

TABLE TALK

Official Publication of the LMS-USA
...these words... shall be upon your heart; you shall
teach them... and talk of them... Deut. 6:6,7



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What Do These Stones Mean?

In Joshua 3 we have the account of the children of Israel finally making their way across the Jordan River and into the promised land. In chapter 4 we read of how the Lord spoke to Joshua instructing him to choose 12 men from the people, one from each tribe, and have them go into the middle of the river to pick up 12 stones bringing them to the shore. In sending the men out on this task, Joshua spoke to the men, "Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones



mean?" tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever" (Joshua 4:5b-7). Later in the chapter we read of how Joshua "set up at Gilgal the twelve stones," and then he said to the people, "In the future when your descendants ask their fathers, 'What do these stones mean? tell them', Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground." And for what reason should they be told? "So that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that you might always fear the Lord your God" (Joshua 4:21-22, 24).

The theme for the 2012 annual LMS Conference/Convention is, "What Do These Stones Mean?" See details for the June gathering inside.

How did it work out? In Judges 2 verse 10 and following we have the answer. "After that

whole generation [that of the people of Joshua's day] had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel... They forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of Egypt. They worshiped various gods of the peoples around them..."

Clearly the people failed. They did not make use of the "memorial." They never told the story. The result? They themselves forgot, and their

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children never heard of the one true God or of the *covenant* which God made with His people and which was renewed under Joshua's leadership at the end of his life (see Joshua 24).

"What do these stones mean?" is the theme of the 2012 annual Conference and Convention of the LMS which will be held June 23 and 24. The gathering will again be held in Chetek, Wisconsin. Having been incorporated on June 17, 1987, the celebration of the congregation's 25th anniversary will take place in conjunction with our convention this year.

Christ Lutheran was born in the midst of the issues involved in the talks that lead up to the formation of what would become the ELCA. A number of folks belonging to the local ALC congregation meet over these concerns and within a couple of weeks, made the decision to begin a new congregation. They were soon joined by other folks of like mind from other area ALC congregations.

The congregation originally affiliated with The Association of American Lutheran Churches, which was also in its formation stages at that time. Its constituting convention was held in October of that year.

After a few years, it became clear that the theological bent of this association was not in line with that of either the pastor or members of Christ Lutheran. Christ Lutheran was not alone in this concern. In the fall of 1993, a number of pastors and laity met at Janesville, WI to share concerns over what they saw as the direction of the AALC. Out of that meeting, further meetings were held, some joining in the concern, others separating themselves from it, until in 1994, at a gathering at St. Matthew Lutheran in Indianapolis, IN, it was decided to form a new Lutheran Church body. Thus was born the Lutheran Ministerium and Synod - USA, of which Christ Lutheran was a charter member. St. Matthew

Lutheran of Indianapolis is the other charter congregation that is still a member of the LMS.

Christ Lutheran built the first unit of their worship facility in 1991. The church structure is, in the truest sense, a "memorial stone." When people (persons seeking membership, visitors, new generations of children) behold this building and worshiping community, the question is often there, "Why is there this church?" Or in other words, "What does this mean?" And behind all such questions, there is a story.

With the talks back in 1986-1987 many were forced to check out (as did the Bereans in the days of Paul, see Acts 17:10 ff) with Scripture, to see if things were really so.

There were sacrifices made - friendships and family relationships were put to the test. There was considerable ridicule to be faced. There was financial sacrifice necessary when it came to a small group setting out to find a pastor and then to undertake a building project.

And then, as mentioned, when their new association was found to be moving in a questionable direction, it meant a further delving into Scripture and into the Lutheran Confessions to test their own teachings and practices to see that they were in fact firmly based on Scripture.

And the story of the LMS-USA is similar. When it comes to the questions asked - "Why was this synod formed?" "What were the concerns that led up to its formation?" - these and other such questions have answers that we must not forget. Each new generation needs to be reminded of the trials and triumphs of those who labored to see that the church be found faithful in the present time, if they are going to be prepared for the struggles of today, as well as for the struggles which are sure to come in the future, to all whose desire it is to be found faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. Ω

Our Annual Gathering

by
LMS President, Rev. Dr. Ralph Spears

*Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down on the beard,
upon the beard of Aaron,
running down on the collar of his robes!
It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the Lord has commanded the blessing,
life forevermore!*

Psalm 133

One of the two Psalms of the greatest brevity ponders perhaps the most important teaching of Scripture. And this is not just a ‘gee isn’t it great’ observation of the ‘if we can only get along’ sentiment. This is a powerful expression of the profound effect when a group of individuals find themselves expressing as ONE. Not only is it marvelous and unique, but it is indeed uncommon, rare enough for our special notice.

