

# FORUM LETTER

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## No unity which evades the truth



"In Luther's understanding, therefore, the unity of the church is grounded in unity of faith. But this means that it is grounded in the one Lord to whom faith is directed. He is the head of the church and he unites the believers in unity. Because he, as the head of the church, does not submit himself to the grasp of human understanding, unity is also something that cannot be empirically determined. It does not lie in a unified organization, like the one the Roman church, for example, has and requires. It rather embraces all the diverse forms which have appeared in history, without requiring that these forms be reduced to the same level for the sake of unity. . . . That is why the Reformers spoke of the 'invisible church' when they were thinking of the unity of the church. Faith clings to unity despite the dividedness of the church and is not simply content with dividedness. Holding this faith, the church, even while it is utterly in earnest about the question of truth, must pray for the unity of the church and seek to overcome the hindrances that stand in its way. But it can do it only as it gives to the one Lord the place due him in its teaching and its life. There can be no unity which evades the truth."

—Herbert Girgensohn, *Teaching Luther's Catechism* (Muhlenberg Press, 1959)

## Veni, Sancti Spiritus



Thomas Long, professor of preaching at Candler School of Theology, tells of teaching his confirmation class about the church year. Christmas and Easter they got, but when it came to Pentecost, they were baffled. Not one student in the class had a clue what that particular festival was about. Dr. Long explained that Pentecost was the day the Holy Spirit came from heaven with the sound of a rushing wind, and fire rested on the heads of everyone gathered there, and they began to speak in other tongues. At this point one girl raised her hand. "I don't remember that," she said. "My family and I must have been out of town that Sunday."

## Calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies

A little parable about all of us who have trouble remembering Pentecost. No doubt we do better than she in recalling the events as portrayed so dramatically in the Acts of the Apostles. But we have trouble remembering the reason, the meaning, the purpose of Pentecost. If asked, we could cite the catechism's comment that the Holy Spirit "calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies" us. Head knowledge, of course, is easier than heart knowledge.

It's the "gathering" part I'm pondering at the moment. Creed, catechism

and Scripture teach us one of the primary works of the Holy Spirit is to gather God's people into one. We like the image. "Blest be the tie that binds," and all that. We love to think of the church — especially the congregation where we worship and serve — as a family. Heck, sometimes we even think of our larger church body as a family — a bit eccentric, maybe, but still our kin.

And yet so often that image leads to caring for each other in an exclusive way. We're like the farmer in the story who prayed, "Lord, bless me and my wife, our son John and his wife, us four, no more." The story of Pentecost blows that idea right out of the water. Here we see the church as a family, yes, but not a family closed in on itself. Rather it is a family always expanding, always extending the circle wider and wider. It is only in this sense we can understand the real work of the Spirit.

You will recall the disciples were gathered in Jerusalem, in the same upper room where so much had happened in the past weeks. That speaks volumes in itself, doesn't it? — the disciples clinging to the familiar place, the place with memories, the place where they can hold on to this intimacy they have had with Jesus and with one another. But on the day of Pentecost, all that was blown away by a powerful wind, a rushing wind, a mighty wind. "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit," it says, "and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them ability."

### Lectors beware

The pilgrims from all over the world who had gathered in Jerusalem now came rushing to see what this commotion was, and each person heard the disciples speaking in his or her own language. We're not talking just one or two languages here, but a whole United Nations full of them. "Parthians, Medes, Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia. . . ." (I always feel sympathy for the lector who has to read that lesson in church on Pentecost — those are hard words, all those nations and peoples.)

And all those languages, being heard from the lips of common Galilean fishermen. You can understand why people were astonished. This was an age when people didn't have much contact with the people in the next village, let alone those on the other side of the world. Yet here the Holy Spirit had gathered all nations together, and had brought them

a kind of understanding. Suddenly the disciples were in contact with people from exotic and strange places, people who talked differently and dressed differently and did all kinds of things differently. One might say their sense of being a family had suddenly changed rather dramatically.

### Ignorance not allowed

But how hard that vision is for us to maintain. We so often have no idea what it is like to be a person in circumstances different from our own. What is it like to be a Mexican migrant worker or a Rwandan refugee? What is it like to be homeless? What is it like to live in the ghettos of our cities? Most of the time, we do not ask those questions — in large part because we don't really want to know the answers. If we knew the answers, we might feel compelled to do something — to help, if we can; to study and learn; to pray.

