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THE DANGER OF PRESUMPTUOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LORD'S SUPPER

Recently speculative and "presumptuous" questions about the Lord's Supper have been raised, questions which are strongly rejected by the Lutheran confessions in the Formula of Concord of 1577. Such questions as "When does the bread become the body of Christ?" and "When does the body cease to be in the bread?" An attempt is made then to give a precise answer to these questions and to make those answers binding on every Christian. This is done even though the words of institution, the basis of the biblical and Lutheran doctrine of the Supper, do not at all deal with the question of when and how the bread and wine become the true body and blood of Christ. The confessions answer the question, "What is it that is distributed and received in the Lord's Supper?" not "When does it become?" and "How long?" We must hold fast to the text of the Bible and what is spoken there, namely, "What is it that is distributed and received in the Lord's Supper?" Therefore we confess with the AC X "that the body and blood of Christ truly are present and distributed in the Lord's Supper to all those who eat and drink," or with Dr. Luther's Small Catechism that "the sacrament of the altar is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ for us Christians to eat and to drink."

In connection with speculative questions of the above-mentioned type, an article was published in Biblicum (6/76, p. 125ff) under the heading, "Something about the Biblical and Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper." Besides this, in Biblicum (4-5/76 pp 90ff and 6/76, pp. 146ff) an analysis was made of the Lord's Supper doctrine of Dr. Tom G. A. Hardt as that doctrine is presented in his doctoral dissertation, Venerabilis et Adorabilis Eucharistia (Uppsala, 1971) and in the smaller publication Om altarets sakrament (ProVeritate, Uppsala, 1973).

In an article in Nya Våktaren (5/77, p. 72ff) former cathedral dean G. A. Danell and Dr. Tom G. A. Hardt attack Biblicum vehemently for the article concerning the biblical and Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper (Bibl. 6/76). The attack, however, is not based on a thoroughgoing review of what Biblicum has written in that article, which is principally a review of what the FC and the orthodox Lutheran fathers taught. They also condemn Biblicum's doctrine without pointing to factual statements but with a number of coarse epithets such as "Philippism, Zwinglianism, Reformed heresy" etc. An attack which is so non-factual and besides so filled with hate and bitterness one ought perhaps to pass over in silence. But since it is not so much Biblicum as the orthodox Lutheran fathers who are attacked--and this without basis--we must come to the defense of the Lutheran fathers and refute these accusations.

We herewith publish in its entirety the article in Nya Våktaren (5/77) which has the title "Concerning Time and Moment--the Lutheran Doctrine about the Point in Time at which the Real Presence in the Sacrament of the Altar Begins." (Tom Hardt in Nya Våktaren, 5/77).

(With joy Nya Våktaren publishes the following contribution in the ongoing debate about the Lord's Supper, which began about a year ago when the editor in two articles showed the absurdity of celebrating the Lord's Supper by TV. This led, strangely, to a sharp attack from the Goteburg diocesan church paper, which supposedly was presenting the true Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper. We are grateful for Dr. Tom G.A. Hardt's illuminating contribution which demonstrates that the diocesan church paper's receptionistic view of the Lord's Supper is clearly un-Lutheran and specifically rejected by the FC and its authors as well as by Luther himself. Later a leader of Kyrka och Folk

advocated the same view of the Lord's Supper and wanted, on the basis of this supposed Lutheran view, to forbid the elevation. Biblicum also, in its magazine by the same name, entered the controversy with an attack on Dr. Hardt in a long article, which was also translated into English and spread in the U.S.A. within the Wisconsin Synod. On the basis of that article Dr. Theol. Tore Hulth'en published an article in Kyrka och Folk against Hardt's reply to the above-named leader in the same paper. Hardt now presents a summary of the material which was used by Biblicum in a way characteristic for that institution in an attempt to prove the very opposite of what that material contains. The article below is doubly valuable, partly for its clear distinction between the true Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper and the Melanchthonian or Philippistic view, and partly because it makes clear, or rather unmasks, the way in which Biblicum operates with the pertinent material.)

The co-minister of the Cathedral Church, Dr. Theol. Tore Hulth'en has in Kyrka och Folk, nr. 13/1977 answered my article in nr. 10/1977. There he claims, in opposition to me, that the Lutheran Confessions do not teach that the presence of Christ in bread and wine begins with the reading of the words of institution. This teaching, according to him, was maintained only, among others, by John Saliger of Rostock and was rejected by the FC.

Dr. Hulth'en, for a "detailed and, for those interested, an easily accessible presentation of the Saliger controversy and the position taken by the Lutheran fathers contemporary with Saliger," points to an article in a magazine issued by a Bible institute in Uppsala. I want to emphasize that Dr. Hulth'en, whose article is modest in tone and demonstrates the author's good purpose, cannot be held responsible for the errors which are found in his article. The responsibility for that rests with the above-mentioned source, the above-mentioned Bible Institute's publication. The author can through his references be shown to have correct data at his disposal but he suppresses these data in order to create a picture which will satisfy the American church organization, which nowadays uses the Bible Institute for its own purposes. That organization has also proclaimed this same doctrine while attacking me as "Romanizing," but it was answered publicly on that point by Prof. Herman Sasse, who at the time of his death was hailed by Kyrka och Folk as one of Lutheranism's foremost scholars. Prof. Sasse at that time made clear that it is good Lutheranism to speak of "God's Lamb that rests upon the altar," and that elevation together with the ringing of the bell is permissible church practice. There is special reason for mentioning this because the Bible Institute through its concluding quotation can easily create the impression that Dr. Sasse himself shared a point of view which he himself characterized as "Calvinistic." Since the circle around the Bible Institute has besides this reprinted articles by Prof. Sasse and even sells one of his works, imprinted "issued by Kyrklig Samling of the diocese of Lund!"-- it must be pointed out emphatically that Prof. Sasse took sharp exception to the activity of the Bible Institute and openly admonished Dean Danell to publicize how the institute operated. Before his death Prof. Sasse, in an exchange of letters preserved in my files, warns his students and friends against having anything to do with the institute. He was disturbed by all efforts of this circle to refer to his work and rejected all such efforts.

