has a knowledge of the matter, praises it. That is at once the most splendid of all the ways in which Luther has spoken the Word of God to us, that he himself has given the dear Bible to all people through his translation.

However, we ought not forget the other true and splendid ways in which he has spoken the Word of God to us, namely, he has so wonderfully explained to us what the Word of God itself says. For Luther preached nothing other than the pure and unadulterated old teachings of the divine Word. That we praise confidently against all lies that others speak to the contrary. They have also opened their lying mouths to say that Luther began to teach what originated in himself. Luther himself once said that he relied upon the old teachers, as they all agreed with

him: “Therefore, I do not say that I also submit to simpletons who are of the opinion that Luther wants to make all things new.”¹ That was and is now the lie of the Antichrist: “Luther has preached a new doctrine.” Yes, it is still a lie and what Luther said is true: “It is not my teaching. It is not out of my hand. Rather, it is the gift of God and not sinful man.” “Yes,” he said, “one says that Luther wants to make a new thing, however he really does nothing other than bring the people back to the Scriptures.” Yes indeed, Scripture and only Scripture it stands written—that Luther applies to every interpretation. He does not interpret any passage of Scripture out of its context—that he damns with hard words—but always interprets it through other passages of Scripture. For that reason, his teaching is so pure. Wheat without chaff, God’s thoughts without man’s thoughts. For that reason also it is so pure. Who since apostolic times has taught so appropriately how to divide law and Gospel, how to divide the Word of God itself! Whoever, therefore, today learns this correctly and well has truly learned his best from Luther. Whoever is in this chief area of preaching will help the people towards salvation and is certainly a good pupil of the old master Luther.

We also praise Luther’s interpretation because he so clearly and painstakingly interpreted and spoke the word. He said once: *One must handle the Bible with great reflection, reverent fear, with prayer, and under Anfechtung, if one wants to penetrate deeply into its sense.* In this way, then, he dealt with the Bible and that has born precious fruit for all the world in his interpretation. For it is certain that Luther’s skill in Bible interpretation is unique, even to this day. In dealing with a law passage, he knew how to pierce a soul and fill it with screams before the thunderbolts of the wrath of God. However, he also knew how to bring forth the sweet comfort of an evangelical passage, so that one’s entire heart became full and certain of the saving grace of God.

¹ “*Das sage ich nicht darum, dass ich auch den Einfaltigen willfahre, die da meinen, Luther wolle all Dinge neu mache.*”

And what an abundance of splendid interpretation has been done by him! And so thorough-going, that is, he always goes right to the heart and core of the matter and lays it bare. If the dear Luther often teaches with many words about one thing, still it is not generally in the same way as in the present day. The present time writes many thick books, but it is as if a thing is enveloped in five hundred pieces of stale newspaper. Their speech in the thick book is nothing other than the unwinding of worthless paper, with perhaps some entirely minute thing emerging from it all. However, the beloved Luther, wherever he speaks copiously, does nothing other than bring the heart and core of the word in pure, small pieces, for each little piece is the heart and core, and each is also sweet, savory, and truthful for the Christian man. However, Luther also oftentimes just as skillfully employs few words, very few words, and yet comes to foundation of the dear Word of God, interpreting it thoroughly.

And yet on account of yet another thing I say that Luther is excellent as an interpreter of the dear Word of God, namely, he has so comprehensively taught the Word. He said once in a writing against the Calvinists: “For we want, in short, to have every article of Christian doctrine entirely pure and for certain, whether great or small (although none is small or trifling in our eyes), and in so doing not to let go of a tittle.” He also gives the proper reason for this: “And that must also be because the doctrine is our only light which enlightens, leads, and shows us the way to heaven.”

That is certainly true, but is it not also a lot to undertake to have each article for certain and clearly? To be sure it is a lot, but by the gift of God it is not too much for dear Luther, Certainly, he has laid out the entire teaching of Scripture in his works. In his eulogy at the death of Luther, Melanchthon said: *One should preserve the books of Luther with diligence for one will still need his testimony frequently.* He wants to say: “If we at some time later will be in need of counsel in a doctrine, so we will safely find it in the writings of Dr. Luther, who has expounded

every doctrine from Scripture. And that is true! That is enough, that we extol Luther with words of praise and commendation in this blessed remembrance, since he was a teacher who spoke the true Word of God to us. Should he not also perhaps be extolled in another way? Of course!

