

# **Farewell to the Old World**

**By**

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**with**

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## **Introduction**

*What makes a man and a woman leave their home and their homeland and travel far distances to create a new life? We have been brought up to believe that people come to North America seeking a better life: freedom, opportunity, and economic security, and while that may often times be the case, conditions in their own place of birth are similarly often the impetus for even thinking of leaving home. If you stop to consider a moment, who would leave their homeland and never come back, if they had the life they wanted there, where the intimacy of their native tongue allowed them to express themselves and understand others in ways they might never again in a new language? Where their childhood memories made the surroundings oh so familiar? Where their family and friends, and all the community they ever sought, made their own lives? Where the hills and valleys, streams, rivers, and lakes, trees, animals, and plants, and the highways and byways were as familiar to them as a good friend?*

*Certainly, some people have wanderlust and want to see new vistas, and some look for opportunity and it is to be found in new places, but many want to go home again at some point. Immigrating to a new place and never looking back is often caused by sad circumstances, by something gone awry in one's own homeland, whether it be war, unrest, overpopulation, poverty, family problems, or the lack of freedom. As one of my students said, whose family willingly chose to emigrate from Rumania when the opportunity presented itself, one must think carefully about leaving behind all that one loves: "... I think it is very difficult to imagine what 'to immigrate to another country' means, to live in another culture, to leave family and friends behind, and especially to abandon one's own heritage. ... I also think that our culture, our identity is very important, and we must not leave our country so fast, only because we want to make more and more money. Money is not everything, but it is true that we need it to live. However, we must also be careful, when we make the decision to leave our country and family.... For me family comes first. And although my parents and I have legal visas here in America, it is still hard. We live in a country where there are so many opportunities, but we are also very far from where we grew up. To be homesick is, I think, the most difficult feeling that one can have." Thus, even if one may want to leave, one is leaving so much behind.*

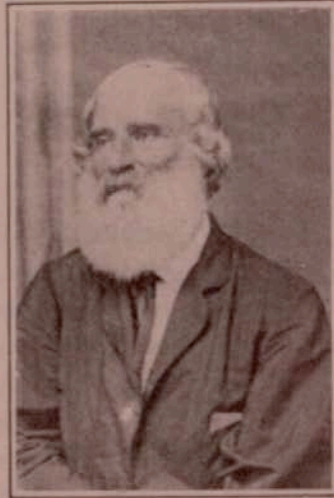
*So what about us or our ancestors who moved to Texas? What were their reasons for coming? I myself came from Kansas via Missouri and California following my career, for Texas was where the good job was. As far as Texans' ancestors are concerned, there are many reasons people came to Texas, given that we all have many direct line ancestors. Depending on the time they came and the circumstances that led them to do so, some left their country because they sought a better economic life, some because*

*they wanted more freedom of expression, some because the crowding of human life in the cities and towns was stifling, some because war drove them away, some because they were captured and brought to the Americas, some because they left heartache and a family in shreds because tuberculosis or other diseases had killed their mothers, sisters, and brothers, some because they were adventurers and wanted to "see the world," and some because they were told they could live better in the new place than the old and were encouraged to buy up lots in what would later be New Braunfels or some other town. Some came for a number of these reasons.*

*Adolph Fuchs was just such an immigrant. A Lutheran minister, he left Mecklenburg-Schwerin, in present-day northeastern Germany in 1845 and came to Texas. In our library's Special Collections here at UT Arlington we have a pamphlet that was published in San Antonio after he came to Texas, rendering in print his last sermon to his congregation in the old country. In this sermon he explained what made him make such a momentous decision, for he came bringing his wife and seven children, and they made their home in Texas for the rest of their lives. What follows is the text of that pamphlet, translated into English. Notes and commentary follow the translation.*

*August 21, 2010*

# Abschied von der alten Welt.



## Eine Abschieds-Predigt

gehalten zu Rölzow in Mecklenburg-Schwerin am  
XX. S. n. Tr. 1845

— von —

ADOLPH FUCHS.

Prediger daselbst.

Der Redner ist bereits über Bremen nach Texas ausgewandert. Er hatte schon lange den Plan, seine Pfarre aufzugeben und über's Meer in die neue Welt zu ziehen. Vergleiche Fuchs, A., Das neue Vaterland. Ein Lied mit Anmerkungen. Rostock, 1836.

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Der Geistliche ist oft an die Vorstellungen - Aeten seiner Gemeinde gebunden. Es gereicht ihm daher keineswegs zum Vorwurf der Ungehorsamkeit, wenn er in Amtsgeschäften dem fremden Urtheil gegen seine eigene Meinung gemäß folgt; es wird vielmehr leicht sehr anmaßlich von ihm sein, der Gemeinde nur seine Ansicht aufzudringen. In solchen Fällen der fremden Ueberzeugung zu folgen, ohne sie für die meinsige auszugeben, ist also durchaus der Pflicht nicht zuwider, indessen muß es freilich für ein wahrhaftes und lauterer Gemüth sehr drückend und widerwärtig bleiben, bei bedeutender Abweichung der eignen Ueberzeugung von der öffentlich sanctionirten Meinung ein solches Amt zu verwalten.

Fries, Ethik. S. 69.

## Friede sei mit Euch!

Es sind nun mehr denn zehn Jahre, Ihr Lieben, seit ich Euer Prediger ward, und es ist heute das letzte Mal, daß ich zu Euch rede.—Wie sollte ein solcher Tag nicht mein Jüngeres ergötzen! Und auch Euch, das glaube ich! wird es sein ganz gleichgültiger Tag sein.

Es war am zweiten Sonntage nach Oheim des Jahres fünf und dreißig, als ich zu Euren Prediger eingeführt ward, das Evangelium des Tages war das Evangelium—von guten Hirten!—Das war mir von rührender schöner Bedeutung: ich erinnerte mir ein solches Leben, ein herrliches Wechselmessen zwischen Hirte und Herde. War es denn nur ein Traum?—Ach, eben dieses Evangelium sprach ja auch—vom Viehhirten, ja, von dem Viehhirten, der die Schafe nicht liebt, der sie verläßt und flucht, wenn der Wolf kommt, der Wolf, der die Schafe erschleht und zerstücket.

Sin ich ein solcher Viehhirten, ein treuloser Viehhirten? Das wäre freilich ein höchst schmerzliches, ein peinliches Bewußtsein.

Unter einem Viehhirten, Ihr Christen, wird verstanden ein Hirte, dessen Herz ohne Liebe ist, dem das Schicksal seiner Herde gleichgültig ist, ein Mensch, der mehr fragt nach dem Irdischen, Weltlichen, als nach dem Himmlischen und Geistigen, mehr nach Geld und Gut, als nach Dem, was wahren Werth hat, mehr nach dem Leben eines ewangelischen Predigers, als nach ewangelischer Wahrheit und Tugend. Habt Ihr mich nun je als einen solchen Menschen kennen gelernt? Dann nennt mich immerhin einen Viehhirten, denn denn verliere ich's.

Aber wenn Du ein Solcher nicht bist, warum willst Du uns denn verlassen, meint Ihr.

Meine theure Gemeinde, hätte ich Euch das Versprechen gegeben, nimmermehr von Euch zu gehen, dann würde ich Euch nicht verlassen. Nun aber meine ich, es könnte wohl sein, daß mancher Hirt, der seine Gemeinde nicht verläßt, noch je verlassen will, doch in der That nichts anders, als ein Viehhirten wäre. Sollte das nicht auch umgekehrt möglich sein!

Hab freier, mühte ich mir nicht mit Ohr und Befürchten, daß durch mein Töngelchen meiner Herde ein schlimmes Schicksal drohe, oder daß der Wolf, wie Christus spricht, die Herde erschleht und zerstücket werde: o, auch dann würde ich Euch nicht verlassen. Aber das zu befürchten, wäre doch wohl ein unerhörter Stolz. Nein, Ihr Lieben, ich fürchte nicht, daß Ihr bei dem Obermannne, der zu meinem Nachfolger bestimmt ist, weniger gut berathen sein werdet, als bei mir—und ich bitte Gott, daß Euer Leben mit ihm ein so schönes, acht christliches werden möge, wie ich's mir je erheut habe.

Aber warum—warum willst Du denn von uns, hinaus in ein unsicheres Leben?

Freilich, Ihr treibt mich nicht von Euch, vielmehr glaube ich gerne daran mit mir und der geordneten Berücksichtigung, daß Ihr mich gern behalten hättet,—auch haben wir immer in Frieden mit einander gelebt—ich glaube kaum, daß ich einen einzigen Feind unter Euch habe—und nicht wenig in Frieden haben wir gelebt, Liebe sogar habt Ihr mir Heil bewiesen, das erkenne ich mit dankbarem Herzen.

Und dennoch, sprecht Ihr, dennoch willst Du fort?