Rightly are the words of Psalm 133, used for the Second Sunday of Easter when frightened Apostles were transformed into fearless confessionals as their Risen Master breathed on them - the Holy Spirit. In this event, the true Church was born along with a priceless lesson - “Blessed are those who have not seen (as eye witnesses) and yet believe!”

For, Thomas included, on this experience – hung all of the training and catechetics of those who followed Him from the beginning and were chosen to carry forth the Faith. They indeed, produced the sentiment and pedagogy which *was* the Apostles’ Creed, centuries

before it was written down in the form so familiar to us today. And then because of the continuing “Thomas-ism” of succeeding ages, that Faith was redefined in twice as many words by the Nicene Fathers and five times as many (words) by an elusive Athanasius in the attempt to produce the same effect nearly six centuries later so that they might “put their finger on Jesus” and believe. Not only did Martin Luther compliment the work of Athanasius as one of the ‘greatest documents of the Christian Church’, but his explanation of the *Third Article* of the beloved Apostles’ Creed, affirmed that Christ through the Holy Spirit “calls, gathers and enlightens” the Church and in the process makes it holy, “sanctifying it” and setting it apart.

The Holy Oil is for “Anointing”! Kings and High Priests were anointed with oil as a living symbol of the action of God in the process because anointing came *only* from God. In this case the Holy Oil is in abundance so much so that it runs down to the collar of the High Priest, Aaron, to reflect

(*Gathering*, continued on next page)

(Gathering, continued from page 3)

Divine favor as present in the fellowship in fact creating the special relationship of the people gathered. This is the same image used in the magnificent 23rd Psalm of David, with the anointing oil in the “cup running over” in blessing. Furthermore in both psalms, the path to eternal life is thereby revealed. *Dwelling in the House of the Lord forever*, Ps. 23 has its counterpart in Divine revelation in our Easter Ps. 133, “*life forevermore!*”

What follows is the mention of Mt. Hermon (the highest peak of Israel on its northernmost extreme) where the cooling “dew” came, again reminiscent of the morning dew which produced the manna which fed the children of Israel on the slopes of the mountain in the days of Moses and Aaron. Although the traditional site of the Transfiguration is Mt. Tabor towering over the Plains of Sharron, many sources consider that the site was actually Mt. Hermon. Indeed holy events happened often on these high and lofty settings providing literal - ‘mountain top experiences’.

So the special time approaches for our **Lutheran Ministerium and Synod** – the time to gather the Church in all of its available parts assembled. It is an interesting time to say the least for many such bodies, filled with hope but at times filled with a sense of quiet foreboding. Veteran convention goers know what I mean as thoughts turn to past gatherings which were *unconventional* rather than conventional and marked not with unity but with partisan agendas played out in opposition to one another.

The Council of Nicea which

gave its name to the second formal Creed of the Church (327 A.D.) was a pressure cooker of opposing ideas. Indeed in reading the history of the Church, one may find it remarkable that the Church survived at all past the 4th Century. Six difficult centuries later, one small phrase, the *filioque clause* from the Nicene Creed - was the seed of discontent which seethed until it brought division between Rome and Constantinople, East and West, in the eleventh century. The question was, did the Holy Spirit which brought unity hinted at by our Psalm, proceed from the subject of the *First Article* along with the subject of the *Second Article*? In other words, did the Holy Spirit come from the Father AND the Son – as the Nicene Creed stated? The Eastern Church did not so confess and went their own way. Even creeds to unify belief brought division within the brotherhood of the Faith. Confusing indeed, for many times unity comes at an even higher price of division.

James, known as the Brother of our Lord as leader of the early



LMS 2011 Conference/Convention

Christians, had yet another application for the Oil of Anointing which was as the functioning of the Church in the healing process. Here the Elders of the Church were instructed to come together to the bed of those who were ill and with the prayers for healing to anoint the member with the oil of presence as though invoking the Holy Spirit in the important role of making well. (James 5:13ff)

A most remarkable fact about the LMS-USA is the way in which we come together. Each year we are pleasantly surprised and gratified that the Holy Spirit brings to our assembled Church just the kind of fellowship that David had in mind in our *Easter* Psalm. We are greater than the sum of our parts and that fellowship sustains us from meeting to meeting, year to year. The true Church is still fed by the Lord's manna and united by His oil of presence which offers healing to the Church body.

We are also gratified that we have had meaningful and ongoing fellowship with the International Lutheran Council who has such a meaningful fellowship of Confessional Lutherans from around the world in thirty-three countries. (We are looking to complete inclusion in this body which next meets in Canada later in the year!)

