

# Quartalschrift

## Theological Quarterly

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\* Due to an oversight the index of volume 45 of the *Quartalschrift* did not appear in the October number. We are having it published in this number, hoping that it will still reach those of our readers in time who intended to have their 1948 issue bound.

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# Quartalschrift

## Theological Quarterly

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Volume 45

January, 1948

Number 1

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### THE WAY OF SALVATION

#### A Handbook of Lutheran (Biblical) Doctrine

*To the Members of the Wisconsin Synod:*

You have by resolution requested me to publish my "material on dogmatics" in the form of a "textbook." I must admit that from the beginning I felt hesitant about accepting the invitation, and I have not yet been able to overcome that feeling.

A study of dogmatics is certainly very important, especially in our Seminary. Its value for the training of our pastors can hardly be overestimated. Yet things are slightly different when a book is to be published. The essential part of the course as given in the classroom with its intensive study of Bible passages according to text and context cannot be preserved satisfactorily in a book. Repetitions, digressions, homely illustrations, resulting from students' questions, not only enliven the classroom discussions but lead to a more thorough understanding of the doctrines and an absorbing of the spiritual food; yet they would make tedious reading in a book.

I fear that publishing my "material on dogmatics" as a "textbook" will prove unsatisfactory.

There is, furthermore, the danger of a wrong study and use of dogmatics. The subject, by its very nature, engages the intellect preeminently in defining concepts and formulating propositions. While this is perfectly legitimate, it may, as the past history of the Lutheran Church on the European continent has shown, lead to "dead orthodoxy" with its attendant evils.

Permit me to illustrate with a few examples that the danger is still lurking today.

We have the Boy Scout problem. Advocates of Scouting in the Lutheran Church, men whose sincerity cannot be questioned, imagine that our boys can align themselves with the Scout organization, can adopt the various "musts" of membership, including the oath, without becoming implicated in the Deistic and Pelagian principles that are still prevalent in the movement. We all know the doctrine of sanctification, that good works are the fruit of the spirit, being motivated only by the mercies of God; and yet some people are ready to adopt also the Scout motivation on the boy's "honor." Is it possible to be a member of an organization without becoming affected in one's spiritual life by the principles prevalent in it?

Another example. Ours are turbulent times for the Church, not only for the Lutheran Church, regardless of synodical affiliation, but also for other church bodies. The persistent union endeavors have brought on a sharp clash between liberal and conservative elements. Some of the liberals have all dogmatical definitions and propositions at their fingers' tips. When the conservatives, then, attack them with dogmatical arguments they get precisely nowhere — except, perhaps, that in their zeal they themselves become involved in some questionable dogmatical pronouncement.

That the practice of defining terms and limiting them over against each other may lead one to make, or to accept, distinctions as serviceable which are not based on vital differences, can be seen from the following. Some very sincere men are ready to permit an occasional "joint prayer" to people for whom "prayer-fellowship" would be definitely out of the question. Does the number of times an act is committed really change its ethical character? Joint prayer presupposes a joint confession of the participants. If the confessional stand of both parties is such as to result in one joint prayer, what is there to bar prayer-fellowship? Can they for the moment acknowledge one another as brethren in the faith and then, while still standing on the same confessional basis, proceed to deny each other?

What we need most today in our theology is not dogmatical acumen of a kind, but a nourishing with the bread of life and a refreshing with waters drawn from God's living fountain. A healthy body will more readily shed disease germs. — If dogmatics is used to lead directly into the Scriptures it will be of benefit.

In order that you may be in a position to judge whether my book would really serve this purpose for you, I agreed to get a few sample pages ready for our *Theological Quartalschrift*. Will you, please, examine them carefully and report your reactions to the Synod's Centennial Committee?

JOHN P. MEYER.

## Introduction (Prolegomena)

### A. The Nature of Dogmatics

#### 1. *Dogmatics as a branch of theology*

The subjects pursued by a student of theology may generally be divided into two groups: historical and systematic.

To begin with the latter, there are some of an entirely practical nature, *e. g.*, Hermeneutics, Homiletics, Pastoral Theology, Catechetics; while, among the so-called theoretical disciplines, Ethics, which is now commonly treated as an independent subject, actually might be considered as a part of an all-inclusive Dogmatics. It presents in an expanded form certain truths of Sanctification.

The historical subjects include not only Church History in general and special studies in the history of missions, of the Confessions, of doctrine, but also such subjects as Isagogics and Exegesis.

In a sense, all work in theology rests on Exegesis. For only if God's message to sinners in His Word is correctly understood can the historical development of the Church, resulting from the interplay of the forces of sin and grace in the world, be properly evaluated; and only if the Word of God is correctly understood can the doctrine, and the doctrines, of the Church be presented in proper formulation.

## 2. *Theology as a Habitus Practicus*

a) We spoke above about historical and systematic subjects, some of the latter we listed as practical. More must be said on this matter.

Our Lutheran teachers are wont to call theology a *habitus practicus*. It is difficult to render this term adequately into our English language. A *habitus* is a "disposition," "temperament," "aptitude," "attitude," "readiness," "skill," and the like. We may be tempted to translate *practicus* with "practical," but words like "active," "operative" come closer to its meaning.

Theology is not a cold knowledge, or insight, or science, which may lie idle and dormant in the mind; it is a living, a powerful active force, which grips the heart and converts it into a seat and source from which emanate powers of a new life. "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly (*i. e.*, even from his lower and lowest nature; so thoroughly will he be affected) shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7, 38). Theology is an active readiness.

b) The word "theology," or "theologian," does not occur in Scripture (except in the superscription of the Book of Revelation, where John is called the *θεόλογος*, the "Divine"). The concept, however, occurs in an expression which approximates "theologian" very closely: "Man of God," *ἄνθρωπος θεοῦ*. In 1 Tim. 6, 11, Paul admonishes Timothy, whom he in the entire epistle instructs about the proper conduct of his office as leader of the churches grouped in and about Ephesus: "But thou, O man of God, flee those things (*cf. v. 9. 10*); and follow after righteousness", etc.

In 2 Tim. 3, 16. 17, we have a brief, but very clear and graphic, description of a theologian, showing above all that theology is an active aptitude. After telling Timothy that the Holy Scriptures can make him wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, Paul continues: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (The English "to all good works" is somewhat misleading. Luther's translation is better: *zu allem guten Werk*, *πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθόν*.) With this passage compare Dt. 33, 1; Jos. 14, 6; 1 Sam. 2, 27; 9, 6. 7.



8. 10; 1 Kgs. 12, 22; 13, 1. 4. 5., etc., where Moses, Samuel, and other prophets are called "men of God." In no case is the reason for this some theoretical knowledge which they possessed, but their very operative ability which they evinced.

To the foregoing we add some passages in which theologians, though not expressly called "men of God," are spoken of as being active. Mt. 28, 19. 20 (*μαθητεύσατε διδάσκοντες*); 1 Cor. 4, 20 ("The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power"); 2 Cor. 2, 16 ("a savor of death unto death . . . a savor of life unto life"); 3, 5. 6 ("sufficiency . . . able ministers"); 1 Tim. 4, 16 ("thou shalt save"); Heb. 5, 14 ("senses exercised to discern"); Jas. 5, 20 ("convert a sinner . . . save a soul"). — The passage Heb. 5, 14, contains the Greek word for *habitus*: *ἔξις*, translated in the English Bible: "by reason of *use*"; R. S. V.: "practice". — Summing up his theology in one word Paul calls it a *ικανότης*, a sufficiency to administer the treasures of the New Testament (2 Cor. 3, 5).

As a valuable testimony from our theologians we adduce a word of Calov (Theol. pos., de natura theologiae, V): *Genus theologiae remotum est habitus; propinquum est habitus practicus, quia finis theologorum et theologiae non est nuda cognitio, sed praxis, perductio scil. hominum ad salutem. Non ergo vel habitus theoreticus est, in sola contemplatione acquiescens, nedum et theoreticus et practicus simul, quod σιδηρόβυλον est, cum impossibile sit differentias oppositas contradictorie, vel saltem habentes contradictionem necessario annexam, in una eademque specie concurrere; et quidquid in theologia tractatur, non alia ratione ibi proponatur, quam ut ad praxin dirigatur . . . ad beatam nempe Dei fruitionem.*

People who in support of their definition of theology as a pure science appeal to passages like Jh. 17, 3: "This is life eternal that they might *know thee the only true God*," etc., overlook the fact that *γινώσκειν* denotes a knowledge gained by experience, a tasting (cf. Ps. 34, 8: "O taste and see that the Lord is good"). Also Jh. 17, 3, confirms theology as a *habitus practicus*.

c) It is in place that we here briefly point to the source of our theology as *habitus practicus*. To the Corinthians Paul wrote that "our sufficiency (*ικανότης*) is of God" (II, 3, 5); that "the

excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (II, 4, 7). We add at once that it rests on the redemption of Jesus Christ, and is given to us by the Holy Ghost on the basis of faith which He Himself kindled in our hearts by teaching us to call Jesus our Lord and Savior (1 Cor. 12, 1-6). The entire life which Paul lived in the flesh, including his work as a theologian, he lived "by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2, 20).

The Holy Spirit makes theologians of men, not by a direct act, but by means of the Scriptures. Timothy was a "man of God thoroughly furnished" unto every good work because he knew the Scriptures; and the Scriptures were profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness.

d) Just as, thus, the *habitus practicus* of a theologian is drawn from the Scriptures, so again, a theologian will use the Scriptures as the only means for doing his work. Paul found the Word of God to be an implement (ἔπλον) "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Cor. 10, 4) and after years of experience wrote to the Romans that he was "not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ"; in all his labors he had found it very effective as "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1, 16). The Word of God never returned void, but faith sprang up in the dead hearts as a result of hearing it (Rom. 10, 17).

Some men, indeed, whose minds are blinded by the god of this world resist lest "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine (*i. e.*, get to dawn, ἀγγέσαι) unto them" (2 Cor. 4, 4. — Note how Paul here piles up terms to emphasize the power of the Gospel: "light," "glorious," "Christ," "image of God"; but so wicked are the hearts, due to the blinding by Satan, that not even this super-bright light gets a chance to dawn to them). However, not even in that case is the *habitus practicus* of the theologian ineffective. "We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that are lost. To the one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life" (2 Cor. 2, 15. 16). A warning for every student of theology! If we, deceived by the devil, frustrate the life-giving efficacy of our theology, we through

our own fault change it into a savor of death unto death for ourselves.

Paul asks the searching question: "And who is sufficient for these things?" and answers in substance: he who does not corrupt the Word of God, but out of sincerity, out of God, in the sight of God, speaks in Christ (2 Cor. 2, 16. 17).

e) In this connection our theologians raise the question concerning the *theologia irrogenitorum*. That the unregenerate have a natural theology, based on the natural knowledge of God, is evident from Rom. 1, 19. 20. There is inborn in their hearts a knowledge of God, which may be cultivated, widened and deepened by meditating on God's works of creation. There is also inborn in them a conscience which testifies to them about their accountability over against God, and stirs them to action (Rom. 2, 14). But since this knowledge is not coupled in their hearts with faith in the unmerited grace of God through Christ, but is employed by them according to their inborn *opinio legis*, their theology has not the least in common with the *habitus practicus* of a Scripture theologian. True, an unregenerate man may have in his intellect doctrinal statements and their literal understanding, he may also, even with fervor, convey them to others, the Holy Spirit may also use the truths when spoken by an unregenerate "theologian" to create faith in the hearts of his hearers; yet Joh. Musaeus is right when he says: *Verum haec aequivoce dicta theologia est et a theologia proprie dicta tanto distat intervallo, quanto fides humana vel opinio ex motivis externis de veritate divinae revelationis animo concepta a fide divina distat* (Introd. in theol., p. 191).

As a case in point consider the prophecy of Caiaphas concerning the death of Christ, Jh. 11, 51.

f) In a looser sense (metonymy) the science of theological truths may also be, and often is, called theology. Compare the description given by Quenstedt (Systema, I, I, 28): *Sumitur vox theologiae vel οὐσιωδῶς, essentialiter, absolute et habitualiter . . . vel συμβεβηκότως, accidentaliter, relate systematice, quatenus est doctrina vel disciplina quae docetur et discitur, aut libris continetur*. A little more fully he says (l. c. 29): *Theologia, systematice et abstractivè spectata, est doctrina ex Verbo Dei*

*extracta, qua homines in fide vera et vita pia erudiuntur ad vitam aeternam, vel est doctrina e revelatione divina hausta, monstrans, quomodo homines de Dei per Christum cultu ad vitam aeternam informandi.* He calls this a secondary use of the term theology. Some (e. g., F. Pieper, Chrl. Dogmatik, I, 10, p. 56) call doctrine theology in the objective sense.

g) The aim and purpose of theology may be stated briefly in the words of Calov (Theol. pos., de nat. theol., IX, 4): *Finis theologiae absolute ultimus est gloria Dei, secundum quid ultimus salus hominum. Medius est tum internus, hominis perductio ad fidem et salutem, tum externus, fides salvifica.*

By stating as the first and direct aim of theology the inward leading of men to faith and salvation, or, disregarding man as the subject of faith, faith itself, Calov implicitly points to religion, the bringing about of religion and its nurture, as the purpose of theology.

h) The term religion, of uncertain etymology (*religere*, Cicero; *religare*, Lactantius) denotes in the first place a man's relation to God, his union with God. Cicero says: *religio, i. e., cultus deorum*; and adds: *sua cuique civitati religio est.* Here religion is taken in a rather external, superficial sense, while the complaint of Livy about ungodliness shows that the inwardness of all religion was well understood: *nullus deum metus, nullum iusiurandum, nulla religio.*

Although the Bible does not contain the word "religion," its essence as union and communion with God is clearly stated. It speaks of God's *dwelling* in our hearts (Jh. 14, 23; 1 Cor. 3, 16; Eph. 2, 22; 2 Cor. 13, 5); of our having *fellowship* with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ (1 Jh. 1, 3), the fellowship of *love* (Jh. 17, 23); so that our *life* is that of Christ (Gal. 2, 20), as the life of the branches is that of the vine (Jh. 15, 5).

This state of union, a union which is complete in every respect (*τετελειωμένοι*, Jh. 17, 23), is realized only through faith in Christ Jesus. It is a gift from God. Hence there is but *one* religion. Only improperly speaking may the attempts of men to achieve union with God through their own efforts be called religion. Quenstedt (Theol. did. pol., I, II, 1): *Religio christiana est ratio colendi verum Deum in verbo praescripta, qua homo, a Deo pe-*

*peccatum avulsus, ad Deum per fidem in Christum, Deum et hominem, perducitur ut Deo reduniatur eoque aeternum fruatur. . . . Religionis vox sumitur vel improprie et abusive, vel proprie. Improprie accipitur pro religione falsa, v. g., ethnica, turcica, iudaica. . . . Proprie significat veram rationem Deum colendi . . . diciturque christiana, quia per Christum unice ad salutem perducimur.*

We note that Quenstedt denounces it not only as an inexact use, but as an actual abuse of the term, when we call false ways of seeking union with God a religion. Rightly so. For every effort that seeks union with God not as a free gift from God through Christ, but aims to force such union through what we do ourselves (our merits, or character) can lead only to an accentuated separation from God.

As synonyms for "religion" found in the Scriptures may be listed the following: *θησικεία*, Jas. 1, 26. 27, speaking about a vain and a pure *θησικεία*, translated both in the A. V. and the R. S. V. with "religion"; *εὐσέβεια*, godliness, 1 Tim. 4, 8; *λογικὴ λατρεία*, reasonable service (spiritual worship, R. S. V.) Rom. 12, 1.

The religious element must be considered as present, not only where the express aim is the attaining of eternal salvation, but also wherever the idea of God, a person's relation to his God, his accountability to God for his actions is used, by an appeal to his conscience, as a motive for stimulating ethical conduct and building an ethical character. The mere urging of ethical conduct as such is not necessarily an indication of religion. It may be done on a purely utilitarian basis, as illustrated, *e. g.*, by the common saying about honesty being the best policy.

Since only the Christian religion achieves its purpose, true unity with God, while all other so-called religions frustrate that purpose and result in a more pronounced separation from God, we need not be perturbed by a seeming inconsistency of warning, on the one hand, against an educational system because it has no religion, and, on the other hand, condemning the Boy Scout movement because it employs the religious motive in its program.

i) Religion is not man-made, it is a gift from God. Even the distorted religion of natural man with its conviction of the

existence and of some of the attributes of God, with its (dimmed) knowledge of the will of God, with its painful realization of separation from God, with its strong urge of seeking communion with God, has its source in God Himself; only: sin, which is basically unbelief, a refusal to rely on God and to trust in Him alone, has corrupted man so that all his religious endeavors become an abomination in the sight of God.

How true religion is from beginning to end the work of God will be presented in detail in the sections on Christology and Soteriology.

A remark about the efficacy of the *theologia irregenitorum* will bear repetition here. For his own person the unregenerate "theologian" may thwart the efforts of the Holy Ghost to make a true theologian out of him through the divine truths which he has grasped in his intellect; yet it would be an error to assume that his presentation of these truths to others could not produce faith in their hearts. The efficacy of the divine truths does not depend on the faith of the one proclaiming them (the error of Pietism.).

### 3. *Dogmatics as the Habitus Practicus of Teaching*

a) Like the term *theology* so also *dogmatics* may be taken in a looser sense. It then denotes the doctrines of theology couched in as concise statements as possible, expanded in explanatory discussions, arranged in some convenient order. The term is most commonly used in this sense.

In the strict sense, however, dogmatics, being a branch of theology, shares the nature of theology as a *habitus practicus*, an active readiness. Dogmatics is the active aptitude of teaching religion, the union and communion of the heart with God.

We here at once insert the truth that both the medium as well as the source of dogmatics is the Scripture, the Word of God. This fact will be presented in greater detail in the next paragraph. The several items of the Scripture truth are called doctrines.

b) Under the present creational arrangement of God, speech (words, phrases, sentences) is the chief vehicle for communicating truths to others. This applies also to the truths of theology.

It may be granted from the outset that the divine truths are far too great to be adequately expressed in human speech. This applies even to the words given by divine inspiration, seeing they are taken from human language. In them we see as "through a glass, darkly" (1 Cor. 13, 12). Therefore, though in dogmatics we can never hope to state the Scripture truths in their full divine glory, we must ever strive to express them in such a way that error is warded off. St. Paul insists on the use of *sound* words and *sound* doctrine. "If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome (*ὀγαλινουσι* words," etc. (1 Tim. 6, 3). What Timothy had heard from Paul he should hold fast as a model (*ὑποτύπωσι*) of sound words (2 Tim. 1, 13). Compare also 1 Tim 1, 10; 2 Tim. 4, 3; Tit. 1, 9; 2, 1.

Our dogmatics at its best is only, and should be only, a *theologia* *ἐκτυπος* — a copy with all the limitations of a copy — of the *theologia* *ἀρχέτυπος*, the wisdom found in God Himself and revealed to us in the Scriptures. Our dogmatics is, as Luther often expressed it, a mere *Nachsagen*, with all that this word implies.

It must also be remembered that language is in a constant flux. An expression which is adequate in one generation may in the next create a false impression if not viewed in the light of its historical setting.

c) Bearing these things in mind, we may say that dogmatics, in the first place, is the *habitus practicus* of exhibiting and substantiating the doctrines of the Scriptures. This is plainly included in the demand on every bishop that he must be "apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3, 2: *διδασκτικός*; 2 Tim. 2, 2: *ικανὸς . . . διδάξαι*). Paul repeatedly tells Timothy to teach certain things: "These things command and teach" (1 Tim. 4, 11); "These things teach and exhort" (1 Tim. 6, 2).

From these few examples we readily see that teaching embraces far more than a correct presentation of certain truths, it includes also the practical application of those truths and the training in their use. Compare also 1 Tim. 4, 6. 16; 5, 17; 6, 1-3; 2 Tim. 4, 2. 3; Tit. 2, 1. 4. 7. 10; Col. 3, 16.

There is, furthermore, a number of passages in which the leaders of churches are called teachers. God placed into the church

(ἕτερο) “thirdly teachers” (1 Cor. 12, 28: here mentioned in contradistinction from apostles and prophets, also from other of God’s gifts, as miracles and tongues). In Eph. 4, 11, “pastors and teachers” are grouped together, in the fourth place, after apostles, prophets, and evangelists had been mentioned. Note the peculiar climax in 1 Tim. 2, 7: Paul has been appointed (ἐτέθην) α κήρυξ, an ἀπόστολος, yes, a διδάσκαλος of the Gentiles.

Also from these passages it is clear that to teach does not stop with the transmission of doctrines to the intellectual grasp of the hearers, but culminates in their training in the practical application of the truths for both their inner and their outer life. This view is supported by the fact that ἡγούμενος (leader) occurs as a fitting name for teachers; e. g., Acts 15, 22; Heb. 13, 7, 17. — Peter warns against false teachers (ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι) who will in an underhanded fashion introduce heresies of perdition, even denying the Master who bought them (2 Pet. 2, 1). Again note the practical implications of teaching.

d) Dogmatics is furthermore the *habitus practicus* of defending the doctrines of Scriptures against error, and of convincing the gainsayers.

According to Tit. 1, 9, a bishop must not only be δυνατός to exhort by sound doctrine, but also to “convince (ἐλέγχειν) the gainsayers.” He may not be able to win the gainsayers from the error of their way, but he must be able to point out their error as such convincingly to the hearers entrusted to his teaching. He must be able to “stop their mouths” (ἐπιστομίξειν) so that they can produce no further argument with any show of being in agreement with the Scriptures (v. 11, 13).

e) Since the opposition of people to the doctrines of the Scriptures will find expression not only in hostile words but in hostile deeds, the *habitus practicus* of dogmatics includes as a third factor the readiness to establish the truth and the power of sound doctrine by submitting to suffering even unto death.

Jesus Himself spoke His great word about His being a King because of His witness for the Truth in the very moment when He was about to lay down His life in order to establish that Truth (Jh. 18, 37). He foretold His disciples that they would be delivered up to be afflicted, that they would be killed, not by



accident, but because people would hate them for His name's sake (Mt. 24, 9). Paul sums up his experience in preaching the Gospel thus: "unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1 Cor. 1, 23). When he lays claim to the distinction of being a "teacher of the Gentiles" he immediately continues in the next verse: "For the which cause I also suffer these things" (2 Tim. 1, 11. 12). He was a prisoner in Rome with a criminal charge filed against him, with certain execution staring him in the face (ch. 2, 9; 4, 6), but he was ready to confirm with a martyr's death the truth of the Gospel which he had taught. He was not ashamed, the Word of God was not bound (ch. 1, 12; 2, 9. — Note the litotes).

If any one is interested in Christian dogmatics, whether he teaches it or studies it, merely for the sake of a purely theoretical grasp of the Scripture doctrine, he abuses the term dogmatics. Dogmatics does require also a *habitus theoreticus*, but it is essentially nothing less than a *habitus practicus* which includes not only the readiness to teach and defend, but to apply to life, yes, to suffer for the establishment of the doctrine.

#### 4. *The Holy Scriptures as the Source of Dogmatics*

a) This applies, first of all, to dogmatics as a *habitus practicus*. The active readiness of any person to present God's truths positively and negatively, and if need be, by martyrdom, is a gift of the Holy Ghost. "God hath set some in the church . . . thirdly teachers" (1 Cor. 12, 28). This gift, moreover, like all gifts of the Spirit, presupposes a new birth. Before a man comes to faith in his Savior he is like the heathen who worship dumb idols, and are themselves dumb like the idols which they worship. Only after the Holy Spirit has taught them to call Jesus their Lord will He also "divide" His gifts to every one severally as He chooses (1 Cor. 12, 11).

b) For all practical purposes the Holy Ghost and the Scriptures are identical. There is no Holy Ghost for us except in the Scripture, and there are no Scriptures void of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost creates faith in our hearts through the Scriptures, for we are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever"

(1 Pet. 1, 23). Through the same Scripture He conveys, and increases, and preserves the *habitus practicus* of teaching. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine . . ." (2 Tim. 3, 16).

The *habitus practicus* of dogmatics is *θεόςδωτος* in the full sense of the word.

What was said about the theology of unregenerates applies, *mutatis mutandis*, perhaps with even greater propriety, to the dogmatics of unregenerates.

Also when the term dogmatics is not taken in the strict sense as *habitus practicus*, but in the looser (some call it objective) sense of a summary of divine truths, its only source is the Scripture. It will suffice for the present to point to the emphatic injunction: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (Dt. 4, 2; 12, 32).

c) Not only concerning the subject matter of dogmatics in the looser sense must it be said that the Scriptures are the only legitimate source, but also to a certain extent concerning the manner of presentation. When our teachers say, *Methodus est arbitraria*, they presuppose that it in no way conflicts with the Scripture presentation; and they wish to point out that in perfect keeping with the Scriptures there may be different methods of teaching the Scripture truths properly.

If some one, *e. g.*, should teach sanctification first and then justification, he would not only be causing himself unnecessary difficulties by reversing the order, since sanctification presupposes justification; his method would also raise the danger of misleading people to base their justification on their sanctification — and thus to falsify both. — Also regarding the method we employ it is proper to remember: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119, 105), and to "speak the things which become sound doctrine" (Tit. 2, 1; cf. also ch. 1, 9).

About the methods applied by our Lutheran teachers it may be said that some were content to treat the various doctrines in a number of *loci* set in a series only loosely connected. — Among the classical dogmaticians of our church the earlier representatives

preferred a synthetic method, proceeding from the causes to the effects, while later representatives chose an analytic method, beginning from the final aim (eternal salvation) and going back to the means and causes. — In unfolding the individual doctrines they extensively applied the so-called “causal” method. *Causa* in this case does not mean the same as our English “cause.” It is more general, denoting simply a relation of some sort. Compare the following samples: *causa efficiens*; *causa movens (interna, externa)*; *causa instrumentalis*; *causa materialis (subiectum quod, and quo; obiectum: materia circa quam, ex qua)*; *causa formalis*; *causa finalis*.