Ja, dennoch Ihr Lieben, will und werde ich Euch verlassen.—Ihr könnt aber mit Recht von mir fordern, daß

ich Euch Rechenhaft gebe — wenigstens in der Hauptfrage — über die Gründe, die mich den Sinnen treiben; und das will ich denn jetzt unter Gottes Hand thun.

Ich möchte demgemäß meinen Zeit an dem alten Jerusalem, und zwar aus dem 12. Kapitel des ersten Buches Mose, wo die Worte im 1. und 2. Verse also lauten :

„Und der Herr sprach zu Abraham : Gehe aus deinem Vaterlande, und von deiner Freundschaft, und von deines Vaters Hause, in ein Land, das ich dir zeigen will. Und ich will dich zum großen Volk machen, und will dich segnen.“

Wenn wir nach den Gründen fragen, warum der edle Stammvater des jüdischen Volks sein Mesopotamien verließ, und über den Guphrat in das ferne Palästina zog, so bleibt freilich die Antwort schwierig, und wir müssen uns genügen lassen an dem Wenigen, was die heilige Schrift uns darüber erzählt : daß nämlich in seinem Herzen die Stimme Gottes laut ward, welche zu ihm sprach : mache dich auf, gehe aus deinem Vaterlande in ein Land, das ich dir zeigen will, und ich will dich zum großen Volk machen und will dich segnen. Im Einzelnen aber mögen seine Gründe, wie seine Hoffnungen, mannigfacher Art gewesen sein. Er wird seine innern und seine äußern Rücksichten dabei getrennt haben; die innern werden vielleicht religiöser Art gewesen sein, die äußern aber höchst wahrscheinlich keine andern, als die, daß es ihm in seinem alten Vaterlande an hinlänglichem Raum fehlte für seine Heerden und Ditten : er suchte ein Land, wo die Bevölkerung schwächer, und also der Raum größer wäre.

Es ist nun in der Hauptfrage mit mir nicht anders. Auch ich habe meine äußern und meine innern Gründe, oder mit andern Worten, meine niede-

ren und meine höhern, meine irdischen und meine religiösen.

#### Von den irdischen Ursachen.

Es gibt Menschen genug, welche noch immer nicht glauben wollen, daß in unserm deutschen Vaterlande, wie wohl einst in Mesopotamien, der Mensch zu viele hat, aber daß wir, wie man's zu nennen pflegt, an Uebersättigung leiden. Und freilich könnten wohl bei uns der Menschen noch viel mehr wohnen, wenn nämlich Kanakés bei uns anders wäre, als es ist, wenn i. B. die Güter dieser Welt, und namentlich der Grund und Boden, nicht so ungleichmäßig vertheilt wären. Es ist aber einmal nichts anders, und — es ist schwer, die Dinge anders zu machen, als sie seit Jahrhunderten sind : schwer, sage ich, ist das zu erreichen auf dem Wege des Rechts; — und auf dem Wege des Unrechts? — durch Raub und Blutsvergießen? — C, der Himmel bewahre mein Vaterland vor den Gräueln der Revolution!

Nein, meine Theuren, wenn es einmal nicht zu läugnen ist, daß es den Bewohnern unlers Vaterlandes, und namentlich den Vätern großer Familien, von Tage zu Tage schwerer gemacht wird, sich und die Ihrigen ehrlich durch's Leben zu bringen, weil nämlich der Andrang zu jeder Art von Erwerb von Tage zu Tage unerbittlich zunimmt — und daß ich eben das Zeichen von Uebersättigung; — wenn es ferner nicht zu läugnen ist, daß auf diese Weise Armuth — und schlechte Sitten — immer mehr überhand nehmen müssen; so gilt es, die geeigneten Wege einzuschlagen, um diesen Uebel abzuheben; und Einer dieser Wege ist der, daß man Raum schafft, daß Einer den Andern Platz mache, und also ihm Gelegenheit gebe, sein Brod zu erwerben. Dies hat unser Volk denn auch längst erkannt; darum giehen alljährlich viele

Tausende aus dem überfülltesten Lande in solche Länder, wo es der Menschen wenig, des fruchtbarsten Landes aber viel giebt. — Ja freilich, wie könnte es wohl um unser deutsches Vaterland, wenn nicht seit Jahrhunderten so viele Millionen ihre alte Heimath verlassen hätten? Warum wandert ihr mich denn tadeln, wenn ich es thue?

Aber Ihr meint vielleicht: bist Du es denn nicht, der uns so oft zugruft hat: Seget nicht! Sehet die Vögel unter dem Himmel an, sie säen nicht, sie ernten nicht, sie sammeln nicht in die Scheuern, und eure himmlische Vater nährt sie doch! Und: sehet die Vögel auf dem Felde, sie arbeiten nicht, auch spinnen sie nicht, und doch ist Salomon in aller seiner Derrlichkeit nicht bestattet gewesen, wie derselben Sinn. — Warum denn in's ferne Land? Ist nicht die Erde überall des Herrn? Und ist das Seine Ergebung, Seine Demuth? — Ja, wohl habe ich Euch oft, und mit aufrichtigem Herzen zugruft: seget nicht! Sehet die Vögel unter dem Himmel, und die Vögel des Feldes; aber niemals habe ich gesagt: laßt eure Hände untätig im Schooße ruhen, laßt nur Alles gehn, wie es will, und wartet, bis der Herr für Euch sorgen wird; vielmehr habe ich Euch oft daran erinnert, wie es eben des Herrn Wille sei, daß der Mensch im Schwelche seines Angehörs sein Brod esse. Und, warum in's ferne Land, meint Ihr, die Erde sei ja überall des Herrn? Nun, eben weil sie überall des Herrn ist, so jenzeit, wie dieszeit des Meeres; ja, weil überall auf Erden dieselbe Sonne scheint, und derselbe himmlische Vater regnet, die ihn fürchten, so kann's nicht so sehr ankommen auf das Wo, und auf das Fern oder Nahe. Endlich, an die Ergebung in Gottes Willen, an die Demuth wendet Ihr mich mahnen? C, Ihr Vögel, es ist sicherlich nicht Got-

tes Wille, uns in einen überfülltesten Lande verflümmern zu lassen, während die reichsten Länder der Erde noch menschenleer sind. Und, wenn der Herr mit einem freundlich frommen Muth und frischen Muthen seinem Gott vertraut, das heißt auch demüthig sein.

Freilich, ob der Herr nun auch wirklich mit mir sein werde — ob also des Herrn Wert an Abraham: und ich will Euch segnen, wirklich auch mir gesen werde, ja, das ruht in Gottes Hand. — Vielleicht zweifelt Ihr; aber wenigstens weiß ich, daß Eure Segenswünsche mich und die Meinigen begleiten; und ich — ich hoffe und bete. Aber meine Hoffnungen sind ja auch nicht auf große Schätze gerichtet; Reichtum ist nie mein Loosden gewesen, und wird es nie sein. Wenn jetzt mein Wahlpruch heißt: hoffe und bete! so wird es künftig heißen: arbeite und bete! Ja, Ihr lieben Christen, ich will lieber in Zukunft im Schwelche meines Angehörs mein Brod essen, als hier — von dem Ueberflusse der Reichen, und von dem sanft erworbenen Gelde der Armen — um Gottesmilien erhalten werden. Ich will in den irdischen Dingen lieber von Gott, als von Menschen abhängig sein.

Kennt Ihr das ein übertriebenes Streben nach Freiheit oder Unabhängigkeit? einem solchen Geringe, einem werthlosen Stroh? So bete ich Euch, daß ich mich eines solchen Stolzes und eines solchen Strebens nach Freiheit nicht schäme.

Und so komme ich denn dazu, Euch auch die innern Gründe zu nennen, welche mich bewegen, Euch zu verlassen.

Ihr Vögel, wenn ich so eben sagte: ich will in den irdischen, zeitlichen Dingen lieber von Gott, als von Menschen abhängig sein, so gilt mir das noch viel mehr von den geistlichen, und also auch von den religiösen und kirchlichen. Nun ist aber dies meine Pri-

nung—obgleich nicht bloß die meinige, sondern die von vielen tausend Christen unserer Lage— daß unser öffentliches religiöses, d. h. unter kirchliches Leben in seiner ganzen Einrichtung im Irigen liegt; daß es himmelweit verschieden ist von der Kirche, die Christus in Sitten gekennet war, und daß es kaum eine Spur hat von der Freiheit, die, wie er sagte, durch die Wahrheit kommen soll. In Menschenvergessenheit ist die Freiheit der Kirche zu Grunde gegangen, in Menschenvergessenheit aber, die nicht einmal von dem Willen der gesamten Kirche, d. h. aller Gläubigen, ausgegangen sind, sondern nur von einigen Willkürigen in derselben, die als Priester oder Könige das religiöse Leben aller Lebigen beauftragten. Eine ächt christliche Kirche kann aber nur da bestehen, wo freier Gewissensgenuss und Glaubensgenossenschaft sich findet; wo die Gemeinde, d. h. die Gesamtheit aller Gläubigen, völlig frei, durch ihre selbstgewählten Vertreter, ihr öffentliches religiöses Leben nach besserer Einsicht anordnet. Solche Religions-Freiheit, more nicht nach Außen, aber in ihrem eignen Innern, besah die erste christliche Kirche mit ihrem Christus oder Vorkämpfer; und lebten wir nicht zu ihr zurück, so wird unter kirchlichem Leben öffentlich immer mehr verfallen, und die Theilnahme der Christen am Christenthum immer mehr verschwinden!