This blessed remembrance may also be raised to Luther through our diligent listening, for the diligent hearer of the dear Word of God and of preaching from it is genuinely called the faithful and blessed servant of God, lifting up the blessed memory of the dear Luther. Such diligent hearers, especially of public preaching, can surely demonstrate that the people still regard highly and as valuable what Luther accomplished by the grace and power and working of God, namely, to speak the Word of God to us by the precious translation of the Bible and the magnificent interpretation of it. Yes, if Lutheran Christians issue a lot of praise with words, but in deed fail to diligently employ the now restored, beloved Word of God, they allow others to ask: Do those who hold Luther in honor bear in mind the right honor of the dear man Luther? They are, as one can see with their own eyes, not the true children of the blessed Luther, who himself held the Word of God so high, both the reading and diligent hearing of it. Luther said: *Whoever can weigh every word of a single expression of the Gospel and perceive how great a treasure lies therein will in return esteem all the kingdoms of the world as genuine, plain rubbish.* He says: *If we now also understand the Word of Christ, as one who reads and hears it from a distance, yet, since it should be understood completely and thoroughly, one can and indeed must always learn it further, especially learning more from it and deeper.* And: *In truth, you cannot read in the Scriptures too much, and what you read, you cannot read too well, and what you read well, you cannot understand too well.* It is not right, dear Lutheran brothers and sisters, it is certain that one cannot rightly say about Lutherans who are lazy and idle in regard to the hearing of preaching: “See they are people you bear the memory of Luther in their hearts.”

In the old fatherland many splendid memorials to Luther stand, however the churches are only too often mournfully empty. The statues of marble and bronze say: “A man named Luther has once lived.” The empty churches say: “One knows nothing about a man such as Luther.” Brothers and sisters, let each of us every Sunday be a walking, living monument to the honor of Luther through the faithful hearing of preaching. Let us fill our dear church to the last pew. Many Lutheran churches are precious memorials to the blessed memory of Luther. It is so among us, so let it not only remain that way, but always become better. Have no doubt, in that way we at the same time bear witness to God correctly and give him pleasing thanks. It has been properly proven by our dear father Luther, who himself hung on to the Holy Scriptures with such great diligence and the greatest of all reverence and humility, that whoever remain in the words of Jesus, that same one the words of Jesus and the truth sets free, since that one does not pay attention to earthly power and force, nor allow himself to be led and guided astray in any way. And that is what we today commend to others about Dr. Luther.

II.

That he remained constant in faith in the Word.

The blessed remembrance correctly sets our view of Luther upon his faithfulness to the faith. Indeed, he has shown faithfulness to the faith—faithful, believing adherence to the Word of God. The true man of God experiences many *Anfechtungen*, in which the devil works on him so that he should relax concerning the Word of God. Much damage could well have been avoided for the Lutheran Church and much benefit could have been bestowed upon the same, if one would have relaxed something from the Word of God. However, although many times the assistants of Luther wavered and became dejected and spoke of yielding, the faithful Luther stood fast. His heart was so firmly rooted through faith in the Word that he allowed no room for yielding or relaxing in respect to it, and also left no space for anxiety or hesitation. *Let befall us*

whatever will, it was said by him, *Let whatever advantage there may be escape us, it does nothing*. The Word must remain. And if that remains, then we have enough. The Word must preserve us and will also truly do it. The beloved Luther once detailed a little about the *Anfechtung* that he had to endure against his preaching of the pure Word of God, and indeed he detailed them thus, that he shows how they always were more serious. He says: *I hold that I (will the past keep silent) have suffered more than 20 heavy storm winds and mobs, which the devil has blown*. However, Luther did not let himself be torn from the Word. He did not allow himself be terrified by the furious enmity of the Antichrist nor enticed by the cunning propositions of the same.

That was the first enemy which the devil brought upon the path: the Antichrist, the papacy. As Luther said in the above mentioned place: *First, the papacy has contended against me*. The pope sought with all force to terrify Luther with banishment and exile and aroused all the force of the emperor against him. Scarcely did Luther fear and he did not yield concerning the Word. The Word of God alone at that time had Luther entirely in its power and there was no talk of yielding, none of fear. Already in the beginning, when Cardinal Cajetan demanded an answer from him as to where he wanted to remain, since surely no prince would intercede for him and his case, Luther answered in humble faith: *Under heaven!* Although he perhaps would have to stand alone with the Word, that did not make him yield. No threats succeeded later either. He said once: *Your ranting and raving should help nothing, but indeed the more you rant and rave, the more proudly we want to oppose you with the help of God and despise your disfavor*. Another time he spoke out: *You will not quash the Word of God, but it will crush you.*”