Yet other methods have been employed, *e. g.*, the so-called “Federal” method, speaking of a “Covenant of works” (before the fall), and a “Covenant of grace” (after the fall); the latter being subdivided into a “stage of conscience” (covering the time from the Protevangel till Moses), a “stage of the Law” (from Moses till Christ), and a “stage of true grace” (the New Testament times). — It seems evident that this method will, at least, necessitate many repetitions, and will thus hamper an easy overview.

The same may be said about the “Historical-expository” method; although, as has been pointed out before, sound exegesis is the only adequate basis for Christian dogmatics.

##### 5. *Scripture the Only Source of Dogmatics*

This has been tacitly assumed in the foregoing; it must be discussed a little more fully, both positively and negatively.

a) For the assurance of our faith many passages, particularly in the Psalms, promise us that the Word of God will teach us, instruct us, give us understanding, make us wise, etc. See particularly Ps. 19 and Ps. 119. They all amount in effect to what Ps. 94, 12, tersely says: “Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy word.” When Dives demanded that Lazarus be sent from the dead to testify to his (the rich man’s) brothers on earth, his request was denied: “They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them.” Even more: “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead” (Lk. 16, 29. 31).

Joshua directed the people to the "book of the law of Moses," warning them "that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left" (ch. 23, 6).

The fact that the Scriptures are the only fountain of doctrine is underscored by the demand of God that every teacher must submit to its judgment without reservation. The Scriptures provide the absolute standard by which all doctrines must be gauged. Paul, the great apostle, was very careful to say "none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come" (Acts 26, 22). The Bereans are commended because they "searched the scriptures daily whether those things were so" (Acts 17, 11). Adding anything to the Scriptures does not produce more light, but tends to extinguish the light which the Scripture sheds. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Is. 8, 20). Paul says about a teacher who deviates from the norm of the Scriptures that "he is proud (*τετύφωται*), knowing nothing" (1 Tim. 6, 4).

"The rule is: the Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel" (Art. Sm. II, II, 15). "We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone" (F. C., Ep. 1).

b) Every statement contained in the Scriptures must be accepted by us as absolute truth, but not every statement is an article of faith. An article of faith stands in relation to our salvation, some in direct, some in more remote relation. Thus the story of Jonah and the whale must be believed, but it is not in itself an article of faith, though it certainly contains elements that illustrate many such articles, *e. g.*, God's power, His forgiving grace, His hearing of prayers, etc.

This example points to the use we may make of the historical statements of the Scriptures: they illustrate truths, but do not establish articles of faith. Articles not otherwise presented in the Scriptures may not be based on a mere historical record of some event. The case may be that a story just records God's own action, or that it illustrates God's approval, His forbearance, His

judgment, etc., concerning human acts. Thus it would be wrong to infer from the fact that the Holy Spirit first gathered the Christians into local groups before He led them to express their fellowship of faith beyond the local confines: that local congregations are divine institutions while larger church bodies, *e. g.*, synods, are of human origin. The statements of Scripture show *how* the Holy Ghost gathered, and may still gather, the whole Christian Church on earth.

Not every article of faith is contained in the Scriptures *κατὰ τὸ ῥητόν* or *expressis verbis*; it is sufficient that the content of every article is clearly presented. Thus the Scriptures clearly teach that God is one; on the other hand, they just as clearly teach that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. Summing up these two facts the Church coined the expression: God is *triune*. This is an article of faith, though the word *triune* is not found in the Scriptures. — The Masonic Order is not mentioned in the Scriptures by name. Yet the elements that make up the Masonic religion are clearly denounced as anti-Christian. It is an article of faith that membership in the Masonic Order is forbidden. — The Pope in Rome is not named as the Antichrist. Yet the elements of the papacy are clearly indicated as the characteristics of the great Antichrist. No one may reduce the belief that the Pope is the Antichrist to a mere historical judgment.

Though the words for formulating an article of faith need not necessarily be found in the Scriptures, yet the essence must be there. No article of faith may be constructed by the method of logical conclusions of the inductive type. Only deductive or analytical conclusions, which unfold in detail truths presented in general statements, are admissible. This may be illustrated by the manner in which Jesus demonstrated the article of the resurrection of the dead from the fact that God calls Himself the God of Abraham centuries after the patriarch had departed this life (Mt. 22, 23-32). If to have a God means to fear, love, and trust in Him above all things, then it is clear that no dead person has a God. If God is the God of dead Abraham, this proves that Abraham's present condition cannot be final. Before God, to whom all His works are known from the beginning, Abraham's

future resurrection is a present reality. Thus Jesus unfolds what is implicitly and virtually contained in the respective Scripture statements. These logical conclusions are a legitimate method of demonstrating an article of faith if they draw out of a Scripture statement (*eliciunt*) what is *implicite* and *virtute* contained therein. Theological conclusions, says Hoenecke (Dogmatik III, p. 71), are permitted *in sehr beschränkter Weise, sofern nur analytische Schlüsse erlaubt sind, die in der Tat und Wahrheit aus der Schrift nur das herausnehmen, was Gott selbst wirklich hineingelegt hat und als hineingelegt deutlich bezeugt. In diesem Fall erzeugen wir durch Schlüsse nichts Neues. . . . Solche Schlüsse sind legitim, weil sie nicht den Hauptgrundsatz verletzen, dass die Schrift Quelle und Norm der Lehre ist.*

c) The Word of God and the Scriptures must be considered as identical for all practical purposes. If God alone can reveal the truth to us, then the same must be said about the Scriptures. *Genus scripturae est verbum Dei . . . et idem verbum quod in Deo fuit atque est, quod ἐνδιάθετον vocamus, et quod prolatum vel in scriptura redactum est, quod προφορικόν nuncupatur* (Calov, Theol. pos., proleg. IV, 169). Augustine says in a note on Ps. 57: *Auferantur de medio chartae nostrae, procedat in medium codex Dei.*

d) Here a question arises concerning so-called *articuli mixti*. The truth, *e. g.*, that there is a God, that He is mighty, wise, good, is known also to people who do not have the Scripture. Reason recognizes this truth to a certain extent by its own light, arriving at this understanding by means of its own principles. Yet such truths are not for that reason articles of faith, but only because they are propounded to us in the Scriptures. *Omnia quae lumine naturae quodammodo innotescunt non creduntur quatenus e naturae lumine, sed quatenus e divina revelatione habentur* (Quenstedt, Theol. did.-pol. I, V, 1, Nota 9).

## 6. False Sources of Dogmatics

If it is true that Scripture is the only legitimate source of Christian dogmatics in both the strict and in the looser (objective) sense, then all other sources are automatically excluded. No doctrine may be admitted which is not clearly presented in the Scrip-

tures; nor is there any real aptitude to teach, except that imparted by the Holy Spirit through the medium of the Scriptures.

a) The most flagrant violation of this truth, though for that very reason perhaps not the most dangerous, is the claim of infallibility raised by the Pope of Rome, and accepted by the Roman Church. It was promulgated by the Vatican Council (1870) Sess. 14, 4: *Docemus et divinitus revelatum dogma esse definimus: Romanum Pontificem, cum ex cathedra loquitur, i. e., cum omnium Christianorum pastoris et doctoris munere fungens pro suprema sua apostolica auctoritate doctrinam de fide vel moribus ab universa Ecclesia tenendam definit, per assistentiam divinam ipsi in beato Petro promissam ea infallibilitate pollere, qua divinus Redemptor Ecclesiam suam in definienda doctrina de fide vel moribus instructam esse voluit.*

This is in line with the claim advanced by Boniface VIII in his Bull *Unam sanctam*: *Porro subesse Romano pontifici omni humanae creaturae declaramus, dicimus, diffinimus et pronunciamus, omnino esse de necessitate salutis.*

This brazen arrogance is rightly condemned by our Lutheran Church: *Dies Stueck zeigt gewaltiglich, dass er der rechte Endechrist oder Widerchrist sei, der sich ueber und wider Christum gesetzt und erhoecht hat, weil er will die Christen nicht lassen selig sein ohne seine Gewalt* (Art. Sm., II, IV, 10).

Lutherans may not be in immediate danger of acknowledging any source of dogmatics outside the Scriptures, be it an individual like the Pope, or some church assembly, — in theory. Yet in practice, when some one opposes, *e. g.*, the lodge with the argument that “our church does not approve” of lodge membership, or if some one tolerates certain practices because “our synod has spoken” — without being convinced in his conscience in either case, is he not erecting an authority beside the Scriptures? “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God” (1 Pet. 4, 11). And: “If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1, 9).

b) Just as decidedly as we decline to accept the Roman Pope as a source of dogmatics, we also reject traditions, which the Catholic Church places on a level with the Scriptures. *Synodus . . . omnes libros tam Veteris quam Novi Testamenti . . . nec non*

*traditiones ipsas, tum ad fidem tum ad mores pertinentes, tamquam vel ore tenus a Christo vel a Spiritu Sancto dictatas, et continua successione in Ecclesia Catholica conservatas, pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipit et veneratur* (Trid., Sess. IV).

If we remember how solemnly Jesus denounced the Pharisees as "blind leaders of the blind" because of their traditions which they added to the word of the Old Testament (Mt. 15, 1-4), we will not only condemn the traditions which the Catholic Church imposes on the Christians, but we will religiously guard against the lures of traditionalism in any form. If our fathers coined certain phrases to confess the truth and to reject the error in their day, it will be traditionalism if we content ourselves to retain their expressions with pious reverence, but permit the truth to slip away. Traditionalism, according to the laws of psychology, has a tendency to increase.

c) Quakerism in its crude form may not constitute a serious danger for our Lutheran Church. No one will be easily moved by the fulmination of Geo. Fox: "Not Scriptures but the Spirit; not Christ *for* us but Christ *in* us; not steeple houses and bells, not sacraments and dogmas, but the inner light." On the basis of Lk. 16, 29; 2 Tim. 3, 15; Heb. 1, 1, we know that in the Son we have the last word of God, the complete fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy; we need not, we dare not, expect any further revelations. With a solemn curse on every one who will presume to add to the Revelation of John this last book of the New Testament closes its pages (Rev. 22, 18-20).

Yet when Schleiermacher elevated the "inner light" to the position of a scientific theory, he was not greeted with a storm of protest, he was hailed as a savior of theology, who vindicated for it a place among the sciences.

d) Although the Reformed axiom that "nothing is given by inspiration that is an offense to reason" in reality assigns to reason a position superior to that of the Scriptures, making it the final arbiter according to its own principles: actually, reason must not only be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10, 5), but is not, in its present corrupt state, even a fit organ for receiving the divine truths. "Natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit" (1 Cor. 2, 14). This applies also to



natural reason in its most highly developed forms, for "the world in wisdom knew not God" and: "God made foolish the wisdom of this world" (1 Cor. 1, 20, 21). Compare also Eph. 4, 17, 18; Col. 2, 8; and the trenchant remark of Jude: "These speak evil of those things which they know not; but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves" (v. 10).

*Denn erstlich des Menschen Vernunft oder natuerlicher Verstand, ob er gleich noch wohl ein dunkel Fuenklein der Erkenntnis, dass ein Gott sei, wie auch von der Lehre des Gesetzes hat, dennoch also unwissend, blind und verkehrt ist, dass, wenn schon die allersinnreichsten und gelehrtesten Leute auf Erden das Evangelium vom Sohn Gottes und Verheissung der ewigen Seligkeit lesen oder hoeren, dennoch dasselbe aus eigenen Kraeften nicht vernehmen, fassen, verstehen noch glauben und fuer Wahrheit halten koennen, sondern, je groesseren Fleiss und Ernst sie anwenden und diese geistlichen Sachen mit ihrer Vernunft begreifen wollen, je weniger sie verstehen oder glauben und solches alles allein fuer Torheit oder Fabeln halten, ehe sie durch den Heiligen Geist erleuchtet und gelehrt werden (F. C., S. D., II, 9).*

e) What about reason of a reborn man, illumined reason? Is not regeneration, in which a man becomes a believer and his reason is renewed, a very profound experience; and will not reason when thus enlightened discover the divine truths by means of self-observation?

There can be no doubt that self-inspection of a Christian by means of his restored reason has a legitimate place in his new life. Paul practiced it, as witness Rom. 7, 17-23; 2 Tim. 1, 12; and he encouraged the Corinthians to do the same, 1 Cor. 11, 22; 2 Cor. 13, 5; also the Galatians, ch. 6, 4. So did John, and he assumed that his readers were with him, 1 Jh. 3, 14; 4, 13. In this way we get to hear the testimony of the Spirit which "beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8, 16). Yet, on the one hand, the results of such self-examination are never absolutely reliable, even in matters of personal conduct, and an appeal to God's knowledge and judgment is necessary. Paul did not consider himself justified by the fact that he was conscious of no wrong doing (1 Cor. 4, 4); and John comforts his readers that, though their heart condemn them, yet God is

greater than their heart and knoweth all things (1 Jh. 3, 20). On the other hand, God simply did not assign to our illumined reason the function of furnishing us with a knowledge of the divine truths, nor of enabling us to teach them. That function, of being the source of dogmatics, is reserved to the Scriptures.

While natural reason with its resources, laws, and operations may be a comparatively sufficient light to decide in temporal matters (economic, sociological, political, etc.) what is good and what is harmful, what is right and what is wrong: in spiritual matters it provides no more than the channel through which the divine truths reach the heart, even though the ethical principles of reason conflict with them. After conversion, the reason now being enlightened, it can somewhat judge and discern spiritual things spiritually. But it does not even then become a source of dogmatics.

f) If we make the enlightened ego the source of our dogmatics we thereby automatically reduce the Scriptures from their exalted position of being a divine revelation to the level of a mere record of divine revelation. For then every divine truth must prove its worth on our own hearts before we are to accept it, and the books of the Bible merely show us, across the ages, how the divine truths were felt by generations of Christians in the hoary past. Scripture is more than a record of divine revelations, it is more also than the remaining result of a past revelation, it is an ever continuing self-revelation of God in which the Holy Ghost is present with all His divine majesty and truth, operative and effective. In other words, Scripture is not a record of what God spoke to men in ages past, it is not a faint echo of words so spoken: it is a medium through which God is present and speaking to us today. His word, which the ever present God is personally speaking to us in the Scriptures, must be the source, the only source, of our dogmatics; not our illumined reason in which we, more or less imperfectly, receive His truths.

### 7. *Dogmatics and the Book of Concord*

a) No Christian, nor group of Christians, has the authority to establish any doctrine of faith, even in the most subordinate point, but every Christian and group of Christians will confess the faith which fills the heart, for out "of the abundance of the

heart his mouth speaketh" (Lk. 6, 45). Every group of Christians will strive that all its members "speak the same thing," that they be "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment," without "divisions" among them (1 Cor. 1, 10).

b) The Lutheran Church has published its understanding of the Scripture truth, formulated on different occasions, in a collection of writings known as the Book of Concord (1580). For every Lutheran this Book of Concord is a norm or standard of doctrine, by which he must abide. It is also a source of doctrine, but only a secondary, derived one. The Scriptures are the absolute *principium* and the *norma normans* of doctrine, while the Book of Concord holds the position of a *norma normata*. See the F. C. (Trigl., p. 778, 7. 8).

The Lutheran Church insists, and rightly so, on an unequivocal subscription (*quia*) to the Book of Concord by all its members, particularly by its teachers and leaders, because a qualified subscription (*quatenus*) would offer no assurance against aberrations. About a *modus subscribendi cum restrictione* J. G. Walch says (Introduct. in Libr. symb. I, II, II, 11): . . . *eiusmodi admissa formula nihil obstat, quominus quis Alcorano, Catechismo Racoviensi possit subscribere*. The F. C. professes adherence to the A. C. *non ea de causa, quod a nostris theologis sit conscripta, sed quia e Verbo Domini est desumpta et ex fundamentis sacrarum literarum solide exstructa* (Trigl., p. 850, 5) and: *cum e Verbo Dei sit desumpta* (l. c. p. 854, 10). This is not coercion or tyranny, since no one is forced to become a member, or a teacher, in the Lutheran Church, but every member is expected, before subscribing to the Book of Concord, to have assured himself that it is in agreement with the Scriptures.

c) The subscription includes every doctrine contained in the Book, whether presented thetically as the truth or antithetically as the rejection of error, whether introduced as a formal declaration, or incidentally in the presentation of some other doctrine. — All things pertaining to the manner of presentation, as *e. g.*, figures of speech, method of deduction, use of proof texts, historical, archeological, scientific remarks, etc., are excepted.

### 8. *Dogmatics as a System*

a) In a system of philosophy the philosopher assumes some single truth which he regards as basic, and from this he draws out his whole system. There is in Scripture also a central truth, briefly stated, *e. g.*, in Jh. 3, 16; but dogmatics is not to present the various doctrines by developing them speculatively from Jh. 3, 16: it must take every doctrine directly from the Scriptures, from passages which specifically speak of it (*sedes doctrinae*). Nor does dogmatics point out the precise relation of every article to the central truth. It teaches, *e. g.*, the time and manner of creation as presented in Gen. 1 and 2, and in other references, whether any relation to Jh. 3, 16, is evident or not. And by no means does it omit any doctrine if such relation is not apparent. Compare, *e. g.*, angelology.

b) If the idea of system is overstressed it will lead to serious danger. One might be tempted to harmonize certain articles which in their Scripture presentation contain incongruities and contradictions, according to our mode of reasoning. Compare, *e. g.*, such doctrines as universal grace and the decree of election; salvation by the grace of God alone, and damnation *ex sola culpa hominis*. Dogmatics retains these articles as presented in the Scriptures, and does not invent auxiliary doctrines to bridge the apparent gaps, as was done with great harm to the Church by introducing the *intuitus fidei*, and the distinction between natural and malicious resistance.

c) Dogmatics is systematic in so far as it presents the doctrines of the Scriptures in an orderly fashion. It gathers all statements of Scripture regarding any one doctrine. It clearly limits the articles of faith over against one another and defines their relation to one another in so far as Scripture indicates such relation; *e. g.*, between justification and sanctification. It groups the articles of faith together according to certain viewpoints.

### 9. *Fundamental and Non-Fundamental Articles*

a) In the work of systematizing, dogmatics may point out regarding any article its proximity to, or remoteness from, the central truth. It will do this in the interest of establishing its relative importance with reference to faith, the creation and

maintenance of faith. In this endeavor the dogmaticians pointed out that there are some articles without a knowledge of which faith would be impossible, while in the case of others ignorance, or even a denial, of them (in ignorance) might leave faith unimpaired. This gave rise to the distinction between fundamental and non-fundamental articles.

The scheme developed by Quenstedt may serve as an illustration. His terms are self-explanatory.

1. *Articuli fundamentales.*

- a) *Primarii.* — 1) *Constitutivi*, e. g., *omnium fundamentalissimus*: justification, — sin and guilt, — person of Christ, — work of Christ.  
 2) *Conservativi*, e. g., election by grace, — inspiration.

b) *Secundarii*, e. g., sacraments.

2. *Articuli non fundamentales*, e. g., Antichrist, — angels.

b) It is a gross abuse of this distinction when any one makes it the basis for determining church fellowship, teaching that disagreement in some non-fundamentals need not be divisive of church fellowship, because it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all of them. The question of church fellowship is decided on other grounds, chiefly by the willingness or unwillingness to submit to instruction from the clear word of Scripture.

No doctrine, whether fundamental or non-fundamental, which is clearly taught in the Scriptures dare be declared to be an "Open Question," no matter whether it has been fixed symbolically or not. — There are questions which are suggested, but not answered, in the Scriptures, as, the possibility and the manner of the fall of the angels. There are exegetical difficulties and theological problems. In such matters, since the Scriptures do not speak clearly, we dare not presume to define a doctrine, because thereby we should become guilty of adding to the Word of God. Cf. Dt. 4, 2; 12, 32; 1 Pet. 4, 11.

10. *Arrangement of the Material*

The central truth of Scripture, and its aim, being the salvation of sinners, all articles of faith may be conveniently grouped under the following heads.

- A. Of God, the Author of salvation (Theology).
- B. Of man, the object of salvation (Anthropology).
- C. Of Christ, the Mediator of salvation (Christology).
- D. Of the personal appropriation by the sinner of his objective salvation (Soteriology).
- E. Of the ultimate consummation of salvation (Eschatology).

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## JUSTIFICATION — ETHICAL OR JUDICIAL?

Through four centuries and more the doctrine of justification by grace through faith has stood as the central teaching of the Lutheran Church. It was the key to Luther's own understanding of the Scriptures. It governed his theology ever after. It was the heart of the Augsburg Confession. The Formula of Concord calls it "the chief article in the entire Christian doctrine." This opinion as to the importance of this doctrine is the consensus of Lutherans today.

In the course of the many treatises which have been written on this subject certain terms have come into general use and have been accepted as expressing the various Scripture truths which apply. We speak of a forensic interpretation of the New Testament verb *dikaion*, according to which the justification of a sinner is a judicial verdict pronounced by God. We speak of the righteousness which underlies this judgment as an *aliena justitia*, which is not the sinner's own, but has been wrought for him by Christ. We call it a *justitia imputata* in order to bring out the thought that this righteousness is credited to the believer, not earned by him. We call faith an *organon leptikon* in order to state that it can not earn or produce this righteousness, but merely receive it on the basis of pure grace. Of course, the wide use and general acceptance of these terms does not vouch for their correctness.

Only Scripture can do that. But the fact that these terms are in such general good standing does indicate that they have passed the test of time and of much close scrutiny.

It is therefore startling, to say the least, to read in the *Lutheran Outlook* \* that there are “unfortunate connotations in this terminology” of justification by faith; that “Luther himself very seldom spoke of ‘justification’;” that Paul and Luther “show that faith actually makes a person righteous, not only in God’s sight, but he becomes in fact a better person for this faith;” that “the satisfaction of God’s justice was fraught with danger as far as his (Luther’s) thinking was concerned;” that Luther “had seen so much of the imputation of merit emphasis in Romanism that he hesitated to use this figure extensively.” Goodspeed’s translation of *dikaioun* in the sense of “transformation of personality” is quoted with approval.

In fairness to the author it should be said that when he speaks of the sinner as being made righteous (*dikaiousthai*) by faith he does not mean to imply that faith is a work for the sake of which the sinner is justified. He is speaking of faith as a power which works such a transformation of personality. This thought is, of course, perfectly true in itself. But this is sanctification, not justification. Dr. Hall is right when he says, “The purpose of salvation is found in sanctification. The two are not separated from each other, but are in one and the same act. We are not merely justified: we are made righteous in Christ’s redemption.” But this translation of *dikaioun* as “make righteous, — upright” can only serve to obliterate a distinction which is most necessary for a clear understanding and correct presentation of these vital doctrines. The only alternative would be that we — and here we mean the entire Lutheran Church of these four centuries — have been wrong all along in our forensic interpretation of *dikaioun*, as this word is used by Scripture in general and by Paul in particular.

We shall, therefore, do well to examine these strictures against the “customary way of expressing the Lutheran doctrine of salvation.” Is this righteousness of faith something that consists in

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\* October, 1946. Quoted in full on page 54 of our current issue.

our own ethical transformation, or is it a "foreign righteousness," namely that of Christ? Is it something acquired, or is it imputed, credited to us? In his frequent use of *dikaion* is Paul telling us that God makes us righteous, or that he declares us righteous? This last question is, of course, the basic one. We need first to understand Paul. Then we shall be in better position to discuss Luther's understanding and use of Paul's terms.

In building up his argument against the forensic interpretation of *dikaioō* Dr. Hall follows Goodspeed's translation of the word, also his discussion of Rom. 3:28 in his "Problems of New Testament Translation" (p. 143ff.). In this chapter Goodspeed disagrees with translators who ordinarily use "justify" as meaning "to acquit of wrongdoing one who has been guilty of it, to treat as righteous someone who has been unrighteous" (p. 144). He grants that such a sense appears in the Septuagint, and then also in the New Testament. But he raises the question whether that is the sense in which Paul wanted to be understood. His final decision is to translate the passage: "a man is made upright by faith" (p. 146).

In the course of his discussion Goodspeed declares that *dikaion* ought to, according to the formation of the word, mean "to make upright." Then he asks: "Is it possible that Paul thought faith really possessed this transforming power and that faith, which made a man assume his right relation to God, was really the germ and central principle of righteousness; so that the believer was potentially at least upright already?" (p. 144). Leaving aside the clause which speaks of faith as the power which makes a man "assume his right relation to God," we may well answer the rest of this question by saying that Paul not only possibly but actually thought that faith possesses such a transforming power. He speaks very clearly when he describes the purpose of the self-sacrifice of Christ: "that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous unto good works." (Tit. 2:14.) Add the words which Paul quoted in his address to Agrippa (Acts 26:18), in which the Lord spoke of "them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (*hagiasmenoi pistei*), and the question as to the function of faith in regard to the change in the believer is answered, fully and completely. Faith is indeed



a transforming power, and the righteousness which manifests itself in the life of the believer, being a fruit of this faith, demonstrates this power beyond doubt. Luther's Foreword to Romans gives classic expression to this thought: "Thus faith is a divine work in us that changes us and regenerates us of God, and puts to death the old Adam, makes us entirely different men in heart, spirit, mind, and all powers, and brings with it the Holy Ghost. Oh, it is a living, busy, active, powerful thing that we have in faith, so that it is impossible for it not to do good without ceasing."