But when the Holy Spirit comes, we aren't allowed to remain ignorant. That's the "enlightenment" part. The Spirit gathers us into a community extending far beyond our walls, and enlightens us with gifts — including a compassion and an awareness which makes it impossible for us to shut our eyes and pretend we don't know. Yes, the church is a family — but it is bigger than one can imagine, more diverse, and it is filled with people who in many ways are very different from us, but like us in that they, too, have been called by the Holy Spirit, and gathered, enlightened and sanctified.

Calvin Miller has written a moving account of his presence, on Pentecost, 1966 in the Cathedral of St. Michael in Brussels. Miller is not Roman Catholic; he grew up in rural Oklahoma, where the Pentecostal church was dominant. As he stood in that cathedral, his mind flashed back and forth — one moment focused on the presiding bishop, dressed in rich red vestments, chanting the ancient words of the Latin mass, with incense wafting through the air in that ornate space; then suddenly recalling the summer revival tent in Oklahoma, with tearful choruses and Sister Rose, the local Pentecostal preacher, speaking in tongues and weeping, and the young boy Calvin, kneeling in the sawdust, experiencing in his own way the Holy Spirit.

These two pictures kept alternating in his mind, until he at last realized they were vitally connected. "That is what the Spirit does," he reflected.

"[The Spirit] condenses, integrates, and unifies all years and all saving experience. As a matter of fact, Joel 2.28 binds the ages before Christ with Peter's ecstatic sermon of AD 27, with Chrysostom, Augustine, Aquinas, and, yes, Sister Rose. To be sure, all ages, cultures and churches go about it differently, but we are yet made one by the *Spiritus Sanctus*." [Calvin Miller, "Pentecost," in *Stories for the Christian Year*, ed. Eugene H. Peterson (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1992), 158.]

Was I out of town that Sunday? No, I was in

church then, for it happened, you see, the day I was baptized. That's when I became part of this family, this family of red-robed bishops and sawdust Pentecostal preachers and everything in between. It is my family. I've got to keep my eyes and my heart open, and never forget my brothers and sisters come in many colors and speak many languages and live in many places — yes, and some of them go about it in ways really strange to me. And yet we are made one. *Veni, Sancti Spiritus!*

— by Richard O. Johnson, editor

## Why we need Valpo: two responses to Speckhard



Associate editor Peter Speckhard reflected recently on Valparaiso, "The University with a Lutheran heritage" (February 2008).

Here are two responses to his angst.

### The Mission of Valparaiso University

by Luke Bouman

We at Valparaiso University appreciate *Forum Letter* for its openness to include opinions like Peter Speckhard's in the wake of the news of the appointment of Mark Heckler, an ELCA layman, as the University's next president. Whenever there is a change, some will react with feelings of loss and grief. It is good for Pr. Speckhard to give voice to his grief, and it is good for the Valpo community to pause and reflect in these moments, whether we are in favor of the changes or not, whether we feel something is lost or not.

However, we feel that some of what Pr. Speckhard perceives as a loss is in fact a gain. Valparaiso is and continues to be unique, as the only large independent Lutheran university in the United States, and one of the few in the world. Valparaiso has always been the institution that has focused upon the development of the lay leadership of the Church. Our mission will continue to be the same: *Valparaiso University, a community of learning dedicated to excellence and grounded in the Lutheran tradition of scholarship, freedom, and faith, prepares students to lead and serve in both church and society.*

### Strategic engagement

Our strategic plan makes clear our desire to

engage the citizens of the Lutheran world, from our independent status, in an inclusive way, as we seek to "affirm and build upon the independent and inclusive Lutheran character of Valparaiso University."

Our desire to relate to all the citizens of the Lutheran world is much more than a "heritage"; it is our past, present, and future. At Valpo, we are convinced our identity is best served and preserved not by relating to one or another denomination, but by being related to and serving Lutherans who desire to meet at the intersection and crossroads of the theological spectrum. While it is risky to stand in the middle of that intersection, we believe it is the best way for us to serve the whole Lutheran world. So we will continue to be engaged with the members and pastors of the LCMS, not only because of our roots and heritage, but because of our commitment to a common future in the proclamation of the gospel. But we will also be engaged with the members and pastors of the ELCA for the same reason.

