

309. Our Lutheran Forefathers.

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. *Heb. 13, 7.*

It is about a thousand years since the Gospel was first brought to our forefathers while they were sitting in the darkness of idolatry. Sad to say, it was a corrupted Gospel; for the Pope had already introduced many of his idolatries into the Church. But in the sixteenth century, God granted the full light of the Gospel truth to the nations of Northwestern Europe. Luther broke with the abuses and falsehoods with which the Apostolic Church had been corrupted and restored the Church to its pristine purity. But later the light of the Gospel was again darkened in the land of the Reformation. There was no religious freedom, the state church, filled with false professions of all kinds, reigned supreme and persecuted those who confessed the Biblical Lutheran truth. The life of most of the fathers was made so burdensome to them that they felt constrained to leave the country of their birth.

America was destined to become the paradise of the Lutheran Church. What better land could God have invited her to than this? What opportunities were lacking for her to carry out her principles of a free Church built upon the foundation of religious liberty? The greatest spiritual blessing of our land is religious liberty, in consequence of which we can worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience.

Our fathers, who left their native land and came to this country because they were harassed and persecuted in the old country for the reason that their conscience would not permit them to remain in the state church, have taught us highly to value this blessing of religious freedom. And our fathers made full use of this freedom. As soon as they came over to America, schoolhouses and colleges were reared by them side by side with the churches; indeed, in many instances the school came first, and from it grew the church.

We ought to continue the work which our fathers began. Our testimony for the truth has not been in vain. God has prospered us greatly and will continue to do so, unless we become ungrateful.

Prayer.

Faithful Redeemer, keep us and our descendants in the blessed knowledge of Thy Gospel to the end of time and so guide and lead us by Thy Holy Spirit that we no longer, like the heathen, walk in the vanity of our minds and according to our own lusts, but lead a godly life, as the children of life, and serve Thee in due obedience as our King all the days of our lives. And when our confession arouses opposition and we must encounter much hostility, let us not be discouraged, for the cause belongs to Thee, our Redeemer. Amen.

Be of good cheer; your cause belongs
To Him who can avenge your wrongs;
Leave it to Him, our Lord.
Though hidden yet from mortal eyes,
His Gideon shall for you arise,
Uphold you and His Word.

This devotion is one of 318 taken from *Daily Bread* by F. E. Pasche, published by CPH in 1926, but now in the public domain. They have been copied and reformatted by Rev. Bruce G. Ley and made available for distribution by pastors and missionaries.

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