But while this thought is certainly Biblical and Pauline, it is not what Paul meant by *dikaioun*, even though Goodspeed may say: "This points to something more than the cancellation of any charges against the believer in the heavenly courts. Paul's language may sometimes be forensic, but what he means is something much deeper than that — a real change in the believer himself. Paul is pointing out something much more important than a verdict of 'not guilty' for people who are guilty; he is pointing out a way — the only way— to what we call character, in the sight of God" (p. 145).

It should hardly need to be said among Lutherans that a definite danger lies in these views, as well as in Goodspeed's persistent tendency to translate the Pauline *dikaioun* with "make upright." It empties one of the most precious New Testament terms of its peculiar Gospel significance and gives it a connotation which must eventually lead to Synergism, if not to outright work-righteousness.

But what of the idea that in his use of this word Paul goes far beyond the forensic sense which is so closely associated with the accepted doctrine of justification, that in the Apostle's mind the word does not imply a judicial verdict, does not mean that the sinner shall be declared or pronounced righteous, but rather suggests an ethical change, a transformation of character by which the sinner is made righteous in fact?

In view of Dr. Goodspeed's high standing as a New Testament scholar this claim, which evidently has made such a profound impression on Dr. Hall, may certainly not be taken lightly. It calls for a careful review of those passages in which the word

is used in such a way as to cast light upon its meaning. Taking up those New Testament passages first which are not Pauline, we find that they do not lend themselves at all well to the thought that a sinner is made righteous. This is freely conceded by Goodspeed, as his translations (which we shall be quoting throughout) clearly show. In Mt. 11:19 and its parallel, Lk. 7:35, the translation reads: "Wisdom is *vindicated* by her actions," — certainly not *made* right, but *proved to be* right. A similar thought appears in Lk. 10:29 where the lawyer is described as "wishing to *justify* his question." Lk. 7:29 is translated rather freely: "even the tax collectors, when they heard him, *acknowledged the justice* of God's demands, by accepting baptism from John." But the sense is clearly that of a judgment, a verdict which is expressed by the people. The thought of *making* righteous or upright is, of course, entirely out of the question in this context. A favorable verdict is also implied in Lk. 18:14, where the Publican is described as going back to his house "*with God's approval*" (*dedikaiōmenos*). What is perhaps the strongest instance of the judicial meaning of the word appears in Mt. 12:37. "For it is by your words that you will be *acquitted* (*dikaiōthēsē*), or by your words that you will be condemned."

These passages clearly establish the forensic definition of *dikaioun* as far as the New Testament is concerned. Nor do the remaining instances of its use in the non-Pauline writings seriously weaken this position. In Lk. 16:15 (still in the Goodspeed translation) Jesus says to the Pharisees, "You are the men who *parade your uprightness* (*hoi dikaiountes heautous*) before people." But that does not mean that they were upright in fact, or that they were being made upright, but rather that they were trying to demonstrate or prove an "uprightness" before the people, in order to be considered and perhaps pronounced righteous by them. — In the three passages from James (2:21, 24, 25) Goodspeed uses "made upright" throughout. But even here "proved righteous" alone will satisfy the context, since in each case the reference is to the deeds and actions which *demonstrate* the righteousness of Abraham and the others.

But the real issue is the question about the Pauline use of *dikaioun*. Here Goodspeed, arguing for the ethical interpretation,

speaks in sweeping terms: "Certainly this is what he (Paul) seems constantly to be saying, and the experience which he describes is a profoundly transforming one, introducing them to a new life (Rom. 6: 4). They have died to the old one" (p. 145). Dr. Hall goes even further in claiming that "justification, as a term, does not come through Paul's Greek." Declaring that there is "little hope that . . . this terminology will be clarified," he states that "theologians must constantly redefine 'justification' to accurately express the theology of Paul and Luther." Neither of these critics seems to concern himself greatly about a discussion of such passages in the writings of Paul which might favor the forensic meaning.

In the interest of his ethical interpretation Goodspeed uses "make upright" for *dikaioun* wherever it is at all possible. But even so his translation cannot always obliterate the plain indications that the term is being used forensically, in a judicial sense. In a substantial number of passages the thought is clearly present. In Rom. 2: 13, 3: 20, and 4: 2 Goodspeed uses his "made upright," seemingly with some reason. But we also note the *para tō theō, pros theon, enōpion autou* (Goodspeed: in the sight of God, before God) which introduces the element of God's judgment, whether lenient or severe, and definitely implies a verdict on His part. Nor should it be overlooked that in the last of these passages the manner in which Abraham was justified before God is described as one where his faith was *counted* (Goodspeed: credited) unto him for righteousness (v. 3). The emphasis which this thought gains as it is repeated in the succeeding verses (cf. vv. 5, 6, 12, 22) should make it abundantly clear that Paul is not speaking of an inherent, but rather of an imputed righteousness; that it is not ethical, in the sense that it rests upon Abraham's own qualifications of character, but judicial, resting upon a gracious verdict of God.

A passage which calls for particularly close study is Rom. 6: 7, which the Authorized Version renders: "For he that is dead is freed from sin" (*dedikaiōtai apo tēs hamartias*). It must be granted that here our term appears in a setting which is ethical throughout. The apostle is describing the new life which a Christian should and can live by virtue of the resurrection of

Christ. He is showing what it means to be dead to sin, that henceforth we should not serve sin. The thought of justification in the sense of forgiveness of sin nowhere enters the picture. And yet, as it is used here, the *dedikaiōtai* is clearly a judicial term. Paul has just described our former condition as a *douleuein tē hamartia*, being enslaved to sin. The entire system of slavery as it existed in the Roman Empire of that day forms the background of Paul's thought. The property rights of a slaveholder were protected by law. The strength of an owner's claim lay in the fact that it could be enforced through the officers of the Imperial courts. Even an escaped slave was not truly free. The master's claim was still valid. But when such a slave died, he was removed beyond the jurisdiction of the law. His master's claim was terminated. A higher hand had written *Finis* across the entire case. This analogy Paul uses in order to show that in his new life a Christian is no longer a slave of sin. But the *dedikaiōtai* is here also clearly used in its judicial sense. Goodspeed recognizes this with an excellent translation: "When a man is dead he is free from the claims of sin."

In other passages the context speaks so strongly for the judicial interpretation that the idea of a transformation of character is completely eliminated. As a rule this is also conceded by Goodspeed (although he does not always surrender his "upright"), as we shall try to indicate by emphasizing the pertinent words in his translation. Rom. 8:33 obviously presents a court scene. We note the Accuser, the defendants, the Judge, and we hear the verdict as it is proclaimed concerning the accused: God pronounces them "upright" (so Goodspeed). In Tim. 3:16 the apostle is speaking of the holy Son of God (Lk. 1:35) Who from eternity was never anything but truly righteous. Of Him he says, *edikaiōthē en pneumati* (Goodspeed: *was vindicated* by the Spirit). In Rom. 3:4 the reference is to God, so that the customary "upright" of Goodspeed becomes woefully inadequate; and since "make righteous" or "upright" is here out of the question, Goodspeed translates: "That you may be shown to be upright in what you say." In the case of 1 Cor. 4:4 (*ouk en toutō dedikaiōmai*) it will be enough to quote the context as given by Goodspeed: "I for my part care very little about being examined by you or

any human court. I do not even offer myself for investigation. For while my conscience does not trouble me at all, that does not *prove that I am innocent.*" Finally Acts 13:39, which is also a word of Paul — and here Goodspeed speaks as forensically as any one could wish: "through him the forgiveness of sins is announced to you, and that through union with him every one who believes is *cleared of every charge* of which the Law of Moses could not clear you."

In order to make any pretensions to completeness this study would have to include not only all the other passages where the verb *dikaion* appears, but also the use of *dikaioynē*, *dikaio*, as well as those interesting phrases, *dikaioynē theou*, *dikaioynē pisteōs*, and *logizesthai eis dikaioynēn*. But from what has been said it should be clear that the forensic interpretation of *dikaion* is no figment of the imagination, but that this meaning is firmly established, not only by other New Testament passages, but also by a respectable number of instances from the writings of Paul. It is most unfortunate that Goodspeed has tried to discredit this well founded interpretation. It is doubly deplorable that a Lutheran theologian should have followed this lead and given Lutheran endorsement to this un-Lutheran exegesis.

But if we may let matters rest at this point as far as Paul's concept of justification is concerned, it still remains necessary to investigate Dr. Hall's evaluation of Luther's thoughts on this subject. Has Luther really been misunderstood so thoroughly as this article would imply? Or is it Dr. Hall who has misunderstood Luther?

We are told that "Luther himself very seldom spoke of 'justification'." One must conclude that the author makes a distinction between *justificare* and *rechtfertigen*, between *justification* and *Rechtfertigung*, since the German terms occur so frequently that it takes several columns in the Index volume of the St. Louis Edition to list the more important passages. But what about the Latin terms? The very text (Rom. 3:28) which Dr. Hall in his second paragraph quotes as "we hold that a man is *made righteous* by faith" is one where Luther used the word: "*Quod sine operibus justificamur.*" In the next two pages of the Latin original (Weimar Edition, vol. LVI, p. 264ff.) the

same term is used at least a dozen times. We note in passing that it is consistently rendered with *Rechtfertigung* in the Ellwein translation to which Dr. Hall refers.

In the very next paragraph, referring to Rom. 5:1 (which is first quoted according to the Authorized Version: "being justified by faith") Dr. Hall has Luther saying: "Because he says first 'one is *made righteous* through faith' . . .", etc. But note that what Luther actually writes is: "*Justificati ex fide pacem habemus*" (Weimar Edition LVI, 298). Ellwein again translates: "Nun wir denn sind *gerechtfertigt worden* durch den Glauben."

Luther's Large Commentary on Galatians naturally abounds in similar instances of the use of *justificare*. Its German translation accounts for a large part of the index references under *rechtfertigen* and *Rechtfertigung*. Among these passages we meet with a number in which the term "justification" is broken up into its component parts, and then it is not "to *make righteous*," but "to *pronounce righteous*." For in the original (Weimar Edition XL, 240) we read: "*Hic respondemus cum Paulo Sola fide in Christum nos pronuntiare justos*," and page 355: "*Articulus autem Justificationis, id est, Sola fide in Christum nos pronuntiar i justos et salvari*." It is therefore evident that Luther did speak of "justification." It is also clear that he used the term in its forensic sense. Finally, this should also dispose of the argument that Luther interpreted Paul's *dikaion* to mean that faith, not only in God's sight, but actually, makes a man a better person. Luther knew about the active, yes, creative power of faith. He taught it clearly and forcefully, as we have seen from his remarks in his Foreword to Romans. But he never injected this thought into the article of justification. He well knew how to distinguish between the receptive function of faith in justification and its productive role in sanctification. He warned against separating from each other the righteousness of faith and that which manifests itself in the works of believers ("Denn sobald du sie von einander trennst, so geht der Glaube verloren, und die Werke bleiben allein uebrig," St. Louis Edition XIX, 1460). But he also assigned each to its proper place. We can not improve upon this method.

Another statement which is anything but fair to Luther's theology is the following: "The application of the merit of Christ

and the saints to pay the fine imposed by justice was an abuse which he sought to avoid. That idea of justification is too limited in extent and intensity for Luther, neither is it found in the Biblical passages which clarified Luther's faith and experience." Only boundless confusion can be the result of such an indiscriminate throwing together of the merit of Christ and that of the saints. For it is perfectly justifiable to speak thus concerning the so-called merits of the saints. One may well find fault with the manner in which Rome presumes to distribute the merit of Christ and to apply it as though it were merely to supplement the credit which men earn by their own works. But does the rest of the statement follow, namely that the vicarious satisfaction of Christ, by which his merit, his obedience, his suffering and death are accepted by God because they were endured and offered in our stead, is to be considered an idea of justification that was "too limited in extent and intensity for Luther, and that it is not found in the Biblical passages which clarified Luther's faith and experience? For Luther's views on payment (*Bezahlung*) of our debt to God read the closing paragraphs of his sermon on Mk. 10: 35-45: "His life a ransom for many" (St. Louis Edition XIII, p. 1206f.). For the imputation of the merit of Christ see Luther's comment on Gal. 3: 13 and 4: 5 (St. Louis Edition IX, 373 and 489, 491, 492).

Some may wonder why we have considered it necessary to go into this question at such length. One reason is that the Goodspeed translation is involved. The "American Translation" of Goodspeed-Smith is too valuable a work to be ignored. It will be used with profit by any serious Bible student. But it must be used with the greatest care lest it become a vehicle for carrying elements of the modern liberal trend into our theology. For it is characteristic of modern religious thinking to emphasize the ethical aspect of the Christian life rather than the gracious forgiveness of sins earned for us by the sacrifice of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the end this is simply salvation by character. To carry this thought into the passages which speak of the justification of the sinner before God is to attack the very heart of the Gospel. One need only read the third and fourth chapters of Romans or such a passage as Gal. 2: 15-17 in order to realize how completely the sense of these classic passages has

been changed by the substitution of "make upright" for "justify."

The second reason is that the doctrine of justification is involved. Conservative Lutheranism has ever been sensitive about this article. Any deviation which taught men to look to their own works, or into their own hearts for evidence of the development of a righteousness within themselves was immediately branded as depriving souls of the comfort of the Gospel, and as obscuring the glory of the merit and sufferings of Christ. They wanted it clearly understood that the *justitia* because of which the sinner is justified is an *aliena justitia*, namely the righteousness of Christ. Therefore it could not be an earned, but must necessarily be an imputed righteousness, awarded freely, for Christ's sake, through faith: *gratis, propter Christum, per fidem* (Augsburg Conf., Art. IV). Anything less than this was recognized as leading back to Rome.

Dr. Hall declares that "justification is a good term for Romanism; a very poor choice for Protestant theology." This can be said only if one is carried away by the superficial resemblance between the way in which Rome uses the idea of the application of merit and, on the other hand, the manner in which this is spoken of in Scripture. It can be said only if one fails to see the difference between two widely different procedures. The one is an act by which the *Church* awards a portion of the great store of merit over which it supposedly presides, granting it to sinners who in the judgment of its human priests rate such a special indulgence. The other is the wondrous act by which the *justice of God* recognizes the complete adequacy of the things that were done by our great Substitute for the redemption of all the world, and now awards this as a personal justification to all who receive it through faith.

The error of Dr. Hall is not that he pleads for a personal righteousness on the basis of the transforming power of faith, but that he reads this into the passages which deal with the question of how sinners may stand before their God. Even to mention the personal righteousness of believers in the connection is to set up a false foundation for our faith. This entire matter is treated very carefully in Article III of the Formula of Concord. Andreas Osiander had forsaken the forensic concept of justification as it was held by Luther and his fellow Reformers. Osiander



defined justification as something that takes place within the believer as a result of the indwelling of Christ. His emphasis was not on the Christ for us, but on the Christ in us. Of this the Formula says: "For one side has contended that the righteousness of faith, which the apostle calls the righteousness of God, is God's essential righteousness, which is Christ Himself as the true, natural, and essential Son of God, who dwells in the elect by faith and impels them to do right, and thus is their righteousness, . . ." (Triglot, 917, 2). There is little difference between Osiander's claim that it is Christ, dwelling in the hearts of the elect by faith, who does these things, and the present view that faith is the power that works the transformation of character in the believers. In fact, when the Epitome lists the following view among the rejected errors, "That faith saves on this account, because by faith the renewal, which consists in love to God and one's neighbors, is begun in us" (Triglot 795, 19), this might well have been written with reference to the articles before us now.

We regret the need of saying these things. We dislike this singling out of some Lutheran author for special criticism. But a year has passed, and more, since this article was published, and it has gone unchallenged so far, even in conservative Lutheran publications. Are we losing our sensitiveness about this central doctrine of the Gospel? Are we becoming complacent because of a surface trend toward conservatism in some parts of the Lutheran Church? Are we taking it for granted that such basic truths as this doctrine have become so firmly established that they can not be lost or become corrupted? It is significant that among the many articles by Lutheran authors of different synodical backgrounds which are published in the recent book, "What Lutherans Are Thinking," and which according to the declared intention of the chief editor were to serve as an introduction to Lutheran theology, there was none on the doctrine of justification. It is said that Luther gave the lectures which are now preserved in his Large Commentary on Galatians because he felt that other controversial matters were crowding this cardinal doctrine into the background. The Lutheran Church of our day will do well to follow this hint and never permit itself to lose sight of this particular teaching. The Article of Justification is still the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*.

E. REIM.

## THE PARABLE OF THE PLOWMAN

### An Exegetical and Homiletical Study of Isaiah 28, 23-29

We know of no series of Old Testament pericopes in the Lutheran Church that has adopted this parable as a text. It is not to be found in any of the 15 Old Testament series of the German State churches as selected and published by Langsdorff in his *Alttestamentliche Perikopen* and reedited by Neuberg in 1912. This work contains no less than 205 Old Testament texts, still our Isaiah text is not among them. It has also not been found by this writer in any of the older and modern sermon books of our Seminary Library, with the exception of Dr. C. F. W. Walther's *Predigtentwürfe* of 1891. There the text, verse 29, is used for a *Trauredede* with an outline, however, which covers all seven verses. Whatever the reason may be why this text is not to be found more often in Lutheran sermon books and why it did not receive a place in one of our series of Old Testament pericopes, it certainly deserves a place among them as one of the gems of the Old Testament.

The preacher who has chosen this parable for a sermon text will, in most cases, have read it first of all in the English or German translation. He may even have read it in one of our modern translations and then first have sought an approach to it by way of the Hebrew original. For very definite reasons we do not hesitate to recommend such a mode of procedure.<sup>1)</sup> Already a comparison of the English and German authorized versions calls the reader's attention to certain differences in the translation of our parable. Especially verses 26 and 28 betray a different understanding of the original in the King James and in Luther's Version. Verse 26 reads in Luther's translation: "Also züchtiget sie auch ihr Gott durch Recht, und lehret sie." In the Authorized Version

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<sup>1)</sup> We take occasion to recommend the reading of the books of the Old Testament in just this manner, *i. e.*, comparing the English and German translations with one another, and whenever and wherever they differ or contain unclarities and difficulties which necessitate a recourse to the original, to study the Hebrew text. The advantages of such a study of the Bible are manifold.

this verse reads: "For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him." In Luther's translation Israel is the object of the predicate, while the King James Version lets the plowman be instructed by God. The beginning of verse 28 reads in the German: "Man mahlt es, dass es Brot werde," while the English has: "Bread-corn is bruised." Luther's translation tells us of the bread-corn being ground and made into bread, while the King James Version only speaks of the bruising of the bread-corn by the thresher. The Septuagint and the Vulgate, which should not be ignored in the study of this text, also do not agree with one another. These differences in our various translations, old and new, most naturally lead the preacher back to a study of the Hebrew text for a fuller understanding of all its phases.

The first aim of our study of the Hebrew text, however, should be to find the poetical form of this didactic poem, since our German and English Bibles and even our older Hebrew Bible editions do not reproduce it in verse form. The new editions of the Masoretic text, the Kittel and the Kittel-Kahle Bible, do so. They reprint the text with its division into lines determined by regard to parallelism and rhythm. Each line represents a couplet or distich and is therefore divided by means of a *caesura* into two half-lines. These half-lines or hemistichs are metrical, consisting of two or three or four accented syllables each. The whole text can also be divided into two strophes with ten hemistichs each. The two strophes of our poem are not only alike as to the number of their half-lines, but also in this that each one ends up with a refrain which most naturally brings about a greater sense pause.<sup>2)</sup>

In this connection we would prefer to present the Hebrew original to our readers in its poetical form, but must perforce content ourselves with a reproduction of the English and the German translations in verse form, although they do not always lend themselves to a presentation of the metrical form of the text.

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<sup>2)</sup> For a further study of Hebrew verse forms, we refer the reader to Prof. A. Pieper's remarks on the *Redeform* of Isaiah in his *Einleitung to Jesaias II* (pp. XLIV—XLVIII). English treatises of the poetical forms of the prophetic literature are to be found in the commentaries on Isaiah I (chaps. I—XXVII) and Psalms I of *The International Critical Commentary*.

**Strophe I. 23-26**

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| Give ye ear, and hear my voice;                          | hearken and hear my speech.                                 |
| Doth the plowman plow all day to sow?                    | doth he open and break the clods of his ground?             |
| When he hath made plain the face thereof,                | doth he not cast abroad the fitches and scatter the cummin, |
| And cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley | and the rie in their place?                                 |
| For his God doth instruct him to discretion,             | and doth teach him.   |

**Strophe II. 27-29**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, | neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin;   |
| But the fitches are beaten out with a staff,                  | and the cummin with a rod.                              |
| Bread corn is bruised;  | because he will not ever be threshing it,               |
| Nor break it with the wheel of his cart,                      | nor bruise it with his horsemen.                        |
| This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts,                | which is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. |

**Strophe I. 23-26**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Nehmet zu Ohren, und höret meine Stimme;                        | merket auf, und höret meine Rede:      |
| Pflüget oder brachet, oder arbeitet auch ein Ackermann          | seinen Acker immerdar zur Saat?        |
| Ist es nicht also? Wenn er es gleich gemacht hat,               | so streuet er Wicken und wirft Kümmel, |
| Und säet Weizen und Gerste, jegliches, wo er es hin haben will, | und Spelt an seinen Ort.               |
| Also züchtiget sie auch ihr Gott durch Recht,                   | und lehret sie.                        |

**Strophe II. 27-29**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Denn man drischt die Wicken nicht mit Eggen,        | so lässt man auch nicht das Wagenrad über den Kümmel gehen;    |
| Sondern die Wicken schlägt man aus mit einem Stabe, | und den Kümmel mit einem Stecken.                              |
| Man mahlt es, dass es Brot werde,                   | und drischt es nicht gar zu nichte,                            |
| Wenn man es mit Wagenrädern                         | und mit Pferden ausdrische;                                    |
| Solches geschieht auch vom Herrn Zebaoth;           | denn sein Rat is wunderbarlich, und führet es herrlich hinaus. |

Comparing these two translations with one another it is quite apparent that Luther has retained the word sequence and even the sequence of each half line less than the King James Version. Still no translator of the past and the present has sensed and anticipated the rhythm, *i. e.*, the natural laws of speech and music as the basis of the measures of the poetry of the Bible more than Luther. In how far Luther has succeeded in this instance, the readers may judge for themselves. A better insight into the poetic form of this poem can be gained by reading Moffatt's and Gordon's translation, the latter adhering more closely to the text than the former. For the sake of those who happen to be without the one or the other or both, we are producing them verbatim:

Listen to me, hearken,  
     hear my message, mark it.  
 Is a ploughman always ploughing,  
     always harrowing up the soil?  
 Once the field is smooth and level,  
     does he not scatter fennel seed and cummin,  
 planting wheat and barley,  
     with vetches on the border,  
 guided aright by the Eternal,  
     prompted by his God?

Then, fennel is not threshed with sledges,  
     cummin never needs a cart-wheel;  
 men thresh fennel with a stick,  
     and cummin with a flail;  
 bread-corn is not ground to pieces,  
     no one threshes it for ever,  
 but, once the cart-wheel passes o'er it,  
     we spread it out, instead of crushing.  
 'Tis the Eternal who this lore supplies,  
     so great a Guide, so wonderfully wise. (Moffatt)

\* \* \* \*

Give ear, and hear my voice;  
 Attend, and hear my speech!  
 Does the plowman keep plowing all the time,  
 Is he forever opening and harrowing his ground?  
 Does he not, after leveling its surface,  
 Scatter dill, and sow cummin,  
 And put in wheat and barley,  
 With spelt as their border?  
 For his God instructs and teaches him aright.

Dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge,  
 Nor is the wagon-wheel turned on cummin;  
 But dill is beaten with a staff,  
 And cummin with a flail.  
 Is wheat crushed?  
 No! one does not thresh it forever,  
 But when he has rolled his wagon-wheel over it,  
 He spreads it out, and does not crush it.  
 This also comes from the Lord of hosts,  
 Whose counsel is wonderful, whose wisdom is great. (Gordon)

After having gained an idea of the poetical form of this parable, the reader will do well, if he is not in possession of the first or second edition of the Kittel Bible, to copy the text from his Hebrew in couplet form and then to enter in upon the study of the text verse for verse.

Verse 23 enjoins special attention on the part of the hearer and reader, since it contains no less than three different words for hearing. *Ha'azinu* and *haqshibu*, each of which introduces a half-line, have one and the same meaning in the end, namely that of listening attentively, *scharf zuhören*. The Septuagint translates these two words with *enōtizesthe* and *prosechete*. *Enōtizomai* occurs but once in the New Testament, in the Pentecostal sermon of Peter, Acts 2, 14, together with *gnōston* in the parallelism: "Be this known (*gnōston*) unto you, and hearken (*enōtisasthe*) to my words." *Prosechein* is used quite often in the New Testament in the sense of giving attention, taking heed, for instance in Acts 16, 14: "Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended (*prosechein*) unto the things which were spoken of Paul," as also in Hebrews 2, 1: "Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed (*prosechein*) to the things which we have heard (*akoustheisin*)." In other words *prosechein* presupposes a hearing, even a heartfelt receiving of the things heard. The other Hebrew word, which we find in both half-lines of verse 23 is *shim'u*. It also does not only mean to hear, but to hearken to, to give heed, even to obey and to understand. The "hearing heart" in Hebrew is the understanding heart. Solomon asked God for such a heart (1 Kgs. 3, 9), while Samuel reminded Saul that to obey (*shemō'a*) is better than sacrifice, and to hear (*haqshib*) than the fat of rams (1 Lam. 15, 22). Enjoining his hearers to "hear"

Isaiah certainly exhorted them to understand and to obey God's Word. It is "a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed" (*prosechontes*), 2 Peter 1, 19. In like manner Jesus closes His parable of the sower (Mt. 13, 9) and begins its interpretation (13, 18).