A majority of the search committee for our new president were members of the LCMS. They selected Mark Heckler, not as a departure from our past traditions, but as someone they believed could lead us in the same trajectory. We believe we can serve all Lutheran church bodies in the future as we have done for many years past. We believe the future of Lutherans in North America depends on all of us being in dialog and working together for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

*Dr. Luke Bouman, an ELCA pastor, is Director of Church Relations at Valparaiso University.*

## A place for the radical middle

by Josh Messner

Peter Speckhard laments the hiring of Mark A. Heckler as new university president at Valparaiso University as indicative of the turn Valparaiso is taking away from its unofficial but nevertheless historic roots in the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. As a Valparaiso graduate myself ('02), I welcome this change.

Pr. Speckhard and I do have some common ground. I too am perennially frustrated by the myth that Valparaiso is an official Missouri Synod institution. When my wife and I tell ELCA people we went to Valpo, they often ask what it was like to be at an LCMS school. We then try to explain Valparaiso's curious nomenclature as an "independent" Lutheran university.

### The dominant LCMS

But of course our frustration cuts in opposite directions. Pr. Speckhard hears this myth and wishes it were true. I hear it and lament the fact that people actually think this is the case. As an ELCA student whose life was shaped dramatically by my experiences at Valpo, almost all for the good, this myth brings up a difficult reminder that campus life, in one very large way, was always dominated by the Missouri Synod and seems destined to remain that way for the foreseeable future.

The remarkable Chapel of the Resurrection at Valpo—both the physical and spiritual center of campus activity—seemed always under the thumb of the LCMS. The dean of the chapel has always been an LCMS clergyman.

This Missouri-centric history was placed in sharp, even painful, relief for many Missouri folks on February 1, 1998. On that Sunday morning, Thelma Megill-Cobbler, theology professor at Valpo and a pastor ordained in the ELCA, preached at a service of Holy Communion in the chapel. It took drastic measures, many painful meetings, and even lost friendships for women to be permitted to preach in the chapel during Sunday morning worship. And even once this "permission" to preach became policy, ELCA services were offered only on one Sunday per month, and then only on one of the two morning services on those days, because the Missouri Synod students still needed to have a service they could

attend in good conscience.

So the Missouri contingent lost a little something here (though many LCMS students were decidedly pleased about this development), and the ELCA crowd perhaps gained something (though the solution was far from just). But my point in telling this story is not a victory lap. In fact, considering the confessional disasters into which Higgins Road has led itself, we ELCA folks won't be doing any victory laps for years to come.

### Discussion without schism

The point is that the lines of discussion were open. It took a long time for us to get women in the pulpit at VU, and the road sure wasn't pretty. But along the way, an awful lot of conversation took place between LCMS, ELCA, and other Lutherans. And the conversations didn't end at the all-too-familiar *telos* for American Lutherans: schism.

Such conversations happen often at Valpo—and far too rarely in most other places. This is one of the most distinctive and wonderful aspects of this vital institution. This is not an appeal to relativism. There is a right and a wrong answer to the issue of women preaching, and the readers of *Forum Letter* are sure to come down on both sides of the issue. But precisely because Valpo is independent, one group was able to fight and struggle for something it needed without destroying the whole enterprise.

Now we have moved on to having a university president who is not an LCMS clergyman. This means, Pr. Speckhard argues, Valpo has lost another touch of its distinctive Missouri character. But it also means Valpo will continue to play a dynamic and central role in the future of American Lutheranism. Now this flagship Lutheran institution, still steeped in Missouri history, will be led for the first time by a member of another body.

### A place to listen and respect

We need Valparaiso because it helps us hold on to the radical middle, a place where the gospel is more likely to cut through our bureaucratic politicking. The beauty of being a Lutheran at Valpo, whatever your denominational affiliation, is that you learn to listen to and respect the "other Lutherans," even though you might disagree with some or most of their theology.