Research, which in its main points is unanimous, has treated in detail the question of "the moment for the beginning of the real presence." The controversy, which was by no means limited to Saliger, is a well-known point of division between the Lutheran and the Melanchthonian (Philippistic) doctrine of the Lord's Supper. In two well-known letters to Pastor Wolferinus, as well as

in other writings, Luther rejects the view which is advanced by the Bible Institute. It had disturbed Luther's old age and was called Zwinglianism, that is, Reformed heresy. Luther instead teaches a presence which lasts from the words of institution until all the elements have been consumed within the boundaries of the service. The background for this is the idea repeatedly defended by Luther that "As soon as Christ says, 'This is my body,' then it is His body through the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit." (WA 19, 490). Luther's meaning in this letter and in other contexts is cited repeatedly by the FC generation and finds its expression in these words, "Here the words 'usus' or 'actio', that is, 'use' or 'action' do not mean principally faith, or even eating with the mouth, but the whole outward perceptible action instituted by Christ, the consecration or the words of institution, the distribution and reception or oral manducation of the blessed bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ (SKB, p. 624). For this definition which extends the real presence it appeals to "what Dr. Luther himself" wrote (SKB, p. 625). For it is maintained that "thus the real meaning and intention of this confession can and should be nowhere better understood than from Dr. Luther's doctrinal and polemical writings" (SKB, p. 616). The meaning of the Confessions in regard to the present question is completely clear from the point of view of church law: with Luther the Lord's Supper doctrine of the Bible Institute is to be rejected.

While Luther in his cited doctrinal and polemical writings and also elsewhere defended the elevation and adoration of the sacrament, Melancthon rejected this view. During Luther's lifetime he concealed his doctrine but he still feared that he would be driven into exile by Luther because he could not approve of "worshipping bread" (CR9,1029). Melancthon taught, "It first then is a sacrament when the eating is added" (CR4,264), and "Christ is not to be worshipped under the form of the bread" (CR7,867). After Luther's death, Melancthon attacked Luther's followers with hateful epithets, such as asses, heathen, Mohammedans, and apers of the papists.

Melancthonism also made inroads into Sweden, and here it was combated by the Swedish reformer, Laurentius Petri, who in a popular work "Dialogues" printed in 1562, emphasized that the miracle took place at the moment that the words of institution were read, "Just as clearly as they testify to the presence itself, so clearly they seem also to testify concerning time and moment. After all, the words do not say, "This will become my body," (presumably first when they are eaten) but they say, "This is my body," as if He wanted to say, now already it is so as it passes from My hands to yours."

The fathers of the FC, such as Chemnitz and Selnecker, in the same way defended the elevation and adoration of the sacrament (Historia des Sakramentsstreits, p 549. The reason was that, as Chemnitz maintains, it was not their idea that the "bread then first becomes the body of Christ when it is eaten," but that it is "a great, miraculous, and truly divine change" that "from the blessing the body and blood of Christ really and truly together with bread and wine are present, distributed, and received" (my emphasis, Examen Concilii Tridentini, ed. Preuss, p. 309.313).

Musculus, one of the other authors of the FC, before the communion presented the consecrated elements with the words, "See, dear Christians, this is the Lord's body, this is the Lord's blood,"--all this in consequence of his faith, that "with the reading or presenting of these words THIS IS MY BODY the BODY OF CHRIST is immediately in the bread." Andraee (sic), another one of the authors of the FC, defended these expressions of Musculus against attack: "Through the sacramental union the bread immediately becomes the body of Christ when the words of the Lord's Supper are presented, which it was not before,

and which Musculus says, namely, that the body of Christ immediately becomes present." (Solida Refutatis, p. 404). Such and similar citations were well-known to the Bible Institute when it set forth its presentation which moved Dr. Hulth'en to say that "Martin Chemnitz and Jacob Andreae, leading Lutheran theologians and principle authors of the FC also did not want to fix a definite moment as the point of time for the beginning of the real presence in order not to teach a presence of Christ divorced from the distribution and reception"! Dr. Hulth'en is not to be faulted, but his source has falsified the evidence with malice aforethought. Prof. Sasse's warnings against both the Lord's Supper doctrine and the ethical standards of the Bible Institute seem more than justified.

This can even be said more emphatically in regard to the controversy around John Saliger, who only set forth what all old Lutherans of the 16th century believed. The Old Lutheran superintendent Jobst Schöne shows in a recent description of this controversy--"Um Christi sakramentale Gegenwart"--, that Saliger was "doctrinally right" in his various pronouncements on the subject. The judge, the highly regarded Johannes Wigand, maintained that it was necessary to confess clearly and unanimously in the presence before the reception. The so-called Mecklenburger Edict also agrees with Wigand's pronouncement. The edict's use of a word of Luther about not prescribing to God "a moment or point of time" is word for word identical with what Saliger himself had said in the preceding investigation. Luther's words namely were intended to avoid the disputes of the Middle Ages about at which syllable in "This is my body" the miracle took place. This situation is well-known to the Bible Institute on whose article Dr. Hulth'en bases his use of this Luther word against me. Comments are unnecessary since the reader will already have formed his own judgment.