Verse 24 describes the work of the plowman (*hachoresh*). He plows, *i. e.*, he cuts deeply (*jacharosh*) into the soil with his plowshare and opens (*jephatach*), *i. e.*, furrows it. Then he harrows (*saddad*) his land and does all this with the purpose of making an arable field out of it in order to sow (*zero'a*) on it.

Verse 25 pictures the husbandman as just such a sower.<sup>3)</sup> After having leveled (*shiwvavah*) the surface (*paneha*) of the field, this husbandman scatters the dill (*qetsach*)<sup>4)</sup> and sows the cummin (*kammon*)<sup>5)</sup>, plants the wheat (*hittah*)<sup>6)</sup> in rows (*sorah*) and the barley (*se'orah*)<sup>7)</sup> at the appointed time (*nisman*) with spelt (*kussemeth*)<sup>8)</sup> as their border (*gebulatho*).

Two words, *sorah* and *nisman*, are not translated at all by the Septuagint. Are they to be regarded as dittographies in the Masoretic text, since they are followed by two similar words? The Authorized Version translates both words with "principal" and "appointed," taking them to be participles. Luther seems

<sup>3)</sup> Verse 25 does not contain the Hebrew word for "sower." The Infinitive *sero'a* occurs in verse 24. Moffatt and Gordon omit it.

<sup>4)</sup> The Septuagint has *melanthion*, which occurs in Matthew 23, 23 without the prefixed adjective in the form of *anethon*, rendered in the text of the English versions by "anise," on the margin by "dill." Anise or dill is "somewhat like caraway in appearance, occasionally cultivated in the East for its seeds, which are used as a seasoning and as a carminative" (The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible, p. 29).

<sup>5)</sup> The Septuagint uses the same word, *kyminon*, which also occurs in Matthew 23, 23. Cummin is "a cultivated plant sown broadcast. . . . It was cultivated in Palestine for its seeds, which were eaten as a spice or relish with food" (Ibid, p. 122).

<sup>6)</sup> *Chittah* is translated by the Septuagint with *pyros*, wheat, *Kern und Korn*. The New Testament does not have it.

<sup>7)</sup> *Krithē*, barley, is used by the Septuagint for *se'orah*. It occurs but once in the New Testament, Rev. 6. 6.

<sup>8)</sup> The Hebrew *kussemeth* is rendered with *zean*, *Triticum spelta*, by the Septuagint. It is not found in the New Testament.

to join both words into one expression: *jegliches wo ers hin haben will*. The Vulgate has *per ordinem* for *sorah*, but gives no equivalent for *nisman*. Moffatt, Smith, and Kautzsch follow the Septuagint and omit the two words. We prefer to follow the majority of commentators and to regard both words as accusatives. *Sorah* as an accusative of condition (cf. Dillmann) can mean "in rows," *reihenweise*. Wheat and barley were sown in furrows in order to assure a good crop. Miller, *Encyclopedia of Bible Life* (p. 21) has this to say on our verse: "Fitches, yielding black seeds used to flavor bread, and cummin, a plant used in flavoring candy, were regarded as weeds which had to be cleared before legitimate crops of wheat and barley were sown in the furrows" (Isa. 28. 25). *Nisman* can very well be an accusative of time meaning "at an appointed time," being related to the Assyrian *simânu*, definite time. While these rows take up the main portion of the arable field, the border is used by the sower to seed it with spelt (*kussemeth*). Proksch in his Isaiah commentary tells us that *kussemeth* is not spelt (*triticum spelta*), since it is not to be found on the Mediterranean coast, but rather *Emmer, triticum sativum decocum*, a kind of inferior seed which was used regularly in Ancient Egypt. Here it is apparently used as a border and as an enclosure, the neuter suffix of *gebulatho* referring to all the aforementioned seeds (Marti).

Looking back on this sentence with its difficulties and comparing it, for our own satisfaction, with a row hard to hoe, we may nevertheless say this: Whatever the specific meaning of this or that word in this sentence may be, the general import of the sentence is quite clear: The sower does not only use many different kinds of seed for the field which he has just plowed, but sows his seed as a wise sower in rows and at a specified time. This wisdom the sower has received from his God, verse 26 informs us. The translation of our English Version imparts this meaning to the reader quite readily. Luther's rendition can lead one afield, since he applies the words to the people of Israel (comp. his "sie") and to the judgments with which God visited them. He tells us in his commentary on Isaiah in reference to this verse: „Das ist der Endzweck des Verderbens, dass das Volk unterwiesen werde zur Gerechtigkeit, nicht dass es ganz zu



Grunde gehe" (St. L. VI, 359). But *yissar* does not only mean chastise, *züchtigen*, or admonish, *ermahnen*, but also teach, *unterweisen*. Proverbs 31, 1 makes this quite clear speaking of the prophecy that Lemuel's mother taught him (*yissartu*). *Yissar* is a characteristic word of all gnomic and didactic poetry. The Septuagint uses *paideuein* for *yissar*. We know that this word also means both to chastise and to instruct. The Vulgate has *erudiet*, which it also uses for Proverbs 31, 1. *Mishpat* in our sentence does not have to have the meaning of judgment or of right, Luther's *Recht*, as a principle of judgment, but in this connection evidently has the connotation of right in reference to any conduct or method, "*das Rechte im Sinne des richtigen, zweckmässigen Verhaltens.*" In German the sentence may read: "Er unterwies ihn zum Rechten, es lehrte ihn sein Gott" (Kautzsch). The *yorennu* in the second half of the parallelism is, of course, a synonym of *yissero* and in the Hiphil has the meaning of instructing, teaching. The root-word of *thorah*, law, is our *arah*, Hiphil *yoreh*, *thorah* meaning as much as instruction, *Unterweisung*. The prophet in using this word as a synonym of *yissero* certainly wants to emphasize that the teaching in husbandry and agriculture is a divine instruction and that the application of our parable is based on an argument, *a minori ad maius*.

The second strophe speaks of the husbandman as a thresher. In threshing or treading out (*dush*) he uses staff (*matteh*) and rod (*shebet*), threshing-sledge (*charuts*) and wagon-wheel (*'ophan 'agalah* and *gilgal 'agalah*). Even his horses<sup>9)</sup> do their part in treading out the grain. Of course, in the use of these various threshing instruments, the thresher uses discretion no less than in sowing. He does not thresh vetches or dill with a threshing-sledge, with which the victorious Syrians threshed Gilead (Amos 1, 3) and with which the redeemed Israelites shall

<sup>9)</sup> Both Moffatt and Gordon do not follow the Masoretic reading *upharashaiw* (and his horses), but point the consonants to read as a verb and therefore translate "we spread it out" or "he spreads it out." Proksch points out that *paras* means to separate, but not to spread out. Symmachus, Theodotion, Peshitta, and Vulgate apparently read *upherasaiw* with a *samech* instead of a *sin* and therefore translated *ungulis suis*, with their hoofs.

thresh the mountains (Is. 41, 15) ; neither does he thresh cummin with a wagon-wheel, with a roller of a threshing-machine, which a wise king brings over the wicked in order to scatter them (Prv. 20, 26). On the contrary, the staff and the rod are used for the *infirmiora semina* (Jerome), since that grain is too tender to be used in any other manner. But the bread-corn<sup>10)</sup> he does thresh by letting his wagon-wheel and the hoofs of the horses pass over it. The horses and the oxen (Dt. 25, 4; 1 Cor. 9, 9; 1 Tim. 5, 18) are hitched to the wagon and are driven over the threshing floor. Although wagon-wheel and horses' hoofs pass over the grain again and again, still the grain is not crushed and pulverized (*yudaq*). For the Lord again has instructed and taught the thresher aright. Even this rough method comes from the Lord of hosts, whose counsel (*'ezah*) and whose wisdom (*thusshiyyah*) are wonderful and great. Wisdom in Proverbs claims both the *'ezah* and the *thusshiyyah* for herself and adds that kings reign by her and princes decree justice and the judges of the earth rule. Thus the husbandman by means of *'ezah* and *thusshiyyah* knows how to deal prudently and to gain results with his plowing, and sowing, and threshing. And as the earthly husbandman uses these methods, thus the heavenly Husbandman also. God in His wisdom deals likewise, the prophet wants to tell us, with His people by tilling the soil of Israel, by putting in the seed, and by reaping and threshing. He has dealt thus with his people Israel in Egypt, he will deal thus with them in Assyria and Babylon. He has ever

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<sup>10)</sup> Bread-corn is the correct translation of *lechem* in verse 28, which Luther following the Septuagint (*artos*) and the Vulgate (*panis*) translates with *Brot*, the ordinary meaning of the word. But *lechem* does not only have the meaning of bread, but also of bread-corn, "das enthülste, bereits essbare Brotkörn" (Proksch). Cf. Is. 30, 23 and Psalm 104, 14, although the Septuagint again uses *artos* in both of these passages. The Greek word for *lechem* meaning bread-corn or wheat is *sitos*, which the Septuagint uses for the Old Testament word *dagan*, denoting grain or corn. The more important question is how to translate the sentence: *lechem yudaq*. Is it an interrogative or an affirmative sentence? Because of the following negative, we prefer to translate it with Delitzsch and Gordon as an interrogative sentence: "Is bread-corn crushed?" The answer is No, "for one does not thresh (*dush*) it forever."

dealt thus with them. But wherever and whenever he has done it, he has done "his strange work" and "his strange act" (Is. 28, 21).

First the field had to be plowed. "Zion shall be plowed like a field" (Jer. 26, 18; Micah 3, 12). This plowing was done by means of the judgments with which God visited His people. His judgments consisted in this that the "plowshares" and "harrows" of tyrannical conquerors and overseers broke up and pulverized the hardened soil of Israel as a field. In the midst of such visitations Israel cried out: "Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth. . . . The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows" (Ps. 129, 2. 3). But the soil of Israel was not only prepared by the plowshare of God's judgments, but also by the plowshare of the Law, which is also compared with a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces (Jer. 23, 29) and with a twoedged sword that divides asunder (Hebr. 4, 12). Note how this Law is being applied to God's people by Isaiah in the very context in which we find our parable, culminating in the words: "For I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption (a consummation, a work of complete destruction, *ein Vernichtungsgericht*) determined (lit. a decreed ruin) upon the whole earth. And it will be nothing but terror to hear such a report (28, 19).<sup>11)</sup> Thus the preaching of God's Law draws long and deep furrows over the hearts of His impenitent people.

<sup>11)</sup> This passage is well known to the readers of Luther's translation: "*Dem allein die Anfechtung lehret auf das Wort merken.*" Luther follows the Vulgate, *et tantummodo sola vexatio intellectum dabit auditui*, by translating: "But the vexation teaches to take heed to the word," as if the reading were *thabin* instead of the *habin* of the text (Cf. Delitzsch). Again the Hebrew *zawa'ah*, which Luther renders *Anfechtung*, denotes terror. It is the terror of those who had mocked the prophet by saying: "Whom shall he make to understand doctrine" (28, 9). Delitzsch translates: "And to whom make preaching intelligible?" The prophet's answer reads in our King James Version: "And it shall be a vexation only to understand the report." In Delitzsch's translation it reads: "And it is nothing but shuddering to hear such preaching," namely the preaching of God visiting the scorners with His dire judgment. As to the *shemu'ah* of our sentence, rendered doctrine (V. 9) and report (V. 19) in our King James Version, the reader is advised to read Professor Pieper's discussion of this word in his commentary on Isaiah 53, 1, pp. 396f.

But God is also the sower. "Behold, a sower went forth to sow" (Mt. 13, 3). He sows the seed of His Messianic promises into Israel's soil. Whenever and wherever He reminds His people of His covenant of grace He sows this seed. Speaking in our context to Israel of the precious foundation stone which He lays in Zion (28, 16) or of Lebanon that in a little while shall be turned into a fruitful field (29, 17), He is performing the work of a sower. But here in our parable the Lord tells His people once and for all how wonderful and excellent His counsel and His working are, converting Israel into an arable field, from which He obtains a rich harvest, a redeemed and sanctified people.

But first Israel must be threshed. "O my threshing, and the corn of my floor" the prophet Isaiah exclaims in view of the fallen Babylon which as an instrument of God had threshed Israel long enough (21, 10). By this process the grain was separated from the husks, the wheat from the chaff. God did this strange work in Israel when He "removed men far away" and suffered but "a tenth" to return (Is. 6, 12, 13). He repeated this separation when the tenth was "eaten" or rather "burned up" and when only a "holy seed" remained as the "substance" of Israel. Then the Lord, indeed, separated the grain from the husks, the wheat from the chaff, in order that those who had gone through the process might become the "true children of the threshing floor."

God's counsel and working in regard to the New Testament Church is in no wise different from that of the Old Testament. The Lord of the Church must plow, must sow, and must reap and thresh in order to finish His work and the Church must ever keep in mind the "strange work" and the "strange acts" of God.

The plowshare of God's judgments also draws long furrows over the backs of the New Testament saints. "Judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 Pet. 4, 17). This judgment consists in suffering (4, 16), in fiery trials (4, 12), in "great tribulation" (Rev. 2, 22), in sickness and illness and in an untimely physical death (1 Cor. 11, 30), finally in judgment-fire (1 Cor. 3, 15). These judgments are, as those of the Old Testament dispensation, chastenings of the Lord with the purpose "that we should not be condemned with the world" (1 Cor. 11, 32).

Although we are not to be condemned with the world, still we are involved in the judgments with which God visits the children of this world, that obey not the Gospel of God (1 Pet. 4, 17). Imprisonments, deportations, exile, and temporal death are not only the lot of the unbelievers, but also of the believers and vice-versa. The plowshare of God's judgments has also drawn long furrows over the backs of the nations of our day, He has punished the host of the high ones and the kings of the earth upon the earth, even as He did in Old Testament times (Is. 24, 21; Jer. 30, 15). Still the purpose of these judgments is also to separate the corn from the chaff that we should not be condemned with the world. To make this clear to our hearers we shall do well to use the Old Testament words: "For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished . . . because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee" (Jer. 30, 11, 15).

But the New Testament Church must also remember that God plows in order to sow. He does not plow all day, He is not forever opening and harrowing His ground. "He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger forever" (Ps. 103, 19). When He again has made plain and smooth the field and when He has leveled its surface, God sows the seed of His Word. Even a span of time may intervene in which He lets the ground lie fallow to grant it a period of rest from its harrowing experiences. God also grants His Church periods of rest and quiet in this world (1 Tim. 2, 2), especially after severe trials and tribulations. When the seed of the Word is sown in such times it is as the sowing of the sower on a smooth and level field, which has been opened and harrowed and made plain. Today, after World War II, there are many fields that have been plowed and harrowed and lie there as so many mission fields waiting for the sower to sow his seed. Such fields are the "appointed place" of God's own counsel and choosing.<sup>12)</sup> Yet the Church is not to be blind to

<sup>12)</sup> In this connection we shall do well to keep in mind the words of our Lord: "The field is the world" (Mt. 13, 38). While our Old Testament parable with its "ground" or "field" (*admatho*) refers only to the soil of

such opportunities for the sowing of the Gospel seed. It must ever keep in mind that where the heavenly plowman has plowed there the seed must be sown. Where the Law has been applied there the preaching of the Gospel must follow. No text shows us more clearly than our parable how the preaching of the Law must precede the preaching of the Gospel. It is only into the broken and contrite heart that the seed of the Gospel can be sown. And it is the Gospel of Him who was despised and rejected, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, who was taken from prison and from judgment, who was cut off from the land of the living and was stricken for the transgression of his people. Indeed, it is the Gospel Word of Isaiah 53 that is to be preached in this connection.

But as the sower uses discretion in sowing the seed in that he uses different kinds of seed for different places, thus we are also to divide the word of truth and to show ourselves approved unto God, who has called us His servants to preach the Word (2 Tim. 2, 15). The Word of the Scriptures has many constituent parts and "we must see what the Scripture ascribes to the Law, and what to the promises" (Trigl., p. 173). Every Word of God is divinely inspired, but some of it is to be compared with vetches and cummin, some with the principal wheat and the appointed rye. While we learn from our parable that every word of Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Tim. 3, 16), yet we also learn how we must be instructed by God to discretion in the proper use of the Word.<sup>13)</sup>

Finally we Christians must also keep in mind that sowing is followed up by threshing. This work reaches its consummation

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Israel including the penitent and the impenitent, the New Testament parable of the tares of the field speaks of the *world* as the field where the wheat and the tares grow together (13, 30). In applying the great truths of our Old Testament parable to the times of the New Testament dispensation, we must also speak of God as the plowman who plows the whole world as His field, in order to sow on it.

<sup>13)</sup> Luther's Writing Against The Celestial Prophets (St Louis Vol. XX, pp. 133ff.) gives many an excellent directive for the proper use of the Old Testament and for its application to the people of God in the New Testament dispensation.

on Judgment Day when the Son of man "shall separate" the nations "one from another" and "shall set the sheep on his right but the goats on the left" (Mt. 25, 32. 33). It has its beginnings already in this life. God, of course, does not do this work here in such a manner that He fully separates tares from the wheat, the believers from the unbelievers (Mt. 13, 30). Yet He does not want the believers "unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6, 14), but wants them to "come out from among them" and to be "separate", and not "to touch the unclean thing" (6, 17). God's children often love the world and the things of the world instead of separating themselves from the world. To bring about such a separation of his erring children, God visits them with judgments in the form of persecutions, trials, and tribulations. But by means of such chastenings the Lord does not only want to separate us from the evil world without, that we do not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful (Ps. 1, 1), but also wants to separate us from the uncleanness of the world within us, the new man from the old, so that we shall walk in the Spirit and shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Gal. 5, 16). All chastisement should make us "partakers of his holiness" and "should yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Hebr. 12, 8. 10. 11).<sup>14</sup>

In the process of threshing God shows a careful discrimination, administering a severer treatment to the one than to the other. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" (Hebr. 12, 6ff.). What severe blows God may inflict Jeremiah has told us with incomparable words: "For I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one; for the multitude of thine iniquity; because thy sins were increased" (30, 14). But even in the severest treatment there is gentleness. "I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30, 11). Our parable is an excellent illustration

<sup>14</sup>) Luther also speaks of the Law, *die Verdammung unserer Gerechtigkeit*, as a means used by God in threshing, whereby we are being prepared as a delectable food, even as the final means of threshing is to make bread and not to bring about the destruction of the grain (St. Louis VI, p. 361).

of that faithfulness of God, whereby He does not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear (1 Cor. 10, 13). Besides we have the great comfort that our God does not thresh forever. As little as He plows and harrows forever, just as little does He thresh forever. He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner (Ezek. 18, 23. 32; 33, 11), He does not willingly afflict. Let us remember Christ's tears over Jerusalem. Threshing ever remains a strange work and act of His. "It is foreign to His heart but not to His nature." Luther says: "According to His work He seems to hate you, but according to His intension (*Gesinnung*) He loves you exceedingly." The final purpose of all threshing is to purge His floor and to gather His wheat into the garner (Mt. 3, 12). Thus the heavenly Husbandman gathers His children, well prepared by the workings of tribulation (Rom. 5, 3), into His heavenly garner.

This whole continuous process of plowing, sowing, and threshing, as set forth so impressively in our parable clothed in the simple garb of husbandry, comes forth from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working (Verse 29). Therefore the preacher in his sermon will not fail to glorify this wonderful counsel and excellent working of God by speaking of Him as the heavenly Husbandman who plows in order to sow and who threshes in order to garner.

P. PETERS.

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## NEWS AND COMMENTS

"Righteousness Through Faith." Under the above heading the *Lutheran Outlook* (A. L. Cf.) of October 1946 brings an article in which the author undertakes what he himself calls "A Study of Luther's Doctrine," namely with regard to the topic specified in the heading. If there has been any reaction in the various publications that represent the several Lutheran bodies of America, it has escaped our notice. Our comment will be found in a separate article on page 26 of this issue. For the sake of fairness we are printing Dr. Hall's essay in its entirety, without any added emphasis of our own save for an occasional parenthetical *sic!*

E. REIM

### RIGHTEOUSNESS THROUGH FAITH

#### *A Study of Luther's Doctrine*

By George F. Hall

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Luther's emphasis on the righteousness that comes through faith was not developed in the years of polemic that followed the Ninety-Five Theses. It had reached its full stature before that time and its explosive impact was realized when righteousness through faith was compared with the righteousness gained through indulgences. Enemies of Luther picture him as a good Romanist, desirous, however, of advancement in the Church's political system, using the overstatements of Tetzel as a spring board for his own personal aggrandizement. Failing that, and finding himself alienated from the Church instead of advanced in it, he went on in his self-willed way to formulate a doctrine in opposition to the Church, emphasizing a freedom and lawlessness the Church could not allow. Thus Grisar<sup>1</sup> pictures Luther arriving at righteousness through faith two years after the Ninety-five Theses had been written.

The facts do not show the development that Grisar has described. In Luther's lectures on Romans (1516), he interprets 3:28, "For we hold that a man is made righteous by faith," in this manner: "Without our works and service, God's righteousness is offered to us — to us, who seek after every other intellectual thing and establish laws but not the righteousness of God. For who has sought after the Word that became flesh who has not first seen his real nature revealed?"<sup>2</sup>

#### *Peace Follows Righteousness*

And again on Romans 5:1, "Being justified by faith," Luther says: "But this is to be noted how in the Apostle this spiritual peace comes only when righteousness precedes. Because he says first, 'one is made

<sup>1</sup> H. Grisar, *Luther*, Abbrev. ed., p. 106ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Römerbriefvorlesung*, 1515-1516, Eduard Ellwein German translation, Muenchen, 1928, p. 156.

righteous through faith,' and as such 'we have peace.' Therein is man's perversion of this doctrine demonstrated that he seeks first after peace and then strives after righteousness, and therefore he finds it not. The Apostle shows a striking paradox in these words, namely:

"The righteous have peace with God, but are slaves to the world while they live in the Spirit.

"The unrighteous have peace in the world, but are in slavery, anxiety with God, while they live in the flesh.

"But similarly as the flesh is temporal, so also the anxiety of the righteous and the peace of the unrighteous are temporal."<sup>3</sup>

In Luther's interpretation of these passages written and delivered while he was still in the bosom of the Church as a Bible professor, we see the same important elements that were consistently featured in his soteriology. His own experience is reflected. He had certainly sought for peace before he came to righteousness. He found that the conquest of fear through faith and righteousness was given to him through faith. Peace came to him after this gift of righteousness was his. Here is also shown the germ of his doctrine of Christian liberty, later developed in the treatise of that title.<sup>4</sup> Here is also found his favorite motif (in the explanation that follows 3:28) of the atonement, namely Christ's victory over Satan. Following Paul, Luther everywhere condemns good works as the basis for salvation.

#### *Luther Seldom Used "Justification"*

While "*justification* by faith" is the customary way of expressing the Luther doctrine of salvation, there are unfortunate connotations in this terminology. Luther himself very seldom spoke of "justification." He followed Paul exactly in this matter. Paul uses *dikaioo* which means to "make righteous" or "make upright." "Justify," it is true, does mean that to a certain extent. But "justify" pictures a court-room scene where the law is satisfied. Paul and Luther go much beyond that to show that faith actually makes a person righteous, not only in God's sight, but he becomes in fact a better person for this faith.<sup>5</sup> The Holy Spirit makes him holy, as His name implies. It is the power that raised Jesus from the dead dwelling in one (Rom. 8:11), and therefore one who believes is resurrected from his dead self by the same power. By faith, Christ's victory on the cross becomes the believer's victory too.

Justification in the sense of the sinner standing before the bar of God's justice was not totally eliminated by Luther. That metaphor is in the Scriptures and Luther never intentionally omitted anything important that was there. However, the satisfaction of God's justice was fraught with danger as far as his thinking was concerned. He had seen so much

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 196-197.

<sup>4</sup> Holman ed. of *Luther's Works*, Vol. 2.

<sup>5</sup> E. J. Goodspeed, *Problems of N. T. Translation*, 1945, p. 143ff.

of the imputation of merit emphasis in Romanism that he hesitated to use this figure extensively. The application of the merit of Christ and the saints to pay the fine imposed by justice was an abuse which he sought to avoid. That idea of justification is too limited in extent and intensity for Luther, neither is it found in the Biblical passages which clarified Luther's faith and experience.

*Must Be Aware of Its Inadequacy*

If we continue to use the word "justification," we must be aware of its inadequacy. Justification, as a term, does not come through Paul's Greek nor through Luther's translation of it. It is an English translation, as Goodspeed points out, that has introduced the word where it does not properly belong. By assimilation, we have adopted a terminology which Paul and Luther did not use and we have not benefited thereby.

Justification is a good term for Romanism; a very poor choice for Protestant soteriology. The word is freighted by usage, but not to the benefit of Pauline theology. In English usage, justification is a court term. The fine is paid and the record is cleared of the charge. In Romanism, there is a charge against one which is removed by payment of fines and penalties to render satisfaction. By this scheme, faith animated by charity through the merit of works balances the debt of sin.

*Difficult to Find Another Term*

But to find another word is nearly hopeless. For one thing, it could not be expected that Christendom would adopt it. Besides other words are freighted, too, and fail to give the complete picture. Goodspeed's "made upright" means the transformation of personality like *dikaioo*, but too many suspect that it stresses the ethical aspect too greatly. But then, that is exactly what Paul saw happen in Christian conversion. Yet, this translation is criticized for emphasizing only one phase of the total act, namely the ethical transformation in salvation. The American Standard used "righteous" instead of "justify" for it was recognized that "justify" had a broader meaning in the seventeenth century than it carries today. The mediating Revised Standard Version uses both "justify" and "make righteous." Thus Romans 1:17 is, "He who through faith is righteous shall live," and 5:1, "since we are justified by faith."

