

# 21PP<sup>st</sup> Century Manifestations of the Pietistic Evil (originally: The Effects of the Age of Pietism on the Lutheran Church)

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The age of pietism began with a strength and weakness analysis of a group of Lutheran congregations. Church leaders identified opportunities and threats, and decided that spiritual renewal was necessary. They set specific, measurable goals for the renewal, and decided to work especially through the clergy. When the new reforms did not achieve the desired results, the leaders decided to appeal directly to the laity. With a love for the Savior and a desire to see more good works, men with strong personalities and good fund-raising techniques built up a college that emphasized lay ministry. The activities at that college institutionalized the worst practices of pietism and diluted the message of the gospel. The reader of this paper can sense that its topic still has application today.

The effects of the age of pietism on the Lutheran Church can be summarized by the following theses:

1. The age of pietism institutionalized applying "correct" doctrine to the wrong situation.
2. The age of pietism resulted in less use of the Means of Grace.
3. The age of pietism gave Lutherans forms that appeal to the Reformed.
4. The age of pietism emphasized mission expansion at the expense of thorough study of the Word.
5. The age of pietism forced orthodox Lutherans to reaffirm their great heritage.

UUThesis One - The age of pietism institutionalized applying "correct" doctrine to the wrong situation.

Why is it so difficult to identify a Lutheran pietist? Historian after historian complains that "pietism" is slippery to define. The title of this paper limits it to Lutheran pietists, but even in this smaller arena it is difficult to find a definition that suffices. The problem is that we tend to define religious movements or bodies by the doctrines they teach, and most Lutheran pietists at least begin by teaching correct doctrine. They can quote the Bible, the Lutheran Confessions, and Luther himself very easily to support their points. What makes them pietists is that they apply "correct" doctrine to the wrong situations. When they do this often enough, an observer unacquainted with the specific situation simply senses that a pietist emphasizes certain doctrines to the exclusion of others.

A charge often leveled against pietism is that it **confuses justification and sanctification** or emphasizes sanctification to the exclusion of justification.<sup>i</sup> Readings from the most famous pietist writers make that clear.<sup>ii</sup> Where does the confusion or wrong emphasis come from? Pietists operate from a strength and weakness analysis of congregations and from a "felt need" analysis of individuals. Such navel-gazing to find problems is always in the realm of the law, and the logical answers suggested by the *opinio legis* are also law answers. Unless the gospel is forced into the discussion and understood as "our only strength and comfort" (CW 536, stanza 2), it is never studied or applied as a solution to the problems of individual Christians, congregations, or synods.

Such a thing easily happens to any of us today. We look at ten commandments, one gospel message, and adjust the ratio of our teaching accordingly. We find new ways and areas to present the law and talk about what's on people's

minds, but always present the gospel in the same phraseology. Soon we discard presenting the gospel at all, since "they've heard that before." If we put out sanctification literature without the gospel (because "that is our agreed starting point, so we don't have to present it each time"), then pietism is institutionalized.<sup>iii</sup>

The perceptive observer will soon discern that the real problem here lies in the area of proper application of law and gospel. If an entire discussion of problems and solutions is in the realm of the law, one comes to rely on it, rather than the gospel, to do the work of the Church. C.F.W. Walther, who spent some of his formative years among pietists, realized that this was the crux of the matter, and delivered his famous lectures on the subject. His Thesis Twenty-Three fits at this point: "...The Word of God is not rightly divided when an endeavor is made by means of the commands of the Law rather than by the admonitions of the Gospel, to urge the regenerate to do good."<sup>iv</sup> When the law is used in this way, we identify in pietism **a slant toward perfectionism.**

Spener, who wrote the first strength/weakness analysis during the movement (*Pia Desideria*), and Francke, who developed the University of Halle, each specifically rejected perfectionism.<sup>v</sup> Then they embraced it without calling it perfectionism.<sup>vi</sup> Writing about the similarity between yesterday's Pietism and today's Church Growth Movement, Carter Lindberg phrases the problem well:

Neither...has any sense of the motifs of the dialectic of law and gospel and the Christian as *simul justus et peccator*. And when Luther lamented that there are too few Christians in the world, he did not then suggest that the Word and Sacrament are insufficient for the church.<sup>vii</sup>

Pietists, however, do make that suggestion, and **add Christian living to the Marks of the Church.** It is a simple process to arrive at that idea today. Direct questions to new Lutherans who are happy in their congregations. Discover that they mention a loving, family atmosphere as one reason for being happy. Find a Bible passage that talks about the topic: "By their fruits you will know them" or "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." Take the logical step: It is not a real Christian church if I do not feel a loving, family atmosphere there. You have arrived at pietism, defining the "reciprocal love of the members"<sup>viii</sup> as what makes a model congregation rather than faithful application of the gospel in Word and Sacrament.

