



**Session 4:
Perseverance
in the Face of Challenges
(1914–1933)**

Introduction

Share (with as much or as little detail as is appropriate): “The darkest day I’ve experienced as a member of the Wisconsin Synod has been ...”

Lecture Notes

Feel free to summarize main points or interesting things from the PowerPoint overview of this period of WELS history:

Discussion

Gustave Bergemann's Legacy

Bergemann gave the Wisconsin Synod the organizational structure that we (basically) have today. Pastors, especially in areas of leadership, need to have both administrative abilities and theological abilities. What happens if they focus on one to the detriment of the other?

Synodical Merger of 1917

Many congregations today struggle with the thought of merging, either into a single site or a multi-site. Respond: "Merger? We could never merge! That would mean we would lose our independence and our identity!"

Cultural Transition

Many WELS congregations today struggle to transition from a predominately white ministry to cross-cultural or multi-cultural ministry, especially when the community around them changes and becomes more diverse. How would you make the case for that change today, based on lessons from the first major cultural transition in our synod's history (German to English)?

Protest'ant Controversy

From an organizational standpoint ... Imagine if you were a district president during this controversy. If you could do it all over again, which policies would you have changed to better improve how the synod resolves conflicts?

From a personal standpoint ... Imagine if you lived during this controversy. If you could do it all over again, what would you have changed so this could have had a more amicable ending?

Conclusion

God has a way of bringing blessings through hardships. With the perspective of hindsight, how was the Wisconsin Synod blessed through persevering through all these hardships?