There is, therefore, little hope that even if the Revised Standard Version is widely accepted, this terminology will be clarified, for a more realistic view takes into account the fact that clergy and laity alike are still wedded to the King James Version. All of this means that theologians must constantly redefine "justification" to accurately express the theology of Paul and Luther.

*Denotes an Actual Change*

Faith in Christ does more than justify. It means that we are made righteous not only in God's sight, but by an actual change in our own

lives on earth. That does not mean perfectionism, but as Paul could address his sinful converts as "saints" because they were on the road (*sic!*) to sainthood, similarly we have a righteousness through faith because of the direction in which the Holy Spirit has set us going. It means that God in uncalculating love meets man on the level of his sins, for Jesus was a friend of sinners. And He continues to remain with the repentant sinner, making him righteous in fact even while he remains a sinful person.

A repentant person who believes in Christ is re-created ethically. Luther said it in immortal lines:

"I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord; who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, secured and delivered me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with silver and gold, but with His innocent sufferings and death; in order that I might be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness; even as He is risen from the dead, and lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true."<sup>6</sup>

#### *Metaphors in Luther's Immortal Words*

In this explanation of the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed which pertains to redemption, the following metaphors from the Scripture are in use:

1. Jesus is "Lord," which was perhaps the first and shortest creed in the Church. In this one word "Lord," the early Christians embraced every doctrine basic to Christianity.

2. Redemption — the metaphor of the pawn shop or prison. A price must be paid to get one out of the control of bondage power; ransom and deliverance of sinners from the bondage of sin and the penalties of the violation of God's law. We have "redemption in His blood" (Eph. 1:7). It is derived from the Latin and means to "buy back" or "re-purchase."

3. "Lost and found" metaphor that Jesus used so much. The lost sheep for which the shepherd leaves the ninety and nine that are secure; the one lost coin for which the housewife seeks diligently, and, like the shepherd, rejoices when the lost is found; the two sons, one of them a prodigal who leaves his father's house and, although undeserving, returns to be received royally and is banqueted in the midst of great joy; the other son, the elder one, who remains home and pouts when his brother is received so wholeheartedly, complaining that he has never been feted for his faithfulness; and the loving father's solicitude for his hurt feelings, even though this revelation of his essential pettiness has occurred (Luke 15). Economically, the value of the lost should never call for expenditures of time and money to a greater amount than its market value, but the divine economy, after expending much more than the lost is worth. *rejoices*

<sup>6</sup> H. E. Jacobs, *Book of Concord*, p. 367.

in the finding. The shepherd risks his life and spends more time than the purchase price of the sheep; the housewife spends more time and effort to find the coin than would be necessary to earn it again; the prodigal is received with joy even though he has spent his living advanced to him by his father in riotous behavior and according to worldly standards is not worthy of another chance. The lost cost more to redeem than they are actually worth, but in the divine will to redeem the lost whatever the cost, the value of man's soul is set that high.

4. "Condemnation," the courtroom metaphor. Before the judgment seat of God's holiness and righteousness man stands condemned. But the sentence passed upon him is borne by another. Like the other metaphors, the worthlessness of the subject is emphasized and the uncalculating love of God is stressed.

5. "Deliverance," the Christ the Victor<sup>7</sup> illustration. Here is the champion of salvation who wins out against the forces of evil. Here is the power of all-conquering love to defeat the evil forces of hate.

6. "Ransom," the metaphor of the prisoner whose release is secured through the payment of a price. In the judgment scene metaphor, one's sins condemn him before God's justice. Here, however, one may be a prisoner of a power greater than one's self. The ransom asked is much greater than the value of the one imprisoned. One may die for a good man perhaps, but God commended His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:7-8).

#### *Purpose of Salvation Is Sanctification*

The conclusion of the explanation states God's purpose — to live in His Kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness. Hosea's wife is returned to her home in spite of her sinfulness; the prodigal returns to his former position as a son, in spite of his sin; the found sheep returns to the fold to be as one with the other sheep; the coin is found to be used; the Christian is redeemed for usefulness in God's Kingdom.

The purpose of salvation is found in sanctification. The two are not separated from each other, but are in one and the same act. We are not merely justified: we are made righteous in Christ's redemption.

The metaphors of salvation, whether they be the reconciliation of friends separated for a time; the finding of the lost; the courtroom in which justice is satisfied; the liberation of slaves by ransom; the purchase back of that which is in pawn; the marriage of a king and an humble maiden; the victor in the strife; or the fulfillment of Old Testament types — are all demanded by man's rationality. They are attempts to explain by illustration. Yet, each of these defies man's imagination. We cannot actually conceive that such transactions occur in the spiritual sphere. But the central truth each seeks to portray is unmistakable. It is God's fellow-

<sup>7</sup> G. Aulen, *Christus Victor*.

ship with man, not on the basis of holiness or worthiness on man's part, but on the basis (*sic!*) of man's sinfulness. It is motivated by a love, not of man or by man, that makes man ascend to a relation with God, but the love of God which reaches down to man's level of sin and unworthiness and meets and redeems him there.

*Faith Is Something Dynamic*

Faith is a word that must constantly be re-thought and re-defined. To many it means only the assent to a creed. To many it means an imitation of Christ's attitudes through our own love and means, such as the Romanist "faith animated by charity." To Paul and Luther it is the dynamic re-creating faith that makes a person righteous through the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. The efficacy of faith therefore rests in the power of God to make us believe, not in our strength to attain it.

Righteousness, too, is a word we use too easily. Usually it means only a compliance with religious, social, and cultural patterns. Righteousness in the sense of absolute honesty; of the search for and adherence to truth; of love that is dis-interested and uncalculating for selfgain; of being a champion in the lists against iniquity in its most subtle forms; and as a gift from God that we cannot attain for ourselves — such a description of righteousness is frequently diluted.

*Faith Brings Likeness to Christ*

Faith can be no stronger than the object in which it believes. Faith transforms character to be like that in which one believes. He who believes in Christ will become more and more like unto Christ. In the words of Luther, he will find it his duty to be "a Christ" to his fellow men and will serve, suffer, and die for them.<sup>8</sup>

The Pauline presentation is best! "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed unto His likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." (II Cor. 3:18, Revised Standard Version).

The righteousness that comes through faith in Christ leads from glory to glory. This transformation is God's work of love to those who accept His Son through faith. Though they have the power to rebel against His grace, they permit it to work its work of love in their lives.

For Reformation season there is hardly a more profitable study than the doctrine of righteousness through faith. In every possible aspect, the waters of the Reformation have been muddied and the once-vital distinctions in doctrine are lost to the present-day Protestant churchman unless he reads Luther again. And as he does so, he should not fail to use the Bible which the Reformer opened for us all, for only as Luther teaches Bible truth is he worthy of consideration today.

<sup>8</sup> *Holman ed.* II, p. 336ff.

**Lutheran World Federation.** The first post-war session of the Lutheran World Convention produced a number of noteworthy results. First, there was presented and accepted a doctrinal statement which is definitely conservative in its general tone as well as in its individual pronouncements. Then the convention voted unanimously to accept a proposed constitution, according to which this body will henceforth be known as the Lutheran World Federation and will, by means of an Executive Committee and a full-time Executive Secretary, function as an organized church body also during the five year interval between sessions. Finally the convention went on record as favoring participation in the interdenominational and liberal World Council of Churches. One may well ask whether these several actions are in complete harmony with each other, or whether the admirable qualities of the first are not nullified by these later developments, at least in part.

The doctrinal statement is the work of Prof. Dr. Anders Nygren of the University of Lund, Sweden, who was subsequently elected president of the newly organized World Federation. In the judgment of President Conrad Bergendoff of the Augustana Synod's Theological Seminary at Rock Island, Illinois, this "new emphasis in Swedish theology" is the result of a close study of Luther and implies a passing of the center of gravity in Lutheran theology from Germany to Scandinavia. He places it in sharp contrast to the state of affairs that existed in the days of Einar Billing and Nathan Söderblom. Those who remember something of the extreme modernism of the latter, and the serious misgivings which it aroused even among men who stood rather close to him, as *e. g.* in the circles of the Augustana Synod, will acknowledge this change with profound gratitude.

Nevertheless we believe that the influence of Söderblom is still in evidence. This former Archbishop of Sweden was, in his day, an outstanding exponent of the ecumenical movement, receiving the Nobel peace prize for his efforts in behalf of the unification of the Church (*Quartalschrift*, 1931, p. 282). The objectives which he set up a generation ago are still the chief aims of the Lund Conference. This is evident not only from the forming of this new World Federation and its declared intention of participating in the World Council of Churches, but also from the doctrinal statement itself.

Even though Dr. Bergendoff (in the Fall Issue of the *National Lutheran*, p. 7) calls it "a statement which deals courageously with issues hoary with controversy," it nevertheless is painfully silent on a number of matters which are burning issues among the very delegates who were there assembled at Lund, and in the Churches which they represented.

The statement speaks of the sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as "the sole source and standard of the message which the Church has to proclaim." But it neither comes out with a clear acknowledgment of the verbal inspiration of Scripture and its resultant inerrancy, nor

does it in any way rebuke those who operate with the destructive principles of modern Bible criticism.

In the section which deals with the Sacraments one finds a clear assertion of the real presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. But while Rome is singled out by name in connection with the error of transubstantiation, there is no specific mention of the Reformed Churches and their denial of the Real Presence. Nor is there even an implied rebuke for those Lutherans who at this very time, by their taking part in the formation of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID), are weakening and undermining the position of their Church on this issue by promoting further union with the Reformed Church, and are compromising their Lutheran doctrine. The one Communion at the opening of the Conference embraced them all.

In another paragraph we read: "But the Gospel is so exceedingly rich that no one section of the church can claim to have fully and exhaustively comprehended all its wealth. One church has grasped more of it, another less. One has penetrated to the heart of it, while another has remained more on the circumference. One has grasped one aspect and another another. In this respect the churches can learn from each other and help each other to reach a simpler, richer, and deeper understanding of the Gospel." Very plainly these words are meant to promote a spirit of international good will, broadmindedness, and a magnanimous willingness to "give and take" when it comes to doctrine. But in the same degree they also betray a lack of confessional certainty and doctrinal conviction. The trumpet is giving an uncertain sound. This is the spirit of Söderblom, but not of Luther.

For all the welcome evidence of this new conservatism, we still doubt very much whether the Lund theology is ready for the acid test of the coming conference of the World Council of Churches.

E. REIM.

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**Asmussen and Dibelius.** These two religious leaders of Germany, Dr. Hans Asmussen, chancellor of the Evangelical Church in Germany, and Dr. F. Otto Dibelius, Lutheran Bishop of Berlin, have undertaken a lecture tour in the past months under the auspices of the U. S. Committee for the Lutheran World Federation and of the Federal Council of Churches respectively. They described the condition of churches in Germany, according to *Religious News Service*, as "very poor" and the situation of churches in the Russian Zone as "becoming even more difficult," being handicapped in their youth work, which is blamed by Asmussen on the German Communists more than on the Russians. It is Asmussen also who pointed to the fact that all the churches of the world, and especially the Lutheran Church, are federating for the purpose of unity and that it was his impression that the churches in America have progressed farther on the road to unity than those in Europe. Not less significant are his remarks on the Christian



dogmas which, according to this religious leader, "are rarely disputed in Germany today." Speaking at Lutheran Theological Seminary, he declared that the liberalism which was very widespread during the past decades has practically been overcome, although Germany has not yet really become fundamentalist. When asked about a united front of Protestants and Roman Catholics to combat the spread of Communism in Germany, this champion for a United Evangelical Church in Germany made the statement that the difference between the Evangelical Church and Roman Catholicism is not so great when compared with the differences between Christianity and Communism and Christianity and National Socialism, "for you will find Jesus Christ in both." Complementing Asmussen's statements Dr. Dibelius asserted that the only two spiritual powers in Germany today are Christianity and Communism and that Christianity to his knowledge is the only spiritual power to counteract Communism. He also voiced the opinion that the center of Lutheranism in the future may no more be in the motherland of Germany, but in America. More and more we feel the immense importance of Lutheranism in the United States, he added, and it would be a great pity if the contact between the Lutheran Church here and throughout Europe were not strengthened in every possible way.

For an evaluation of these statements, in as far as they pertain to unionistic endeavors in Germany, we refer our readers to the series of articles by the Rev. O. Gerss on *Die kirchliche Lage Deutschlands*, which is being continued in this number of the *Quartalschrift* under News and Comments, as also to the article on *Treysa and Nürnberg* (p. 61).

P. PETERS.

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**Treysa and Nürnberg.** The October number of the 1945 issue of the *Quartalschrift* (p. 277) informed our readers of the first Convention of the Treysa Conference. After two years, on the 5th and 6th of June, 1947, this Conference again convened. While the Convention of 1945 set up a "new program of social action" and aimed to unite the Lutheran, Reformed, and the United churches on this common platform, the Convention of 1947 sought to bring about a still closer union of the three constituent church-bodies. The July number of the *Amtsblatt der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland* carries an article on this Convention by its editor, Dr. Hans Asmussen, director of the Church Chancery. In it he, first of all, reports that the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD) as a constituent member of the Evangelical Church of Germany (EKD) wills to be in close union with the other two constituent church-bodies, the Reformed and the United. The VELKD even declared at this Convention that it does not only feel itself responsible for the whole Evangelical church life (Kirchentum) of Germany, but that it would also regard a dissolution of the EKD as harmful and detrimental to all parties concerned.

Secondly, Dr. Asmussen sets forth the nature of the EKD defining it as a *Bund*, a federation. It is not yet a "church" in the full sense of the word, he tells us. Still this federation has not discarded the name "church." It hopes, moreover, to see "church" in the New Testament sense of the word realized in its midst by a joint hearing of the Word. The confessional differences are not being ignored. No effort is being made to efface these differences. On the contrary, it belongs to the nature of the EKD, we are being told, to stress these differences *in sauberer Weise*. The EKD does not bypass the confessions, but follows a course which leads through them. We can only then make progress, Dr. Asmussen assures his readers, if we remain true to ourselves, and if we ask ourselves whether and in how far the confessional differences can be overcome by means of the Word of God. The EKD is not simply to be one as a legal administrative organization, but ultimately one as "church" in the New Testament sense of the word. No one is to love the EKD because he hopes to find the invisible church in it. On the contrary, he is to love it because he is waiting most earnestly for the "church", in which one believes, to become visible and an object of experience having its own church-order.

Thirdly, the EKD, according to the author, has its own confession, namely that of Barmen. It is not yet clear to all, Dr. Asmussen declares, what the binding force of this confession is. Church History has always taught us that it takes time before a document acquires the dignity of a confession. Whatever the will of God may be in regard to the Barmen Confession, whatever the wishes of those who agree or disagree with it may be, still every discussion based on God's Word must revolve round about this Confession, until it becomes evident how far one can rest satisfied with its wording tested by the wording of God's Word.

As a result of this union no one is to be excluded from Communion in a congregation of the EKD which happens to have a different confession than the congregation to which the communicant belongs. This is not to be interpreted, Asmussen hastens to inform the Evangelical Christians in Germany, as a sign of indifference to the truth. We would make ourselves guilty of sin, he continues, if we would think of satisfying the hunger for the heavenly meal only after an interpretation of the words of institution has been found that brooks no further questioning. Again we would sin, if we would not ask ourselves anew whether we are actually celebrating communion aright in our own churches. Therefore the Convention at Treysa has requested the Council of the EKD to make every effort to bring about a binding theological colloquy on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The aim of this colloquy must be to discover the significance of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper for church-union.

As soon as this colloquy takes place, it will become evident, Dr. Asmussen assures us, how well the participants will be able to understand one another and to give ear to the Word of the Scriptures. We have to prove that in matters of doctrine our final authority is the Holy Scriptures

and that the Confessions of the fathers are of great weight to us. Such a colloquy must have its effect, Asmussen believes, on the Free Churches. If the Lutheran Free Churches in Germany accuse the churches of the EKD of a church-union contrary to the truth, they will now have to prove there is no difference between the present movement in the EKD and that of the past century, when the Protestant churches of Germany were united without an earnest searching of the Scriptures. The Lutheran Free Churches will have to tell us, Asmussen declares, whether that which has been agreed upon by the colloquists can be upheld in the light of the Word of God. And then he adds — and we are endeavoring to translate his words quite literally: “It is a fact which no one can ignore, that the new understanding of the words of institution has not originated within the pale of the Free Churches, but within the pale of the large State Churches. May the State Churches have erred in many and even in fundamental issues, the fact that they have sought an altogether new answer to the question pertaining to the Lord’s Supper must be an earnest warning to the Free Churches to reconsider their own understanding of the doctrine of the Lord’s Supper.”

Shortly after the Treysa Convention the *Schwabacher Konvent im Lutherischen Einigungswerk* met July 1, 1947, in Nürnberg. Already in 1941 this “Convent” had accepted the following propositions: “The Convent in accord with the fathers of the *Allgemeine Ev. Luth. Konferenz* professes the irrevocable principles of Article VII of the Augsburg Confession as a Biblical doctrine based on Ephesians 4, 4f., namely that it is enough, but also indispensable, to the true unity of the Church, ‘to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments.’” With the acceptance of this doctrine every attempt is rejected to circumvent the truth at issue by establishing church-union on a mere organizational basis and not on the basis of the joint recognized truth of the Gospel and the Scriptural administration of the Sacraments. This doctrine, which has been clearly professed by the Ev. Luth. Church of all times and by all of Christendom, must remain authoritative for the new order of the Evangelical Church in the motherland of the Reformation.

These propositions were therefore agreed upon anew by the signatories of the *Erklärung des Schwabacher Konvents vom 1. Juli 1947*. They declare in this their Declaration that the resolutions of Treysa, on the 5th and 6th of June, 1947, had “caused surprise and alarm in wide circles of German Lutheranism.” Five statements were set up as follows:

The first statement sets forth the *status quo*, namely that the representatives of the VELKD have made it quite clear that they are seeking nothing less than a merger within the pale of the EKD. This “Evangelical Church,” in which the Lutheran, the Reformed, and the United Churches are being merged into a *Bund*, a federation, is, according to all official pronouncements, the successor of the German Evangelical Church of July 11, 1933. It was recognized as such by the Barmen Bekenntnissynode in May of 1934. The Treysa Conference of June 1947 wants to recognize this

church as a mere "federation" of churches, in which conflicting confessions prevail. Still the "Agreement" (Feststellung) of the Treysa Conference lays claim to a "church" which in principle affords its communicants a mutual partaking of the Lord's Supper.

The second statement declares that a "federation" of the Lutheran Church with other churches for the sake of cooperation in various fields of work is possible. As long, however, as doctrines contrary to the Scriptures are being taught in these churches, our church must closely guard those boundaries of church fellowship which are laid down in our Confessions. Again such a "federation" of churches, both as to its name and as to its functions, must refrain from calling itself a church. By being recognized, however, as a united "Evangelical Church," the Scripture doctrine of the true unity of the Church (Augsb. Conf. VII) is being denied. This denial of the Lutheran Confessions has led the German Lutheran State Churches to an abandonment of fellowship with the Lutheran Free Churches. By adhering to the idea of a united "Evangelical Church" the Lutheran Churches have also made it impossible for the Free Churches to join the VELKD. And since the Lutheran Churches have permitted the merger with the Reformed and the United Churches to grow closer and closer by means of a common confession and Communion-fellowship, the Lutheran Free Churches were still less able to join the VELKD.

The third statement pertains to the decisions passed at Barmen. The signatories of the Schwabach Declaration admit that the "Theological Declaration" of Barmen had to reject the false doctrine and the imperial claims of secular powers on the Church as long as the Lutheran Confessions were its guiding principle. But the signatories protest against their church being bound to the "Theological Declaration" and to the "Decision" of Barmen on nothing but the strength of a constitution, because these presuppose and affirm a definition of "church" which is contrary to the Confessions and because they weaken, becloud, and curtail the clear testimony of our Confessions.

The fourth statement pertains to Communion-fellowship with the EKD. The signatories declare that the permission granted to communicants who are not in accord with the Lutheran doctrine to take part in the Sacrament at Lutheran altars is contrary to the good order of the Church and is not in conformity with our Confessions. The pastoral responsibility makes it obligatory to help the communicants to receive worthily the body and blood of Christ. From this there follows the duty to give a thorough instruction to those who have no knowledge of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, to voice a clear testimony to all teachings regarding the Sacrament, and to reject those who despise all instruction in God's Word and thereby contradict the Scriptural and Sacramental doctrine of the Lutheran Church. This confessional Sacramental practice would, however, be prohibited, if the Lutheran Synods and their Councils should give their consent to the

"Declaration" of the Treysa Convention of 1947. Those who are affected by such a prohibition would either have to act contrary to their conscience or be forced to counteract their own church government.

The fifth statement is a formal protest against the consent given by the representatives of the State Churches to the "Agreement" of the Treysa Convention. This "Agreement" must lead to an annulment of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord in our church. Should the legal organs of the Lutheran State Churches also agree to the Declarations of the Treysa Convention which are contrary to the Confessions, the basis of the Lutheran Confessions would be abandoned and the church-constitution broken.

With this Declaration, the signatories say in closing, we are fighting for the conservation of the true unity of our Ev. Luth. Church and are letting ourselves be guided by the petition: "Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth!" (Ps. 86, 11).

This "Declaration" was signed by six theologians. One of them, Dr. Hermann Sasse, Erlangen, is well known to our readers through his work, "Here We Stand" (Was heisst lutherisch?). May the Lord of the Church bless these six signatories and all faithful Lutherans in their stand against unionism, as it prevails in the German State Churches. May He answer their prayer and grant them that faithfulness to finally separate themselves from a church which no longer desires to adhere to the Lutheran Confessions.

P. PETERS.

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**Weitere Fortsetzung über die kirchliche Lage Deutschlands.** Wir freuen uns, daß die Artikelreihe von Pastor D. Gerß, Herrlingen bei Ulm in Deutschland, einen günstigen Widerhall in unserer Mitte gefunden hat. Dies ermuntert uns, die Fortsetzungen, die uns mittlertweile von diesem tiefblickenden Kenner deutsch-kirchlicher Verhältnisse zugesandt worden sind, zu veröffentlichen. Handelt es sich doch in diesen Fortsetzungen um das Verhältnis der evangelischen Landeskirchen zur römischen Kirche und zu den staatlichen Welt- und Kulturmächten, die uns nicht weniger als die vorangehenden Abschnitte Einblick in die kirchliche Lage in Deutschland gewähren.

##### 5.

#### Die evangelischen Landeskirchen und die römische Kirche.

„Das Streben nach Macht im gesamten öffentlichen und politischen Leben, das heute die Landeskirchen maßgebend bestimmt, hat ganz zwangsläufig auch ihr Verhältnis zur römischen Papstkirche grundlegend verändert. Sie können die Stellung gegenüber Rom, die die Reformation einnahm, nicht mehr aufrecht erhalten. Sie wissen sich ja mit der Papstkirche in ihrem Streben nach Herrschaft der ‚Kirche‘ über das weltliche Staats- und Kulturleben völlig eins. Die evangelischen Landeskirchen sehen deshalb heute in der römischen Papstkirche nicht eine falsche Kirche, die die biblische Wahrheit

verleugnet und bekämpft, vor der also zu warnen, die zu meiden und zu bekämpfen ist, wie das Luther und die Reformatoren getan haben, sondern sie sehen in der römischen Kirche eine Bundesgenossin, mit der sie möglichst einig werden müssen, weil sie allein ohne sie die ersehnte Macht über das weltliche Staats- und Kulturleben nicht erlangen können. Auch hier kommt heute nur eine längere Entwicklung zur Reife.

„Man ist heute in den evangelischen Landeskirchen aufs eifrigste bestrebt, von Rom zu lernen. Pfarrer der Landeskirchen nehmen schon seit längerer Zeit und heute besonders in erheblicher Anzahl an kirchlichen Besprechungen, religiösen Exerzitien römischer Mönchsorden and an römischen Gottesdiensten lernend teil. Römische Theologen halten auf Einladung Vorträge in evangelischen Kirchen. Kirchliche Arbeitsgemeinschaften zwischen römischen und evangelisch-landeskirchlichen Theologen werden gebildet und sind in Tätigkeit. Noch niemals, schreibt der Präsident der Evangelischen Kirchenkanzlei D. Msmussen in seiner schon angeführten programmatischen Neußerung zur kirchlichen Lage, hat sich das Verhältnis der evangelischen Landeskirchen zur römischen Papstkirche so positiv gestaltet wie heute.' Und weiter sagt Msmussen eben dort: 'Es haben sich zwischen beiden Kirchen Dinge ereignet, die man noch vor 15 Jahren für völlig unmöglich gehalten hätte. Die Welt wird sich darauf einrichten müssen, daß man den traditionellen Gegensatz zwischen Rom und Wittenberg nicht mehr wie bisher als unveränderliches Faktum ansehen darf.'

„Und das alles geschieht, während die römische Papstkirche in ihrer Lehre und kirchlichen Praxis nichts irgend Erhebliches geändert hat noch zu ändern willens ist. Es sei denn, daß man die lockende Erklärung namhafter römischer Theologen, über den Zölibat könne man wohl diskutieren, für erheblich halten wollte.