That legacy is just one part of the market-driven approach that characterizes Lutheran pietism. The method is to ask Lutherans what they are concerned about, and then make that the business of the corporate church. We come dangerously close to that ourselves when the results of focus groups are used as the basis for church plans instead of the basis for finding out what problems the gospel may address today. That approach means that in the past, the most pietistic of the Lutheran bodies were on the cutting edge of whatever the "modern" issue was. For example, in Germany, the first pietists championed education, but only in the context of improving the condition of the poor.<sup>ix</sup> The orphanage at the University of Halle was famous world-wide. In the United States, the Franckean Synod was the only Lutheran body to take an early, vigorous, and consistent stand on behalf of the abolition of slavery.<sup>x</sup> Lutheran pietists in the United States actively supported the Temperance Movement.<sup>xi</sup> ELCA leaders frustrated by their church body's current preoccupation with social issues trace it largely to Samuel Schmucker's teaching at Gettysburg Seminary.<sup>xii</sup> Schmucker specifically embraced the traditions of German Lutheran pietism.<sup>xiii</sup>

Those of us who have been taught from Scripture that Christ instituted one ministry in his church, the ministry of the gospel and the ministry of the gospel alone, can hardly believe that Lutherans added social work and called it the ministry of the corporate church.<sup>xiv</sup> How could it happen? Writers agree that pietists quietly **reject the Two Kingdom distinctions.**<sup>xv</sup> Such a rejection means that anything logically "supporting the work of proclaiming the gospel" can be called "public ministry."<sup>xvi</sup> In these patriotic days it has to be very tempting for church organizations

to cloak their fund-raising appeals in the flag, blurring the Kingdoms of church and state.<sup>xvii</sup> Once again, the correct doctrine that Christians may occupy positions in government and exercise a wholesome influence is used incorrectly to increase church activity.

With their market driven approach, pietists are aware of problems in society. It seems to an outside observer, however, that pietist preachers often use law to rail against the gross sins of immoral society rather than to convict individuals of their sinfulness.<sup>xviii</sup> When orthodox pastors try to correct the problem, they are open to charges of insensitivity ("Aren't you against sin in the world?"). Unfortunately, when enough orthodox pastors take a stand against these abuses of pietism, pietist leaders appeal directly to the social sensitivities of lay people. Then, in order to discredit public ministers and elevate the laity, pietism either **pits the universal priesthood against the public ministry**<sup>xix</sup> or **blurs the distinction between the two of them.**<sup>xx</sup>

The real doctrine of the priesthood of all believers actually supports the doctrine of the public ministry.<sup>xxi</sup> Pietists always insist, however, that Luther only introduced the doctrine and that we are finally the generation that must fully develop it.<sup>xxii</sup> Such a full development requires "rethinking the concept of ministry." The form that works best to institutionalize pietist reforms has become known to us as "conventicles" or "small group ministry."

It is clear that Spener's original suggestion of conventicles was merely Bible study groups under the direct supervision of pastors.<sup>xxiii</sup> It is also clear that even his own conventicles were anything but Bible study groups and were rarely under the supervision of the pastor.<sup>xxiv</sup> One great attraction of such a group, of course, is the emotional bond of friendship that develops among its participants.<sup>xxv</sup> One great danger is that such a group becomes divisive in a congregation, earning the historical badge, *ecclesiola in ecclesia*.<sup>xxvi</sup>

Probably warning enough for us in this regard is what C.F.W. Walther wrote in his essay, "The Proper Form of an Evangelical Lutheran Congregation Independent of the State." Having experienced conventicles in his theological training, he wrote in Thesis Twenty-Five:

In order that the Word of God may have full scope in a congregation, the congregation should lastly tolerate no divisions by way of conventicles, that is, meetings for instruction and prayer aside from the divinely ordained public ministry, 1 Cor. 11:18, James 3:1, 1 Cor. 12:29, 14:28, Acts 6:4, Romans 10:15; "How shall they preach unless they be sent?"<sup>xxvii</sup>

The divisive nature of conventicles drew people away from corporate worship. The neglect of the public administration of the Means of Grace promoted by this form of small group ministry is the chief cause of the next large problem we see with pietism:

### Thesis Two - The age of pietism resulted in less use of the Means of Grace.

The first Lutheran Pietists wrote about the value of the Means of Grace in Word and sacrament, especially in Word. They put their efforts where their writing was in that regard, distributing from the University of Halle, for example, 100,000 New Testaments and 80,000 complete Bibles in a space of six years.<sup>xxviii</sup> They sought to lead people into the Bible, and quoted Bible passages freely. As time went on, however, each **individual pietist used the Bible less and less.**

How could this happen? Orthodox writers of the day sensed that pietist conventicles used the Bible the way a Reformed person would: as long as the Bible is present, no matter how it is interpreted, a person cannot go too far

astray.<sup>xxix</sup> This is using the Bible as talisman or good luck charm rather than respecting the gospel message. The Bible gets some respect, but because the gospel (the single real Means of Grace) is not clear, the Bible does not become the place to turn in a time of crisis.<sup>xxx</sup> When real difficulties arise for a pietist, the Means of Grace does not offer as much comfort as individual efforts do.<sup>xxxi</sup>

It is well known that **pietists direct people** to the individual effort known as a **conversion experience** as certainty for their salvation. One radical Lutheran pietist went so far as to say that justification is a fiction whereas rebirth is a reality.<sup>xxxii</sup> In less radical but equally dangerous language, Francke's *Autobiography* describes his own adult conversion experience, calling it the end result of his attempt "to become a justified Christian."<sup>xxxiii</sup> Without explicitly denying Christ's work, Francke makes it clear that he considers subjective justification the key to an individual's Christianity.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Francke encouraged each Christian to follow his example and search for a "born-again" experience as proof of his own conversion.

This line of thought introduced **testimonials** to Lutheran practice for the first time. Today it is tempting to incorporate personal testimonies into corporate worship or public devotional life.<sup>xxxv</sup> Our own practice was affected when testimonials at confirmation age turned into what we know as examination before confirmation. Only after a young person was seen to be truly sanctified in word and action was he or she allowed to be confirmed.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

Confirmation was also called a "renewal of the baptismal vow," an idea that even found its way into the old Synodical Conference agenda.<sup>xxxvii</sup> This can be a **devaluation of baptism**. Spener baptized babies, but he believed that the biblical foundation for the assumption that infants can have faith was weak.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Francke was convinced that at some point in the maturation of the individual, personal faith must be added to baptism. Every baptized child was looked upon as having fallen from the state of baptismal grace, necessitating this conscious individual pledge at confirmation as a "completion of the efficacy of the baptismal covenant."<sup>xxxix</sup>

If baptism was devalued, what about the Lord's Supper? We expect to find that it has more attraction for pietists, since it is connected with adult repentance. A modern German historian expected the same thing but was impressed to learn "how relatively **unimportant a role the Lord's Supper actually plays in pietism**."<sup>xl</sup> He quotes the Lutheran pietist, Gottfried Arnold: "The more perfect a Christian is, the less he is in need of Holy Communion; it is only an aid to the weak."<sup>xli</sup>

This attitude explains how our Lutheran Confessions can take weekly use of the sacrament for granted,<sup>xlii</sup> while we discover only a monthly use (or even less frequent one hundred years ago) at some places in our own circles. The practice of offering the Lord's Supper less frequently comes directly from pietism, and it seems to be tied more directly to a **devaluation of liturgy** than to any other phenomenon.<sup>xliii</sup> It might be expressed this way today: "If I get good feelings about myself from a small group Bible study, I do not feel an immediate need for the Lord's Supper, especially when I have to sit through another mumbling of page 15." Church records document the trend that wherever pietism takes hold, communion attendance drops dramatically.<sup>xliv</sup>

With more emphasis on the Bible and less emphasis on its message, with a devaluation of the sacraments and the role of liturgy in worship, it sounds like we are dealing with a Reformed church. That clear truth leads to the next large influence pietism has had on Lutherans:

### Thesis Three - The age of pietism gave Lutherans forms that appeal to the Reformed.

When pietist Lutherans did gather for worship, how was their worship different from that of Orthodox Lutheran

churches? First, they always had less liturgy.<sup>xlv</sup> Second, while they retained the confession of sins, pietists **did not have a clear general absolution** in their worship, since a person had to meet certain inner conditions in order to qualify for forgiveness. One can see how objective justification is ignored.<sup>xlvi</sup>

Third, pietist hymnody was normally very subjective. Until this point in Lutheran history, Lutherans wrote hymns about God. Now they also wrote hymns about human responses to God. The worst of these, thankfully, have gone the way of most excessive hymns. The best of these, such as those by Paul Gerhardt, are preserved by us and can still be used appropriately in our very subjective culture.