C, wahrlich, darin ist es schon weit genug gekommen!

Nach bei Euch, Ihr lieben Christen? Wie unter Euch das religiöse Leben in der Welt des Irigen beschaffen sei, darüber steht mir kein Urtheil zu, hier am wenigsten. Ihr selbst werdet ja wissen, wie Ihr steht mit Eurem Gott, und mit Eurem Heiland. Aber daß das öffentliche religiöse Leben unter Euch sich seiner großen Theilnahme erfreut, daß habe ich förmlich erlab-

ten schon am Tage meiner Antrittsrede, welche nicht mehr als vierzehn Zuhörer fand. Wenn aber nun später die Zahl bere, welche hier Gott die Ehre gaben, oft nicht größer, vielmehr häufig noch geringer war— war ich denn nicht vielleicht selbst schuld daran? Ja, wohl bekenne ich's offen, daß mir jeglicherlei bei der Vorbereitung auf den Sonntag der fröhliche Muth und der heilige Eifer fehlte, wenn ich wiederum erwarten mußte, in einem leeren Gotteshause zu predigen.— Oder war ich nicht vielleicht aus einem andern Grunde schuld daran? Vielleicht konnte und durfte Euch das nicht gefallen, was ich Euch hier für meine Meinung gab, weil es— ja weil es nicht das war, was Ihr unter dem wahren Christenthum verhandelt? Nein, darin bin ich schuldlos, denn unmöglich konnte ich Euch doch etwas Anderes für meine Meinung geben, als was ich, ich selbst für wahres Christenthum, oder für die Hauptsache im Evangelium hielt! Sollte Euch das nicht gefallen haben? Sina, daß ich immer einen höheren Werth lege auf das Auserwählte vom Heil und auf das In-einem-neuen-Leben-mandeln, als auf die Auserhebung des Heilandes? einen höheren Werth auf den Wandel im Himmel, als auf sein ewiges Leben und seine Gottbegehrung immer viel wichtiger waren, als alle die Wunder, die mit ihm und durch ihn geschehen? daß mir das Wort: Ihr seid meine Freunde, so Ihr thut, was das von dem Namen, das der Welt Sünde trägt? das Wort von der Liebe wichtiger, als das vom Glauben und von der Hoffnung?— Wäre Ihr darin anderer Meinung gewesen? Nun, wie gesagt, so wäre ich schuldlos, denn ich konnte Euch unmöglich etwas Anderes für von mir verkündete Wahr-

heit geben, als was ich für Wahrheit hielt.

Das also beunruhigt mich nicht.

Aber etwas Anderes hat mich tausendmal beunruhigt, gedrückt, gepeinigt,— und treibt mich nun von hinnen. Wenn ich Euch nämlich auch immer ehrlich nur Das als meine Meinung gegeben habe, was meine wahre Meinung war; ja, wenn ich Euch auch nie gelogen habe: so müßte ich Euch doch bei tausend und aber tausend Veranlassungen meine innere Ueberzeugung— verheimlichen; müßte es aus bloßen, sowohl Euch als mich betreffenden Gründen der Klugheit; das konnte ich nicht länger ertragen!— Ihr Christen, wenn nicht einmal in der Religion, nicht einmal im Gotteshause die reine laute Wahrheit— das heißt, was der Mensch, der Sprechende, für reine laute Wahrheit erkennt— gelten soll und darf, wo dann? Werden wir dann je im Leben der Lage quitt werden? Oder soll und muß etwa ein jeder Prediger mit jedem Einzelnen in seiner Gemeinde genau in seinen religiösen Meinungen übereinstimmen? Das zu erreichen, ist ebenfalls unmöglich: die religiösen Ansichten der Menschen werden immer verschieden bleiben, auch wenn man sie äußerlich zu einer Herde vereinigt, ja, wenn auch überall und Eine Herde werden sollte; es kann nicht anders sein, so gewis die Verstandesbildung und die Schicksale der einzelnen Menschen immer verschieden bleiben werden.

Aber eben darum soll man auch jedem Einzelnen, und jeder Gemeinde, und jeder Partei ihren Glauben, ihre Gemüther, und ihre Gottesbegehrung lassen— das ist Religions-Freiheit!— und soll nicht meinen, man müsse aller Menschen Geister unter Einen Dachboden vereinigen—das ist Anechtspflicht!

—und das gebiert nur Verfolgung und Zwang.

Und eben darum muß auch nicht jeder Prediger für jede Gemeinde, wenigstens nicht für die Mehrzahl, welche natürlich immer entscheiden muß. Ihr Leben, Ihr thut weder einen reformirten Prediger gebunden, noch einen katholischen, noch einen heilsuchtholischen, noch—mid, es muß ein Prediger sein, der in seinen religiösen Ansichten wenigstens mit der Mehrzahl unter Euch möglichst genau übereinstimmt. Und einen solchen, das hoffe ich, habt Ihr in meinem Nachfolger erwählt. C, möge Gott Eurer ehrenden Verbindung mit ihm segnen!

Aber möchte nun auch Niemand unter Euch sein, der diese meine offenen Bekenntnisse, und deren Veranlassung mißdeutete, Niemand namentlich, der da glaubte, daß ich, weil ich meine bisherige Stellung aufgab, den Beruf eines christlichen Predigers überhaupt geringschätzte, oder gar, daß ich das Christenthum selbst nicht ehere, daß ich mich des Evangeliums schäme—daß es also eigentlich kein rechter Ernst—oder vielmehr: nichts sei mit allen meinen bisherigen Lehren und Ermahnungen—alles nicht!

C, Gott bewahre Euch vor solcher Mißdeutung! Sie könnte mancher Seele unter Euch großen, unberechenbaren Schaden thun, denn sie könnte dazu beitragen, ein Herz am Ende völlig gleichgültig zu machen gegen all unser-kirchliches Leben nicht bloß, sondern gar gegen allen christlichen Glauben und alle christliche Tugend. Sie könnte aber freilich auch nur bei jener Herde, halben Bildung sich finden, die ohnehin schon wenig oder nichts glaubt, und des Evangeliums sich schon längst gekümmert hat.

So hört denn: ich habe mich noch nie des Evangeliums geschämt, und werde mid, desselben auch nie schämen,

denn ich glaube wirklich und wahrhaftig, daß darin eine Kraft Gottes enthalten sei, feilig zu machen alle, die daran glauben, d. h. alle, die es verdienen, den Lebendigen Herra aus der toten Schale des Sündensandes zu lösen; und ich ehre darum auch das Christenthum, und ehre den christlichen Predigerberuf, ja, wenn eine solche Befreiung nöthig ist, ich werde sogar, obgleich ich diesen Beruf jetzt aufgeben, auch jenseit des Meeres nicht aufhören, Wahrheit zu predigen und für das Reich Gottes auf Erden zu wirken, so viel ich vermag.

Und hoffst Du, so meint Ihr wohl, daß Gott Dich dort, wie in den leidlichen, so auch in diesen höchsten Gütern segnen werde? Hoffst wohl gar, daß er Dich wie den Abraham, zu einem großen Volk, und nicht bloß zu einem zahlreichen, sondern zu einem geistig großen, gebildeten, frommen, gerechten Volk machen werde? — Ja, würde ich hoffe ich das. Und wenn ich es nicht hoffe, nicht hoffen dürfte, so würde ich wahrlich mein altes Vaterland nicht verlassen.

Seht, so hoffe ich denn auch, daß dort, wo zwar nicht mehr das Amt, und das Reich, sondern nur der Mensch an mir wird gedacht werden; ich hoffe, so gewiß Gott überall in den Herzen der Menschen wohnt, und nicht bloß in Tempeln, die von Menschenhänden gemacht sind; — ich hoffe, sage ich, daß dort, wo in der That zu finden ist, was wir nicht kennen, Religions-Frei-

heit, im Laufe der Jahre eine Gemeinde sich bilden werde, die würdig ist, mit dem schönsten Heilthum der christlichen Gemeinde verglichen zu werden.

Das hoffe ich!

