



*"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven,
having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth,
and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people..." - Rev 14:6*

CONFESSIONAL LUTHERANISM: THE FAITH OF THE REFORMATION

In the 1500's A.D., after many centuries of spiritual darkness and ignorance of the word of God under the papacy, God raised up a man named Martin Luther to cut through the layers of man-made tradition and religion that had obscured the pure Word, and point people back to Jesus and His salvation, the pure gospel of salvation by grace through faith in Christ, the pure word of God, and the right teaching and use of the holy sacraments. It was a time of great turmoil, but out of it arose the Lutheran Church, whose confession is presented clearly and unambiguously in the Book of Concord, the Lutheran Confessions.

Someone has said that the high water mark of the history of theology was the age of Luther and those Lutheran theologians who came after him and systematized his teaching; men like Martin Chemnitz and Johann Gerhardt. The theological inheritance from these godly men to which we are heirs is simply marvelous. However, it has not always been received with the appropriate gratitude and understanding. The world of 'protestantism' has gone off in many different directions throughout the intervening centuries, and even the Lutheran Church has often sold its spiritual birthright for the 'pottage' (see Gen 25:29ff.) of pietism, enthusiasm, rationalism, and a host of other 'flavors of the month'.

There was a revival of interest in confessional Lutheranism in the 19th century, both in Europe and in America. Lutherans who were sick of pietism and rationalism returned to Luther, the confessions, and the great theologians of the age of Lutheran orthodoxy. Out of this confessional Lutheran renewal sprang the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and numerous other synods committed to genuine Lutheran theology. These churches have, for the most part, flourished despite the rough and tumble of American denominationalism. The Missouri Synod in particular, being the largest of the truly confessional Lutheran churches, has had its fair share of battles, trials, temptations and setbacks, yet as we draw to the close of the 20th century, it remains in the forefront of the confessional Lutheran 'movement'. "Though there be those that hate her, false sons within her pale", may God continue to enrich her with His grace and power so that "against both foe and traitor she ever shall prevail".

Today we live in a time when St. Paul's words are particularly poignant: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim 4:3f.). We live in a time when everyone does what is right in his own eyes (Jud 21:25). The world is full of churches who have departed from Christ and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. Many nominally Lutheran churches have abandoned the Lutheran faith in favor of a bland, liberal, generic American protestantism. Those of us who believe, teach and confess in accordance with the Scriptures and the Lutheran confessions have a responsibility to proclaim and practice this faith clearly and purely, despite the apparent fact that no one seems to want to hear it. While many want to conform and go along with the spirit of the age, we must continually lift up the standard of God's truth, and call people to return to the Lord and His Word.

The Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, a congregation of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, intends to be and remain a true confessional Lutheran Church. We want to proclaim this faith and urge it upon others so that they, too, will taste and see that the Lord is good. In order to do this, part of our mission includes this website with its various articles and links. It is our earnest desire that those who find our site will be moved to a renewed or deepened understanding of genuine Lutheranism and its Gospel-centered message. We also hope to strengthen the hands of those beleaguered saints throughout the world who may be in situations where they are a minority voice in the wilderness, and to remind them that they are not alone. We hope that you are strengthened, encouraged and challenged by what you find on this website and on the links to the other sites we recommend.