In the end, however, pietists sense that corporate worship does not influence people's lives enough. The solution--derived from the anthropological focus of Reformed theology--is to divide people by age and/or gender in order to give them Bible instruction more tailored to their specific needs. One result is an emphasis on **Sunday School** among Lutherans that had never been seen before.<sup>xlvii</sup> This was not Sunday School as we know it today (the current phenomenon is just over one hundred years old). Pietist Sunday School was catechism instruction graded for different age levels. An advantage of this method of education is the direct lay involvement; how can the pastor object to laity in teaching roles when he himself could never cover all of the classes?<sup>xlviii</sup> A disadvantage is that the Orthodox Lutheran solution to the training of children, the Lutheran Elementary School with its more thoroughly trained teachers, is downplayed. The amazing reluctance of some of our oldest teachers to promote Sunday Schools can be traced to this tension and to the Synodical Conference tendency to emphasize the Lutheran Elementary School over special catechism classes or modern Sunday School.

Fewer theological distinctions, more subjectivity, and thriving Sunday School programs made Lutheran pietists comfortable comparing notes with the Reformed.<sup>xlix</sup> Since Dobson and Swindoll weren't on the radio, and Don Abdon and Rick Warren were not offering any seminars, the first pietists went to Reformed strongholds like Geneva for study.<sup>1</sup> There they discovered that they shared a very large problem with the Reformed: as a legacy of *cuius regio, eius religio*, they all had large numbers of people on their books who were supposedly members but who showed no interest in the congregation. Since these people were baptized, Lutherans counted them as members and worked to increase their exposure to the Means of Grace. The Reformed, however, had developed a theology that **distinguished between believers and true disciples**. Pietism took over that terminology and that pastoral practice.

Francke's concept of a three-way division in the congregation shows how it works. The largest group was those who "had the form of godliness but lacked its substance." This denies the faith of those who do not meet the pastor's standards of how the Christian lives. The second group was those who were started but not yet fully committed. Today the pietist might say that these are "head, not heart Christians," making the same scriptural mistakes as decision theologians. The smallest group was the "true" church. Francke could identify these members of the Holy Christian Church because they lived up to his norms.<sup>li</sup>

Such a division influenced even Walther. Because he studied masterful pietist homileticians like Fresenius (Francke's son-in-law), he liked to divide up his listeners into **levels of sanctification**, offering an application for each level.<sup>lii</sup> When he realized later in life that the practice was not biblical, he tried to rid himself of it.

Other American Lutheran leaders embraced pietist practice, however, and we see the next large influence pietists had on Lutherans:

Thesis Four - The age of pietism emphasized mission expansion at the expense of thorough study of the Word.

In a *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* article titled "Lutheran Pietism Comes To America" (82,4, Fall 1985), Prof. Edward C. Fredrich documents three lines of Lutheran pietist immigration. The first is Germans coming to Pennsylvania, the second is Scandinavians coming to the Great Lakes region, and the third is Wuerttembergers forming the roots of the Wisconsin Synod. The details of the immigrations are instructive, but the opening sentence of the article hits the issue that a Christian historian must tackle:

In his long and large plans for his Lutheran Zion the Lord of the church saw fit to accompany the rise of Lutheran Pietism with a general opening of the New World to Lutheran immigrants. (page 263)

Why? We believe in God's providence, and we wonder, why did he allow pietism to blossom in each country shortly before the country's exodus began to the New World?

It is not because pietists were all natural missionaries. The University at Halle encouraged mission work in India (well-known as the Danish-Halle Mission), but pietists almost killed it in its later development. Christian Wendt, an avowed pietist missionary to India, interpreted "true spirituality" to mean that a missionary must receive little or no outside support, remain unmarried, busy himself with no charitable work whatsoever, and refrain from studying the traditions and customs of the people to whom he had been sent, so that he would waste no valuable time.<sup>liii</sup>

There were better missionaries, of course. India's Ziegenbalg, Pennsylvania's Muhlenberg, Michigan's Schmid, and Wisconsin's Muehlhaeuser all had pietist backgrounds to some degree. Evaluating their work today, we see that when their foundations were built on by orthodox Lutherans, the missions thrived. When pietists and rationalists continued the construction, however, the foundations crumbled.

