

For the

# LIFE of the WORLD

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THEOLOGICAL  
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## For the **LIFE** of the **WORLD**

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## FEATURES

### 4 The Beauty of Holiness

**By the Rev. Dr. Peter J. Scaer, Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana**

Our world, it seems, is obsessed with outward physical beauty. Television shows feature the supposedly life-changing results of plastic surgery and air endless “makeovers.” Magazines put out their annual list of “beautiful people.” In such a vain, superficial world, it’s refreshing to reflect on the true beauty, which is the life of Christ lived out still among His people. We should therefore encourage one another in doing good, knowing that our lives are witnesses to the love of Christ.

### 7 The Beauty of the Church

**By the Rev. Scott C. Klemsz, Director of Admission, Public Relations, and Publications, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana**

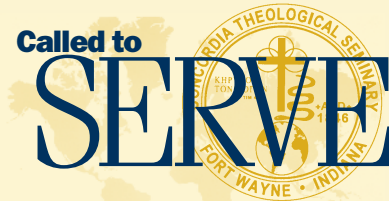
The church building becomes a sacred place where your Savior comes to meet you, comfort you, and restore you. You hear a welcome in the Scriptures proclaimed from the pulpit. The font washes your dirty life clean. The altar feeds your hungry soul. The church’s windows, art, sculpture, and light all bid you a warm hello. The church becomes your sanctuary from the world, a place of refuge.

### 10 The Beauty of Freedom

**By Elizabeth A. Fluegel, Teacher, Immanuel Lutheran School, Alexandria, Virginia**

Since America’s beginning, religious freedom has been essential to our country and necessary to the liberty of mankind. We can agree that religious freedom has been a blessing to us. As recently as the 1998 LCMS Synodical Convention, a resolution was adopted which encourages “the Synod and its members to promote and protect freedom of religion and religious expression both at home and abroad (Res. 2-05A).”

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# The *B*







# country of Freedom

By Elizabeth A. Fluegel

Memorial weekend was busy in Washington, D.C. Thousands of WW II veterans and civilians gathered to dedicate the new national World War II Memorial. It stands on the National Mall between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial and “is flanked by memorials dedicated to the members of the Armed Forces of the United States who served and died in the Korean War and in the Vietnam era.”

At the dedication ceremony, President George W. Bush ended his speech with these words, “At this place, at this Memorial, we acknowledge a debt of long-standing to an entire generation of Americans; those who died, those who fought and worked and grieved and went on. They saved our country, and thereby saved the liberty of mankind.” A week earlier, the Senate had unanimously passed S. Res. 362, which pays tribute to the “duty, sacrifices, and valor of all the members of the Armed Forces of the United States

who served in World War II, a group known collectively as the ‘Greatest Generation.’”

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**Since America’s beginning, religious freedom has been essential to our country and necessary to the liberty of mankind. We can agree that religious freedom has been a blessing to us. As recently as the 1998 LCMS Synodical Convention, a resolution was adopted which encourages “the Synod and its members to promote and protect freedom of religion and religious expression both at home and abroad (Res. 2-05A).”**

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which encourages “the Synod and its members to promote and protect freedom of religion and religious expression both at home and abroad (Res. 2-05A).” (Why this

resolution was not reaffirmed as an overture to the 2004 Synodical Convention is somewhat surprising in light of the fact, for example, that the homosexual lobbyists have vowed that once same-sex “marriage” is legal, they will work to require churches to *affirm, not merely tolerate*, gay marriages. Those that do not will be sanctioned by society.)

To support religious freedom here at home is not to endorse some form of American Christianity or an American Christian Church. As Hermann Sasse reminds us in the first volume of *The Lonely Way*,

The church proceeds *from God and not from men*. Distinct from all other confessions, Lutheranism knows of only two *notae ecclesiae* [“marks of the church”]: the Word of God and the Sacrament. ... The church is constituted only by the *real presence of Jesus Christ the Lord*, who in His Gospel and in the Sacraments is really and personally present. ... There is no German, Spanish, English, or French Gospel. There is only one Gospel of Jesus Christ, therefore only one Christian truth. There is finally no faith which is peculiar to any race or culture. There is only true or false, strong or weak, Christian faith. (Sasse, pp. 128 and 129)

What may be peculiar to Christianity in America is Protestantism with its worship of a generic God (e.g., “In God we trust.” “God bless America.”) But the ongoing struggle within Christendom between a realistic faith and mere religiosity is the struggle over the name of the triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. True worship of God will always embrace a love for and fidelity to this revealed name of the one true God.

Also peculiar to American Protestantism is its insistence that *both* the preacher and the state call man to live a moral life in order to ensure society’s well-being. The Fathers of the Reformation knew better. They did not comingle the role of the Office of the Ministry with the role of the state.



**The ongoing struggle within Christendom between a realistic faith and mere religiosity is the struggle over the name of the triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. True worship of God will always embrace a love for and fidelity to this revealed name of the one true God.**

Our teachers hold that according to the Gospel the power of the keys or the power of the bishops is a power or command of God to preach the Gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer the sacraments. For it is not bodily things that are thus given, but rather such eternal things as eternal righteousness, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life. These things cannot come about except through the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Inasmuch as the power of the church bestows eternal things and is exercised only through the ministry of the Word, it interferes with civil government as little as the art of singing interferes with civil government. For civil government is concerned with other things than the Gospel. The state protects not souls but bodies and goods from manifest harm, and constrains men with the sword and physical penalties, while the Gospel protects souls from heresies, the devil, and eternal death (Tappert, pp. 81-82).

Scripture clearly teaches that the wages of sin is death. Just wars may need to be fought; nevertheless, such wars still cost nations the lives of their sons and daughters so that others may live in freedom. In heartfelt thanks, this is why we build memorials such as the new WW II Memorial.

St. John teaches us that lasting freedom—freedom from the power of sin, death, and the devil—comes from the atoning sacrifice of God’s own Son, who was dead but now lives:

Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. ... He came and took the scroll from the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. And when He had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. ... And they sang a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because You were slain, and with Your blood You purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.” (Revelation 5)

In this picture of the Son of God, one’s attention is not held by the image of a throne nor of those with their resounding songs of praise. Rather, one cannot take his eyes off of the Lamb who was slain. It is in this crucified One that God reveals Himself to us. Moses tells us that he could not look at the face of God—look upon His majesty—and live, while St. John tells us that “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all”(I John 1:5). Now God’s beauty is shown in His mercy toward sinful men, whom He makes sons for the sake of His only begotten Son.

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