Research has not yet been able to explain clearly why Saliger refused to sign the edict and for that reason was deposed. An attempt has been made that Saliger was a sick searcher for quarrels who wanted to continue the controversy at any price. This view, however, does not agree with Wigand's positive judgment of Saliger's personal behavior. With the help of the again discovered records of the proceedings I myself have shown it to be likely that Saliger saw that his opponents in a Melanchthonian way used equivocation even in the settlement. For that reason Saliger seems to have refused to accept the edict.

Concerning Chytraeus already Archbishop Anton Niklas Sundberg maintained that he seems to have held a position which to some extent differed from that set forth in the FC, and this idea has recurred a number of times during the last half century in Swedish research. At the same time he both cooperated in and subscribed to this confession, and because of that the evaluation of his position presents certain difficulties. We do not know to what extent he is responsible for the article on the Lord's Supper, which is sometimes ascribed to him. We know that at the final vote on the FC he took a solitary, disagreeing position, that parts of his contribution to the article on the Lord's Supper were taken away, and that he was offended and left the final sessions and was so disturbed that he complained about what had happened to him. It can also be said that at his first confrontation with Saliger he gave a clear Melanchthonian confession,--typical in this that it raised his private view to a doctrinal standard: it is "enough" to know that we in communion receive Christ's body and blood, a formulation which occurs also in Melanchthon's confidential correspondence with Calvin in this question, and also is used by the man who prompts the Bible Institute, Professor Becker, who says in a letter to Nya Vaktaren 8/1971:3, (should be 8/1973) "For us it is enough to know--in order

to give us certainty that our sins are forgiven." In such formulations the fundamental damage done by religious subjectivism comes into full view; the pious man exercises authority over God.

Through confrontation with Saliger, Chytraeus was steadily driven to the right as the controversy continued, to which both the edict and the FC bear testimony. This later writing is replete with expressions which clearly demonstrate the convincing power of the Lutheran doctrine, about which Chytraeus' coworkers were certainly concerned. His acceptance of this article Chytraeus personally and without the knowledge of the others may have viewed in this way that he possibly worked out a theory about an effective consecration which works the miracle without delay but which can be shown to be effective only when the communion definitely has taken place. This strange thought lacks support in the understanding of the text on the part of the other men and it is without doubt totally excluded by references to what "Dr. Luther himself" believed about this matter.

The Bible Institute concluded by citing as support for its position a certain confession of 1574. The author was in that connection certainly aware that this writing was not accepted but rejected by the authors of the FC. It was attacked by "Wigand and Selnecker without mercy for its lack of confessional character," according to a standard work on the history of doctrine (Heppe, Geschichte des deutschen Protestantismus, II, p. 440). Still the confession is cited by the Bible Institute with the pretense that it is confessionally faithful. The formulation "lack of confessional character" seems to be applicable not only to the Philippists of the 16th century, but also to those of our century--it seems to me to be a not unjustified conclusion of this procedure.

Tom G. A. Hardt

The Background

Let us first make clear that the background for Biblicum's articles in 4-5/76 and 6/76 was by no means Daneli's article about "Communion by TV," which Nya Vaktaren brings into the picture. The background was our sorrowful experience that a dear friend in Uppsala, who, like Biblicum, had subscribed to the doctrine of the Lutheran confessions, suddenly announced that he had changed his mind and now instead embraced Hardt's view of the Lord's Supper. It was no longer sufficient for him to maintain, with the Lutheran confession, what it is that we have in the Supper, namely, that the true body and blood of Christ are really present and are in the Lord's Supper distributed to all those who eat and drink. In agreement with Hardt he now demanded that one must be much more precise in defining the real presence and fix the precise moment when it begins and ends. All churches and individuals who do not expressly teach that the presence of Christ's body and blood in the Supper begins in "the moment of consecration" and that the celebration of the Lord's Supper must continue for as long as any consecrated bread and wine existed, must be excluded from the fellowship of true believers. The pastor who does not see to it that all the consecrated bread and wine is consumed is guilty of grave sin. No consecrated bread and wine may be left but it must, for doctrinal reasons, all be consumed at the altar before the celebration ends (Hardt speaks of the necessity of "consuming all the elements within the framework of the mass" (NV 5/77, p.73). He also does not consider the Wisconsin Synod to be sufficiently strict in its church fellowship principles. The result is that there is no longer really any Lutheran confessional church left in the world with the exception of Hardt's own

church in Stockholm, but that church he was unable to join for other reasons.

Philippism and Zwinglianism

In order to understand the serious nature of the accusations about "Philippism" and "Zwinglianism" made by Hardt and Danell, one must know what these terms mean. By "Philippism" is meant the position to which Philip Melancthon more and more gave expression. He attempted to tone down certain doctrinal disagreements in order, if possible, in this way to establish peace and unanimity. Thus, for example, he tried to tone down the Lutheran doctrine about grace alone and concerning the real presence of the true body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, in order to open the door to the Calvinists. By "Zwinglianism" is meant the denial that the body and blood of Christ are present also when we celebrate the Lord's Supper today and that it is there distributed to all those who eat and drink. With the Lutheran fathers Biblicum condemns Philippism and Zwinglianism in Biblicum (6/76) and maintains: "Those who, like Zwingli, deny the real presence of Christ's true body and blood in our Supper have come into conflict with the clear and plain words of Scripture" (p.126). But Hardt and Danell do not give in to facts.