Historians have wondered whether the pietists who emphasized mission work were reacting to some problems with outreach among orthodox Lutherans. It is commonly in print that Johann Gerhard, the great sixteenth century orthodox Lutheran dogmatician, spoke against missions, attempting to prove that the apostles had already preached the gospel to the whole world in their time, so the commands of Christ had ceased.<sup>liv</sup> Recent examination of Gerhard's original writings shows that this is a misinterpretation of his argument against those who were trying to prove that all pastors had to be directly descended from the apostles by the laying on of hands. Still, some historians write, without documentation, that there was an attitude in this day that to preach to heathen was casting pearls before swine.<sup>lv</sup>

My own reading of the sources has led me to believe that when pietists no longer relied on the gospel to motivate people in the areas of stewardship and evangelism, they had to come up with something that would be an activity of the Church attractive enough to get Christians continuously excited. They settled on mission work in far-flung places. It is generally recognized that the modern missionary movement of expansion into remote areas of the world had its beginnings with German Lutheran pietism. I don't think anyone today would dispute that world mission work certainly captures people's imaginations. It is relatively easy to promote.

There is more than a little marketing savvy in this calculation. Who could speak against missions? That is the context of the oft-misunderstood quotation in J.P. Koehler's *History of the Wisconsin Synod* when speaking of the opening of the Apache mission:

There was something not entirely sound about Synod's heathen-mission endeavor, the idea that a church is not living up to its mission unless it engages in heathen-mission work, according to the Lord's great commission: Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. That idea is dogmatism,

with a streak of pietism (page 198).

Koehler realized from church history that mission work done in order to make the corporate church feel good about itself—or even to say that it is not really a healthy church unless a certain percent of mission work is done in certain areas—can miss the gospel motive for mission work entirely. But he also saw how the Lord of the Church continued and continues to bring good from bad.

It would appear to us that thorough study of the Word of God would promote mission work. But once the gospel is removed from the Word or considered unimportant, mission work must be promoted in a different way, and its cost can come into competition with the cost of thorough study. That's just one dynamic that sets up our last thesis:

Thesis Five - The age of pietism forced orthodox Lutherans to reaffirm their great heritage.

Such a conclusion ought not surprise us. To trace church history is to trace the story of God affirming the truths of his Word in the face of popular and attractive opposition. Insightful historians see just that happening in areas where pietism had made inroads in Germany and the United States.<sup>lvi</sup>

We still see it happening today. Because of the influence of pietism, we are forced every day to **put our reliance on the Means of Grace** or on squirrels.<sup>lvii</sup> We have to choose either strength/weakness analyses or the study of doctrine as the basis for all activity in our congregational life.<sup>lviii</sup> We must preach precise law and gospel on every topic and let the Spirit work the fruits.<sup>lix</sup> In fact, we need to avoid demanding one or more specific fruits as evidence of real Christianity.<sup>lx</sup> Instead, we do best by looking for the fruits the Holy Spirit is working in our people, encouraging those by sending our people into the Word, and continuing to preach specific law and gospel so that more fruits come about as a result of Christians being grafted to the Vine.

In our synod, we trace the blessings of the last 140 years directly to men like Bading and Hoenecke who stood in the face of popular pietism and insisted on Lutheran orthodoxy. What is necessary to preserve that great heritage today? The answer lies in a certain vigilance. In our publications, for example, we need to guard against any attempt to classify Christians based on outward behavior.<sup>lxi</sup> We need to guard against the Reformed idea of "accountability covenants," championed today by Serendipity, which attempts to turn each congregation into a supervised Geneva.<sup>lxii</sup>

In our Seminary training, we need to remove the false assumption of the *opinio legis* that doctrine is philosophical and other things are more practical. Second Timothy 3:16 establishes that all doctrine is practical, and the burden remains on us as theologians to present and use the doctrines in all of their proper applications (dogmatics calls this the *habitus practicus* of the theologian). Robert Preus says that well:

To maintain the practical character of theology against all forms of theological dilettantism, speculation, scientism, and 'dead orthodoxy' is the perennial task of evangelical theology. All true evangelical Lutherans have seen the importance of this responsibility.<sup>lxiii</sup>

Spener called for more practical training of those who would become pastors. It is obviously not a new suggestion, but it is especially important in these last days to ask, who decides what is practical?<sup>lxiv</sup> There is no impractical doctrine of Holy Scripture, and there is nothing more practical than its study and application. Either Word and Sacrament suffices, or something else is necessary for a ministry that pleases God.

