

## **Leaves Of Hope #15**

Family Devotion written by C.M. Gullerud

May God bestow on us his grace,  
With blessings rich provide us,  
And may the brightness of his face  
To life eternal guide us  
That we his saving health may know,  
His gracious will and pleasure,  
And also to the heathen show  
Christ's riches without measure  
And unto God convert them.

L.H. 500, Verse 1 Martin Luther, 1524

### **Ecclesiastes 7: 7-9**

**Extortion turns a wise man into a fool, and a bribe corrupts the heart. The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride. Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.**

If we look for a general lesson to be learned from the words of our text it would be this: Do not try to reach a desired goal by resorting to means which may bring quick results but which would also antagonize and make people angry. Do not act in haste. Do not be in a hurry to pass judgment.

One of the great evils of our day is the tendency to over-react. We find it happening in home, school, church, and state. The exercise of calm and sober judgment is a rare thing. Not only do people get angry when things do not go their way, but they resort to unwise and often sinful means to reach their goals. In this kind of soil, the practice of bribery is planted. In this kind of soil, tyranny takes root. In this kind of soil, rebellion and revolt grow up. Think of the blood bath of the French Revolution with its blind hot-headedness. Had the people considered the extremes that their revolt was leading them - there would no doubt have been some second thoughts and that would have changed the course of history.

What a difference there is between this spirit and that which the Holy Ghost works in the hearts of God's children. The spirit of patience and love toward those who are against us is the spirit in which Christ our Savior carried out his mission. Had he reacted by impulse, as we often are inclined to do, he would have turned his back on all of us. He would have left this earth without going through that bitter suffering and death which was so necessary for our salvation. But Jesus' decision to do all that was required for our redemption was calmly and deliberately made. He looked to the end result, and so he put his foot on the path which led to

the cross on the hill of Golgotha. Then, after the resurrection, he ascended into heaven and together with the Father sends the Holy Spirit to us so that we might come to faith and carry out our mission.

A Lamb goes uncomplaining forth,  
The guilt of all men bearing;  
And laden with the sins of earth,  
None else the burden sharing!  
Goes patient on, grows weak and faint,  
To slaughter led without complaint,  
That spotless life to offer;  
Bears shame, and stripes, and wounds and death,  
Anguish and mockery, and says,  
“Willing all this I suffer.”

L.H. 142:1 Paul Gerhardt, 1648