Und doch, Ihr Lieben, wird mir der Abschied von Euch schwer. Scheiden thut weh! — Es wäre anders, wenn ich Euch und Ihr mich nicht liebte!

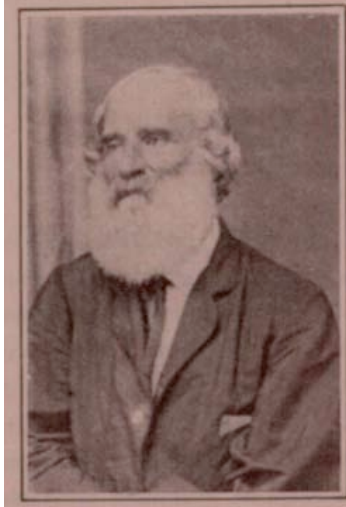
O, verdammt mich nicht! Ich kann nicht anders!

Bewahrt mir Gute Liebe, die Ihr mir stets bewiesen habt. Auch ich werde nicht aufhören, Guter, auch in der Ferne, liebend zu gedenken.

Nun Abschied wünsche ich Euch alles Gute. Den Kleinen, die durch mich die heilige Taufe empfangen, wünsche ich, daß sie zu ihrer Eltern Freude gedeihen und zu Gottes Ehre! Den Jünglingen und Jungfrauen, die hier in meine Hand ewige Treue ihrem Gott und Vaterlande geloben — daß sie nimmer treulos ihr Gelübde brechen! Den Ehegatten, deren Bund ich segnete, daß sie einander Liebe und Treue bewahren! Denen, die hier am Tische des Herrn Trost und Stärke suchen — daß sie diese Früchte gefunden haben und weiter finden mögen! Den Glücklichen und Weichen unter Euch wünsche ich — Demuth, den Unglücklichen und Armen — frohblickenden Muth! Euch allen, Männern und Frauen, Alten und Jungen, wünsche ich Frieden und Freude und einft ein seliges Ende, durch Jesum Christum!

A m e n!

## **Farewell to the Old World**



### **A Farewell Sermon**

held in Kölzow in Mecklenburg-Schwerin on the  
Twentieth Sunday after Trinitatis [Trinity Sunday], 1845

by

ADOLPH FUCHS,

Preacher at the event

The speaker has already emigrated via Bremen to Texas. He had planned for a long time to give up his parish and make the journey across the sea to the New World. Compare Fuchs, A., "The New Country: A Song with Annotations." Rostock, 1836.

The clergyman is often bound to the nature of his congregation's beliefs and views. Therefore, in no way does it redound to a criticism of falseness or insincerity in him if he, in the course of his official functions as a clergyman, speaks against his own view in accordance with a different view; it will much more readily be very pretentious of him, to force only his perspective on the congregation. To follow the different view, without circulating it as one's own, is thus by all means not contrary to one's duty. However, for a straightforward and ingenuous mind it must linger as very oppressive and offensive to administrate such an office, while deviating significantly in one's own conviction from the officially sanctioned view.

Fries, Ethics. §69.

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Printing by Nic Teng, San Antonio, Texas.

## Peace Be With You!

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More than ten years have now passed, my dear friends, since I became your preacher; and today is the last day that I will speak with you. – How can such a day as this not grip me to the core of my soul? And for you – this I believe! – it will not be a completely indifferent day either.

It was on the second Sunday after Easter in the year Eighteen Hundred and Thirty-Five, that I was introduced as your pastor. The Gospel of the day was the Gospel – of the Good Shepherd! That was a touchingly beautiful omen for me. I imagined a wonderful life, a delightful interaction between shepherd and flock. Was it then only a dream? Well, this very Gospel also spoke – of the hireling, yes, of the hireling who does not love the sheep, who leaves them and flees when the wolf comes, the wolf that catches and disperses the sheep.

Am I such a hireling, a faithless hireling? That would indeed be a most painful, distressing judgment.

By a hireling, dear Christians, I mean a shepherd whose heart is without love, who is indifferent to the fate of his flock, a person who cares more for that which is of the earth than that which is of heaven and the spirit, more about money and property than that which has true worth, more for the salary of a Christian preacher than of Christian truth and virtue. Have you ever known me to be such a man? If so, call me a hireling after all, for then I deserve it.

‘But if you are not such a person, then why do you want to leave us?’ you ask.

My beloved congregation, if I had promised you that I would never part from you, then I would not leave you. Now however, I believe it could well be the case, that many a shepherd who does not leave his flock, nor ever wants to leave, in reality might yet be nothing other than a hireling. Shouldn’t the inverse of that also be true?

And furthermore, if I really had reason to fear that through my leaving, an evil fate would threaten my flock, or that the wolf, as Christ says, were to catch and scatter the flock, oh, then I would also not leave you. But to fear that would be contemptible self-importance. No, my dear people, I am not doubtful that you will be less well counseled by the gentleman, who has been appointed my successor, than by me – and I pray God, that your life with him may be as beautiful, as genuinely Christian, as I have ever wished it with me.

‘But why must you go away to a life of uncertainty?’

Indeed, you are not driving me away from you; instead, I prefer to believe your assurances, given me here and there, that you would have gladly retained me. -- Indeed, we have always lived in peace with each other – I believe that I hardly have an enemy among you. – And not just in peace have we lived, even love it was that

you have always shown me. I recognize that with a thankful heart.

‘And even so,’ you say, ‘even so, you intend to go?’

Yes, even so, dear friends, I intend to leave you. – You can rightly demand of me, that I give you an account – at least in essence – of the reasons, which drive me from here; and that is what I want to do now, with God’s help.

With that in mind, I choose my text from the Old Testament, and namely from the twelfth chapter of the first Book of Moses, where the words in the first and second verses read as follows:

‘And the Lord spoke unto Abraham: Go forth from thy country and thy kindred and thy father’s house to the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee.’

If we ask the reasons why the noble ancestor of the tribe of the Jewish people left his Mesopotamia and journeyed across the Euphrates into distant Palestine, of course the answer remains complex, and we have to satisfy ourselves with the little that the Holy Word tells us about it: namely that ‘the Word of God became loud in his heart and spoke to him: Go forth from thy country and thy kindred and thy father’s house to the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee.’ Specifically, however, his reasons, like his hopes and desires, may have been many. He probably had his internal and external considerations in that regard. His

internal reasons would perhaps have been of a religious nature, but the external ones would most probably have been none other than the fact that there was not enough room in the old country for his herds and shepherds. He would have sought a country where the population was less and the space therefore greater.

With me it is essentially no different. I too have my external and internal reasons or, in other words, my lower and my higher, my earthly and my religious, reasons.

### **Of the Earthly Reasons First**

There are people enough, who still do not want to believe, that in our own country, as probably once in Mesopotamia, there are too many people, or that we, as one is accustomed to say, suffer from overpopulation. And of course still more people could live here among us, if, namely, some things were different here than they are; if, for example, property were not so unevenly distributed. However, things are not different at all, and – it is difficult to make things different from what they have been for hundreds of years; difficult, I say, to achieve that in just ways. And in unjust ways? – Through revolt and the shedding of blood? – Oh, dear heaven, preserve my country from the horrors of revolution!

No, my beloved friends, if it cannot be denied that it is, from day to day, made more difficult for the inhabitants of our country, and especially the fathers of large families, to give life and sustenance to their families by honest means, because namely the rush to every kind of

acquisition shamefully grows from day to day—and that is exactly the sign of overpopulation; -- furthermore, when it cannot be denied that in this way poverty – and immorality – are bound to take the upper hand ever more and more; then it is valid to pursue one's own ways to remedy these grievances. And one of these ways is to create more space, to make room for the other, and give him the opportunity to obtain his daily bread. Our people have also recognized this for a long time. Therefore, every year many thousands move away from this overpopulated country to such countries as there are few people, but there is much fertile land. – Yes, indeed, how would it stand with our German country if, for hundreds of years, so many millions had not left their old native land? Then why do you want to reprimand me, when I do the same?

But perhaps you mean to say: 'Aren't you the one who so often called on us by saying: Do not worry! Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet thy heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they labour not, neither do they spin. Yet not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed as one of these. Why then go so far away? Does not the earth everywhere belong to the Lord? And is your resignation your humility?' – Yes, indeed I have often called upon you, and with an honest heart, saying: 'Do not worry! Look at the birds in the sky and the lilies in the field;' but never have I said: 'Let your hands rest inactive in your laps, just let everything happen

as it may, and wait until the Lord provides for you.' Rather, I have often reminded you of the Lord's will that man should earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. 'And why a distant land,' you say, 'as everywhere the earth is of the Lord?' Well, just that, because everywhere is of the Lord, on that side of the ocean, as well as on this; yes, because everywhere on the earth it is the same sun that shines, and the same heavenly Father who blesses those who fear Him, so it cannot depend on the Where and on the Far or the Near. Finally you want to admonish me about giving in to God's will, about humility? Oh, dear friends, it is certainly not God's will to leave us to wither away in an overpopulated country, while the rich lands of the earth are not populated. And when the Christian trusts his God with a joyfully pious courage and fresh daring, that is also called being humble.