On a personal level, the abuses of pietism teach all of us the need for daily contrition and repentance. Although the Word of God has all of the answers we need, our misapplication of this treasure can turn "correct" doctrine into something that really is no doctrine at all. Instead of extracting specks from the eyes of our brothers, we need to call on the Holy Spirit to turn our own lumber stockpiles back into his houses of living stone. Then, with confidence in the forgiveness of sins won for us by the Savior, and perfect trust in the sufficiency of the Savior's Means of Grace, we can echo Herman Sasse:

When will men stop this idle talk about 'dead orthodoxy,' a charge that is completely without historical foundation, resting only on a dogma of Pietism,<sup>lxv</sup>

and repeat the words of Simon Schoeffel:

Nothing is more foolish and more ridiculous than to speak of 'dead' orthodoxy, which has only brought forth letters but has not promoted life. Only monumental ignorance gives a person the right to reject it as 'dead.'<sup>lxvi</sup>

True orthodoxy is never dead, because true orthodoxy is connected entirely with the Word of God, which is Spirit and life, always accomplishing its purpose. Lord, grant, while worlds endure, we keep its teachings pure, throughout all generations.<sup>lxvii</sup>

#### E N D N O T E S

for "The Effects of the Age of Pietism on the Lutheran Church

- i. Fredrich, E.C., "After Three Centuries--The Legacy of Pietism," (paper read to the SEW District Pastor-Teacher Conference at Hales Corners, WI, June 11, 1985), page 11. Fredrich comments: "How can trouble be averted when regeneration gets so much attention that the truth of justification by grace through faith in Christ is no longer *articulus stantis et cadentis*?"
- ii. Brenner, John M., "Pietism, Past and Present," (paper read to WELS Michigan District, Southeastern Conference, Pastor-Teacher-Delegate Conference, January 23, 1989), page 8. Brenner quotes Spener, "As the faith which alone justifies us and makes us holy is inseparable from good works, so no one will be justified other than those who are intent upon sanctification."
- iii. This seems to be a special temptation in Teen Youth Group work. A member of the Synod's Youth Commission told us Middlers at the Seminary in 1986, "Teenagers have heard about justification all their lives! They're bored with it! It doesn't do anything for them! They really want to talk about sanctification. That's what your youth group should be all about." The man refused to give up the view under close questioning from students. Later he left the WELS.
- iv. Walther, C.F.W. *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), translation by W.H.T. Dau, 1928.
- v. Balge, Richard, "Pietism's Teaching on Church and Ministry," (*Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, 82:4, Fall 1985), pages 258,259, specific quotations from their writings cited.
- vi. Heick, Otto W. *A History of Christian Thought*, Volume II (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), page 25.



"Spener makes a distinction between 'having' sin and 'committing' sin, 'keeping' and 'fulfilling' the law. Though not able to 'fulfill' the law, a believer has the power to 'keep' the law; while still 'having' sin, he will not 'commit' sin."

vii. Lindberg, Carter, "Pietism and the Church Growth Movement in a Confessional Lutheran Perspective," (*Concordia Theological Quarterly*, 52:2,3, Apr-Jul, 1988), page 137. We must not add variety to our presentation methods because we think that the Means of Grace is not doing its job in worship or anywhere else. We can use variety in our presentation methods because of freedom in the gospel, celebrating the variety of gifts God has given to us.

viii. Lindberg, op. cit., page 133. Zinzendorf institutionalized this practice of Lutheran Pietism in the congregations under his influence, saying, "The only ground for the existence of a Church is that it may create and promote fellowship among souls who live in a state of ardent love and obedience to the Savior." Cited by Eastwood, Cyril. *The Priesthood of All Believers* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House), 1962, page 226.

ix. Kuenning, Paul. *The Rise And Fall of American Lutheran Pietism* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press), 1988, page 15.

x. Kuenning, Paul, "Lutheran Pacifism," (*Currents in Theology and Mission*, 14:4, August 1987), page 264.

xi. Jackson, Greg. *Liberalism* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House), 1991, page 26.

xii. Some of these guys are eloquent. "There is a crisis in lay roles now only because we fail to remember these few things. To get it straight we do not need a new doctrine of the laity, whatever that might mean, or new programs for the laity. What we need is a renewed understanding of baptism." (Klein, Leonard, "Beyond Pietism," *Lutheran Forum*, 22:3, August 1988, pages 4,5).

xiii. Kuenning, *Rise And Fall*, page 68.

xiv. Lawrenz, Carl, "The Scriptural Truths of the Church and Its Ministry," (*Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, 82:3, Summer 1985), pages 180,181.