„Der Einfluß der römischen Kirche auf die Theologen der evangelischen Landeskirchen zeigt sich auch darin, daß sehr viele der landeskirchlichen Theologen bei ihrem Bestreben, die Landeskirchen zu erneuern und wirksam zu machen, nichts mehr vom Wort der Bibel und dem aus dem Wort erzeugten Glauben erwarten, sondern vielmehr von kirchlichen Zeremonien, von neuen Kirchen- und Bischofsämtern, von Einführung altertümlicher Liturgien und neuen Formen des Gottesdienstes und ähnlichen Dingen. Das Verständnis für das Werk Luthers schwindet mehr und mehr. Es wird auch von Theologen, die sich lutherisch nennen, mehr and mehr kritisiert, bedauert, abgelehnt. Luther hätte doch ‚der Kirche‘ sehr großen Schaden damit getan, daß er die Kirchenspaltung hervorgerufen habe. Aus allen Landeskirchen, auch den sich lutherisch nennenden, kommen Nachrichten von Reformationsfestpredigten, in denen der Abfall Luthers von der römischen Kirche tief beklagt wird. Man müsse diese Kirchenspaltung wieder rückgängig machen und dafür Buße tun. Von einem Kampf gegen die römische Papstkirche dürfe keine Rede mehr sein, vielmehr müsse man mit ihr zusammengehen, da doch die römische und die evangelische Kirche wesentlich eins seien.

„Damit wird die Grundstellung der lutherischen Reformation gegen-

über der römischen Papstkirche aufgegeben, ohne daß die römische Kirche ihre Lehre und kirchliche Praxis irgendwie geändert hätte. Wenn auch Pfarrer, die sich lutherisch nennen und die Bekenntnisse der lutherischen Kirche unterschreiben also predigen und handeln, machen sie jedenfalls ihren lutherischen Namen und Bekenntnis dadurch unglaubwürdig. Wenn Kirchenpräsident Asmussen die Hinneigung der evangelischen Landeskirchen zur römischen Papstkirche damit entschuldigen und begründen will, daß auch in der römischen Kirche ‚der Name Jesu Christi ausgerufen wird‘, so vergißt er, daß es gerade die anti-christliche falsche Kirche der Endzeit sein wird, die den Namen Christi ausruft, wie das der Herr selbst uns warnend offenbart hat. (Math. 24, 23.) Er verschweigt auch und verleugnet die uns im lutherischen Bekenntnis nach der Schrift bezeugte Wahrheit, daß gerade der römische Papst der große Antichrist ist.

„Die evangelischen Landeskirchen kennen nun überhaupt keine falsche Kirche mehr, die zu bekämpfen und vor der zu warnen wäre. Alles, was sich nur Kirche nennt, soll heilig und gut sein, davor soll man alle Achtung haben und sich damit verbinden und vereinigen. Wie haben doch mit solcher Stellungnahme die evangelischen Landeskirchen den Boden der Heiligen Schrift und der lutherischen Bekenntnisse so völlig verlassen! Unser Heiland selbst hat seinen schwersten Kampf gegen die falsche Kirche kämpfen müssen und hat seine Jünger vor ihr am meisten gewarnt. Der Apostel Paulus desgleichen und ebenso in der Nachfolge seines Heilandes auch Luther. Ueberall in der Schrift ist vorausgesagt, daß gerade dieser Kampf gegen die falsche antichristliche Kirche in der letzten Zeit der Welt für alle wahren Christen der schwerste und unvermeidliche sein wird, wenn sie im Glauben wollen erhalten bleiben. Die evangelischen Landeskirchen wollen von diesem Gegensatz und Kampf nichts mehr wissen. Sie gefährden damit das Seelenheil der noch in ihnen vorhandenen Christen auf das schwerste und beweisen, daß sie keine wahre evangelische Kirche sind. Denn wo kein Kampf gegen falsches antichristliches Kirchentum mehr ist, da ist auch keine wahre Kirche.

„Und wie stellen sich nun die Gemeindeglieder, die Christen in den Landeskirchen, zu diesen neuen Wegen ihrer Theologen und Kirchenführer? Sehr viele wissen noch nichts Rechtes davon und können sich noch gar nicht denken, daß ihre Pfarrer wirklich sollten das Werk der Reformation Rom gegenüber so grundsätzlich verleugnen. Sie halten noch die dahin gehenden Neußerungen auf den Kanzeln und in den Kirchenblättern für Entgleisungen einzelner. Viele andere erkennen schon deutlicher, was da vor sich geht. Sie werden mit steigendem Unbehagen erfüllt, verlieren das Vertrauen zu ihren Landeskirchen, fangen an sie zu meiden und suchen nach einer Kirche, die das alte biblische Evangelium festhält und treibt. Kirchenpräsident Asmussen selbst sagt: ‚Sie fürchten sich vor Rom.‘ Ja, sie fürchten sich, alles wieder zu verlieren, was die Reformation Luthers an Glaubensfreiheit und Heilsgewißheit und Erkenntnis der seligmachenden biblischen Wahrheit uns gebracht hat. Aber freilich haben sie in der kirchlichen Öffentlichkeit heute

kaum eine Stimme und können nur untereinander leise ihre Besorgnisse und Hoffnungen austauschen. Wird sich eine Kirche finden, die der Sehnsucht dieser unzähligen evangelischen Christen entgegenkommt, sie mit klarem öffentlichen Zeugnis der Wahrheit sammelt und zu dem lauterem Brunnen des Evangeliums führt, das allein selig macht?

## 6.

### Die evangelischen Landeskirchen und die moderne nihilistische Zersetzung der Sittlichkeit.

„Ihr Streben nach Macht über das weltliche Staats- und Kulturleben begründen die Kirchen heute gerade damit, daß sie doch helfen müßten die Zivilisation und Kultur der Völker, die sich offensichtlich in sittlicher Auflösung befänden, zu erhalten und vor dem drohenden Untergang zu bewahren. Ja die Kirchen wären die einzigsten, die das vollbringen könnten. Dazu brauchten sie eben die Macht. Ohne sie müßte alles, das ganze natürliche Menschen- und Völkerleben, im Nichts, in nihilistischer Auflösung zu Grunde gehen. Kämen aber die Kirchen zur Macht, daß auch die weltlichen Regierungen sich nach ihnen richten und von ihnen leiten lassen müßten wie in dem heute vielgepriesenen Mittelalter, so würde die Menschheit zu dauerndem Frieden, Wohlstand, Einigkeit und Freiheit gelangen. So bieten sich die Kirchen als Retter der abendländischen Kulturwelt an. Nur müsse man sie zur Macht gelangen lassen, damit sie alle bürgerlich-staatlichen Verhältnisse mit dem Evangelium von Christus durchdringen und regieren könnten.

„Und die staatlichen Weltmächte sind heute, wie es scheint, mehr als je geneigt, auf dieses Angebot der Kirchen, der römischen Papstkirche wie auch der evangelischen Landeskirchen, einzugehen. Die staatlichen Welt- und Kulturmächte sind weithin mit ihrer Kunst zu Ende, haben keinen Glauben mehr an ihre eigenen Ideen, haben die Angst eines schlechten Gewissens angesichts dessen, was sie in der Welt angerichtet haben, fahren freilich trotzdem mit ihren alten Welt Herrschaftsplänen fort, möchten aber dazu gern die Hilfe der Kirchen haben. Die sollen mit Christentum und dem Namen Gottes dem Treiben der Weltmächte einen schönen Schein geben, sollen die weithin zweifelnden Menschen im Namen Gottes und Christi wieder willig machen, sich der Gewalt und den Plänen der Weltmächte zu fügen. Die Kirchen aber gehen ihrerseits gern auf ein solches Zusammenwirken mit den Weltmächten ein, weil sie dadurch selbst hoffen zur Weltmacht zu werden, die schließlich alles regiert und alles wieder christlich und kirchlich macht, wie es im Mittelalter gewesen ist. Dadurch soll dann für die ganze Menschheit eine Zeit des Friedens und der Sicherheit des Lebens und des irdischen Wohlergehens herbeigeführt werden.

„Wir haben schon früher darauf hingewiesen, daß die Landeskirchen, indem sie diese Wege einschlagen und sich als Kirche eine solche Aufgabe stellen, das geistliche himmlische Wesen der Kirche Christi preisgeben, die



Kirche politischen Weltmächten dienstbar machen und sie damit selbst weltlichen und politisieren. Das Evangelium wird dadurch zum Gesetz, die Kirche zu einer Gesetzesanstalt gemacht, die unfähig ist, den Weg zur Rettung von Sünde, Tod und Teufel, zur ewigen Gemeinschaft mit Gott zu zeigen.

„Aber es ist zu fragen, ob die Landeskirchen auf diesen Wegen auch nur fähig sind, zur Erhaltung des natürlichen Menschenlebens und seiner sittlichen Grundordnungen beizutragen. Geschichtliche Tatsache bleibt, daß die Kirche des Mittelalters, die jetzt soviel als Vorbild gerühmt wird, als sie auf dem Höhepunkt ihrer weltlichen Macht tatsächlich alle Verhältnisse des Staats- und Kulturlebens der Völker beherrschte, keineswegs eine Zeit des Glücks, der Freiheit und des Friedens heraufgeführt hat. Vielmehr hüteten damals die Kriege nicht auf in Europa, von Glaubensfreiheit war keine Rede, vielmehr wurden gerade durch die herrschende Kirche die Gewissen geknechtet, die Staaten zerrüttelt und geschwächt, die sittlichen Grundordnungen des Menschenlebens zersetzt und untergraben. Europa hat ja schon Jahrhunderte der Kirchenherrschaft erlebt. Was Europa unter solcher Kirchenherrschaft durchgemacht hat, sollte wahrlich genug sein, uns von jeder Sehnsucht nach einem neuen ‚Jahrhundert der Kirche‘ zu heilen und zu bewahren.

„Auch heute sieht es so, daß das so außerordentlich gesteigerte Wirken und Arbeiten der Landeskirchen im öffentlichen und politischen Leben Deutschlands nirgends zu größerer Sicherheit des irdischen Lebens und der Staaten, zu größerem Wohlstand und Wohlergehen der Völker Europas und zur Festigung der sittlichen Grundlagen und Ordnungen des Menschenlebens oder gar zu größerer Freiheit des persönlichen Glaubens und der Gewissen geführt hat. Vielmehr ist gerade das Gegenteil der Fall, wie das vor aller Augen liegt. Und woran liegt das? Kirchen, wie die heutigen Landeskirchen, die sich die Erhaltung des irdischen Menschenlebens zum Ziel setzen statt des ewigen Heils der Seelen, Kirchen, die zur Erreichung dieses Ziels die Völker und Staaten mit dem Evangelium und der Bergpredigt regieren wollen, die dabei vernünftige und ehrliche weltliche Staatsregierungen des bürgerlichen Lebens als Konkurrenz empfinden, die als solche möglichst zu verdrängen und unwirksam zu machen sind, solche Kirchen werden zwangsläufig nichts zu Erhaltung und Festigung der bürgerlichen Gemeinwesen, ihrer Kultur und sittlichen Grundordnungen beitragen können, sondern werden vielmehr nur mithelfen, sie zu zersetzen und dem Nihilismus anzuliefern.

„Das Evangelium ist nun einmal nicht dazu da, das natürliche Leben der Menschen und Völker zu erhalten. Christus ist nicht dazu in die Welt gekommen, daß wir, wie Luther sagt, in diesem Leben Bürger, Bauer, Herr, Knecht, Magd seien, regieren und uns regieren lassen, arbeiten und haus halten, sondern dazu sind wir getauft und dazu hören wir das Evangelium und glauben an Christus, daß wir diese weltlichen Stände allesamt lassen und aus dieser Welt fahren in ein ander Wesen und Leben‘. Arbeiten und

haushalten, regieren und sich regieren lassen, Kinder aufziehen, bauen, pflanzen, Kultur und Zivilisation hervorbringen, bürgerliche Gemeinwesen ordnen und verwalten, das alles können die Menschen und Völker schon vorher, dazu brauchen sie gar nicht kirchlich und christlich werden. Alle diese Dinge werden gar nicht ‚vom Glauben aus‘ und nicht ‚durchs Evangelium‘ hervorgebracht und erhalten, sondern durch die natürlichen sittlichen, geistigen und leiblichen Kräfte, die die Menschen schon durch die Schöpfung bekommen haben, durch Vernunft und Gewissen, bürgerliche Ehrbarkeit und Rechtsschaffenheit und die natürlichen Ordnungen der Ehe und Familie, der Arbeit und des Triebs der Selbsterhaltung, der weltlichen Regierungen und Staaten, die, ohne daß sie verkirchlicht und verchristlicht werden, in selbständiger Verantwortung vor Gott ihre Arbeit tun. Daß sie dabei wahrlich nichts Vollkommenes schaffen und erreichen, ist nach dem Sündenfall und dem dadurch eingetretenen tiefen Verderben der menschlichen Natur selbstverständlich. Aber sie können durch Gottes Macht und Güte ein einigermaßen erträgliches menschliches Leben erhalten und ordnen. Freilich werden sie von den teuflischen nihilistischen Mächten der Lebenszerstörung, der Lüge und des Mordes beständig angefochten und bedroht. Wenn nun die falschen Kirchen sogar mit dem Namen Gottes und Christi diese guten natürlich-sittlichen Kräfte und Ordnungen des Menschenlebens auch noch ihrerseits beständig kritisieren, herunterreißen, verdrängen, angeblich weil sie zu wenig christlich sind, in Wahrheit, weil sie der Alleinherrschaft der Kirchen im Wege sind, dann geraten die Kirchen in eine unterirdische Gemeinschaft und Bundesgenossenschaft mit den satanischen Mächten der Weltzerstörung, helfen mit, alles was das Verderben noch aufhält, hinwegzutun und das menschliche Leben in ein Nichts, in ein Chaos der Auflösung und des Verderbens hinabzustößen, und das alles unter religiösem und frommem Schein, mit dem Mißbrauch des Namens Gottes und Christi und überlauten Versprechungen, daß sie, die Kirchen, jetzt Europa und alle Welt wollen retten, aufbauen und erhalten.

„Wenn heute die Weltkirchen weithin auf diese Wege geraten sind, so kommt das daher, daß sie das eigentliche himmlische Gnadenreich Christi in seiner verborgenen Herrlichkeit nicht kennen, nicht darin leben und ihnen darum die wichtige biblische und lutherische Grundlehre von den beiden Reichen, dem Unterschied der beiden Reiche Gottes, seinem Reich der Macht, durch das er das irdische Leben erhält, und seinem Reich der Gnade in Christo, durch welches er uns das ewige himmlische Leben gibt, verborgen bleibt. Und nun wollen sie doch dabei Christen sein und mißchen beide Reiche Gottes ineinander und müssen dadurch beide verlieren und verderben.

„Das zeigt sich z. B. darin, wie sie das wichtige Gotteswort Gal. 3, 28 (vergl. Col. 3, 11) verdrehen und mißbrauchen. Da heißt es: Hier ist kein Jude noch Grieche, hier ist kein Knecht noch Freier, hier ist kein Mann noch Weib. Damit wird allerdings jeder Unterschied zwischen den Rassen und Völkern, zwischen Befehlenden und Gehorchenden, zwischen Männern und Weibern aufgehoben. Aber dieser Unterschied wird nur aufgehoben und

für nichtig erklärt inbezug auf das Verhältnis des Menschen zu Gott in der Frage des Seligwerdens. Da gibt es allerdings: Es ist da kein Unterschied. Sie sind allzumal Sünder und stehen deshalb ohne Unterschied unter Gottes Gericht und Verdammnis und werden allzumal ohne Unterschied gerecht aus Gottes Gnade durch die Erlösung, die durch Jesum Christum geschehen ist, soviel von ihnen gläubig sind. (Röm. 3, 23.) Die sind allzumal Einer in Christo Jesu, im ewigen Reich der Gnade. (Gal. 3, 28.) Der Unterschied aber ist keineswegs aufgehoben, sondern besteht und ist wirksam vor Gott und Menschen im Machtreich Gottes, im Reich des natürlichen Lebens. Das wird ja ausdrücklich in demselben Kapitel des Colosserbriefs wie auch im Römerbrief ausgesprochen und gelehrt. Da sind im Reich des natürlichen Lebens nach Gottes Willen, Ordnung und Gebot die Unterschiede zwischen Mann und Weib, Obrigkeit und Untertanen, Befehlenden und Gehorchenden, den verschiedenen Rassen und Völkern, Eltern und Kindern vorhanden und wohl zu beachten und wirksam sein zu lassen, wenn anders das natürliche Leben soll erhalten werden.

„Nun ist aber nichts häufiger, als daß Kirchenführer sowohl der römischen Papstkirche (so z. B. in diesem Jahr der römische Bischof Haas von Grand Rapids, Michigan, U. S. A., in einer öffentlichen Rede) als auch der Theologen der evangelischen Landeskirchen in Deutschland die angeführten Gottesworte, Gal. 3, 28 — Col. 3, 11, im Gegensatz zu ihrem klaren Sinn und übrigens auch wider alle Vernunft dazu mißbrauchen, um im Namen Gottes und des Evangeliums völlige Gleichheit und Gleichberechtigung von Mann und Frau, von Obrigkeit und Untertanen, Vorgesetzten und Untergebener, den verschiedenen Rassen und Völkern zu fordern und zu erstreben, auch im ganzen Bereich des natürlichen Lebens, das ja nicht dem Reich der Gnade in Christo, sondern dem Reich der Macht Gottes angehört. Indem sie das tun, zeigen sie, daß sie Christum und das Evangelium nicht verstehen. Sie erweisen sich damit aber auch als solche, die in einer Front mit aller nihilistischen Zerstörern des Lebens die sittlichen Grundlagen und Ordnungen des Staats- und Kulturlebens der Völker zersetzen und zerstören helfen. Das kommt daher, daß der hohe, ganz wichtige und nötige biblische Artikel vom Unterschied des geistlichen Reiches Christi und des weltlichen Reiches von ihnen verleugnet, jedenfalls nicht von ihnen in Gebrauch genommen wird.“

„Ein allerletzter Abschnitt: Und wir Lutheraner heute? folgt baldmöglichst“, schreibt uns der Verfasser unter dem Datum vom 9. 9. 47. Auch diesen Abschnitt wollen wir unsern Lesern nicht vorenthalten. Er soll, so Gott will, in der nächsten Nummer erscheinen. P. Peters.

## REVIEWERS' DESK

**Our Synod And Its Work**, a reader for Lutheran Schools, prepared and published by the Board of Education, Wisconsin Synod. 223 pages, 5¼×8¼, red maroon cloth with silver lettering. Price: \$1.25. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Christian education, by which we endeavor through God's Word to train our children for a comprehensive life of faith, also properly includes commending to their mind, heart, and will in a thorough and practical manner the one great and blessed task which the Savior has entrusted to His believers, the task of proclaiming the Gospel so that His Church may be extended, perfected, and preserved among sinful men.

This carefully planned book offers invaluable aid in carrying out this phase of Christian training. In a vivid manner it lets our young Christians see how our Synod and its work offers rich opportunity for participating in the blessed work of bringing the saving Gospel to sinners far and wide. It shows them how under God's guidance through His Word and Spirit our Synod grew and developed into a church body in which they are now united with several hundred thousand likeminded Christians to carry out their common God-entrusted task. As it acquaints them with Synod's organization, with its officers, commissions, and conventions, with its academies, colleges, and seminary, with its home, foreign, and institutional missions, and with Lutheran homes and schools for handicapped persons, it lets them see how all these arrangements and endeavors have served and continue to serve the one purpose of proclaiming the Gospel for the salvation of men.

Thus our young Christians will be led to say: this is my work, which I will want to cherish, which I will want to help foster and support with my prayers and in an ever increasing measure with my gifts and talents. The book inspires confidence to the hope that it will also prove helpful in encouraging and guiding many to enter into the service of the church as pastors and teachers. In our Christian Day Schools, where this book has been eagerly awaited, it can, of course, be put to its fullest use. Yet also in congregations, which are not yet privileged to carry out Christian training with this agency, pastors will want to find occasion to utilize this material. It lends itself well for use in a Junior Bible Class. Though written with children of confirmation age in mind, its use is by no means restricted to them. It would afford edifying and instructive reading for all members of our congregations.

C. J. L.

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**We Beheld His Glory.** Sermons for the Advent season, Christmas and New Year's Day by pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. 242 pages. 5½×8. Green cloth. Price, \$2.00. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis.

We cannot muster the necessary enthusiasm to grant this collection of sermons our wholehearted endorsement. Of the first four sermons, three almost completely ignored the sacred text they purported to interpret. Besides, quite a number of sermons were studied with quotations and anecdotes not taken from Scripture, which, to our way of thinking, should be used only rarely, if at all, in a Lutheran sermon.

On page 103 we find the statement: "While we believe the autographs of the scriptures were inspired, we do not consider the manuscripts and translations in our possession today infallible. Errors have been made and additions crept in as the scriptures have been handed down from generation to generation." Such remarks are utterly out of place in a Lutheran preacher's sermon. If the Bible from which he is preaching is not errorless and infallible to him, he had better stay out of the pulpit. Hence, we expect our pastors to write the word "scriptures" with a capital letter!

On page 105 the same writer states that John "kept on preaching Law until there was genuine hunger and thirst for righteousness in the lives of his hearers." John could not possibly have lived long enough to accomplish this. Many of his hearers never did acquire such hunger and thirst, nor can Law ever create such hunger and thirst. Genuine hunger and thirst for righteousness are essential qualities of spiritual life, and spiritual life is created only through the Gospel.

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ADALBERT SCHALLER.

**When Christ Went To Calvary.** Lenten sermons by Walter F. Troeger and Harry E. Olsen. 82 pages. 6¼×9¼. Red cloth, title in silver on front cover. Price, \$1.00. Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis.

Contents: The Beginnings of Sorrows — The Perfidy of Judas — Faith in the Crucible — At the Enemies' Fire — The Path of Least Resistance — The Opening Prison Doors — The Path of the Just — The Supreme Sacrifice — Salvation in the Scriptures — A Substitute Secures Salvation — A Ransom Acquires Salvation — The Sinners' Friend Assures Salvation — Salvation in the Judgment — God and Christ Will our Salvation — The Church Proclaims Salvation — The Resurrection Certifies Salvation.

ADALBERT SCHALLER.

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**The Glory of Golgotha.** Lenten sermons from the works of Dr. George Stoeckhardt translated by Rev. William Burhop, and "Passion Story Pictures" by Dr. Louis J. Sieck. 125 pages. 5¼×7¼. Black cloth, title in gold on cover and backbone. Price, \$1.00. Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis.

This little volume of Lenten sermons deserves warm words of praise. We need not elaborate on the worth of sermons from the pen of Dr. Stoeckhardt. They are rightly treasured in our Synodical Conference by pastors and laymen as a precious heritage, and our younger pastors

who are not able to enjoy Stoeckhardt's sermons in the original will be grateful indeed to Pastor Burhop for his translation of this series.

The companion series by Dr. Sieck is likewise a worthwhile contribution to the Lenten sermon literature. His sermons deal reverently with the phases of our holy Savior's passion. Every reader will agree with the publishers when these describe them as "deeply devotional in tone, evangelical in their appeal, simple in their style, and highly practical in their applications to everyday life."

ADALBERT SCHALLER.

**Greater Love Hath No Man.** A series of Lenten sermons by Martin Walker and Theophil H. Schroedel. 106 pages.  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . Brown cloth. Title in gold on front cover and backbone. Price, \$1.25. Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis.

These two series of Lenten sermons deserve special recognition because they earnestly seek to give our suffering and dying Savior the prominence He should receive in Lenten addresses.

The first series carries out the theme of What Christ Did For Us and In Us. The author does this in connection with the following topics: The Courage of Christ — The Submission of Christ — The Patience of Christ — The Silence of Christ — The Compassion of Christ — The Love of Christ — The Death of Christ.

The second series is based on Old Testament types of Christ and discusses the following: The Offering of Isaac — Joseph and His Brethren — The Passover Lamb — The Bread From Heaven — The Rock in the Wilderness — The Brazen Serpent — The Table of the Lord — The Bearer of Our Sins.

ADALBERT SCHALLER

**From Tragedy To Triumph.** Two series of Lenten sermons by Charles A. Behnke and Herman W. Bartels. 117 pages.  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ . Green cloth. Title in gold on front cover and backbone. Price, \$1.00. Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis.

Under the general heading, Prayer in the Passion History, the first series brings six sermons on the following themes: A Savior Who Prays for His Own — A Prayer of Victorious Suffering — The Prayer of an Embattled Soul — The Prayer of a Forgiving Heart — A Prayer of an Awakened Soul — The Prayer Before Entering the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

In the second series, entitled Peace Through the Cross, the author discusses these themes: Peace with God, the Need of the Hour — We Have Peace with God — God at the Peace Table with His Enemies — Live in Peace — Peace in the Church — Peace in a Confused World.

ADALBERT SCHALLER.

**The Empty Tomb.** Sermons for the Easter season. 64 pages. 6¼×9. Green cloth, title in gold on front cover. Price, \$1.00 Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis.

This volume offers a series of sermons on the Resurrection of Christ by several preachers of our sister Synod. We believe with the publishers that the reader "will find much in these sermons that will enkindle his heart for a jubilant proclamation of the Easter evangel."

We list the titles together with their respective authors: O Death, Where Is Thy Sting? by Lawrence Acker — The Knowledge of Christ and the Power of His Resurrection, by J. W. Behnken — The Obligation of a New Life, by Arthur Brunn — What is Easter? by L. B. Buchheimer — Easter Means Victory, by O. A. Geiseman — The Christ They Cannot Take Away, by E. H. Heintzen — The Abiding Presence, by Otto P. Kretzmann — Surrexit! by Erwin Kurth — He Is Risen, by Louis J. Sieck — Easter Joy in a World at War, by Henry F. Wind.

ADALBERT SCHALLER

**Unto A Living Hope.** Sermons for the season after Easter. By pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. 294 pages. 5½×8. Green cloth binding. Price, \$2.50. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis.