The Divine spark, the work of the Holy Spirit, does call, gather and enlighten with still and this is the important point. The Christian community has moved away from a sense of awe and respect of Holy things so far in fact that we must rediscover the far deeper meaning of our own Scriptures. Those past conventions of the Church including the ones of our memory, often split hairs and quibbled over details rendering the sustaining fellowship as secondary in impor-

tance, hardly acknowledging the presence of the anointing Spirit which would draw the Church together once more in renewal and hope. Well can we understand the lament of Jesus over Jerusalem, "How often would I have gathered you together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!"

Gathering is not only good – it is essential. We shrink from saying mandatory, because we cannot force a fellowship that must be chosen by each of us as each of us has been chosen. Without this Fellowship, eventually there is no vitality and no Church, it's just that simple.

The Apostles were gathered in fear with the doors locked. They desperately needed the protection that the fellowship had always offered. They had been called to be Apostles, they had been enlightened. They lacked only one thing and that need was crucial. They had heard only a few nights before that they had not chosen Him, *He had chosen them!* Then coming to them it all became clear as He stood in their midst. In short order they were completely unafraid - The Risen Christ appeared and their destiny and fellowship were complete as they were bidden to "Receive the Holy Spirit!"

We invite you to come with us and meet at Convention in a few short weeks in Chetek. We ask you to come for the very same reason that the Apostles were gathered together as He had instructed them to assemble. The Miracle is there in the gathering as we discover Him once again – in each other. For where even "two or three are gathered together in Christ's Name, there He is in our midst!" Come share with us the Unity of Christ's fellowship! That IS the Church! Ω

Remember

by
Rev. Dr. John Erickson

As mentioned elsewhere in this issue of *Table Talk*, the LMS will be joining with our host congregation, Christ Lutheran of Chetek, WI, in the celebration of their 25th anniversary. Central to such celebrations is the bringing to mind by those who participate, a retelling of past experiences and of what the church and being a part of the fellowship of that church has meant. Although it is not the 25th anniversary of the synod, enough years have passed (17 years since the incorporation of the synod) that similar exercises are appropriate in connection with it also.

What is interesting is that the recalling and sharing together of such remembrances is exactly what God wants people to do in connection with their life of faith. I encourage you to go to a Bible concordance and look up the word "Remember" or "Remembrance" and see what you find. That is what I did, and it is most informative. I am going to share some of what I found. It is not necessarily in any order, nor is it conclusive, but it is a start.

What ought we to remember?

- Remember (and start when you are young) your Creator - Eccl. 12:1.
- Treasure - hide in heart (i.e., remember) God's Word (Ps. 119:11).
- Remember the Lord's leading in your life. We see an example of this in Deut. 8:2. "Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.
- Remember, as were the Children of Israel to do, the part God has in our lives. "But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today." Deut. 8:18.
- Remember the Commands of God. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you to-

day are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. When the LORD your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you--a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant--then when you eat and are satisfied, be careful that you do not forget the LORD..." (Deut. 6:4-12)

- Remember significant events in which God has had a hand. See example of Joshua (chapter 4) and the memorial stones that pointed to people back to their miraculous entrance into the promised land as well as to all that went before.
- Remember the wonders of God

and his doings - see Psalm 105:1-5: "Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced."

Also note what we find in Deut. 4:9. "Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them" (Deut. 4:9).

- Remember what happens when we do not remember. In other words, remember the danger of not remembering. See Judges 2:10
- Remember also that there are some things we ought to forget. Paul instructs us in Philippians 3:13-14, "Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus."

It ought not be surprising that central to our remembering are the Word and Sacraments -

"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct,

rebuke and encourage-- with great patience and careful instruction" (2 Timothy 4:2). And - "Do this (celebrate the Sacrament) in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19, 1 Cor. 11:24). All this is what the Holy Spirit uses - "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26). And in this connection - "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).

Prov. 3:1 "My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart..."

Prov. 4:5 "Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or swerve from them."

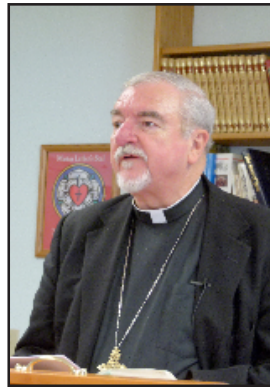
Rom. 15:15 "I have written to you quite boldly on some points, as if to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me."

1Cor. 15:1 "Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand."

This is just a start. I encourage you to consider a word study on "remembering" or "remember" on your own. Ω

You are most cordially invited to the annual convention of the Lutheran Ministerium and Synod - USA June 23 through June 24 at Christ Lutheran Church, Chetek, WI. We will be celebrating with them their 25th anniversary of service.