xv. Kuenning, "Lutheran Pacifism," page 263. Kuenning also refers elsewhere to their treating the doctrine with "benign neglect." In 1918, German Lutheran Pietists generally went over to the political groups favoring a return to the monarchy, because they had noted that church and state were together in Old Testament Israel, and they saw Germany as a New Testament Israel. You can read more about that in *Church History* magazine, Volume 51:1, March 1982, in an article called "Pietism and Nationalism" by Hartmut Lehmann.

xvi. The Wauwatosa theologians were dealing with that issue when they talked about the doctrine of church and ministry. We misinterpret them today when identify the public ministry of the church with any office that does not handle the Means of Grace.

xvii. Terms like "the Christian moral fabric of America is eroding" are tip-off's that there is this confusion.

xviii. Brenner, op. cit., page 9.

xix. Fredrich, op. cit., page 14. The Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the LCMS phrases the

whole issue very charitably: "There are those who would prefer to use the term 'ministry' only in the narrower sense. They feel that this avoids confusion. Others feel that to speak of 'the ministry of the laity' is not only permissible but even essential, so that the individual witnessing and teaching of Christians in general may be properly stressed and dignified." (*The Ministry: Offices, Procedures and Nomenclature*, a report of the CTCR of the LCMS, September, 1981). Notice, however, that even in this definition only what individual Christians do directly with the Means of Grace is called ministry.

xx. Brenner, op. cit., page 26.

xxi. CTCR of LCMS, op. cit., page 19: "Is there one ministry in the church or many?" Footnote (citing *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3rd ed.): "Strictly speaking only the Lutherans have a doctrine of the ministry, while at the corresponding place the Calvinists treat of ministries (Aemter, offices) and the Roman Catholic and Orthodox, as well as, in their own way, the Anglicans, of the hierarchy....Lutheranism powerfully underscores...the position of the Gospel as the lifegiving center of the congregation."

xxii. "Pietism," *Christian History Magazine* (V,2), 1986, page 6 (you can subscribe to this magazine at Box 450, Worcester, PA, 19490).

xxiii. Spener, Philip Jacob. *Pia Desideria*, translated by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1964, page 90.

xxiv. Ernst Valentin Loescher, a contemporary of Spener, documents the problems city by city and meeting by meeting in his *Complete Timotheus Verinus* (Wittenberg: Hannauer), 1726. A translation of this book by WELS Pastor James Langebartels is available from NPH.

xxv. Zersen, David John, "C.F.W. Walther and the Heritage of Pietist Conventicles," (*Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, Volume 62, Spring, 1989), quotes Walther on page 14: [The participants in the conventicles] were inwardly happy in their God and Savior and all who remained faithful looked back on this time of their first love as the most blessed time of their life." A WELS pastor who organizes and participates in conventicles in his own congregation says, "True koinwnia can only come from the gut level communication you have in such a group."

xxvi. Lindberg, op. cit., page 134.

xxvii. Dallmann, William. *Walther and the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), 1938, page 101.

xxviii. *Christian History Magazine*, op. cit, page 6.

xxix. Loescher, op. cit., pages 6-11.

xxx. A WELS pastor, explaining his use of Serendipity materials, began his presentation to other WELS pastors: "Don't worry about me. I'm a Word and Sacrament kind of guy." He proceeded to teach from Serendipity that true koinwnia can only come when there is gut-level communication in a small group. When questioned as to where the Means of Grace play in, the pastor responded, "Oh yes, and it's all based on the Word of God. There, are we orthodox now?"

xxxi. Brenner, op cit, page 13.

xxxii. Lindberg, op. cit., page 144, quoting Hoburg.

xxxiii. Enough of the experience is cited in Balge's *Quarterly* article (pages 259,260) to give you a taste.

xxxiv. Balge (op. cit.) makes it clear just how dangerous this is. He writes (page 252), "The neglect of objective preaching of universal reconciliation and justification was bound to lead to that legalism which characterized Halle under Francke's successors. The anthropocentrism which directed men to self, feeling and experience instead of to the Word, could easily become the anthropocentrism which enthroned reason in theology. It did. Historians are agreed that Pietism paved the way for Rationalism at Halle, especially at Halle."

xxxv. Freitag, Walter, "Fundamentalism and Canadian Lutheranism," (*Consensus: A Canadian Lutheran Journal of Theology*, volume 13:1), 1987, page 30. I wonder whether the medium of television works best with testimonials. I watch the WELS Connection videos with this in mind.

xxxvi. Balge, op. cit., page 256. Interestingly, Loescher adopted the practice as a wholesome one.

xxxvii. *The Lutheran Agenda*, authorized by the synods constituting the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), no date, page 23.