Of course, whether the Lord will really be with me – in other words, whether the Lord's word to Abraham, 'And I will bless you,' will really be valid for me, of course that rests in God's hands. – Maybe you are doubtful, but at least I know that your blessings accompany me and mine; and I – I hope and I pray. But my hopes are also, as you know, not directed toward great treasures. Wealth has never been, and will never be, my aspiration. If my motto now is 'hope and pray!' then in the future it will be 'work and pray!' Yes, dear friends in Christ, I would rather eat my bread by the sweat of my brow in the future than—to be taken care of here, for goodness sakes, by the surpluses of the rich, and by the

miserably attained money of the poor. In temporal, earthly things I want to be dependent on God rather than man.

Do you call that an exaggerated pursuit of freedom or independence? A false ambition, a perverse pride? Then I admit to you that I am not ashamed of such pride and such ambition.

And so now I come to naming for you, also, the interior reasons that move me to leave you.

Dear friends, if I were to say it this way: 'I intend in physical, temporal things to be dependent on God rather than man,' then that pertains even more for me in regard to the spiritual and ministerial reasons for my leaving. Now, however, this is my belief – although not just mine, but that of many thousands of Christians in our day – that our public religious – that is, our church – life lies in disarray in the entire way in which it is set up, that it is extremely different from the Church which Christ had come to establish, and that it has hardly a trace of the freedom which, as He said, should come through truth. In its human manifestations the freedom of the Church has run aground – in human terms, moreover, which have not emanated at all from the will of the whole Church, that is of all believers, but only from the individual powerful people in it, who as priests or kings imposed their will on the religious life of all the rest. However then, a genuinely Christian Church can only survive in a place where no enforcement of conscience and beliefs is to be found; where the congregation, that is, the totality of all

believers, fully freely, through their elected representatives, organizes its public religious life according to best understanding. Such religious freedom, indeed not outwardly, but privately inwardly, is what the first Christian Church possessed with its Oldest Director. And if we do not return to it, then our church life will surely ever more decay, and the participation by Christians in Christianity will ever more disappear!

Oh, truly, in that it has already gone far enough!

And how it is with you, dear Christians? Since among you religious life is to be found in the breast of the individual, I am entitled to no judgment about that, here least of all. You yourselves will of course know how you stand with your God, and with your Savior. But that the public religious life among you enjoys no great participation, that I already painfully experienced on the day of my first sermon, which had no more than fourteen listeners. Now, if however, in more recent times the number of those who worshiped God here was often not larger, more often frequently even smaller, – was it then not perhaps my own fault? Yes, indeed I openly admit that often at times during the preparation for Sunday, cheerful courage and holy zeal failed me, when I again would have to expect to preach in an empty House of God. – Or was I not perhaps guilty for another reason? Maybe what I gave you here as my viewpoint was not something which could gratify you, because it – yes, because it was not what you understood by true Christianity? No, therein I am without

guilt. Because it was truly impossible for me to give you something as my truth that would be different from what I myself understood as true Christianity or the essential element of the Gospel. Should that not have been satisfactory to you? Perhaps, that I always placed a higher value on getting out of bed in the morning and on transformation-in-a-new-life than on the resurrection of the Savior? A higher value on the transformation in heaven than on His Ascension into Heaven? Or that for me His pure life and ardor for God were always much more important than all the miracles, which happened with and through Him? That for me the Word: 'You are my friends, so do what I ask of you' was more important than that of the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world? The Word of love more important than that of belief and hope? – In all of that would you have been of a different opinion? Now, as I said, in this instance I would be guiltless, because it was impossible to give you something that I would call the truth, that was different from what I thought was the truth.

So that does not trouble me.

But something else has troubled, aggrieved, tormented me a thousand times over – and now drives me away from here. If namely I have also always honestly given you only that which was my true perspective – yes, if I have never lied to you, still I had to – conceal my innermost convictions for thousands upon thousands of reasons; I had to do it for pure reasons of prudence which affected you as well as me. That is what I could no longer endure! – Dear Christians, if

not once in religion, not once in the House of God, the pure unadulterated truth – that is, what man, the speaker recognizes as the pure unadulterated truth – is supposed and is allowed to count, where then? Will we then ever in life be done with the lie? Or perhaps should and must every preacher agree exactly in his religious views with every single person in his congregation? To attain that is likewise impossible: the religious outlook of people will always differ, even if they are united into one flock, yes, even if everywhere on earth a Shepherd and a Flock should exist again. It cannot be otherwise, because certainly the cultivation of understanding and the fates of individual human beings will always differ.

But for that very reason one should also allow every individual, and every congregation, and every party their belief, their conscience, and their worship of God. – That is religious freedom! – And it is not supposed to mean, one must unite all people's minds under one umbrella. – That is servitude! – And that gives birth to persecution and hypocrisy.

And exactly for that reason, too, every preacher is not suitable for every congregation, at least not for the majority (in a congregation), who must naturally always decide. Dear friends, you can use neither a reformed preacher nor a Catholic one, nor a German Catholic one, nor – me. It must be a preacher, who in his religious views agrees as precisely as possible at least with the majority among you. And such a one, I hope, you will have elected in my successor.

Oh, may God bless your venerable association with him!

But may there also now be none among you who misinterpret my public avowals and their motives, no one specifically who, given what I have said, would believe that I, because I give up my present position, despise the profession of a Christian preacher, or even that I do not respect Christianity itself, that I am ashamed of the Gospel, that it is thus not real earnestness – or, even more, that there is nothing to all my previous teachings and admonishments – nothing at all! Oh, may God keep you from such a misconception! It could do great incalculable harm to many a soul among you, because it could lead, in the end, to making someone's heart fully indifferent not just to all our – church life, but even to all Christian belief and all Christian virtue. Of course, such a way of thinking could however only be found in that shallow, superficial knowledge, which in any case already believes little or nothing, and has already been ashamed of the Gospel for a long time.

Listen then to what I say: I have never been ashamed of the Gospel and will also never feel ashamed of it, because I really and truly believe that a power of God is contained therein to make all blessed who believe in it, that is, all who understand how to free the living kernel from the dead rind of the letter; and therefore I respect Christianity, too, and respect the Christian preaching profession, yes, if such an assurance is necessary. Although I now relinquish this profession, even on the other side of the ocean I will also not stop preaching truth and

working for the kingdom of God on earth, as much as I am able.

'And do you hope,' you say, 'that God will bless you there, in the physical as in these highest things as well? And do you even perhaps hope that He will make you, like Abraham, into a great people and not simply into a numerous, but also into a spiritually great, civilized, pious, just people?' – Yes, truly I hope that. And if I did not hope for it, could not hope for it, then truly I would not leave my old country.

You see, I thus also hope then, that there, where indeed no longer the office and the dress, but rather only the human being in me will be taken heed of; I hope, so certain God lives everywhere in the hearts of men, and not just in temples that are made by human hands; I hope, I say, that there, where in fact that which we do not know, religious freedom, is to be found, a congregation will be established in the course of time, which is worthy of being compared with the beautiful original model of the Christian community.

That is what I hope!

And yet, dear friends, parting from you is difficult. Separation hurts! – It would be different, if I did not love you, nor you me.

Oh, do not condemn me! I cannot do otherwise!

Retain your love for me, which you have always shown. And I too will not cease to remember you, even from so far away.

In farewell I wish you all the best. For the little ones, who received Holy Baptism from me, I wish that they may thrive, to the joy of their parents and the glory of God. To the youths and damsels, young men and young women, who, by giving me their hand, vowed eternal loyalty to their God and Savior – that they may never in unfaithfulness break their solemn promise. To the married couples, whose union I blessed, that they may preserve their love and loyalty to each other! To those who sought comfort and strength here at the table of the Lord – that they may have found both

and continue to find them! To those who are the fortunate and the rich among you I wish – humility. To the unfortunate and the poor – joyous courage! To you all, men and women, old and young, I wish peace and joy and, when the time comes, a blessed end, through Jesus Christ!

Amen!

## Notes

**The 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Trinity Sunday.** According to information found on the internet regarding dates, it may be that the date of Pastor Fuchs' farewell sermon was September 7, which could make sense, since Fuchs and his family sailed from Bremerhaven on November 13, 1845. If so, then they had from September to November to prepare and make the trip from Kölzow in to Bremerhaven, where they set sail for Galveston and arrived on January 10, 1846 (Information from Fuchs).