Saliger

How is it possible then for Hardt and Danell in spite of this still to accuse the Lutheran fathers and Biblicum of Philippism and Zwinglianism? In order to understand this one must pay some attention to John Saliger and the so-called "Saliger-controversy" of the 1560's (cp. Biblicum 6/76, pp 131ff). John Saliger demanded exactly the same strict definitions in regard to the Lord's Supper which Hardt now again asserts. It was not enough for him to confess the real presence in the Supper, what it is that is distributed and received. He demanded also a clear confession about when it becomes and how long it lasts. Those who refused to give such exact definitions he condemned as Philippists, and thus he came into conflict with the Lutheran confessions and the Lutheran fathers. The exact definition which he demanded was, after all, missing in the AC, the Apology, Luther's catechisms and the Smalcald Articles. And this was the case principally for biblical reasons, for the words of institution do not answer the questions of when and how it becomes, but only what it is that Christ gave to His disciples to eat and to drink. "It is concerning the consecrated bread which is distributed, received, and eaten that Christ says, This is my body" (Chemnitz, Biblicum 6/76, p.135). "He who has ears hears what Christ says and what he should take, eat, and drink, namely, bread and body, wine and blood" (Selnecker, Biblicum 6/76, p.136).

The Lutheran fathers clearly rejected Philippism, and they also refused to fix the beginning of the real presence at the exact moment of the eating and drinking--the so-called receptionist view, which also lacks support in Scripture, and therefore must be rejected. They refused to "go beyond what is written." The basis for articles of doctrine must be the bare and clear words of the Bible, and they teach clearly what it is that is distributed and received in the Supper. The fathers of the FC are not of the opinion--as Hardt correctly maintains--that the bread first becomes the body when it is eaten. Compare Martin Luther's advice to the congregation in Frankfurt: Let him tell you clearly and plainly what it is that he is giving you with his hands and what you receive with your mouth (Luther, Concerning the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, Per Jonsson Bokf., 1974, p.65).

The Lutheran fathers, led by Chytraeus, tried to get Saliger to accept the Mecklenburger Edict of 1569. But since this edict described such questions as to "how and when and in what manner the bread in the Supper is the body of Christ" as being "unnecessary, presumptuous, confusing disputes and quarrels about words" it became impossible for Saliger to accept it. He thought that it was a concession to Philippism if one was satisfied to confess what it is that is present, distributed and received. Those who had no clear doctrine concerning when the presence began, Saliger rejected as Philippists or Melancthonians. When therefore Saliger continued to accuse orthodox Lutherans, who clearly rejected Zwinglianism and Melancthonianism, of being Philippists and Zwinglians themselves, he had to be deposed. The parallel between Saliger and Dannell-Hardt is evident.

These things Hardt does not understand. He writes, "Research has not been able to explain completely why Saliger refused to accept the edict and therefore was deposed" (NV 5/77,p.75). Hardt himself has attempted to suggest the solution that Saliger's opponents supposedly employed "ambiguous phraseology even in the settlement" and that this might have been the reason why Saliger refused to accept the edict. But the language of the edict is perfectly clear. The Lutheran fathers and the authors of the FC could not allow it that those who held to the words of institution without reservations and who agreed with the tenth article of the AC should be accused of being Philippistic. Because of that, Saliger had to be deposed, and thus the condemnation of the Lutheran fathers has also been spoken over Hardt and Danell, who are operating in exactly the same way as Saliger. Hardt and Danell are making common cause with Saliger and his unfounded charges against the orthodox Lutheran doctrines. They condemn the Lutheran fathers and Biblicum as Philippists, even though they reject Philippism, hold to the words of institution without Zwinglian reinterpretations and agree with the Lord's Supper doctrine of the Lutheran confessions. Hardt maintains that Saliger "expressed only what all 16th century Lutherans believed" (NV 5/77,p.74). It is for that reason that Hardt finds it difficult to understand why Saliger was deposed.

On the Basis of Scripture

Hardt's weakness consists in this that he has never made a thorough study of the words of institution and has never given a thoroughgoing interpretation of their content. He has carelessly passed over the biblical text and he has nothing to say about Biblicum's exegesis in Biblicum(6/76, p.125ff). Also Saliger seems to have preferred arguments from church history over biblical evidence. The orthodox Lutherans made clear for Saliger again and again that the precise definitions that he demanded could not be justified by the biblical text and that therefore they could not surrender to his demands. It was basically a question of the principle of sola Scriptura (the Scriptures alone), a principle which is of fundamental significance for all true Lutheranism. It was not because of Philippistic ambition that they were satisfied with asserting what it is that we have in the Lord's Supper, what is distributed and received by virtue of Christ's institution. What they were concerned about was the principle of sola Scriptura and "nothing beyond what is written" (I Cor 4:6). "Luther fought every attack on the real presence because he recognized in every such attack an insidious assault on sola Scriptura (F.E.Mayer, "Artikel X der Variata," CTM, 1931, p.598).