I hope Pr. Speckhard can come to an appre-

ciation not only of Valpo in its current form but of the important work done by other pan-Lutheran groups (including the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau) on behalf of a struggling American Lutheran church. More difficult and constructive work lies ahead of us than writing testimonials to Valpo's "best part." We have much bigger enemies than women preaching the gospel or non-traditional presidents running a Lutheran institution.

Valpo is remarkable not because it enshrines and protects a tradition—though it does do some of

that, and we can fight about how to define that tradition. Valpo is remarkable because it fosters and facilitates critical, responsible, informed conversation. Valpo is not a heritage on which we hang our hats; it is a living community where Lutherans meet, fight, love, pray, worship, preach, and interpret, shaping a common Lutheran future as they go.

*Josh Messner is an editor with Fortress Press and a student at Luther Seminary. He studied music and theology at Valparaiso University.*

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## Issues, no answers



We've all been there—all hot and bothered in the family truckster on a long trip.

The back seat conversation generally goes like this: "Quit it!" "What?" "You know what!" "No I don't. What?" "You do too know what. Now quit it!" "How can I quit it if you won't even tell me what I'm doing?" "I'm telling!" "Telling what? I didn't even do anything." "Yes you did!" "What did I do?" "You know what!"

And so forth. The bigger one insufferably denies knowing anything about what they both know he is deliberately doing, and the littler one becomes all the more shrill and ridiculous for not being able to prove anything noteworthy has happened at all. Ah, family life.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is a pretty typical family in this regard. As in a real family, the fact that we love each other is often a doctrine imposed from above. And in crunch time it is probably truer than we realize. But somehow getting along never really seems like a realistic option. You get the feeling that if our Lord were sitting visibly in the driver's seat, his next words would be, "So help me, I'm going to turn this synod around right now . . ."

### Brother's smelly socks

There had been signs that maybe things were different now. At the triennial convention in Houston last July, we agreed on a lot of things and disagreed without rancor on the others. I commented then that an embryonic trust between the terminally suspicious sides might be developing. And the rela-

tively comfortable silence in the intervening months bore that out.

Then, on the Tuesday of Holy Week, out of nowhere, like the brother's smelly socks in his sister's face that kick-starts the ongoing back seat argument, the host and producer of the radio show "Issues, Etc." on KFYO (the synod's radio station) were suddenly and inexplicably fired and the show cancelled effective immediately. No reason was given, and all traces of the show vanished from the station's website, including the archived shows.

Now, what is the big deal about a radio show being cancelled? Well, the show was a big favorite of the "confessional minority."

Before we go on, let me acknowledge up front that labels are a problem. Everyone objects to being labeled and claims to reject labels on principle, but knows the other side when he sees it. As in national politics where religious conservatives, Libertarians, socialists, populists, neo-conservatives, and a host of others are, for practical considerations, called red or blue, so in church matters there are all kinds of people and preferences and no label fits more than few people perfectly. But there is no way to talk about anything without broad categories, and as long as people understand them as broad and not precise categories, I stand firmly in the minority by finding them helpful to discussion.

### Four sides, more or less

In the case of the LCMS, there are really about four distinct "sides" and you can get a general sense of them by asking what church people would

join if the LCMS suddenly ceased to exist. One side could conceivably join the ELCA, albeit as part of the conservative wing of that body. Another side could operate fairly comfortably, given a little freedom on some Lutheran distinctives, within some brand of Evangelicalism. Those two sides combined tend to be a slight majority and support President Kieschnick.

Another side would go over to Rome or the East, while another side would join the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Wisconsin Synod, or join or perhaps form a new micro-synod. These sides combined constitute the “conservative” minority. Some describe the minority as “conservative,” some say “confessional,” some say liturgical or traditional. But pretty much any label is one the majority objects to on the grounds they’re conservative and confessional and liturgical, too.

If you want to know which side you’re dealing with, remember that the people who didn’t likely vote for President Kieschnick use “conservative” or “confessional” to describe themselves and “liberal” or “moderate” (or something derogatory) to describe the other side. Those who likely did vote for Kieschnick describe themselves with whatever word the other side used to describe itself, and then describe the other side with the same word, except with “ultra-” or “hyper-” or “arch-” attached as a prefix. Got that?