xxxviii. Kuenning, *Rise and Fall*, page 19.

xxxix. Balge, op. cit., page 259.

xl. Stiller, Guenther. *Johann Sebastian Bach and Liturgical Life In Leipzig* (CPH), 1984, page 141. There is a grave danger involved when you decide to celebrate Holy Communion anywhere but Sunday worship because the practice of closed communion might cause offense to visitors.

xli. Preusz, Helmut. *Die Geschichte der Abendmahlsfroemigkeit in Zeugnissen und Berichten* (Guetersloh, 1949), p. 22.

xlii. *Concordia Triglotta* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), Augsburg Confession, Article XXIV, page 67: "Now, forasmuch as the Mass is such a giving of the Sacrament, we hold one communion every holy-day, and, if any desire the Sacrament, also on other days, when it is given to such as ask for it. And this custom is not new in the Church; for the Fathers before Gregory make no mention of any private Mass, but of the common Mass (the Communion) they speak very much. Chrysostom says that the priest stands daily at the altar, inviting some to the Communion and keeping others back."

xliii. Stiller, op. cit., p. 131.

xliv. Loescher documents the trend place by place in his first chapter.

xlv. This attitude frustrated J.S. Bach. James Engel documents that in his article, "Johann Sebastian Bach: Some Theological Perspectives," (*Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, 83:1, Winter 1986), especially page 32. Bach, associated with Orthodox Leipzig, has never been fully appreciated among us because his best work was in German. Handel, associated with Pietist Halle, has received more widespread acceptance because his work was in English.

- xlvi. Brenner, op. cit, page 14.
- xlvii. Balge, op. cit, page 256.
- xlviii. Kuenning, *Rise and Fall*, page 90.
- xlix. Fredrich, op. cit., page 5, quotes the widespread conception that pietists believed it was "not bad to become a Calvinist."
- l. Ahlstrom, Sydney. *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 1972, page 237.
- li. Balge, op. cit., page 251.
- lii. Pieper, August, "Anniversary Reflections II," (*Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, 84:2, Spring 1987), page 109. Walther improved on this near the end of his life but never entirely escaped the practice.
- liii. Wendland, E.H. (or E.W.?), "Pietism's World Mission Enterprise." (*Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, 82:3), Summer 1985, page 200.
- liv. Warneck, Gustav. *A History of Protestant Missions* (New York: Revell), tr. George Robson, 1906, pp.28-31. This slam on Gerhard is effectively refuted by research quoted in WLS President Paul Wendland's analysis of pietism, published electronically in 2004: <http://www.wels.net/s3/uploaded/850/pietism.pdf>
- lv. Pierson, Arthur T. *The New Acts of the Apostles* (New York: Bake and Taylor), 1894, page 76.
- lvi. Suelflow, Roy. *Christian Churches in Recent Times* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), 1980, page 38.
- lvii. The country humor singer Ray Stevens sings a song called "Mississippi Squirrel Revival," in which setting a squirrel loose in a congregation causes these results: "seven deacons and a pastor got saved, \$25,000 was raised, 50 people volunteered for missions to the Congo, 500 people rededicated themselves, and we were all rebaptized whether we needed it or not."
- lviii. Brenner, op. cit, pages 23-26.
- lix. It seems to the author that Pietists reduce Orthodox reliance on law and gospel to absurdity. Pietists say, "You think that if we just preach law and gospel, everything will be OK." Orthodox Lutherans ask, "What specific law and what specific gospel best apply to this situation?"
- lx. Brenner, op. cit., pages 23-26.
- lxi. Brenner, op. cit, pages 23-26.
- lxii. You see a reflection of this legalism creeping into youth publications when they demand specific fruits and signed "accountability covenants" for the youth, supervised either by the group or by the leader.
- lxiii. Preus, Robert. *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House),

1970, page 194.

lxiv. Fredrich, op. cit., page 6.

lxv. Preus, op. cit, page 412.

lxvi. Stiller, op. cit, page 142.

lxvii. The quotation, of course, is from *The Lutheran Hymnal* 283, "God's Word Is Our Great Heritage," by Nikolai Grundtvig, a dedicated Danish Lutheran Pietist. It is an example of orthodox Lutheranism's excellent practice of using worship forms from all sources and interpreting them according to the Scripture. Grundtvig himself believed that the Spirit worked without Means, and he re-wrote "Ein Feste Burg" with that in mind. When he wrote this last verse of his hymn, he was probably thinking of the revelations of God inside human beings, not of the Bible. We can thank our Norwegian brethren for giving the verse its current orthodox context!