We see also how the FC is careful not to make dogmatic assertions which cannot be demonstrated by biblical words. When the FC was ready for acceptance

in 1577, eight years after Saliger had rejected the Mecklenburger Edict, the Lutheran fathers still refused to be more precise than the revelation of Scripture. Many have accused Article VII of the FC of not being sufficiently precise and clear. But thereby they only show that they have not understood the basic principle that underlies the FC, namely, that one must not go beyond what is written. Every doctrinal article must have a clear proof passage in the Holy Scriptures. *

If the FC would have taken Saliger's position, it would have been very easy to make the position clear in a single sentence. It could have stated that the presence of the body and blood of Christ begins in that moment when the pastor consecrates the elements and that it continues "until all the elements are consumed within the framework of the mass," to use Hardt's words. However, no such sentence is found in the FC, which is saying enough when one considers that the background for the FC includes the Saliger controversy. According to Hardt's doctrine the FC ought also to have said: "If anything of the consecrated bread and wine remains after the close of the mass, the pastor has made himself guilty of a serious sin, and he who does not teach that one sins against God if anything remains in the chalice when the pastor leaves the altar, must be excluded from the Christian congregation." But now that FC does not present that doctrine. Nor does the FC exclude from the Christian congregation those who are satisfied to teach that "Christ's body and blood are truly present and distributed in the Lord's Supper to all who there eat and drink and that they disapprove of and reject those who teach otherwise (AC X). According to Hardt and Saliger this is not sufficient and therefore they must be excluded from the fellowship of those who have the true faith and be branded as Philippists. *

When Danell now agrees completely with Hardt's teaching, he does not seem to understand that this teaching brands him as a heretic, since he belongs to a church which does not uphold this doctrine and which does not drive out of its fellowship those who are heretics in this and other questions. That Danell according to Hardt is a heretic both in his Lord's Supper practice and in other points of doctrine both men for the present are able to hide or to forget in their pursuit of a common enemy.

It is easy to establish that the FC does not hereticize those who refuse to make the precise definitions demanded by Saliger and Hardt. Just as the Mecklenburger Edict, so also the FC rejects "all presumptuous, scoffing, and blasphemous questions" (FC, Th.D, VII,127). What is not clearly revealed in God's Word is presumptuous and causes confusion, and therefore the Formula only answers the question "What is it?" When Chemnitz in his Examen Concilii Tridentini in one place asserts that the presence obtains "already after the consecration" (jam post benedictionem) (ed. Preuss, p.313), this does not justify the conclusion that he tried to enter into controversy with Chytraeus and others, who were satisfied to emphasize what is distributed in the Lord's Supper and who considered it unnecessary and presumptuous to fix the moment when the presence began. On the contrary, Chemnitz declared himself to be satisfied with the Mecklenburger Edict, which opposed making points of doctrine out of when and how in matters about which the Scriptures are silent. Chemnitz's relations and church fellowship with Chytraeus, for example, testifies that he could not have made an issue of the beginning and end of the presence in the way which characterizes Saliger and Hardt. It is important that we do "not raise and pursue unnecessary, presumptuous and confusing disputes and logomachies," to quote Chytraeus, one of the principal authors of the FC. *

A Foreign Issue

Those who, like Saliger and Hardt, always have in mind an issue which is foreign to the words of institution, namely, "when it becomes," are much inclined to omit an exegesis of the words of institution. The clear words of Scripture, the sedes doctrinae for the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, "do not deal with the question of when and how the bread and the wine become the body and blood of Christ. The text makes it clear that the bread and wine which is distributed and also received is the body and blood of Christ." "My certainty that Christ's body and blood are given to me in the Supper thus rests upon the word and institution of Christ, not on my qualifications, nor on those of the pastor. And since the basis is the word and institution of Christ, the Supper must be celebrated in accord with the words of institution without misinterpretation or change" (Biblicum 6/76, p.125,127).

Hardt therefore (trans. note: because he cannot base his view on the words of institution) must seek for other evidence, and he turns to Luther's voluminous writings. By underscoring the "right" words he manages to get an answer to the question which he himself has raised but which is not what Luther had in mind. As an example we can mention the only passage in the FC which Hardt can interpret to mean what he wants it to mean. That is the passage cited from Luther's Great Confession concerning the Sacrament, which is quoted in FC VII, 78. There it says, "When we, in accord with His command and institution in the celebration of the Lord's Supper say, This is my body, then it is truly His body..." Hardt comes to this passage with the question, "When does it become?" in mind and therefore he underscores the words "when" and "then." But if we go back to Luther's Great Confession concerning the Sacrament (Luther's Sämtliche Schriften, ed. Walch XX, 894-1105), we find instead that the biblical question with which Luther is dealing is "What is it?" Luther is carrying on a polemic against Zwingli and his followers who thought that what was true of the first Supper was not true of our Supper. Luther shows that since Christ has commanded us to celebrate the same Supper repeatedly, therefore Christ's body and blood are distributed with the bread and the wine not only at the first Supper, but also we distribute the true body and blood of Christ. What Luther therefore intends to say is this: When we in accord with His command and institution in our celebration of the Lord's Supper say, This is my body, then it truly is His body (understand: which is distributed and received.) If there were no command of Christ (Heisselwort) given to us to celebrate communion, then the words in our Supper would only be a portrayal of what happened at the first Supper, Luther maintains. But now there is the command of Christ, and therefore the words in our Supper are true, that is, also that which we distribute and receive is Christ's body and blood, "not for the sake of our speaking nor because these spoken words have the power (to bring this about), but because Christ has commanded us to say these words and to do what He did in the first Supper, and in this way He has joined His command and His action to our speaking" (FC VII, 78).