A more dangerous weapon of evil than force is often the glistening of all kinds of advantages in connection with enticements. The devil and the pope often attempt to employ this tool. Already in 1518, one attempted to make him yield with beautiful promises and to stir him to

recantation of the teaching of the divine Word. He said of himself: *I knew that I would be the most accepted and the dearest of all men if I spoke this one word: revoco=I recant. However, he said, I do not want to become a heretic through opposition to the view by which I had become a Christian in the first place, and thus betray my beloved faith.* Against all enticement, he spoke: *Sooner I would die, be banished, be expelled, and cursed.* Particularly at the time of the imperial diet at Augsburg, it was the *politik* of the devil and of the Antichrist to bring the Evangelicals, that is, the Lutherans, back through overtures concerning advantages, in order that one might not hold so strongly to the Word, but rather allow them to compromise. Many there were apprehensive and pliable. To one such anxious man, Luther wrote: *I have considered the situation and entrusted it to God. I have kept it in my hand so delicately in so far as Christ and I remain one. Therefore let your heart be glad; we want to yield nothing contrary to the Gospel.* And to Melancthon, who had become too yielding and inclined to compromise, Luther wrote: *You should have sufficiently, clearly seen from experience that Christ and Belial can in now way be united, and that it is not permitted to consider any union so far as the religion is concerned. What the friendly citation (that is, the invitation of the papists) has advised, we indeed see well. However, I truly will not yield even a hair's breadth of my person.* Luther neither allowed himself to be frightened by the threat of the Antichrist nor by the deceptive friendliness of the same, but faithfully stood fast by the Word in faith.

And so we may further offer praise concerning his faithfulness to the faith: he was not dissuaded by the abuse of the beloved Gospel perpetrated by the false friends who anew disrupted the course of the Word. These people, who shamefully abused the Gospel, clearly brought Luther as much *Anfechtung* as the pope. He himself said in that place indicated earlier, where he described his *Anfechtung*: *When I had nearly rid myself of fear (namely of the papacy), the devil brought me another opening in Muenzer and his rebellion, through which he almost*

blew the light out for me. When, however, Christ had almost stopped that hole, the devil plucked another plate from the window in Carlstadt, who raged and howled so that I thought he wanted to lead one and all astray. When Muenzer, who especially was led astray through Carlstadt's wild enthusiasm [Schaermerei], began his mischief as the horrible Peasant's Revolt raged with murder and brutality throughout the land, he said that the Reformation should be made serious with the genuine freedom of the Gospel, and when Carlstadt under the pretence of accomplishing this true Reformation and purification of the Church, he introduced atrocious disorder, iconoclasm, mobs, and division into the fray, it was said on all sides: "Do you see now that the new teaching of Luther is good for nothing! Murder and rebellion and most terrible disorder is its fruit. See there the freedom of Christian men through faith which Luther preaches."

Luther says about the *Anfechtung* resulting from Carlstadt's vile activities: *My enemies have not overwhelmed me up to now as I am now overwhelmed through our own—even by Carlstadt. Here I will, thought the devil, seize the heart of Luther and make his firm spirit feeble. And: The devil has set about that because he wants to disgrace the Word that is now taking root. Yes, the Anfechtung clung to Luther: You are not allowed to preach so freely, so much, or so frankly any more about the freedom of a Christian through faith. You must hold something back. However, Luther was far from this Anfechtung in faith. He says: And when Satan tries this ever more highly and more wickedly, he should no sooner be able in so doing to make us weary than he should be able to seize such a one and thereby tear Christ down from the right hand. Thus he persevered in true faith in the Word and, although one profaned the deep wealth of the Word like this, Luther still did not stop laying it out for all the world to see.*

And in his faithfulness to the faith he also did not allow himself to be turned away from the pure Word of God, neither by bitter threats nor by the good friendship offered by the spirit of

enthusiasm [Geistschwaermer], especially the Zwinglians and Calvinists. He said of this in another place: *Thereafter came the Sacramentarians and Anabaptists, throwing open both door and window (as they supposed), to shut out the light.* Luther here gives it to be understood that this was the most dangerous *Anfechtung*. Luther himself described these as the people “who also wanted to be praised, since they were admirable people and had great spirit and could also preach, write, interpret better than others.” Yes, he said of these people: *Spirit! Spirit! This is the chief thing! Luther sticks too much to the letters of the Bible; there is no real spirit in him! He cannot bring the people to real spiritual Christianity.* Indeed, Luther says further about them that they grant it was a good thing for our Gospel to have begun and to have the teaching again purified, but it was not enough; one must engage in better things and come to a much higher place. However, no matter how much the spirit of enthusiasm now reviled, degraded, and threw suspicion on Luther within Christendom in enmity, he did not desist humbly remaining by the Word, far from all higher-coming through one’s own spirit, which he exposes all the while as the most dangerous way of the devil. He would not be induced to perhaps please the people and somehow go beyond the clear, plain Word of God.