**Dashes.** Adolph Fuchs uses dashes to slow the reader down before emphasizing an idea. I have left the dashes so that the reader can see where he wanted the reader to stop and ponder the next word, phrase, or idea.

**Ihr.** This word, used by Adolph Fuchs to address his congregation, is translated into English as 'you.' In contemporary German the general rule is that it is used with two or more people whom you know very well, with family members, or with people of the same age or occupation, while *Sie* is reserved for people you don't know well, people of higher status than you, adults (if you are a child), and so forth. However, it is also the case that preachers often address their congregation with 'Ihr.'

**Fries, *Ethics*.** Jakob Friedrich Fries was a German philosopher, physicist, and mathematician, who lived and taught in Jena between 1816 and his death in 1843 (Hermann). It could well be that Adolph Fuchs knew him. He had possibly read Fries' work, as there is a quote from Fries' *Ethics* in the front of the pamphlet in the Texas version. It is possible that Fuchs chose this excerpt for the pamphlet, although the Texas printing was done after his death (Fuchs). (If the earlier version, printed

in Hamburg just before he left Europe, contains it as well, then quite surely Fuchs chose it. I do not have access to the Hamburg version, so I do not know.)

***Ihr Lieben.*** In the United States a pastor might address the members of his congregation as 'dear friends' or 'my dear friends.' Indeed, that is the case in some of the sermons of the nineteenth century, and so I have used that term here. As for *Ihr Lieben* today, Germans will use this form of address in an email as a salutation when addressing colleagues they like. For sermons today, 'Liebe Gemeinde,' or *Dear congregation*, is sometimes used. For example, a sermon by a Pastor Ludwig Schmidt begins with it, whereas another sermon by Wilhelm Hüffmeier begins with 'Liebe Mitchristen, liebe Gäste,' or *Dear Fellow Christians, dear Guests.* As for 'friend,' Germans normally reserve the use of the word 'friend' (*Freund, Freundin*) for what U.S. Americans would call close friends. In the U.S. 'friend' can well be what Raymonde Carroll calls a "verbal shortcut" to denote "acquaintance, vague acquaintance, buddy, pal, chum, roommate, housemate, classmate, schoolmate, teammate, playmate, companion, co-worker, colleague, childhood friend, new friend, old friend, very old friend, family friend, close friend, very close friend, best friend, girlfriend, boyfriend, etc." (77).

***Mensch.*** In German this word denotes a human being, a person. Although we might not do so today, I have attempted to remain true to the time by translating it the way that it might have been translated then, with 'man' rather than people, e.g., when Adolph Fuchs states: "In temporal, earthly things I want to be dependent on God rather than man."

***Nic Tengg.*** The name of the man who printed the pamphlet to which we have access can be found on the internet. According to what is on the web now, Nic Tengg was an Austrian, born in 1847 and came to San Antonio in 1852. In 1874 he bought the business of Julius Berends, a bookseller and stationer, in which he had worked (Tengg). According to Kenneth Fuchs, a descendant of Adolph and Luise Fuchs, the pamphlet was reprinted in the 1890's, which would have been after Paster Fuchs' death.

**'Protestant.'** Adolph Fuchs uses the German word *evangelisch* to talk about his religion. It translates as 'Lutheran' or 'Protestant.' In the German-speaking world of that time, the two were more or less synonymous, as Protestantism *was* essentially Lutheranism. Contrast that with the use of 'Protestant' today, which is the umbrella term for non-Catholic Christian religious affiliations: Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Church of Christ, etc. I have translated *evangelisch* as 'Lutheran,' 'Protestant,' or 'Christian,' depending on the way the concept is meant and how it would read as an older text in English today. The latter term 'Christian,' is used in the phrases 'Christian preacher' and 'Christian virtue and worth,' as I thought 'Lutheran' would render it too narrow in meaning, and 'Protestant' is not normally used when talking about 'virtue and worth.' In other words, people would be less ready to say 'Protestant virtue and worth' and more likely to say 'Christian virtue and worth.' In other contexts I use 'Protestant' as the term for non-Catholic Christianity. While 'Lutheran' would be more acceptable in Germany, as today

people are (mostly) still Catholic or Lutheran, in the U.S. that is simply not the case. (There are, of course, small minorities of other Protestant denominations in Germany, and other non-Christian denominations, but Germans often speak in terms of *katholisch* or *evangelisch* [*lutheranisch*]). One should note that the German word *evangelisch* does not have the connotations that the English word 'evangelical' does, although they are etymologically related. This discussion demonstrates why one cannot simply translate words in another language into one's own. One must (attempt to) translate meaning and understanding as well.

**Quotation Marks.** Adolph Fuchs did not use quotation marks. However, I chose to use single quotation marks, as they were commonly used in English in the past, and it is easier for the reader to follow.

**Sentence Length.** The written German language allows for sentences that are much longer than those in American English, and it allows for what we would call separate sentences to be linked by, for example, a comma. I have tried to adhere more to the U.S. American standard for length, as I think the sentences seem more natural to U.S. ears and eyes. However, where I did not think it made much of a difference, I left the length as it was in the German original.

## Commentary and Discussion

If you begin up north in Lübeck, in former West Germany and head east on Highway 20, on your left you will bypass turnoffs to the towns of Wismar and Rostock up near the Baltic Sea. Then you will come to another turn, which will lead you north on 110 and then east on Sülzer Straße or L19. Just past Dettmannsdorf you'll "hang a right," heading south for a short distance to the village of Kölzow, today part of Dettmannsdorf-Kölzow in the old imperial region known as Mecklenburg, or Mecklenburg-Schwerin, an area beholden only to the Emperor during the times of the Holy Roman Empire. There is an old castle, built in the early 1840's, that has been made into a restored hotel. A little, ancient church graces the town. On google.de maps it looks like a sleepy little hamlet – but thriving. For instance, its church, being so old and historical, has its own extensive website, and on the web one can find some pictures of the church and the town.

It was in this little ancient church in this very small village that Carl Adolph Friedrich Fuchs was pastor for ten years before leaving his homeland and settling in Texas. In order to understand his farewell sermon better, it is important 1) to understand at least some of the political, religious, and economic issues of the area where he lived, in the time he lived, and 2) to read his sermon more closely, looking for the specific issues that he wished to address publicly, and which drove him from his homeland, with his wife and seven children.



(Photograph by J.Brodhagen.)

### Fuchs, His Times, and His Beliefs

Adolph Fuchs was indeed actually one of those who came to the new world for the main reasons we always associate with immigrants to this land: democracy, freedom of religion, and economic opportunity, all three. He lived during a time when the winds of political change were blowing, and when Mecklenburg-Schwerin, long an area of immigration, was beset by the results of economic hardships and population growth. A close reading of his sermon reveals that there were a number of concerns and problems that drove him and his family to move across the sea to a completely new land.

## The Political Situation

The political reasons for Adolph Fuchs' departure concerned the situation in the German lands at the time. He saw that there was an uneven distribution of wealth, and that therefore the overpopulation problem he perceived was exacerbated by it. He felt that more people could live there if things were different: "And of course still more people could live here among us, if, namely, some things were different here than they are; if, for example, property were not so unevenly distributed." Yet he felt that change would not happen: "[I]t is difficult to make things different from what they have been for hundreds of years; difficult, I say, to achieve that in just ways... ." He believed in the liberal ideas of the time, those winds of change that had begun with the American and French Revolutions. But what he also feared was upheaval if change were to come about in "unjust ways:" "Through revolt and the shedding of blood? – Oh, dear heaven, preserve my country from the horrors of revolution!" His fears were justified, for that upheaval came to fruition in the (failed) Revolution of 1848, three years after he left Europe.

The ideas supporting political change were known to Adolph Fuchs, as he was a friend or good acquaintance of people like August Heinrich von Fallersleben, the man who wrote the German National Anthem. A little history of the anthem will help set the ideas of the time into their proper context. This anthem is the very same one that Hitler misappropriated for his own uses. However, when Fallersleben wrote "Germany, Germany over everything" – "Deutschland, Deutschland über alles," his intention was not to take over the world. Rather, there was not a unified Germany. Indeed, there was "not a state but at best a nation with a blurry claim to a territorial homeland based on linguistic and cultural affinities, ... a so-called federation (the Deutscher Bund), which consisted of thirty-five independent political entities and four free cities..." (Geisler, 69-70). People like Fallersleben thought these thirty-five separate entities and four cities should be one Germany. In other words, "Germany above all," meant a unified Germany would be more important than these individual principalities, which at the time were run by their own "lesser monarchs, dukes, and princes who had everything to lose by national unification and nothing to gain. Against this backdrop, Hoffmann's exhortation [was] to put the struggle for Germany (i.e. unification) topmost on the agenda..." (Geisler, 70).