The Bible's Emphasis on "What it is" is Basic

It is also worth noting, that even if Luther believed (just as I do) that the real presence begins when the consecration takes place, yet he never made a doctrinal article out of this by which one can test faithfulness to the Bible and on the basis of which one can carry on doctrinal discipline. He held firmly to the principle that every article of faith must have this characteristic that it can be demonstrated by the bare words of Scripture, which only answer the question, "What is it?", and not "When does it become?". Therefore Luther

always emphasizes what it is that is distributed and received. He says, "This command and institution of Christ can and does bring it about that we do not distribute and receive only bread and wine but also body and blood. For His words say, This is my body, This is my blood. For that reason it is not our work or our speaking that brings this about that the bread is Christ's body and the wine is His blood, but it is the command and ordinance of Christ, and this regularly happens from the first institution until the end of the world, but through our service they are distributed daily (FC,VII,77).

Luther always had in mind that it is in connection with the distribution and reception that we are accustomed to call it communion, as Jesus says, "Take eat, this is my body" and "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood" (the blood of the testament), which is shed for many for the remission of sins (Mt 26:26ff). Through the words, "giving to His disciples," He said (Mt 26:26) "gave it to them and said" (Mt 26:27, Mk 14:22), "gave it to them saying" (Lk 22:19) it becomes clear that the words of Jesus, "This is my body," and "This is my blood," belong together with the communion (see Biblicum 6/76,p.125). In a letter to Carlstadt in 1528 Luther maintains, "The participle 'saying' (dicens) proves that Jesus said while He was giving, This is my body...So it ought to happen every time that the one who distributes at the same time should distribute and speak or name that which he is giving" (WA, Br, No. 1214, p. 363ff).

Like Luther, the FC always emphasizes what it is that is distributed and received. It is asserted that the words, "This is my body," are said about the consecrated and distributed bread (FC, VII, 58). The bread is through a sacramental union the body of Christ," that is, that when the bread is given, the body of Christ is likewise at the same time truly distributed" (Billing's ed. p.492). The same emphasis is found also in the Lutheran fathers (see Biblicum, 6/76, pp 139ff).

The Letter to Wolferinus

It is also characteristic of Hardt, that when he does not find anything in the words of institution which can serve as a basis for his doctrine concerning "what is left over" (reliqua sacramenti), he employs Luther's letter to Pastor Simon Wolferinus of Eisleben in 1543 as the sedes doctrinae for the teaching that all the consecrated elements must within the framework of the mass be consumed to the very last particle or drop (Om altarets sakrament, p.76). When the Lutheran fathers reject every dispute about the nature of what is left over as "leading astray," because the biblical text is silent about this matter, Hardt must take exception to the Lutheran fathers.

Hardt also cannot distinguish between what may be advisable in order to protect the teaching concerning the real presence and to avoid misuse or offense, and what is a doctrine based on the Word of Scripture. In his letter to Wolferinus Luther demands that everything be consumed in order to avoid "innumerable scruples of conscience and endless questions," which are dangerous and cause offense. He does not point to any word of the Bible. In order to avoid "scruples of conscience and endless questions which cause offense" he also recommends as his opinion (sic sentio) that the presence lasts "from the beginning of the Lord's prayer (ab initio orationis dominicae) until all have communed, drunk out of the cup and eaten up the consecrated wafers and left the altar. That Luther says "from the beginning of the Lord's prayer" instead of from the beginning of the words of institution is extremely annoying for Hardt. But he manages to make "the Lord's prayer" mean the words of institution (see Hardt's forced interpretation in his dissertation, pp 233ff).

The Orthodox Lutherans against Hardt and Danell

The orthodox Lutheran fathers after Luther's time did not understand Luther as though he would have made a doctrinal issue out of "when and how," as though this were a test of faithfulness to the Bible and a matter of doctrinal discipline. On this point Saliger and Hardt part company with all orthodox Lutherans. The fathers of the FC and orthodox Lutherans such as Gerhard, Quenstedt, Walther, Hoenecke, and Pieper, to name only a few, were very well acquainted with what Luther had written and taught. Yet they have not drawn the conclusions drawn by Saliger and Hardt. Therefore they must be rejected by Hardt and Danell as Philippists without any basis in fact. }

Fraudulently, however, Hardt and Danell do not let their sentence of condemnation strike these orthodox Lutheran fathers. They speak of the "doctrine of the Bible institute as being heretical," when in reality it is a question of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper held by the Lutheran confessions and the orthodox Lutherans, which is only restated by Biblicum (See Biblicum 6/76, pp. 76ff). When Danell expresses his joy over the fact that Hardt has been able to unmask "the Bible institute's doctrine of the Lord's Supper" as Philippistic, why does he not say openly and plainly: I am happy that Pieper has been unmasked as a Philippist and I want to warn against Pieper's Dogmatics? I am happy that the orthodox Lutheran fathers, such as Gerhard and Quenstedt, are now unmasked as Philippists! Why do Hardt and Danell not honestly say: We deplore the fact that the fathers of the Formula of Concord were of the opinion that Saliger went too far in presumption when he raised false charges of Philippism. We deplore the fact that they cooperated in bringing about the deposition of Saliger, for Saliger was after all correct and we are his followers. Instead they make "the Bible institute's Lord's Supper doctrine" the target, as if Biblicum had now come with something new. That says a great deal about the tactics of Hardt and Danell in their pursuit of Biblicum.