Yet what we have just now reported was not even the greatest *Anfechtung* brought forth through the spirit of enthusiasm and the Sacramentarians, so called because they especially followed their own spirit and not the Scriptures in regard to the doctrine of the Sacraments, concerning Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These followers of Zwingli and Calvin explicitly attempted to initiate a bond of friendship and thus would press Luther to yield concerning doctrine for the sake of love, especially since it only involved certain articles of faith and because through the *Bund* with the Reformed great advantages would come for the benefit of the entire Evangelical Church. Luther had then taken a difficult stand, but he paid no attention to requests, to rebukes, he simply and only looked upon the Word in faith. *I am determined*, he speaks in a

Gutachten, that I will not hold my life long [Lebenlang] with the Sacramentarians, and I know that Zwingli and his associates write incorrectly about the Sacraments. The love, he spoke, which would go beyond the Word of God, is from the devil. He always remained by that: *The Word is of God and not us, and we have no right to relax something from it or to set ourselves up in God's place.* That certainly won Luther an evil name for himself and discontent with many who very much wanted to look upon themselves as good Evangelicals. Luther merely bore this all in faith as another cross to the honor of God. This all we entirely correctly commend to his honorable memory.

Yet this blessed remembrance may be given to him not only through our praising mouths, but also may take place through imitation. Accordingly, the text before us explicitly demands: “imitate their faith” Now, then, let us be such Lutheran Christians according to the example of Luther that we do not through threats of any sort, which may come as they will, allow ourselves to be scared into departing from the Word of God. Now is the time when many Lutheran brothers are menaced. The devil does not menace them through the Antichrist, the papacy, as before, even with danger to one's life, now the devil indeed menaces them through the great heap of godlessness which wants to overthrow all which is called God and *Gottesdienst* and religion and godly order the same as the papacy, but merely in a different way. He menaces our Lutheran brothers with this mob and injury to goods and profits and sustenance if they yet want to give honor to the Word of God and the truth of Jesus Christ. They should let it go, but do not do so. Lutheran brothers and sisters, imitate the faith of Luther. Do not let yourselves be terrified by the threats so that you yield concerning the true Word of God. Let us also be such Lutheran Christians who do not allow themselves to be led astray from the Word of God through any false friendship; not through the friendship of unbelievers or worldly men. O, how sweet it is to them if a Lutheran Christian allows himself to be led astray by their alluring promises of all kinds of

benefits to yield in connection to the Word of God and in so doing to become an inferior Christian has the tenet: “One cannot in this day so precisely lay hold of their teaching with the Scriptures; one must consider the times, be liberal and accommodating to it.” Yes, that is exactly what the devil wants. If he in this way has the finger, he will soon have the hand. Let us people, therefore, be Lutheran Christians according to the example of Luther: *Above all the advantages in the world goes the Word of God and truth.*

Not through the friendship of the false believing people of the sects. They approach us Lutheran Christians with delusions of great benefits for the entire Church which could be achieved if we would choose to permit love to reign and male brotherhood with all and not stand so rigidly by the letters of the Scriptures. However, let us not become yielding for the appearance of imaginary love and friendship. Let us also not, when the friendship later deteriorates into enmity and derision, be loveless and have no heart for the Christian Church. You dear Lutheran Christians, let us remain steadily by the letters of Scripture, entirely according to the manner of Luther, so that this one thing matters to us above all: thus it stands written here in the Bible, word for word, and thereby remain and let no friendship take precedence over it. Consider, after all, that the Savior says about Christians: “You are the salt of the earth,” because we alone in this time still stand fast by the written Word, while the whole world places reason over Scripture. Luther says that he wants to remain by the Word because he would not lead many souls to ruin. Therefore, let us also stand by that Word. Who will yet delay the disaster of Christendom, if we Lutheran Christians, whose wonderful honor up to now was the unshakable adherence to the letter, now also want to yield in that! Now let us guard our honor crown and walk as we have up to now, in a proper believing adherence to the Scriptures, to honor God above all, but also to give a living blessed remembrance to Luther.

There is still one other thing we today commend to the blessed memory of Luther:

III.

That he has always only sought the honor of his Savior through the Word.