Moreover, Adolph Fuchs had received an education and was a teacher and minister. He had studied at Jena, Halle, and Göttingen. If it is not known when he studied in Göttingen and Jena, at least it must be recognized that he knew about the liberal ideas that had been floating around in these towns; and at Halle he most probably knew of the controversies there which led to the firing of old Lutheran and rationalist professors. In other words, he was cognizant of and took part in the intellectual thought and debates of the day.

Furthermore, the word 'democracy' and 'freedom' were on the lips of the liberals. Think, once again, of his statement that more people could live in

Mecklenburg-Schwerin if resources were allocated more fairly. Furthermore, the word 'freedom' was important to Adolph Fuchs, and where he saw a great need for freedom was in religious freedom of thought.

## **Religion**

Beyond fearing that he could not make it financially, beyond feeling that the system disadvantaged the poor, there is something that deeply bothered Adolph Fuchs, and these are his "internal reasons" for leaving. They have to do with his discontent with the Lutheran Church and with his ministry, and they are tied together. But, first, it is worthwhile to take a look at his core beliefs.

Adolph Fuchs was what one might call a "liberal Christian." Note that in his sermon he says one must draw the living kernel of truth from the dead letter, meaning that the Bible contains words, but the truth must be drawn from those words -- in other words, it must be interpreted. He is less a man of the "letter of the law" than of the "spirit of the law," for he says that he has been more interested in how Christians behave and in what is in their hearts (transforming oneself, leading a pure life, demonstrating enthusiasm for God, doing as Jesus asked, focusing on love) than in dogma (the Resurrection, the Ascension into Heaven, the miracles, the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world, and belief and hope [versus the higher virtue of love]). In other words, he was one of those whom one still finds today, who say that one's essence, how one loves, and how one presents oneself spiritually are what one should concentrate on, rather than the supernatural happenings of the Bible, and that how one loves is more important than how one believes. He also finds the important things of life to be, not how one is regarded, based on what kind of job one has or what kind of clothes one wears, but who one is as a human being. In other words, he is not interested (he even says so) in wealth ("Wealth has never been, and will never be, my aspiration"), but rather the truth of one's being. The essence of a human being is the most important thing there is, and he looks forward to being respected for who he is rather than for what wealth or position he has in the community, "there, where indeed no longer the office and the dress, but rather only the human being in me will be taken heed of... ."

Adolph Fuchs' core spiritual issue in his sermon is with the Church as it is and the lack of full freedom to express one's religious views as one really sees them. When one opens up the pamphlet to his farewell sermon, there is a page with a quote from Fries, which essentially says that it is okay-- and not hypocrisy -- to state the official church belief, even if somewhat different from one's own. But, Fries opined, "for a straightforward and ingenuous mind it must linger as very oppressive and offensive to administrate such an office while deviating significantly in one's own conviction from the officially sanctioned view."

Adolph Fuchs must have felt himself to be one of those for whom it was very difficult. From Fuchs' words it is quite easy to see that the freedom he most sought was the freedom to speak his truth as he saw it, and far and away the most important reason he had for worrying about his Church was this need for truth, and for the freedom that allows one to seek the truth. As a minister he felt stifled by the Church "powers that be." He felt he could go only so far in expressing his true beliefs. He was quite vehement in his sermon about this. First of all, he was critical of the Church in general, stating that there is no freedom – no freedom to seek the truth:

Our public religious – that is, our church – life lies in disarray in the entire way in which it is set up, ... it is extremely different from the Church which Christ had come to establish, and ... it has hardly a trace of the freedom which, as He said, should come through truth.

Rather, he believed in the freedom of each individual, and of each congregation, to seek their own truth and did not think that the Church allowed it:

[A] genuinely Christian Church can only survive in a place where no enforcement of conscience and beliefs is to be found; where the congregation, that is, the totality of all believers, fully freely, through their elected representatives, organizes its public religious life according to best understanding. Such religious freedom, indeed not outwardly, but privately inwardly, is what the first Christian Church possessed with its Oldest Director. And if we do not return to it, then our church life will surely ever more decay, and the participation by Christians in Christianity will ever more disappear! ... In its human manifestations the freedom of the Church has run aground – in human terms, moreover, which have not emanated at all from the will of the whole Church, that is of all believers, but only from the individual powerful people in it, who as priests or kings imposed their will on the religious life of all the rest.

Related to this, Adolph Fuchs felt that he could not openly tell his congregation what motivated his beliefs, not only because of the need to represent the officially sanctioned views, but also because he did not want to completely alienate his congregation who, he believed, had views that were different from his own. This belief, however, put him at odds with his own congregation, because he could not be completely open with them:

If namely I have also always honestly given you only that which was my true perspective – yes, if I have never lied to you, still I had to – conceal my innermost convictions for thousands upon thousands of reasons; I had to do it for pure reasons of prudence which affected you as well as me. That is what I could no longer endure!

Thus, he came to the conclusion that he was the wrong pastor for this particular congregation:

Dear friends, you can use neither a reformed preacher nor a Catholic one, nor a German Catholic one, nor – me. It must be a preacher, who in his religious views agrees as precisely as possible at least with the majority among you.

His disappointment must well have been profound, because he had such high expectations when he began his ministry in Kölzow:

I was introduced as your pastor. The Gospel of the day was the Gospel – of the Good Shepherd! That was a touchingly beautiful omen for me. I imagined a wonderful life, a delightful interaction between shepherd and flock.

Finally, it seems that his relationship with his congregation was loving, but ambivalent. He was very disappointed in the attendance at church, which severely dampened his enthusiasm:

I openly admit that often at times during the preparation for Sunday, cheerful courage and holy zeal failed me, when I again would have to expect to preach in an empty House of God.

And he stated that he wished that his successor would have a good relationship with his congregation, which he had wished for himself, but did not indicate that he had: “I pray God, that your life with him [Fuchs’ successor] may be as beautiful, as genuinely Christian, as I have ever wished it with me.” Note that he did not say: “I pray God, that your life with him may be as beautiful, as genuinely Christian, as it has been with me.”

Certainly, he must have felt bad because the church attendance did not grow while he was minister, and his ministry was not satisfactory for economic reasons as well.

## **Economics**

The economic situation in Mecklenburg-Schwerin was making it more difficult for Adolph Fuchs, a father of seven, and people like him to fare well economically.

[I]t is, from day to day, made more difficult for the inhabitants of our country, and especially the fathers of large families, to give life and sustenance to their families by honest means, because namely the rush to every kind of acquisition shamefully grows from day to day—and that is exactly the sign of overpopulation; -- furthermore, ... it cannot be denied that in this way poverty – and immorality – are bound to take the upper hand ever more and more....

Furthermore, Fuchs believed that the overpopulation problem would not have been so bad, had material wealth been distributed more evenly. To give context to Fuchs' statements, I'll let historian Wolfram Siemann describe, through my translation, some of what was going on where Adolph Fuchs lived:

If one surveys the spatial patterns and temporal structure of population development in Germany in the 19th Century as a whole, three time periods stand out. The first phase from about 1806 to 1840 was marked by an "agrarian population wave" (Jürgen Kocka). Growth was concentrated in the agrarian landscapes in West and East Prussia, Posen, Pomerania and Mecklenburg. In the 1840s, these areas were gradually transformed from immigration into emigration areas. ... As the second phase of population development, the 1840s and 1850s were characterized by crop failures, famines and epidemics, so that because of them the population growth stagnated, even partially declined. With the 1860s the industrial population wave began, ..." (89-90).

(Überblickt man das räumliche Muster und die zeitliche Gliederung der Bevölkerungsentwicklung in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert insgesamt, so heben sich drei Zeitperioden ab. Die erste Phase von ca. 1806 bis 1840 war geprägt durch eine "agrарische Bevölkerungswelle" (Jürgen Kocka); das Wachstum konzentrierte sich auf die agrарischen Großlandschaften in West- und Ostpreußen, Posen, Pommern und Mecklenburg. In den 1840er Jahren verwandelten sich diese Gebiete almählich von Zuwanderungs- in Auswanderungsregionen. ... Die 1840er und 1850er Jahre als zweite Phase der Bevölkerungsentwicklung waren geprägt durch Mißernten, Hungerkatastrophen und Epidemien, so dass in ihnen das Bevölkerungswachstum stagnierte, teilweise gar zurückging. Seit den 1860er Jahren began die Industrielle Bevölkerungswelle," ...)

Thus, Adolph Fuchs lived in an area of population growth during the first forty years of the century. Then in the 1840's people began leaving. What Siemann calls the second wave was beginning, marked by hunger and disease, which Adolph Fuchs may have already been seeing. By 1845 Adolph Fuchs had decided to leave as well. He even said that a major "external reason" for leaving was overpopulation and the need to make room "for the other, and give him the opportunity to obtain his daily bread." All in all, about one quarter of the Mecklenburg population left in the mid-nineteenth century ("Zeitsprung in das 19. Jahrhundert").