This is another series of sermons by the same publishers on a restricted part of the church year, the six Sundays after Easter, Ascension Day, and Pentecost, and for each of these days there are three sermons. Each of the twenty-four sermons is by a different author.

As in the other series, the phrase "of the Evangelical Lutheran Church" must be taken in a narrower sense than seems indicated. None of the writers are members of the large section of the Evangelical Lutheran Church known as the Ev. Luth. Synodical Conference of North America. "The Evangelical Lutheran Church" is the new official name of the former Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.

The contents are listed as follows: Not Seeing, Yet Believing — Casting on the Lord's Side — Living or Dead? — Our Redeemer-Shepherd — Follow Me! — The Shepherd's Voice — A Little While — Commendable Self-Seeking — On This Build Life — The Spirit of Truth — Portrait of God — The Fountain of Life — Prayer, But in His Name — Consecrated to Him — Richer or Poorer through Prayer — Hope for all the World — Our Real Home — Where Every Prospect Pleases — Witness for Christ — Before Pentecost — The Other Side of God — The Coming of the Holy Spirit — A Vital Union — If Ye Love Me.

If a little play on words be permitted, we would say that as we review these sermons, *not* every prospect pleases. Those of us who are satisfied with nothing short of a textual sermon which leads the hearer (or reader) from verse to verse through the chosen text and seeks to expound each inspired statement will find a number of these sermons much to their

liking. We noted with pleasure the exposition of the Lord's Prayer in chapter fifteen. There are several sermons which expound the text admirably, such as the one on "Witnesses For Christ." Unfortunately, however, there are quite a number of discourses in which the writer promptly forgets about the text and appears to consider stories and quotations from other sources far more weighty and important than God's Word.

On the whole, however, our pastors will find much enjoyable reading in this volume of sermons.

ADALBERT SCHALLER.

**With Hands Uplifted.** Sermons for the Lenten season by Joseph L. Knutson. 159 pages. 5½×8. Green cloth, title in gold on front cover and backbone. Price, \$2.00. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Contents: Praying Hands — Loving Hands — Hostile Hands — Guilty Hands — Pierced Hands — Simon of Cyrene, the Cross-Bearer — A Complete Bath, or Just a Foot Wash — Claudia, Conscience Personified — The Shadow-Walker — Fences of Love.

ADALBERT SCHALLER.

**God Goes to Golgotha.** A series of Lenten sermons by W. A. Poehler and W. F. Bruening. 5½×7¾. Blue cloth, title in gold on backbone. Price, \$1.75. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This series of Lenten sermons carries the date 1948 on the title page. Actually the book contains two series. The first, by Prof. W. A. Poehler of Concordia College, St. Paul, is entitled: Little People of the Passion Story. The author, in explaining the choice of this heading in the introduction to his first sermon, states that "in a farther removed and less distinct circle there were also some little people, less known, less important. . . . They are of no particular importance in themselves, neither for their goodness nor their badness." While this may perhaps be properly said in reference to such individuals as Malchus, and Pilate's wife, and the women who wept over Jesus, and to the centurion at Golgotha, we would certainly hesitate to apply the term to "The Man Who Was known to the High Priest," especially so since the apostle whom Jesus loved is here numbered among the "little people" in contrast to such persons as Pontius Pilate, Herod, Caiaphas, yes, and strangely enough also to John (!) and Mary.

We do not offer the above as a serious criticism, but this little flaw does raise the question anew whether one should seek for catchy titles when publishing a series of sermons.

Aside from this purely formal criticism, however, we gladly commend the author's sermons for their pointed emphasis on the central person in the Passion story as well as for their pleasing style and reverent language.



The second series, entitled "Pictures of the Passion from the Gospel According to St. John," is from the pen of Pastor W. F. Bruening of Washington, D. C. The simple, old-fashioned heading and the equally unassuming topical headings, such as "The Arrest in the Garden," "Jesus Before Caiaphas," "Behold the Man," and "Good Friday Signs and Wonders" are very much to our liking. In simple, impressive manner the author portrays the line of thought in each text and points out the persons who march across the scene. The application of the Sacred Story to our life and times is effectively carried out. The value of these sermons to the reader and more so to the hearer could have been increased materially according to our way of thinking if the author had provided a theme and parts for each sermon.

And now, had we better not say much about the Six Masterpieces of the Passion Story which pastors may purchase together with this book? Perhaps not, for although these four-color prints are quite beautiful indeed, our readers might feel a strong aversion to the purpose of this "highly effective innovation," of which the publishers state in addition that these pictures "may be had in quantities for distribution to each worshiper at the beginning of the service" and that "wherever this Lenten 'picture plan' has been used . . . church attendance has increased considerably." We do feel constrained, however, to ask this question: shall our Lutheran clergy begin to stoop to the machinations of Jesuits missionaries by employing colored trifles in order to increase the attendance at our solemn meditations on the Savior's passion?

ADALBERT SCHALLER.

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**Church Posters and Publicity.** Graphically presented by Homer H. Seay. 79 pages. Imitation leather binding. Blue cover with embossed design. Price, \$3.00. The Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio.

"This book is profusely illustrated . . . it contains 35 full pages of alphabets, symbols and designs." The pages of lettering, Roman-Italic, Gothic, Square Semi-Script, Semi-Text, Modern Uncial, Modern Text, and Oriental, are beautifully done. We recommend the book to pastors and teachers chiefly because of these pages. Many of our readers will also find the three pages of church symbols instructive and helpful. The book has five pages of instruction on the art of lettering, well written and amply illustrated. While we must warn the prospective purchaser of the book that he will find extreme ideas and suggestions on church advertising and publicity which may be quite distasteful to him, the book is very much worth having in spite of this.

ADALBERT SCHALLER.

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**Memoirs from the War Years.** By the Right Reverend Arne Fjelibu, Bishop of Nidaros, Norway. Translated from the Norwegian by L. A. Vigness. Published by Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1947. Price: Paper, \$1.25, cloth, \$2.00.

The author, according to *Religious News Service* (12/4/47), is a native of Decorah, Iowa, and is one of the best known leaders of the Norwegian State Lutheran Church, having become prominent in the church fight against the Quisling regime in Norway during 1941. He has been invited by the American Committee for the World Council of Churches to visit the United States early in 1948. These *Memoirs* will be of interest to our readers for two reasons: They contain many noteworthy conversations carried on by the author with German officers, chaplains, and professors, and also give the reader an insight into the struggle engaged in by Norwegian church-leaders during the military occupation of Norway.

P. PETERS.

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**Daniel Speaks to the Church.** By Walther Lüthi. Translated by John M. Jensen. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1947. Price: \$2.00.

The original title of Walter Lüthi's book, published in 1937 in Basel, Switzerland, reads: *Die kommende Kirche, Die Botschaft des Propheten Daniel*. It contains twelve messages on the prophet Daniel and serves as an excellent means of furthering one's understanding of the purpose of this prophetic book in times past and present. It also serves to show how pastors can use entire chapters of the book as texts for sermons and Bible-Class talks. The translator of this book writes in his preface: "Lüthi makes the prophet Daniel walk in the midst of the modern world applying the Word of God to all phases of life. In his emphasis on Christ he makes every chapter a living message." The author himself has this to say about the Book of Daniel: "It is not an extinct crater. Daniel is a volcano in activity. It may therefore well be that he who thinks that he has discovered hardened lava with which he may play and enjoy himself, may wake up to the fact that he is playing with fire."

We agree with the translator that the author knows how to apply the Word of God to conditions obtaining in the world today. Every reader can convince himself of this after having read but a few pages of the book. Still we must question the following statements made by the author. On page 55 Lüthi emphasizes that no one, no matter how great his sin, should be excluded from the invitation to come to the Lord's Supper. While we fully agree with the author that sin does not exclude anyone from the Sacrament of the Altar, still it should not have been left unsaid that this Sacrament should only be administered to Christians who can examine themselves (1 Cor. 11, 28, 29). — The question on page 100: "Should not we dare to remind God continually that this present generation is baptized"? can only be answered in the affirmative wherever and whenever Baptism was not separated from a sound and thorough instruction in the Word of God according to Matthew 28, 19. Where and when churches have, however, neglected to instruct their baptized youth in the Word, they have every reason to remind *themselves* of their guilt and to repent.

Finally, we ask what the author means by saying that the words of Daniel 9, 24-26, "pregnant as they are with Christ Himself, did not refer to Jesus of Nazareth, yet they lead our thoughts in the direction of Jesus Christ." If they do not refer to Jesus of Nazareth, to whom do they refer? The Anointed is none other than Jesus Christ or, as Keil-Delitzsch puts it in reference to these verses, "Christ, who in the fullest sense of the word is the Anointed" (p. 360). Indeed, "it would be difficult to refrain from thinking of Christ here" as the author himself admits (p. 103).

Nonetheless, this book should be in every pastor's library as a help and aid to teach him and others to "discern the signs of the times" in the light of God's holy Word.

P. PETERS.

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**The Church and Christian Education.** By Paul H. Vieth, Editor. Published for the Cooperative Publishing Association, by The Bethany Press, St. Louis, Missouri. 1947.

This book would have value for those who wish to know what is advocated in the way of Christian education by the International Council of Religious Education, which "represents forty-two denominations in the United States and Canada, including over 90 per cent of the Protestant church membership of the continent."

This book is meant to be a somewhat popular presentation of the findings and conclusions of a committee of the Council which studied the present status of Christian education. It advocates a program of Christian education which is necessarily unsound, since it does not accept the Bible as the sole and inerrant source of Christian faith and life, denies the total depravity of natural man, is unclear and evasive concerning the heart of the Gospel message, confused concerning the function and mission of the church. The fostering of unionism under the new garb of the ecumenical spirit is set as one of the objectives of Christian education.

The Christian Day School is not considered in a thorough discussion of agencies of Christian education: "We believe, however, that there are such disadvantages in parochial education that some other solution must be found." *Released Time programs* are endorsed and the contention is expressed "that to lay foundations in religious education is a part of the responsibilities of the general schools." In a positive way wholesome stress is laid on the importance of the home in Christian education.

C. L.

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**The Cross Of Christ.** Lenten meditations by Olin C. Egelstad. 30 pages. Pamphlet. Price: 35 cents. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

In the preface we find the following statement by the author: "These messages are not an attempt at literary excellence or profound scholarship. Those familiar with the facts and truths of Christianity will not find on these pages anything essentially new. The aim has been to tell again

plainly the old story, from the Word of God, that Christ loved us, and gave Himself for us, that He might reconcile us to God through the cross."

One cannot help being pleased with the reverent aim which the author has set for himself in these meditations, and we may add that he has sincerely attempted to set forth the glory of the cross of Jesus. We do regret, however, that he did not see fit to enhance the value of his meditations by expounding the texts he chose for them. "The words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life." John 6:63.

ADALBERT SCHALLER.

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**Proceedings** of the 26th Convention of the Central Illinois District of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, etc.

**The Sacraments**, an Essay read at the above Convention by Pastor Arthur E. Neitzel. Available upon request. Address the Secretary, Rev. E. C. Wegehaupt, 1120 E. Orchard Ave., Decatur 2, Ill.

A correct restatement of Missouri's teaching on this subject during its first century, rather than a restudy of the pertinent passages of Scripture.

E. REIM.

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**Northwestern Lutheran Annual, 1948**, issued by request of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and other States. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Price: 35 cents.

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**Gemeindeblatt Kalender 1948**, herausgegeben im Auftrage der Allgemeinen Ev.-Luth. Synode von Wisconsin und anderen Staaten. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin. Preis 35 Cent.

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**The Lutheran Annual 1948**. Editor: O. A. Dorn, Statistical Editor: Armin Schroeder. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis 18, Missouri. Price: 35 cents.

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**Amerikanischer Kalender für deutsche Lutheraner auf das Jahr 1948**. Literarischer Redakteur: D. J. Müller, Statistischer Redakteur: P. Armin Schröder. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis 18, Missouri. Preis: 35 Cents.

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**Proceedings Twenty-Ninth Convention**, Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States. Held at Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin, August 6-12, 1947. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin. Price: 15 cents.

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All of the above items may be purchased from our Northwestern Publishing House, 935-937 North Fourth Street, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

# Quartalschrift

## Theological Quarterly

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Volume 45

April, 1948

Number 2

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### RADIO SERMON ON PSALM 16

DELIVERED ON EASTER MORNING, 1948

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.

*Dear Friends in Our Risen Savior:*

The 16th Psalm, as both St. Peter and St. Paul assure us, speaks of the suffering and the resurrection of our Savior. David is the author, but he is not speaking in his own person, he is speaking in the person of Jesus. Let us ponder his words this Easter morning, under the gracious guidance of the Holy Ghost.

Jesus is speaking about His office as our Savior. First He pictures to us the glorious purpose of His office. Then He speaks about His joy in assuming this office. And lastly He voices His assurance of success in His office.

#### I.

What is the purpose of Jesus' office as our Savior?

Jesus speaks about this in verses 1-4. In our meditation we shall reverse the order and begin with v. 4: "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god; their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take their names into my mouth."

The condition that Jesus finds on earth is this: people hasten after another god. All people do this. Since Adam and Eve wanted to become like God all men by nature have forsaken the true God and are serving strange gods. They have all gone astray. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. And the result is, as our text says, that their sorrows shall be multiplied. The

wages of sin is death. And they shall be cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth without end.

Could they not, perhaps, appease the wrath of God? They try. They bring many drink offerings and bloody sacrifices, in an attempt to pay for their sins. They believe in salvation by character. They try to build up their character by doing good deeds. Where they have failed they practice selfdenial of a kind by bringing sacrifices. But Jesus will have nothing to do with them. He will not join their sacrifices, nor acknowledge their works. He will not take their names into His mouth.

This is the condition as Jesus finds it on earth. What is He trying to achieve? He tells us in the third verse, where He speaks about His *delight*: "To the saints that are in the earth and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight."

Where will Jesus find these saints, seeing all men have gone astray and there is none that doeth good, no, not one? That is the very purpose of His office to make men saints. "*All His delight*," His only purpose. Everything else means nothing to Him. He does not care about the riches of this earth. He is not fascinated by its pleasures nor its honors. He is nauseated by its arrogant self-righteousness.

Therefore He sets out to achieve redemption for the people, to prepare a righteousness for them which will make perfect "saints" out of the sinners and "excellent" ones, who need not fear to stand in the judgment of God.

How will He achieve this? He tells us in verses 1 and 2: "Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust. O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord, my goodness extendeth not to thee."

The sin of the people is that they follow after strange gods and do not put their trust in the true God. Jesus on the contrary is determined to say to the Lord, Thou art my Lord. He will say so, not with His mouth only. He will say it with all His soul, with all His life. Trust in the Lord will dominate His heart. Trust in the Lord will shine forth in all His words and all His works.

The sin of the people is that they boast of their own goodness — of which they have none since they are sinners. Jesus has

goodness, a perfect goodness. He was obedient unto death. Yet He says: "My goodness extendeth not unto thee." He does not present His goodness before the Lord and demand a reward for it. He simply puts His trust in God.

And how will He fare? He says: "Preserve me, O God." He asks for preservation. He will go into great suffering and bitter death. He foresees Gethsemane and Calvary. He foresees the agony of hell on the cross when He will be forsaken of God. But He trusts in the Lord that He will preserve Him.

In this way He substituted for the sinful world. He suffered what we had merited with our sins. And He achieved a perfect righteousness, which we were lacking.

## II.

Did Jesus assume this office reluctantly? Did He hesitate because of the unspeakable suffering which it involved? No, on the contrary, He expresses great joy in His office. He does so in verses 5-8.

Note how He speaks of His office in verses 5 and 6: "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." Note all the expressions He uses in describing His office. He calls it a "goodly heritage." As one cherishes an inheritance, and a goodly one at that, so He cherishes His Savior's office. He speaks about a "lot" where lines are fallen unto Him in "pleasant" places. When Israel took possession of the land of Canaan the fields were divided among them by lot. How happy were they when the surveyor's lines fell for them in pleasant places! He also calls it a "cup." And He says that it is so pleasant for Him because in it all He sees the Lord: "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance."

Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever (Ps. 73, 25. 26).

Does Jesus not realize what bitter suffering and anguish His office will bring to Him? Does He overlook the fact that in Gethsemane He will wrestle with death till the sweat of His

brow will turn into drops of blood that fall to the ground? Does He forget that He will be nailed to the accursed tree and will be forsaken even of God?

No, He does not forget. Note how He uses the word "cup." In Gethsemane He prayed the Father three times if it were not possible that this cup pass from Him. Must He really drink it? And when He said to His disciples: "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" He knew how bitter the cup would be to His taste. Yet He rejoices in His office, the duties of which obliged Him to taste the bitter cup. He is looking beyond that. He is thinking of the cup in the sense of the twenty-third Psalm: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over."

He rejoices in His office, and expresses His joy not only in the words with which He describes it, He shows it also in the way in which He thanks the Lord for it. The next verse (v. 7) reads: "I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night season."

The Lord gave Him counsel. Luther sings of it in these lines:

He spoke to His beloved Son:  
 'Tis time to have compassion.  
 Then go, bright Jewel of My crown,  
 And bring to man salvation:  
 From sin and sorrow set him free,  
 Slay bitter death for him that he  
 May live with Thee forever.

Or as we sing in one of our Lenten hymns:

Go forth, My Son, the Father saith,  
 And free men from the fear of death,  
 From guilt and condemnation.  
 The wrath and stripes are hard to bear,  
 But by Thy passion men shall share  
 The fruit of Thy salvation.

Jesus blesses the Father for this counsel. He could never forget. Even in the stillness of the night His reins would instruct Him. So greatly He rejoiced in His office as Savior.



Jesus told us in the beginning of the Psalm that He trusted completely in the Lord. Also His joy in His office rests on this trust, as He points out in the next verse (v. 8): "I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."

When He trembled in Gethsemane, the Father sent an angel from heaven to strengthen Him. When He was ready to die on the cross He prayed: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

He was not moved from His determination, nor from His joy, by His bitter sufferings and death.

### III.

In the verse which we considered briefly just now Jesus already voices His assurance of the complete success of his office. This is the thought to which He gives forceful expression in the concluding verses, 9-11, of our Psalm. Listen to the jubilant note in verse 9: "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope."

He speaks of His "heart." The heart is at the center of the whole personality. It controls our lives. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" (Lk. 6, 45). The heart of Jesus is glad. He is all gladness.

Then He divides. He speaks about His "glory," which means His soul. In Gethsemane His soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. But in view of the sure victory His "glory" rejoices. And His flesh, though it be laid in the grave, though a heavy stone be rolled before the opening, though the stone be sealed, and a guard placed: His flesh shall rest in hope.

This hope He repeats in the following verse 10 as being based on His trust in the Lord: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption."

He is the Holy One of God, of whom Isaiah wrote: "The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel" (Is. 29,

19); who Himself gave the promise: "I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior" (Is. 43, 3). As the Holy One of God He must battle with hell. But God will not deliver His soul into the power of hell; He will give Him a glorious victory. As the Holy One of God He must battle with death. He must die. He must be buried. But He will not see corruption. God will grant Him a glorious resurrection before even three days have passed.

What does this victory mean? He sums it up in the last verse, 11: "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore."

The sorrows that were multiplied for them that hastened after other gods are completely done away. The path of life is clear. The guilt of men has been removed: sinners have by the victory of the Holy One been turned into saints and excellent ones. Fullness of joy may be found for them in God's presence. He is present in the Gospel. He is present in the sacraments. Word and sacrament are filled with the forgiveness of sins, with everlasting righteousness. What joy!

And all they that have quenched their thirst in this fountain of life here on earth, although they too must bear the cross and suffer many things, although they too must die and be buried, can rejoice and rest in hope, for a glorious resurrection is awaiting them. They will enter into the kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world, where there are pleasures for evermore at our Lord's right hand.

And when Thy glory I shall see  
 And taste Thy kingdom's pleasure,  
 Thy blood my royal robe shall be,  
 My joy beyond all measure;  
 When I appear before Thy throne,  
 Thy righteousness shall be my crown, —  
 With these I need not hide me.  
 And there, in garments richly wrought,  
 As Thine own bride I shall be brought  
 To stand in joy beside Thee. Amen.

M.

**CONCERNING CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD  
AND CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP  
Their Relation and Certain Practical  
Questions Involved**

*(Submitted at the request of the editors by Pastor E. Schaller,  
Nicollet, Minnesota, and presented for study  
of this timely topic.)*

I.

**The Christian Brotherhood**

A. *Its Existence*

The New Testament frequently refers to the Christians as "brethren." This term is used by the Apostles, not only when in their letters they address the believers emotionally, as Paul writes 1 Thess. 5, 25: "Brethren, pray for us," or 2 Cor. 13, 11: "Finally, brethren, farewell," but very frequently also in such a manner as to make the term synonymous with the title "Christian." Thus we read Acts 28, 13-14: "We came the next day to Puteoli, where we found brethren"; or 1 Thess. 4. 10: "And indeed, ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia." By this term Christians are distinguished also from the unbelievers or the heterodox, as in 1 Cor. 5, 11: "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any MAN THAT IS CALLED A BROTHER be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner: with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also THAT ARE WITHOUT?" — and 2 Cor. 11, 26: "In perils among false brethren."

So the Scriptures give expression to the existence of a unique brotherhood, separate and distinct from the common human relationship of race, to which Paul had reference when he wrote: "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites," Rom. 9, 3. Superseding all such earthly ties and bonds, the Christian Brotherhood is a concept which received its name from our Savior, Who said to His disciples: "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," and again to Peter: "And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," Luke 22, 32.

From the highest source, therefore, we have been made conscious of the existence of a certain fraternal union recognized by the Lord as actual and as binding, a union quite apart from that of which Malachi wrote, 2, 10: "Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?" When Jesus said after His resurrection: "Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee," Mt. 28, 10, or later: "I ascend unto my Father and your Father," John 20, 17, He lifted the concept of Christian Brotherhood out of the realm of the earthly and, by counting Himself in, at once put it into a class by itself and stated the basis upon which it rests.

#### B. *Its Basis*

John 1, 12-13: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

James 1, 18: "Of his own will he begat us with the word of truth."

1 John 3, 1: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God."

There is a Christian Brotherhood because all Christians have one Father. They were begotten of God with the Word of Truth. They have undergone a second birth, a spiritual regeneration, have actually become partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1, 4) and are thus distinctly separated from the rest of the human race. Their distinguishing mark is a new heart and a right spirit; their special prerogative is the adoption of sons.

God's Word describes this Brotherhood variously. Thus in Gal. 3, 7 the Christians are characterized in a group as "they which are of faith." The unity of the Christian Brotherhood is composed of a faith which all Christians have in common. This is necessarily the true, the saving faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, Lord and God. Christians are called the household of faith (Gal. 6, 10). Their enduring and imperishable relationship is reflected in such designations of the Brotherhood as "household of God," Eph. 2, 19. The family intimacy is stressed again and again.

Summing up: There is a Christian Brotherhood which binds

certain human beings together in one family by virtue of a new birth out of a single parentage and a resultant common faith in Christ. True Christians are brothers, without reference to space, color, age or sex. This Brotherhood is formally known as the Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints; cf. Eph. 2, 19-22.

However, as is well known and abundantly testified in Scripture, the membership of the Christian Brotherhood is an invisible quantity. The very existence of the Brotherhood is a matter of faith, in every sense. It is bound up with faith, it is conceivable only to the believer and it is perceived only with the eyes of faith. My brethren are as invisible to me as my Savior Himself is. We are assured of the existence of brethren only by the Word and Promise of God, not by any of our five senses.

## II.

### Christian Fellowship

#### A. *Its Relation to the Christian Brotherhood*

When we now speak of Christian fellowship, we begin to deal with a visible, practical exercise which presupposes the existence of the Christian Brotherhood. While we, as citizens of the earth, find ourselves compelled to associate with our fellow-men, not only as such who are engaged with us in the common pursuits of living, but also as such who are in need of our help, we nevertheless are constrained to distinguish and foster a human association of quite another kind and intensity which is predicated by the presence on earth of the family of God. There exists an invisible body of people among us, whose members are sanctified by faith and to whom we number ourselves individually. If there is such a Christian Brotherhood, and if we regard ourselves as part of it, it behooves us to recognize our brethren and associate with them actively in the interest of those matters which are of common concern to us, namely in our relation to Jesus. We may speak of our obligation as that of Christian fellowship, which consists of joint worship, prayer, and Church work.

It should not require extensive demonstration to establish active fellowship as an essential fruit of the Christian Brotherhood. Fellowship is the confessional act of belonging together

which Christians owe one another. It is enjoined upon us in a hundred ways in God's Word — by Apostolic example, injunction and exhortation. We are not to "forsake the assembling of ourselves together," Heb. 10, 25; for our brethren and companions' sake we shall say to Jerusalem, Peace be within thee, Ps. 122; we are to admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, Col. 3, 16. Such quotations presupposing or enjoining outward, visible fellowship of Christians could be indefinitely extended.

So also could the blessings and benefits of Christian fellowship be lengthily reviewed. How good it is for brethren to dwell together in unity is seen from the joyful comments of the Apostles. Even as they deplored the disaster which befalls all Christians when one of them suffers or falls into sin, so the Apostles delight in the charity extended by Christians to one another, in the prayers which they offer for one another and with one another, in the manner in which they edify one another in their most holy faith.

But it is hardly necessary to convince ourselves of the impelling need which causes Christians to recognize one another and express their common faith as children of the same Heavenly Father, nor of the will of God which gathers these children into flocks. For it is conceded on every hand that true Christians must have fellowship in practice as well as in sublime reality.

