

Examples of Disclaimers

An Example of a General Disclaimer

St. Paul's church library offers "Christian fiction" and other "do-it-yourself" books addressing personal and family issues. While these are good reading and may be helpful, there is an inherent danger in many of them written by authors who do not understand that conversion and faith are not of our choosing, but gifts of the Holy Spirit. The concept that man has some role in his conversion thereby gaining salvation is known as **decision theology** and is quite common in churches with a Reformed background. It is probably the major reason WELS librarians feel it necessary to disclaimer most or all books written by non-WELS people, even if they were purchased at Northwestern Publishing House.

Decision theology is fairly easy to recognize when the author gets to the part where he asks you to "make your decision for Christ" or "ask Jesus into your heart". But some of the less obvious manifestations of this false teaching are in regard to what is said about original sin, calling it a "tendency toward sin"; about baptism, seeing it not as the bestowal of grace but rather an outward sign of one's Christianity; and about prayer, calling it another means by which God brings his grace to us apart from Word and Sacrament. Anything other than complete reliance on what Jesus has done to accomplish our salvation robs God of due honor, praise and glory. So when reading non-NPH material, please be aware that this teaching is not consistent with WELS doctrine!

An excellent reference regarding this topic for both librarians and patrons is "Conversion", a very readable book in the People's Bible Teachings series by Prof. John Brenner. Confer with Pastor if you have additional concerns.

More General Disclaimers – *posted in the library or in most non-NPH books*

- Some publications may contain teachings not in harmony with WELS. Please read all disclaimed material with care. Address questions to Pastor.
- Opinions and doctrines expressed in the materials do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Wisconsin Synod and/or Immanuel pastors and faculty.
- Although this author writes from a Christian perspective, not every belief and doctrine expressed in this book may agree with the beliefs and doctrines of the Bible, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, and the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod. Be a discerning reader.
- Some of the materials in this library may contain references to doctrine that is not in complete agreement with what our church teaches. A specific example of this is the idea that a person can choose to believe in God. God's Word teaches that we come to faith entirely by the work of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel. Please keep this in mind as you read these books.

The following disclaimer in an old book that was borrowed through interlibrary loan from Maranatha Baptist Bible College. It could be adapted for use in our church libraries.

- Because this volume is shelved in the Library does not mean that Maranatha Baptist Bible College endorses its contents in reference to morals, philosophy, scientific content, theology, or Biblical separation. The Maranatha position in these areas is fundamental and well known. Very few books can be endorsed and subscribed to in their entirety.

Specific Disclaimers – for specific books or types of books

- The author sometimes writes about people having a specific moment of conversion. We know from God's Word that we are born again of water and the Spirit through Baptism. The Holy Spirit calls us to faith by the Gospel and makes us His children.

*Lord, 'tis not that I did choose you;
That, I know, could never be,
For this heart would still refuse you
Had your grace not chosen me,
You removed the sin that stained me,
Cleansing me to be your own;
For this purpose you ordained me,
That I live for you alone.*

*It was grace in Christ that called me,
Taught my darkened heart and mind,
Else the world had yet enthralled me,
To your heav'nly glories blind.
Now I worship none above you;
For your grace alone I thirst,
Knowing well that, if I love you,
You, O Father, loved me first.*

- Our library was established to provide spiritual enrichment. Some fictional materials may contain material that is not in full agreement with God's Word concerning Christian faith and life. We hope you will read all material with discernment. If you have any questions, please consult with one of the pastors.
- This material was not published by NPH. It may include thoughts or doctrine not held by the WELS. Remember we are saved only by the grace of God and the work of Jesus Christ. (Fiction books)
- The author makes reference to praying to saints. We know that only our Lord can hear and answer our prayers.

- This book is NOT the inspired Word of God. It is a historical novel based on real people and events which occurred during biblical times. The author has taken these people and events and embellished them with conversations, feelings, and backgrounds as is always done in historical fiction.
- There is mention of purgatory as a fact. We know God takes all souls to heaven at the time of death or sends them to hell. We do not have to wait to be judged.
- Romans 16:17 - I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.
- God commands us to be baptized. Among the many Bible passages, Read Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12 and Acts 16:15. Scripture says nothing specifically about the eternal state of those who never were born.

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