For further information you may contact Pastor Spears at revralphs@sbcglobal.net. Or you can call Christ Lutheran Church at 715-924-2552.



Rev. Dr. Ralph Spears,
LMS President

When we think of the church, and specifically, "our church," or our "denomination or synod," it is so easy to begin to think in terms of success. Are we successful in what we are about? We see the big churches, the mega churches, all the activities that seem to be going on in some of these places, and the question comes to mind, "What are we not doing?" or, "What are we doing wrong?" The problem of course is that when we begin to think in terms of success it is most often in terms of how the world looks at success. It is with this in mind that the following article is offered for your consideration. Joe McKeever is a regular contributor to *Discipleship*. The article is found in the February 13, 2012 edition and is used with permission.

A Scripture You Don't Believe *Less Can Be More*

by Joe McKeever

"Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, 'Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. It may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few'" (1 Sam. 14:6).

It doesn't matter to the Lord whether He saves by the many or the few. Now, you could make an argument that that is not an authoritative statement since the line was uttered by Jonathan, son of King Saul, and not by a prophet or some inspired writer. But you would be fighting a losing battle on that, since it's a truth found all through scripture from beginning to end, Genesis to Revelation.

God has His crowds, to be sure. In Heaven, the guest list—the family reunion, choose your metaphor—seems endless. "...a great multitude which no one could number" was standing before the throne praising the Lord (Rev. 7:9). That was sure some crowd Moses led out of Egypt, whether a few hundred thousand or two million as some say. Either way, God knows how to work the big numbers.

However, being God, He does not need big numbers. He does not call off anything (so far as we know) because only a handful of nobodies showed up. In fact, God

told Gideon he had too many soldiers in his army. Defeat the Midianites with that crowd, He said, and your people will take credit for the victory. So the Lord had him whittle the assault team down to a manageable 300 (Judges 7).

God loves small things - ordinary people, insignificant gifts, and undramatic acts. It does not matter to the Lord whether He saves - and works, transforms, and wins the victory - by a few people or by a crowd. It's all through Scripture.

The only problem is that you don't believe it, and something inside me resists it, too.

Somehow or other, we have got it through our brains that, in order to do anything significant for God in this world, we have to have big numbers. Crowds. Celebrities. Large offerings. Miracles.

God being God does not need big numbers.

A preacher friend here in New Orleans still talks about the time all of

us evacuated in advance of a hurricane said to be headed our way. He was thrilled about one thing: that Sunday in a nearby city, he would be able to hear someone else preach. That Sunday morning they got dressed and went to a nearby church filled with anticipation. Since many of their members had left the area also, the crowd was maybe a third its usual size, perhaps 50 people.

The pastor walked out in front of the sanctuary and said, "Since there are so few of us, I'm not going to preach this morning." He did something else instead, but I don't know what. My friend was pretty disgusted with this lazy unbelieving pastor who would pull such a stunt.

I said "unbelieving", and I mean it. **Faith in God means we believe He is sovereign and omnipotent. He can do anything He pleases (Ps. 115:3) and does not require us or our tricks and methods or our crowds and gimmicks.**

Few things disgust me more than pastors who decide to pack the church by bringing in a celebrity. Some of the shallowest messages ever have been delivered by "names" who were brought in at great expense and fanfare. They came, received a carnal adulation from the crowd, signed autographs, sold books and CDs, gave a little talk, and went on their way. Pastors justify it to their deacons and finance committees by reasoning that some people in the crowd will come back to church the next Sunday. In your



dreams. If they came to see Drew Brees or Bobby Jindal or Denzel Washington, what makes you think they'll come back next Sunday to hear you?

I heard a television preacher say it: "You can't do anything without money."

Unbelief. That's what it is. Whatever we have to have other than God Himself in order to do God's work is sin. (My variation of Romans

14:23 "*Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*") So, a question: "What would we do if we really believed that little things matter in big ways to God?" Here are some answers found in Scripture.

I. We Would Honor Ordinary People

James chapter 2 delivers a knock-out blow to the practice of church members who fall all over themselves to roll out the red carpet for the owner of the factory, the local celeb, the rich family, when they deign to show up at our church. James says, "*God has chosen the poor of this world...*" (2:5).

Paul wanted the leaders of the Corinthian church to look around their congregation one Sunday. "*For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put*

Whatever we have to have other than God Himself in order to do God's work is sin.

(*Less Can Be More*, cont. on next page)

(*Less Can Be More*, continued)
to shame the wise...” (1 Cor. 1:26-27) Why did He do this? “*That no flesh should glory in His presence*” (1:29).