Unfactual Argumentation

When then, instead of arguing from the biblical and Lutheran material, the hatred against Biblicum takes this form that it argues from what a dead person is supposed to have said about Biblicum, the worth of the attack of Hardt and Danell is demonstrated even more. Hardt maintains that Prof. Sasse warned against the "Bible institute's doctrine of the Lord's Supper" (NV 5/77, p.74). But the truth is that Sasse was dead when Biblicum for the first time expressed itself on the doctrine of the Supper! But this evidently is not taken into consideration when one must at any cost find some argument against Biblicum. When Hardt furthermore finds an argument in favor of Saliger's doctrine of the Supper from the fact that Sasse supposedly objected to the work and methods of the institute, this shows how difficult it is for Hardt to find some positive argument against Biblicum's doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Besides the situation actually is this that Hardt with great diligence sent all over the world a number of false reports and accusations against Biblicum (See Biblicum's Kamp for biblisk tro, 1974, pp 90ff), by which anyone who did not know the facts might easily have been misled. By spreading inaccurate reports and accusations against Biblicum, Hardt has been able to bring Biblicum into disrepute not only in the eyes of Prof. Sasse. Sasse, who in the last years of his life was very sick and weak, did not have the opportunity to verify Hardt's reports, but he believed that Hardt was a

reliable witness. For this he is not to be blamed. But if we were to take up and answer all the unfactual arguments which Hardt adduces in Nya Våktaren 5/77, Hardt would succeed in drawing us away from the matter under discussion, namely the biblical and Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper. But this he shall not succeed in doing.

An Error?

In his judgment over what Hardt calls "the Bible institute's doctrine of the Lord's Supper" Hardt has been able to allude to only one error in the article he attacks. That is worthy of note, since Biblicum's article is after all a human document that makes no claim to inerrancy. However, as far as this "error" is concerned it is evident that it is in reality Hardt who has made two serious mistakes. Hardt writes, "The Bible institute concludes by citing as support for its teaching a certain confession of 1574," and Hardt maintains further that this confession is quoted by the institute "with the evident purpose of presenting itself as faithful to the confessions." He is of the opinion that the description "lacking confessional character" fits "this type of activity" (p. 75). Danell in his introduction to Hardt's article says that it is "an unmasking of Biblicum's manner of dealing with the pertinent materials." But here instead it is again Hardt and Danell who are unmasked. The article in Biblicum, which Hardt criticizes, in its conclusion quotes "a statement by the faculties in St. Louis and Springfield from the year 1959," a statement "which deals with the question of fixing the time of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper" (Biblicum, 6/76, pp 143ff). In this statement it is said, (Translated from the Swedish)

However, the Formula of Concord does not fix the moment when the sacramental union takes place. On the contrary it rejects in strong terms speculative questions which deal with the "when" and "how" of the sacramental union. "When and how does the body come to the bread? How long does the sacramental union last? When does the body cease to be in the bread?" See Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche, 2 suppl. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1952), p. 1016, note 4, for a list of such questions which had been taken up in Kurtz Bekenntnis, 1571 (should evidently be 1574, my note) a forerunner to the Formula of Concord.

Hardt's first mistake is that he maintains that Biblicum cites "a certain confession of 1574." It is not Biblicum but the faculties in St. Louis and Springfield which cite the scholarly Göttingen edition of the Lutheran confessions, and it is this edition in turn which cites this confession. The second error is that Hardt says that Biblicum "appeals" to this confession "as support for its teaching." Neither Biblicum nor the faculties in St. Louis and Springfield nor the Göttingen edition "appeal" to this confession "as support for their doctrine." The faculties point to the Göttingen edition, where one finds a list of such questions which had been discussed in the Kurtz Bekenntnis, which is something completely different. What kind of confidence can one have in a doctor of theology who deals in such a way with the material he is studying?

Hardt's way of dealing is illustrated by his persistent efforts to get at Prof. Becker. He maintains that Prof. Becker wants to "make out of the pious thoughts of the individual a doctrinal norm," on the basis of the

fact that Prof. Becker had written in a letter published in NV 8/1971:3 (should be 8/1973), "For us it is enough to know. . .in order to give us certainty that our sins are forgiven." Hardt comments, "In such formulations the basic error of religious subjectivism comes to light--the pious man exercises control over God" (NV 5/77, p.75). But now this conclusion is based on a conscious misrepresentation of what Prof. Becker has said. Hardt omits the middle part of the sentence which he cites and in this way he cuts the heart out of Prof. Becker's statement. Let us quote Prof. Becker without any misleading omissions: "For us it is enough to know that His body which was given for us, and His blood which was shed for us, truly are present, in order to give us certainty that our sins are forgiven." Prof. Becker thus confesses that the body and blood of Christ truly are present in the Lord's Supper, just as the AC does in Article X. Just before this sentence Prof. Becker had replied to a false representation of the Wisconsin Synod's doctrine on the part of Hardt in NV 3/73, and had written, "It is, for example, not true that the Wisconsin Synod limits the presence of Christ 'to the mathematical point of the eating and drinking,' We teach, on the contrary, that one cannot limit the true presence in this way. With the Lutheran confessions we also do not speak of the presence of Christ in the sacrament, for Christ is always with His own, even when they are not celebrating the Lord's Supper. We speak of the presence of His body and blood, and with the Lutheran confessions we teach that the body and blood of Christ are present 'in the whole sacramental action' (SKB, p.624). Those who teach that we can fix the mathematical point when His body and blood begin to be present, e.g., when the pastor says, 'This is my body,' teach more than Scripture says" (Becker in NV 8/73). We thus see that Prof. Becker nowhere wants to let "the pious man exercise control over God" and to "make out of the pious thoughts of the individual a doctrinal norm." On the contrary he emphasizes the Scriptures as the highest norm, rule, and standard, also in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. But with such a person who, like Hardt, seeks to cut down persons who are displeasing to him by twisting quotations and facts, one obviously cannot carry on a discussion.