Yet of course, it was his own financial situation that also led him, together with dissatisfaction in other realms, to go to Texas. It seems, from the historical information located on the Kөлzow Church website, that Adolph Fuchs was having a very difficult time making ends meet, and he had attempted to get a second parish. In 1839 had applied for a second position in his place of birth, Güstrow, about thirty miles from Kөлzow. However, he did not get this job. In the

Hamburg version of his farewell sermon, published just before he and his family left the Old World, he stated it quite vehemently and colorfully:

I am fed up with eking out my existence in a beggarly fashion from the surplus of the rich and the sweat of the poor. To you poor I preach courage and to you rich humility. My ax on my back and my Luise (Lieschen) at my side, I go from my country and from my friends, to the land across the sea (“Das erste halbe 19. Jahrhundert”).

(Ich habe es satt mit dem Überfluss der Reichen, dem Schweiß der Armen mein Dasein kümmerlich zu fristen. Euch Armen predige ich Mut und Euch Reichen Demut. Meine Axt auf dem Rücken und mein Lieschen an der Hand, gehe ich aus meinem Vaterland und aus meiner Freundschaft, in das Land jenseits des Weltmeeres.)

What is interesting is that the later version is less colorful:

Yes, dear friends in Christ, I would rather eat my bread by the sweat of my brow in the future than—to be taken care of here, for goodness sakes, by the surpluses of the rich, and by the miserably attained money of the poor.

There is another telling example that leads one to the conclusion that Pastor Fuchs was feeling the results of economic hardship. In Kölzow he evidently told an acquaintance, “My faithful flock decreases, as my creditors increase” (“Das erste halbe 19. Jahrhundert”). (This sentence is a very clever play on words in German that is impossible in English: “Meine Gläubigen nehmen immer mehr ab, meine Gläubiger immer mehr zu,” where *meine Gläubigen* refers to his faithful believers, *meine Gläubiger* his creditors, and *nehmen ab* means ‘decline’/‘decrease’ and *nehmen zu* ‘increase.’ He must have said that with a wry sense of irony and wry humor.)

But Adolph Fuchs, unlike some, must at least have had the wherewithal to cross the Atlantic with a wife and seven children.

## **The New World**

If you travel along Farm-To-Market Road 949 to where it crosses Newberg and Track Roads about an hour west of Houston and slightly to the north, you’ll come to a little town – hardly a town, rather a few streets – called Cat Spring. Boasting a post office, a volunteer fire department, Carol’s Restaurant, and St. John Lutheran Church, this was the place where Adolph Fuchs brought his family in 1845, according to an article by Lota Spell in *The Handbook of Texas Online*. From what he said in his sermon and from what this article says, Rev. Fuchs was convinced that freedom was the key, in religion as well as in political and economic life: freedom of the congregation to say its truth, and political

democracy so that there would not be such a divide between those who have and those who do not.

In his farewell sermon Adolph Fuchs also stated that he was giving up his ministry. But what must he have been feeling, deep inside, once he got to the New World, given that he was not experienced in farming or animal husbandry, that he was a “man of the cloth,” and that he was a thinker, as he had pursued the life of the mind through his education, through his ministry, and through his relationships with “movers and shakers” of the day? Be that as it may, Adolph Fuchs and his family came to this small place in Texas and suffered the hardships of pioneer life. He found out that he was still much better suited for the life of the mind than that of farming, and he “became a music teacher at Baylor Female College in Independence. He was given credit for founding the first state-supported public school in Texas” (Spell). He evidently wrote music to German poems and wrote his own songs as well. So he weathered the change very well.

Adolph Fuchs is one of those we think about when we think that people came to North America to find political and religious freedom. For him North America was indeed the “land of opportunity,” as he saw overcrowding and fewer and fewer chances for himself and his children in the Old World, and he caught the spirit of progressive political and religious ideas in mid-nineteenth century “Germany.”

So especially for economic reasons, and for religious freedom, Adolph Fuchs left his country. For him the New World was indeed the “promised land.” Fuchs’ descendants live on, and I think Adolph Fuchs would have, perhaps on his deathbed at the age of eighty, thought that God had indeed blessed him and carried out for him the same promise that He had to Abraham, that Pastor Fuchs had quoted on that Sunday in early September, back in 1845. He had “gone forth” and found “the promised land,” and in the end it was very good for him and his family: personally, professionally, emotionally, spiritually, politically, and economically.

### **Oratorical Style: Repetition.**

It is enjoyable to read through this sermon and look at the pastor’s oratorical style (“the art of swaying an audience by eloquent speech”) which preachers often still use. Adolph Fuchs used biblical allusions and appealed to the emotions, as discussed in this definition of ‘oratory:’

In the 19<sup>th</sup> cent., the rise of Methodism and evangelical religions produced great preachers like John Wesley and George Whitefield who addressed a wide audience of diverse classes of people. Their sermons, replete with biblical allusions and appeals to the emotions, profoundly influenced the oratorical style of many politicians (“Oratory”).



Finally, lest the reader think that I have idealized Pastor Adolph Fuchs too much, I want to address that issue here, by discussing the topics of overpopulation, American Indian rights, and women's rights.

It is perhaps surprising that overpopulation was on Adolph Fuchs' mind. After all, he did not live in a big city, but he evidently felt the increase in immigration that was in the region where he lived. He also was quite educated, so he may have been more in tune with the thought and knowledge of the day. One could criticize him and say that his family contributed to the population growth, since he and his wife, when all was said and done, had a total of nine children. (They came to Texas with seven. One died young, and one was born in Texas.) So one might wonder what his rationale was, seeing overcrowding in Europe, while continuing to have children. On the one hand, birth control wasn't what it is today. On the other hand, he did not seem to think that this land called Texas was overpopulated, so maybe that was the context of his thinking. It was indeed a great contrast: Europe was very settled, with huge cities, lots of buildings that reflect large populations, and lots of agricultural lands being used to produce food, as well as a long history that included famine, wars, and population displacement, whereas many of the Indian tribes were more nomadic, and people did not know their history. So the lack of buildings and bigger established cities may have made the American Midwest and Southwest seem pretty much completely unpopulated to the Europeans.

The reader may also have been reminded, on reading this, that Pastor Fuchs did not address the plight of the native American peoples who were originally on this land that he bought. He also spoke of "his" decisions, not of "my and my wife's" decisions, to leave their country. In his defense, Adolph Fuchs, at this point, was a man of the early nineteenth century. We too would not have thought of these issues back then, before the Civil Rights and Women's movements of the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries raised awareness.

How would Pastor Fuchs have viewed our present situation? None of these problems have gone away. One need only do an internet search to see that people are concerned, and while there are different perspectives on the matter, nevertheless the human global population continues to increase. A sample of the concerns about overpopulation can be found on websites or even on youtube ([http://www.metacafe.com/watch/621146/cia\\_predicts\\_the\\_future\\_2015\\_overpopulation/](http://www.metacafe.com/watch/621146/cia_predicts_the_future_2015_overpopulation/)).

Relative to the issue of overpopulation, some people are searching for solutions by arguing for more sustainable economies, rather than never-ending economic growth, as they believe that at some point there simply won't be enough to go around anymore and the earth's resources will be more and more exhausted (e.g., Bill Mckibben's ideas at <http://www.uta.edu/uac/one-book/deep-economy> or <http://www.billmckibben.com/>).

As for Native American Indian rights, and women's, work is being done to address those issues. There are, for example, websites that explain the laws pertaining to American Indians since the white peoples began making laws about them (see, for example, <http://rtc.ruralinstitute.umn.edu/Indian/Factsheets/AIDLHistory.htm>), as well as websites that help address their rights and resources (<http://www.airro.org/main.html>). As for women, there is access to information that addresses women's rights and issues globally, through groups (<http://www.cedaw2010.org/>) and individuals (<http://www.globalissues.org/article/166/womens-rights>), and locally in the United States as well (<http://www.wic.org/misc/history.htm>).

I do believe, however, that with his sense of justice and fairness, had Adolph Fuchs lived today, he would have been on the side of the downtrodden, he would have championed American Indians' and women's rights, and he would have supported the right to think our own honest thoughts, *especially* when it comes to religious freedom. I also think that he and his wife would not have had so many children, as may many of our grandparents or great-grandparents not have done, had they lived today. Although we are glad we are here, I believe, nevertheless, the financial, emotional, and physical burden of having five, seven, or eleven children or more, was enormous. Certainly, the children helped out on the farm, and certainly there may have been community (as well as family feuds), but the burden that was put on the women to bear them was enormous, and many women died in childbirth with the last child or had deteriorated health because of bearing so many children. And today many people in our country opt not to have so many children, given all the considerations mentioned above.

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