Let’s review. If the person you’re talking to mentions the “arch-confessionals,” you can bet your lunch that person supports President Kieschnick. If he talks about the “liberals” doing this or that, go ahead and bet he doesn’t support President Kieschnick. You might pick up the lunch tab once in a while, but I guarantee you’ll come out way, way ahead overall. Also, both sides will refer to the pro-Kieschnick side as “*Ablaze!*” but one side will mean it as an insult, the other side as a compliment.

### Minority flagship

Anyway, “Issues, Etc.” was a favorite, sort of the flagship of the minority, confessional – whatever you want to call them – side of synod. Syndicated on various radio stations, but mostly downloaded via podcast (about 250,000 times each month), it was a call-in talk show hosted by Pr. Todd Wilken. It featured nationally and internationally known guests discussing culture, religion, history, and a lot of is-

sues, etc. Hence the name.

The first program that comes up on the website now is from 2005 and featured Ed Meese of the Hoover Institute discussing the nomination of Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court; a pastor from Michigan discussing “Luther on Preaching”; Part V of a discussion of Luther’s writings, this one on *Bondage of the Will* presented by Dr. Martin Noland of the Concordia Historical Institute; and a sermon by an Orthodox priest on justification by faith. The show discussed anything. But it did so from a confessional Lutheran perspective often thought, rightly or wrongly, to be at odds with the synodical leadership and especially the *Ablaze!* outreach effort, which the confessional types (or arch-confessional types) find shallow and fraught with all the foibles of Evangelicalism, but which the regular confessionals (or moderates) consider to be a ground-breaking movement to help Lutherans get beyond the limitations of their grandfather’s old-fashioned church.

### Howl of protest

When the show got cancelled and the host and producer fired with no warning whatsoever, a howl of protest went up. The immediate assumption was that this was a raw political power play by the president of synod, even though technically such decisions are not made by the president of synod, but by the Board for Communication Services (BCS). Since the minority perceived it as a political move, they responded with political assumptions, and the blogosphere rang with the equivalent of “what did the president know, and when did he know it?”

The official line came out (belatedly) claiming the change in programming was entirely due to financial concerns, an explanation that strained credulity, sort of like the older brother claiming he smacked you because there was a bee on your head. For one thing, the explanation failed utterly to account for the total surprise and lack of even decent notice given, the deletion of the show and archives from the website (though that issue was soon remedied), or the delay in getting the explanation out. Many people (reasonably, it seems to me) assume that, had it really been a financial/stewardship move, there could have been months of advance notice that as of such and such a date the show would be cancelled, the reasoning behind the decision would have been released concurrently with the de-

cision, and the show's web presence and archives would have been entirely unaffected.

### Online petition

As of this writing nearly 7000 people, some of them heavy-hitters from many denominations, have signed an online petition to bring the show back – many of them leaving powerful and moving (and some nasty) comments and testimonies about the show, some detailing the role it played in their becoming Christian and Lutheran. You can read these names and comments at [www.petitionsonline.com](http://www.petitionsonline.com).

Ironically, here was something using the very modern medium of podcasting to proclaim the Gospel and interact with the world beyond the LCMS – the sort of thing *Ablaze!* is all about – and the perception is that the proponents of *Ablaze!* were behind shutting it down. At least a couple of district pastoral conferences have officially requested the show be resumed. But the financials released by the synod do seem to indicate the show cost a lot to produce and air. Stay tuned.

### Style or substance?

But one last note for now. What exactly do the “sides” disagree about? As I see it, the issue is whether we have any issues. One side says no, we don't have any substantive, doctrinal differences, but we simply disagree on externals of style, which are *adiaphora*. Therefore we should be able to live and let live and not worry about our differences

but just get on with our common mission of reaching the lost. This side is fond of the phrase “Evangelical style, Lutheran substance” (the title of a 1980's book advocating “contemporary” worship forms). To them, it's the same stuff, but with peppier, more 21<sup>st</sup>-century packaging.

The other side disagrees. They say the differences are over substance and not style. It comes in different packaging because it is different stuff. Message and medium, style and substance are not so easily disentangled according to this view. You can't offer Evangelical style and Lutheran substance any more than you can go to the store and buy a loaf of milk and a gallon of bread. The packaging, the form, informs and conforms to the substance. There is a reason, and it is an inherent reason, that we don't buy milk by the loaf or bread by the gallon. And to the (hyper-) conservatives there is a reason, and it is an inherent reason, that Lutherans don't worship with the trappings of Evangelicalism but should stick with their grandfather's church. Of course that is an old, ongoing argument that has dominated the back seat for several tanks of gas by now.