We can thus summarize by saying that the only factual error which Hardt has found in Biblicum's article on the biblical and Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper is not a factual error. Instead Hardt has made himself guilty of a grave error when he accuses Biblicum of proceeding in a way that lacks confessional character, a word which now boomerangs on him. Danell says that Hardt unmasks Biblicum's way of dealing with the evidence and he rejoices over this (p.72). We have seen that the evidence points in exactly the opposite direction. Biblicum's presentation is correct, but Hardt ignores the real nature of the evidence and this then leads to false accusations.

Joy or Sorrow?

We on our part cannot rejoice over this that Hardt and Danell act in such a way. Instead it brings great sorrow to us that Hardt and Danell now view it as one of their first duties to defame and attack Biblicum and such orthodox Lutheran theologians as Gerhard, Walther, and Pieper. Danell writes, "With joy Nya Vaktaren publishes the following contribution in the ongoing debate about the Lord's Supper," and he calls Hardt's article an "illuminating contribution." Danell is correct when he calls it an "illuminating contribution" --illuminating in another way than Danell intends. It illuminates how far one is willing to go in misrepresentation and false accusations so long as it will harm an institution which one cannot tolerate. Danell also writes

that "the following article is doubly valuable, in part because it makes clear the distinction between the true Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper and the Philippistic or Melancthonian view" (which as we have seen is altogether untrue (our note)), "and partly because it also makes clear, not to say un-masks, Biblicum's way of dealing with the evidence." In other words, Danell is happy if Biblicum is harmed as much as possible. If Danell is now really concerned about the truth, ought he not instead with sorrow demonstrate that his former brethren in his opinion have erred and try to help correct them? Scripture holds that it is those who have not believed the truth who find pleasure in unrighteousness (II Th 2:12; cp. I Cor 13:6). Everyone who reads NV 5/77, p.72ff finds there an example of a non-factual and hatefilled campaign against Biblicum and biblical-Lutheran faith. Compare this article with the factual presentation in Biblicum 6/76, pp 125ff.

It is also deplorable that Hardt and Danell make this attack on Biblicum and at the same time stand in close contact with the so-called high-church movement in Sweden, which knows little of what true Lutheranism is (see, e.g., NV 4/77, p.64). Thereby their presentation of the Lutheran doctrine becomes even more distorted. Danell has never out of love for biblical and Lutheran doctrine taken issue, for example, with Dr. Gunnar Rosendal's papistic view of church and ministry, the Lord's Supper and conversion, as it is expressed in his doctrinal writings. The papistic view of consecration as a work of the priest and the papistic view of the apostolic succession and ordination has never yet been unmasked in Nya Vaktaren by either Hardt or Danell on the basis of the doctrine of the Bible and Lutheranism. Instead they cooperate with Romanizing theologians in "study days" and Danell can without compunction celebrate the Lord's Supper together with Gunnar Rosendal. That shows the worth of their defense of the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The high churchmen are allowed to remain in their false view that the Lord's Supper doctrine of the Lutheran church can be reconciled with their Romanizing doctrine of the church, the ministry, and the Lord's Supper.

What is Involved

It is not Hardt's and Danell's zeal to emphasize the extension of the presence in time which is serious. It is important to emphasize what is really present in the Lord's Supper and what is there distributed and received by virtue of the words and ordinance of Christ. What is serious is the attempt to go beyond what is written and to make a doctrinal issue of things for which there is no support in clear words of the Bible. It is extremely serious when men are bound by doctrines which cannot be demonstrated by Scripture but must be believed and defended on the basis of human authority. When one maintains without Scriptural authority, for example, that God has commanded that every particle or drop of the consecrated elements must be consumed at the altar within the framework of the Lord's Supper, one is adding an appendix to God's Word and laying on men a burden that they are not able to bear. One turns the Lord's Supper from gospel into law, and gratitude for our salvation in Christ Jesus, that precious treasure which is offered to us in the Lord's Supper, is obscured by anxiety over whether one has fulfilled what God demands in connection with the sacrament. What is really involved is the sola Scriptura principle, that only Scripture must be the basis of articles of doctrine.

When now Hardt and Danell, as Saliger did, insist on doctrines which

are without support in Scripture and condemn as Philippists and Zwinglians men who with all their might stand guard over the real presence in the sacrament, then Hardt and Danell take their position side by side with Saliger, that is, outside the Lutheran church. Here we find good reason for the admonition in the confessions that we should not "raise or pursue unnecessary, presumptuous, and confusing disputes and quarrels about words." Let us hold fast to the clear and plain words of institution and remember that the Lord's Supper is Christ's precious testament to us, a treasure beyond value.

Seth Erlandsson

(translated by S. W. Becker)

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