The truth of which we appropriately commend to his blessed memory is that Luther has not sought something for himself. He said once: *I desire to be no cardinal, and I also do not aspire to any gold, honor, and money!* Whoever does that does not place his light under the bushel, but if grass grows boasts with full cheeks about what he has done for it.² Nowhere do we find that in Luther, nowhere such words: “See what I have accomplished.” Rather, just the opposite. So he says: *It is not our work which now goes through the world. It is not possible that a man alone should begin and direct such a thing.* Nowhere does he brag that it sprung out of his head. On the contrary: *It has come thus far without my thoughts and counsel and it should also well continue without the same.* Another time he humbly calls out: *What is Luther then!* Whoever only knows the thoughts of Luther must say that there is no second man so high and so great, who so entirely sought nothing for himself, neither goods nor high station nor also honor, as the beloved man of God Luther.

He sought only the honor of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ yesterday, today, tomorrow, and also into eternity; that was his motto. Accordingly, he employed all his strength and abilities for Jesus’ honor. *I am certain, he once said, that my word is not mine, but Christ’s Word Therefore, my mouth must also belong to the same one, whose Word it speaks.* Jesus alone is our salvation and life through His Gospel. That was the one thing which from the beginning he wanted to extol to the honor of God and genuinely did. *Our one care, he said once, has been and still is that men be instructed purely and clearly about the service of Christ and His grace.”* In another place, he said, *I have a higher treasure in heaven, namely, Jesus Christ. Thereupon I hang one and hold myself to His work, righteousness, holiness, and wisdom, and want to know absolutely nothing*

² *sondern wenn Grasses geschieht, ruehmt er mit vollem Backen, wie er dazu getan hat*

about my own works or those of any many...but I believe on Christ alone. And again: Lock up your reason and trample underfoot your wisdom, and do not allow them to grope about, feel, or thing in matters of your salvation, but only hear what the Son of God speaks, what His Word is, and remain by that. Therefore, he calls out to all preachers: A Christian preacher should teach so that man alone seeks his rest in the genuine treasure of all the perfection of Christ. And such a priest Luther was; in this way he has preached the Word, so that all his teaching aims at this one thing: To Jesus Christ the honor, since He alone is our salvation! And whoever knows the writings of Luther must say: From them no word of Luther is praises too much.

And yet Luther has constantly proclaimed yet another honor for Jesus: *Jesus alone, entirely alone is our help in every need.* O how far, therefore, he was from saying, “Trust only in me. Leave it all to me.” He pointed the people to one thing alone, upon which he himself relied. Consider his beautiful saying: *There is no need which cannot tear Jesus down from heaven.* It is again the pure truth that in the entire life of Luther, which others have written about for us, in all his writings, which we have printed for us, the drift of the speech of Luther was this one thing: *Not unto us, but to Christ give the glory.* For example:

*With might or ours can naught be done,
Soon were our loss effected;
But for us fights the valiant one,
Whom God Himself elected.
You ask, “Who is this?”
Jesus Christ it is,
The almighty Lord,
And there’s no other God;
He holds the field forever.*

Let it now also happen among us, dear fellow Lutheran Christians, that the blessed memory of Luther is able to be commended by us, so that we are his true spiritual children and seek nothing other than Christ’s honor. Let us always be obviously recognized as such who have

entirely set their hope on Christ alone in faith. May our mouth out of honest faith constantly issue praise, since we unrighteous men can only be righteous through the one Jesus. May no one be revealed as an accursed man who founds himself upon his own righteousness and despises the righteousness of Christ, who gives the glory to themselves and takes himself as the beloved Savior. Whoever does that and calls himself Lutheran truly brings dishonor upon the name of Luther. Let us be revealed as such who in love live for the beloved Savior and want to offer themselves to Him with all their gifts and goods and abilities. Let us also be light in these troubled last times, who in it shine to Jesus' glory. People who live of the world and the god Mammon, as almost all now do, and at the same time call themselves Lutheran, are a disgrace to the name of Luther, the beloved man of God, who truly consumed himself with, and offered himself for the service of Christ.

God keep us that we may be genuine Lutheran Christians, true children of the Reformation, that is, the purification of the Church. *Wohl uns!* Let a purification arrive in the days to come, where the Lord Jesus will purge the chaff from the wheat. Then we are genuine Lutheran Christians, the good wheat, and gathered in Jesus' granary. Yes, blessed be all genuine Lutheran Christians! That is the truth of God. Amen.

This sermon is taken from:

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Ein Jahrgan Predigten ueber die zweite wuerttembergische Perikopen=Reihe
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This sermon was delivered at St. Matthew's in Milwaukee, where Hoenecke served before becoming a full-time professor at our synod's Milwaukee seminary.