There will have to be a further official explanation about the cancellation of “Issues, Etc.” because it has caused a huge stir. But the explanation (I predict) won't be accepted; it will be received as something like: “I didn't kick you, my foot slipped.” “Well then I'm not hitting you, I'm having muscle spasms.” “You are not, now quit it!” “What?” “You know what! . . .”

—by Peter Speckhard, associate editor

## Omnium gatherum



**The waters of Meribah** • A number of ELCA pastors were puzzled by a request coming out of the office of the ELCA News Service. A staff member there noted March 22 was “World Water Day,” and solicited information about congregations that might be planning some special observance of the occasion. Responses suggested – some gently, others not so gently – that Holy Saturday was not normally trumped by secular advocacy “observances,” and that the primary water issue ELCA congregations should be thinking about on that day had to do with the waters of baptism at the Easter Vigil. But I wouldn't be surprised

if some enterprising pastors worked World Water Day into their homilies that evening – or, who knows, even the next morning. Disappointed, but not surprised.

**Marty's take on Jeremiah Wright** • There's been a lot of ink spilled about the brouhaha regarding Barack Obama's former pastor, Jeremiah Wright. Likely there'll be a lot more, especially if Sen. Obama is nominated by the Democrats. Pastors have found this a tricky situation, one in which several issues (the nature of pastor/parishioner relationships, the unique context of the African-American church, the

complexities of race in America) get mixed together. My opinion, one very worthwhile take on this is offered by Martin Marty – always an interesting writer (and one who has contributed to *FL* in the past), whether you agree with him or not. His thoughts were published in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and can be viewed at <http://chronicle.com/free/v54/i30/30b00101.htm>.

**Jesus for the road** • Oh, for Pete’s sake. The March issue of *The Lutheran* offers us a full-page tale of a cute little girl, five years old, who receives communion. That part is fine by me. What’s not so fine is that she breaks the wafer in half and carries part of it around with her through the week. It’s “Jesus for the road,” she says. “It helps me remember Jesus loves me.” Her mom marvels at how deeply the little girl understands the meaning of communion. One wonders if she understands it better than Luther and friends, who had some sharp things to say about Corpus Christi processions and other strange uses of the host outside the context of the communion liturgy. I think the technical term, at least the most benign one, is “superstition.” One can’t blame the five-year-old, whose impulses are certainly pure; but who the heck is providing catechesis in that congregation? And is *The Lutheran’s* criterion for publication “cute” rather than “theologically sound”? No, don’t answer that.

**If grace is true** • The associate editor reflected above on the trials and tribulations of the LCMS’s

now discontinued radio show. The ELCA has a radio show, too, called “Grace Matters.” A January installment raised a few eyebrows. Host Peter Marty interviewed Philip Gulley, a Quaker who has written a book called, *If Grace Is True: Why God Will Save Every Person*. Gulley admitted up front his book “jettisoned much traditional theology.” Truer words were never spoken. He believes God will ultimately save everyone (you know, Hitler, Attila the Hun, Jeffrey Dahmer, et. al.). This isn’t based on any particularly convincing Biblical evidence, but just on a general sense that the whole idea of “grace” requires us to believe all will be saved. This is clear, he said, to the spiritually mature – which he defined as those with “a keen awareness of self.” OK, then. Universalism is nothing new, of course; at least as long ago as Origen Christians have speculated about this. Usually they’ve been wise enough to be clear they are speculating, that it is, we might say, a “pious hope” that all will be saved rather than the clear teaching of Scripture or the doctrine of the church. Mr. Gulley apparently offers no such cautions. Pr. Marty’s reflection after the interview didn’t challenge his guest’s certitudes, and was more or less along the lines of our needing to remember that when Jesus said “No one comes to the Father but by me,” his words “were not intended as proof of Christianity’s superiority over other religions.” “There is great danger,” Pr. Marty suggested, “in believing that we know the truth more clearly than others.” Seems to me the greater danger is believing there are many truths, all more or less created equal.

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