Look at the disciples whom Jesus called. See any celebrities among them? Any powerful, influential, wealthy? A bunch of nobodies—God’s favorite kind.

II. We Would Treasure Small Gatherings

Jesus stated it in an unforgettable way: “*Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst*” (Matt. 18:20). Pow! Take that, crowd-addicted preachers and leaders. It does not matter to the Lord whether He saves by the few or by the many. I posted this on Facebook and several people responded by telling me of congregations of 10 or 20 people who are doing significant things in the Kingdom.

There is an inferiority complex that haunts small churches. The mantra is “We can’t do anything; we’re not large enough.” It’s baloney, of course. You can do anything God wants you to do which you have faith to claim and cooperate with. Ask churches with small groups meeting in homes if tiny numbers have a certain power and authenticity of their own.

III. We Would Encourage and Welcome Small Offerings

As the widow dropped her two small coins into the Temple treasury and went on her way—clueless that the Son of the Living God had seen her offering, noted her faith, and complimented her commitment—Jesus said, “*I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury.*

For they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood” (Mark 12:41-44).

Pastor Jim Henry told in one of his books of the moment early in his ministry when an older poor woman taught this lesson to her young stupid pastor. She handed him an envelope. “Brother Jim, I want this to go toward the new building.” Jim took her hand in both of his. “Now, Miss Elsie,” he said. “You keep this money. You need it worse than we do. And you let those who have the money pay for that building.” Through teary eyes, she said, “Pastor, do not deny me the privilege of giving to my Lord.” Every gift is precious in His sight, and some of the smallest are the largest of all.

IV. We Would Celebrate Small Deeds of Faithfulness

A little boy gave his lunch to the Lord’s disciples and saw it multiplied to the point of feeding many thousands (John 6:9). Elijah received from a widow the last morsel of food in her house (1 Kings 17), but God blessed her gift in incredible ways.

“*Whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward*” (Matt. 10:42). A cup of water, a little flour and oil, a boy’s lunch. Nothing much by human standards, but given to the Almighty, they become major instruments for unforgettable blessings.

V. We Would Cherish Our Little Places

“*Can anything good come out of Nazareth?*” (John 1:46). Something spectacular came out of Bethlehem, from a stable, a manger even. One place is as good as another, if the Lord is in that place. “Jacob awoke

from his sleep and said, *‘Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it. How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God! The gate of Heaven!’* (Gen. 28:16-17).

And yet, I know preachers who want to leave their little isolated town in favor of a big city where they can do a great work for God and—let’s be honest here—build a reputation in the Kingdom. Lord, help us. Give us faith to believe your word. *“I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, ‘The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid’”* (Heb. 13:5-6).

A cup of water, a little flour and oil, a boy’s lunch. Nothing much by human standards, but given to the Almighty, they become major instruments for unforgettable blessings.

be ordinary and to do my small acts of faithfulness to You. We recall our Lord Jesus saying the one who is faithful in small things is faithful also in much (Luke 16:10). He said the Kingdom is built on small acts of faithfulness, and pointed to the mustard seed to make the point (Matthew

13:31). Our problem is not that we do not know these things; the problem we have is believing them and acting upon them. “Help us to give our offerings no matter how small; to share our faith

no matter how weak; to give our testimony no matter how undramatic; to encourage our neighbor, no matter how small, young, ungifted, or ordinary.

“Help us to start believing You today. For Jesus’ sake. Amen.”

A Prayer

“Dear Lord, it is my privilege to

What makes the church a church?

According to Luther -

The external marks, whereby one may perceive where this church is on earth, are Baptism, the Sacrament of the Altar, and the Gospel, and not Rome or this or that place. For wherever Baptism and the Gospel are, no one is to doubt the presence of saints, even if they were only babes in their cradles.

It is really the Word that Makes the Church. The Gospel is the one most certain and noble mark of the church, more so than Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, since the church is conceived, fashioned, nurtured, born, reared, fed, clothed, graced, strengthened, armed, and preserved solely through the Gospel. In short, the entire life and being of the church lie in the Word of God, as Christ says: By every word that proceeds from the mouth of God man lives (Matt. 4:4).

Table Talk
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The LMS-USA is Lutheran Church body describing itself as *Biblical, Confessional, Evangelical, Liturgical and Congregational*. It is a 'Forum' in which there is an on going discussion of theological issues and concerns among clergy and lay alike. The LMS-USA meets annually for a Theological Conference and this publication, besides carrying news of the Ministerium and Synod, functions also as a vehicle for this continuing dialogue.

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