#### B. *Its Basis*

The critical question is: What must be the basis of Christian fellowship? Someone will think of posing the question: If, as we have said, the membership of the Christian Brotherhood is invisible, how then can the brethren on earth find one another in order to practice Christian fellowship? If we face this problem boldly, if we accept established Truth and study the Word of God for the solution of what seems to be a dilemma, we shall not only be able to answer the question, but will at the same time succeed in clarifying a great deal of muddled thinking on this subject which today is causing untold difficulty within the Brotherhood itself.

Let us begin by stating the truth that, while the basis of the Christian Brotherhood is regeneration and true faith, the basis

for recognition and the practical exercise of Christian fellowship is NOT regeneration and faith. The reason obviously is that recognition must precede fellowshiping; and recognition must have as its object something that can be seen. Faith cannot be seen. Hence it is impossible to recognize a brother by his faith, and equally impossible to fellowship with him on that basis.

In this connection we may refer to a statement made by Dr. Theo. Graebner, as found in *Concordia Theological Monthly*, issue of August, 1931. He writes: "To introduce the question of personal faith into the general question of fellowship is inadmissible." This succinct observation merits careful consideration.

We must have fellowship with our brothers in Christ. But in order to establish grounds for having such fellowship with a given person, it is simply not feasible to consider his personal relation to God, because we cannot read the heart. Personal faith cannot be the basis of Christian fellowship. Instead, Christian fellowship can be based only on Profession of Faith, by word and deed, which is something else again.

Let us look into the Scriptures. In 1 John 4, 1-3 we read: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby KNOW YE the spirit of God: Every spirit that CONFESSETH that Jesus Christ is come into the flesh is of God; and every spirit that CONFESSETH NOT that Jesus Christ is come into the flesh is not of God."

This passage, in urging discrimination and recognition of the spirit that is in men, sets up the confession of a man as basis of recognition. That is the trial of every spirit. We are not asked to delve with conjurer's art into the recesses of the human heart, nor are we told to act intuitively in selecting brethren and discarding non-Christians. Our task is to listen to their confession. That is decisive. That is the basis upon which fellowship rests.

And in actual fact we do so distinguish our brethren. As pastors of our congregations, we fellowship with each individual soul of their membership, and this without reference to their faith because we have no power to determine its presence. We assume it. We take for granted that behind the confession lies

the faith which matches it. We are reconciled to the truth so often expressed in Scripture, that our fellowship here is not necessarily identical with the spiritual fellowship of the Christian Brotherhood, but only an approximation. That our acre of wheat may be afflicted with tares is a reality we must reckon with. That a brother may not be a brother at all is a risk we take; that a supposedly false brother may nevertheless be a true one at heart is a sorrow we must bear or a joy we may contemplate. But when all is said and done, the proof of true fellowship is and remains what men are ready to bring into the fellowship — their confession.

We must now amplify the statement that confession is the basis for fellowship by saying that the deciding factor in establishing Christian fellowship is that of a common and correct confession. God's Word is blunt on that point. We have already heard John as he sets up the terms of a true confession as over against a false one. Now we hear John again: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house." 2 John 10. Further 1 Tim. 6, 3ff.: "If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness . . . from such withdraw thyself." By illuminating the negative side of the problem, John and Paul also imply the positive side. Only those who profess with us the doctrine, the words of Jesus, may be received as brethren.

It is not for us to choose or decide to what extent a confession must be in accord with Scripture in order to reveal its author as a brother. God, who commands that brethren be of the same mind and speak the same things, has decided it beyond legitimate dispute. There is but one form of sound doctrine. A confession in that form reveals the Christian brother, nothing more and nothing less.

There is no exception to this rule. We are well aware that in certain cases true Christians, for one reason or another, are not able formally to express their faith in a confessional manner. This may be due to lack of maturity or of information. We recall how Paul met some brethren at Ephesus who had not heard that there was a Holy Ghost. The Apostle did not make fellowship an



issue in that meeting, but rather by instruction remedied the lack immediately. Frequently Christians are inadequately instructed. When that can be determined to be the case, confession may be judged accordingly, as we constantly do in the case of our own parishioners. We do not require ability to recite from memory the Formula of Concord. We take for granted that he who declares or has declared himself in accord with the doctrine laid down in the Lutheran Confessions is of one faith with us, and upon that basis we recognize him as a member of the Brotherhood.

On the other hand, if such a person by word or deed denies what he has thus confessed, and persists in such denial or contradictory confession, our basis of fellowship has vanished principally because the basis of recognition is gone. We know that a brother may be overtaken in a fault, and the Lord's injunction is that we restore such a one in meekness, Gal. 6, 1 (cf. also 2 Thess. 3, 14-15). But if he is beyond our reach to restore, if we do not know whether he was merely overtaken or is pursuing the fault, or if he refuses to be restored, fellowship is impossible and unscriptural. We do not know whether or not he is a Christian, then or ever; for we cannot read his heart. But now we cannot even declare him a brother, because there is no basis for such recognition.

### III.

#### Practical Questions

Out of the confusion of those who have been unwilling or unable to analyze the Scriptural doctrine of the Communion of Saints and the fellowship of believers there has come a welter of confused attitudes, theories, principles and practice in matters of fellowship.

Symptomatic and not actually new is the proposal of Selective Fellowship now officially sponsored by the A. L. C., a practical recognition of individual Christians or congregations, by word or deed, which ignores Synodical affiliation. It argues for the right to call a man a brother and treat him as a brother when he is formally separated by Synodical lines. Let us say at once that, if this right is admissible in the case of those belonging to doctrinally divergent Lutheran bodies, it must be admitted also when

it concerns relations with Methodists, Baptists and other sectarians whose Churches rate as Christian bodies. For selective fellowship simply champions the alleged right of one Christian to recognize another by some signal other than his confession. If this is possible with heterodox Lutherans or Lutheran congregations, it is possible with the heterodox of any category.

The Apostle Paul wrote to people in Rome as brethren though he had never seen them. He relied upon the assurance of those brethren who knew both. By the same token he denied fellowship to others in Rome of whom he had heard that they were causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine. Even so each of us regards as brethren many people whom we have never seen or heard. We do so because we have accepted the word of known brethren for the confessional position of the unknown brethren. Thousands of people in the Missouri Synod are fellowshiped by us sight unseen, because they belong to the Missouri Synod which officially professes the pure doctrine of Jesus Christ. How important a confession, therefore, membership in a Church body is!

Membership in a Church body is confessionally decisive for conclusive action regarding fellowship. Whether we know people personally or not, we shall never come closer to their hearts than when they announce their doctrinal stand by their affiliation. If it develops by personal contact that their affiliation is in conflict with the testimony of their lips and due to ignorance, as symbolized by Absalom's two hundred men who went with him in their simplicity and knew not anything (2 Sam. 15, 11), the problem we face is not one of fellowship but of instruction. Lacking opportunity for the latter, we also lack opportunity for the former as well as the obligation thereto. Selective fellowship is not a necessity compelled by circumstances; it is a presumption. It means that we arbitrarily go beyond confession in establishing fellowship. For, one who is already engaged in fraternal relations elsewhere must be judged by those relations. We are not concerned with whether or not he is a Christian. Christianity in others is a matter of faith with us, not of determination. But practical fellowship is purely a matter of outward confession.

A situation may arise where an individual will, by personal

testimony, unmistakably reveal himself to us as a confessing brother despite a confessional affiliation with a heterodox communion which has not yet been publicly terminated. Pastor A, for example, of the A. L. C. may, in private consultation with Pastor B of the Wisconsin Synod, unequivocally declare himself in accord with the pure doctrine *and disavow the position of his Church body*. It has long been recognized that such a one occupies a temporary, anomalous place known as *status confessionis*. What has happened is that Pastor A has privately expressed severance of his ties with the heterodox Church, but this is not known except to Pastor B or, let us say, to Pastor B and his Conference. Where the testimony vindicates such an estimate of Pastor A, he is undeniably recognizable as a brother. But it is hardly a legitimate contention that he may then be so declared and received into fellowship. For while his private confession may be clear to us, the act of recognizing a brother is essentially a public act; and Pastor A's public confession is still heterodox. Therefore even in such a case the exercise of selective fellowship would be improper, since it tends to confuse other brethren and may give offense. Fellowshiping in such a case must wait upon public disavowal of previous affiliations with the heterodox.

But selective fellowship wishes to operate even where confession is in conflict with God's Truth and promises to remain so. Previously we stated that genuine selective fellowship argues for the right to call a man a brother and treat him as a brother when, and while, and despite the fact that he is formally separated by Synodical lines. It is argued that such a practice is justifiable, even mandatory, when dealing with individuals or congregations, affiliated with heterodox bodies, who despite their affiliation and without formal renunciation thereof nevertheless confess and practice in accordance with God's Word. By such confession and practice, so it is alleged, they are recognizable as Christians and brethren.

Such reasoning is spurious. CAN ANYONE WHO DOES NOT RENOUNCE HETERODOX AFFILIATIONS BE SAID TO PRACTICE AND CONFESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOD'S WORD? Is not that a contradiction in terms? If a man, or a congregation, does these two things simultaneously: a) Make a verbal confession that is cor-

rect; and b) Make and uphold a second confession by affiliation with a heterodox Church body . . . then those two confessions form one Whole. And together they form one *false confession*. For the false part negates the true. Where, actually, does the man or congregation stand? Who can say? It is presumptuous of the proponent of selective fellowship to choose the verbal confession of that man or congregation, because it is in itself orthodox, and ignore the dominant and decisive confession being concurrently maintained through heterodox affiliation. Fellowship practiced under such circumstances constitutes recognition of a confession which is thoroughly in conflict with divine Truth.

To illustrate the point by concrete example: The confession of a member of the A. L. C., so long as his membership is maintained, is in conflict with the Truth because the doctrine of the A. L. C. is in conflict with the Truth. But selective fellowship says: Let him be a member of the A. L. C.; in personal contact with him I have heard him profess full adherence to sound doctrine and have observed that he conforms to scriptural practice. Inwardly he stands as I do. I shall choose to believe that he truly participates only in the verbal, orthodox confession he has made to me, and not in the confession implicit in his affiliation. Therefore I shall fellowship with him.

This arrogant conclusion must be firmly rejected on every count. On the one hand, it ignores the fact that it is quite impossible to determine the Christianity of those who confess error unless they recant their error. On the other hand, although the private, verbal confession of an individual or group appears orthodox, yet their continued allegiance to false doctrine through membership in a heterodox body is an incriminating fact which has not been removed and which, therefore, of itself makes the establishment of fellowship impossible except by the process of ignoring the explicit command of God to avoid all who are such.

We know that there may be Christians among those who hold or confess error. We believe that by the gracious power of the Spirit saving faith is maintained, even in many who labor under error. But when selective fellowship presumes to recognize such instances and blandly ignores the confessional barrier of their heterodox affiliation, we demur.

Show us an errorist and we swing into action as exhorters and convincers, if we can; and if we cannot, we suspend judgment\* concerning the Christianity of the errorist while refusing to fellowship with him. We may rejoice when an errorist utters truth, bears testimony to the Savior. For God has been known to proclaim the Gospel truth even by the lips of a heretic (cf. Jn. 11, 49-51). We warm with thankfulness when we read the inspiring witness to Grace of men like Spurgeon, Machen, MacLaren, Reu, or perhaps our neighboring A. L. C. man. For we recognize Christian utterances coming from an errorist without at the same time presuming to pronounce on the status of the speaker.

We do not, in other words, feel bound to declare anyone a Christian, by word or act of fellowship, simply because we believe or hope he may be one. And whether someone in a heterodox communion is a deceiver or a deceived person is of no import whatever in the matter of fellowship. The deceiver causes divisions and schism in the Brotherhood, and the deceived partakes of the sin. Our inability to distinguish between them leaves the question of actual spiritual brotherhood where it always is here on earth — unsettled; but fellowship is automatically excluded both by the deceiver and the deceived.

The Epistle for the First Sunday after Epiphany admonishes us: "I say to every man that is among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." May we all heed this exhortation in humility also when we are tempted to override both obvious facts and clear Scripture by making ourselves judges of that which can only be judged by God Himself. Only if we refrain from trying to see the invisible and content ourselves with careful weighing of the visible, audible evidence, can we truly establish fellowship with brethren and successfully avoid syncretistic affiliations. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" 1 Cor. 2, 11. Let us mark that which comes out of a man, and judging by this, we will know as our brethren on earth those whom God permits us to know as such.

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\* Suspension of judgment in such an instance simply involves a neutral public attitude which neither affirms nor denies the Christianity of the errorist. With reference to a person whose public confession contains error, we refrain from committing either ourselves or the Lord whose name we bear in a confessional manner.

## LUTHER ON THE FORM AND SCOPE OF THE MOSAIC LAW

When the influence of the enthusiasts headed by Carlstadt and Münzer was growing and when it seriously threatened Luther's work and the preaching of the Gospel, the Reformer stepped into the breach by preaching a series of sermons on Genesis and Exodus to his *Wittenbergers*<sup>1)</sup> and by publishing his polemic *Against the Celestial Prophets*.<sup>2)</sup> In these treatises Luther discussed the whole question concerning the validity of the Law. His attack is directed against those tracts<sup>3)</sup> of Carlstadt, which deal with questions pertaining particularly to the Sabbath and to the Law in general. In regard to the Mosaic Law Carlstadt had argued that there are commandments which are independent of circumstances, time, and place. "These commandments," he asserts, "we must always obey and at no time can we abstain from them or act contrary to them. Such commandments are: Thou shalt not make or have or permit images, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not kill, not commit adultery, not bear false witness, not covet thy neighbor's goods, and the like. These commandments bind us," he continues, "at all times and in all places. He who acts contrary to one of these commandments at any time or at any place is a transgressor, an insubordinate, an unjust person, a despiser of God."<sup>4)</sup> Now Carlstadt had more in view with this line of argument than to break a lance for the moral law of Moses. This becomes quite evident by his placing the ceremonial prohibition, thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything, on a level with the moral commandments of the Decalogue, thou shalt not kill, not commit adultery, etc., etc. Added to this, Carlstadt, in this connection, argued *a maiori ad minus*. Since the Mosaic Law is a moral law it must be kept in all its parts, even to the bitter end of inflicting the penalty of death on all transgressors. "God does not at all desire," he says, "that we should wait for others until they finally

<sup>1)</sup> St. Louis Edition, Vol. III, 1ff.

<sup>2)</sup> Ibid. XX, 133ff.

<sup>3)</sup> Luthers Werke, Weimar, 18. Bd., p. 45.

<sup>4)</sup> Ibid. p. 76, Anmk. 1.

turn and grow pious. He has, therefore, commanded that the ungodly should be punished, even as other vices are forbidden under penalty, Dt. 13 and 17, and in addition whole cities are destroyed and laid waste which adhere to idolatry and do not want to walk the straight path.”<sup>5)</sup>

How could Luther meet this line of argument? Certainly not by simply making use of the classification of the Mosaic Law dividing it, as Thomas Aquinas had originally done, into *leges morales, ceremoniales, and judiciales*, and by finding in the Decalogue nothing but moral laws. This classification he had still used in his letter to John Lang in Erfurt, June 26, 1522.<sup>6)</sup> Here he briefly states that “one is free to keep the civic and ceremonial precepts of Moses as Philip Melancthon also teaches in his *Locis*.” Yet he already adds: “It is not necessary to stone the adulterers who can be punished with the sword or in some other manner.” In attacking the false teachings of a Carlstadt and a Münzer, however, Luther had to refrain from using the old division into three different kinds of law, but had to speak of the Law of Moses as an undivided Corpus of laws and of the validity of the laws as such. Therefore he first of all declares that the old and usual distinction drawn between the Decalogue and the commandments of a ceremonial and judicial nature was done “with want of understanding,” *mit Unverstand*.<sup>7)</sup> For all the commandments of Moses issue from the Decalogue and in the Ten Commandments all the others are included, *i. e.*, the laws of Moses are one undivided Corpus of laws. But these laws con-

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<sup>5)</sup> Ibid. p. 87. — Luther, therefore, did not exaggerate when he said of the enthusiasts: “These prophets teach and practice that they are called to reform Christendom and to establish a new one in this wise: They must kill wantonly all rulers and ungodly, so that they may become lords on earth and live on earth among saints only. Such things I myself and many others have heard them say. Carlstadt also knows it that they are enthusiasts and murderous spirits. . . . Yet he does not avoid them. And then I should believe that he does not want to instigate rebellion and murder?” (St. L. XX, 164.)

<sup>6)</sup> St. L. XXI, 429.

<sup>7)</sup> XX, 147.

cern the Jews alone, not the Gentiles and the Christians, Luther argues, thereby setting forth the relativity of the Law of Moses.

We shall do well to follow and to recall Luther's line of argument as set forth in the above mentioned writings. In view of the demands which our times place on us we are very much in need of the clarity that Luther had on this subject. Every pastor must have it for his religious instructions on the Law of Moses, as he finds it presented in Luther's Small Catechism. Every one who seeks to gain clarity on the doctrine of the natural knowledge of God should read what Luther has to say to the enthusiasts on the natural law. And even in regard to an old problem and question like that of the *Schwagerehe*, which at present is again under discussion in different conferences of our Synodical Conference, the relative nature of the Mosaic Law must remain evident to every one who approaches Lev. 18 and 20. Therefore we deem it timely to present Luther's arguments to our readers for perusal and for application to the problems of our day.

Luther's thesis on the relativity of the Mosaic Law is brief and concise. It reads: "The Law of Moses does not bind the Gentiles but only the Jews."<sup>8)</sup> To prove that the Law of Moses does not bind the Gentiles but only the Jews Luther argues that it has never been given to the Gentiles but only to the Jews. This is really all that there is to Luther's whole line of argument and everything else that Luther adds is to support and strengthen this argument. Both the positive and the negative side of his argument, that the Mosaic Law has only been given to the Jews and not to the Gentiles reads in his polemic *Against the Celestial Enthusiasts* as follows: "For Moses has only been given to the Jewish people and does not concern us Gentiles and Christians."<sup>9)</sup> In his Sermons it has the following wording: "For the Law is given alone to the people of Israel. And Israel has accepted it for itself and for its posterity, and the Gentiles, in this instance, are excluded."<sup>10)</sup> In these and similar statements Luther is, of

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<sup>8)</sup> III, 6.

<sup>9)</sup> XX, 146.

<sup>10)</sup> III, 6.



course, speaking of the Law of Moses "as Moses' Law"<sup>11</sup>) and as such it has been given to the Jews alone and not to the Gentiles. To prove this he first of all has recourse to 1 Tim. 1, 9 and Acts 15, 10, from which he wants to "lay the groundwork" for his discussion of the relativity of the Law. For "St. Peter with this verse (even as Paul with his) abrogates all of Moses with all his laws for the Christians."<sup>12</sup>) Here Luther is really speaking of the "spiritual" abrogation of the Law, which carries him far beyond the arguments for the relativity of the Law. Koestlin in his *Theology of Luther* (Vol. II, p. 36) is undoubtedly correct in stating that we fail to discover in 1 Tim. 1 and Acts 15 "an actual basis for the specific argument which Luther here presents and endeavors to establish." Luther himself differentiates further between an "outward" and a "spiritual" abrogation of the Law. He says: "Where, now, the laws of Moses and the laws of nature coincide, there the Law remains in force and is not abrogated *outwardly*, except in so far as it is *spiritually* abrogated by faith, which is nothing else than a fulfilling of the Law (Rom. 3, 28), whereof we do not want to speak now and have spoken enough elsewhere."<sup>13</sup>) Indeed, Luther does not make use of the spiritual abrogation of the Law at all as soon

<sup>11</sup>) XX, 151. Professor Pieper referring in his *Christliche Dogmatik* to the context in which we find Luther's quotation speaks of the Ten Commandments "*in der Fassung, wie sie den Juden gegeben wurden,*" while Dr. Mueller in his "Christian Dogmatics" speaks of the "form" in which the Ten Commandments were given to the Jews. Both passages deserve to be quoted in full: "Der Wille Gottes an alle Menschen ist nur das, was in der Heiligen Schrift als alle Menschen verbindend gelehrt ist. Das sind auch nicht die zehn Gebote in der Fassung, wie sie den Juden gegeben wurden (2 Mos. 20), sondern die zehn Gebote nach der Erklärung des Neuen Testaments, wie wir sie z. B. in Luthers Katechismus haben." (Bd. I, p. 636f.) Dr. Mueller has a somewhat different version of this thought: "While the Moral Law is summarily comprehended in the Decalog, the Ten Commandments, in the form in which they were given to the Jews, Ex. 20, 1-17, must not be identified with the Moral Law, or the immutable will of God, Rom. 13, 8-10; Jas. 2, 8; 1 Tim. 1, 5. (Cp. Luther, St. L., XX, 146ff.)"

<sup>12</sup>) XX, 147.

<sup>13</sup>) XX, 152.

as he comes to grips with the enthusiasts. Carlstadt "is forcing him," he confesses, "to come down from such high necessary articles to the lower ones, so that we are losing time through him and are running the risk of forgetting the high things."<sup>14</sup>) But he begs his readers to bear with him while he is disputing with his opponents on these very minor questions. Dealing with the "outward" abrogation of the Law Luther naturally was forced to refrain from dwelling on "the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." Of this liberty he says in his Commentary on Galatians that it is "a far better liberty . . . not from material bonds . . . but from the actual wrath of God."<sup>15</sup>) We may add that this liberty which was gained by Christ's abolishing the Law and fulfilling all things foretold by the prophets is the premise for the clear understanding of the relativity of the Law. Luther, therefore, both in his polemic *Against the Celestial Prophets* and in his *Sermons on Genesis and Exodus* treats first of the Law and the Gospel before he adduces the arguments for the relativity of the Law of Moses. He knows only too well, that the "Mosaic teachers deny the Gospel, drive Christ away, and abrogate the whole New Testament" and therefore adds: "I am speaking now as a Christian and for the Christians. For Moses has been given only to the Jewish people and does not concern us Gentiles and Christians. We have our Gospel and the New Testament."<sup>16</sup>)

To prove that the Ten Commandments pertain only to the Jews, Luther now points to the Commandments, first of all to the First Commandment and argues from it: "The text testifies to that and constrains us in that it says: 'I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage (Ex. 20, 2)'. This is quite true and sufficiently clear," he goes on to say, "that we Gentiles were not led by God out of Egypt, but only the Jewish people Israel. Therefore Moses is applying the Ten Commandments exclusively to the people, which has been led by God out of Egypt. . . . Consequently

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<sup>14</sup>) XX, 138.

<sup>15</sup>) New Abridged Translation by Theodore Graebner, pp. 217f.

<sup>16</sup>) XX, 146.

it is apparent that the Ten Commandments were given alone to the Jews and not to us, despite all enthusiasts.”<sup>17)</sup>

This is also quite obvious, Luther assures us, in view of the prohibition of the First Commandment: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness. “For this,” Luther states emphatically, “was spoken alone to the Jews and not to us. Show me one text,” he demands, “wherewith God has prohibited us to use images.”<sup>18)</sup> Israel needed such a prohibition, Luther says further on, because Israel was “a coarse carnal people.” Therefore “Moses was a schoolmaster of the Jews, as Paul [Gal. 3, 24] says. . . . And it could happen today that one would give the uncouth such precepts. But we Christians, who have God’s Word, do not need such jugglery, we do not belong to the school of Moses, we have a better master.”<sup>19)</sup>

The same can be said in view of the Third Commandment, Luther continues. “For Paul and the New Testament abrogate the Sabbath, so that one can readily comprehend that the Sabbath concerns the Jews only, for whom it is an exacting commandment.”<sup>20)</sup>

Finally he shows that the threats and promises of the Ten Commandments only concern the Jews, while we heathen and Christians have received other threats and promises. Thus the punishment of the Old Testament, which involved the extirpation of the royal houses, as for instance those of Jeroboam and Ahab, is done away with in the New Testament, where we are threatened with everlasting death, with judgment day, with hell and eternal damnation. On the other hand, we do not have bodily, but spiritual and eternal promises in the New Testament, as for instance in John 3, 16; 4, 14, and 7, 37. 38.<sup>21)</sup>

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<sup>17)</sup> III, 1031. Further on (1037) Luther says once more: “Thus this text constrains us strongly that the Ten Commandments have been given to the Jews only and not to the Gentiles, as it also follows from the Third Commandment. For the Gentiles have never been brought out of Egypt.”

<sup>18)</sup> III, 1045.

<sup>19)</sup> III, 1048.

<sup>20)</sup> III, 7.

<sup>21)</sup> III, 1055.

These are the arguments that Luther adduces from the Ten Commandments themselves, in order to show that the Law of Moses was given alone to the Jews. At the same time he does not fail to show us the weight of these arguments. For he had to throw their whole weight against the enthusiasts, who, when reading the Law of Moses, said: "God is speaking, no one can deny it, therefore one must keep it." After carrying out what kind of an influence this kind of an argument had on the peasants, who likewise exclaimed: "God has spoken, who will gainsay it," Luther replies: "Dear enthusiasts, it is true, God has commanded it to Moses, and has therefore spoken to the people. But we are not the people to whom God spoke thus. My dear fellow, God also spoke to Adam, but I am not therefore Adam. He commanded Abraham to slay his son, but I am not therefore Abraham that I should slay my son. In like manner he also spoke to David. It's all God's Word. God's Word here, God's Word there, but I must look and consider to whom God's Word is spoken. The false prophets say: You are the people, God speaks to you. Prove it to me," Luther demands.<sup>22</sup>)

This demand to be shown to whom God is speaking His Word Luther carries still further: "Look in the Scriptures at all the words of God and at all His commandments, and do not apply them to yourself till you are certain that you are being addressed. Then do it and do not ask what the others are being charged with and commanded. Yes, you say together with the enthusiasts, God has said it to Moses, therefore I must also do it. My good fellow, rather say: It does not matter, the Word does not reach any farther than to the one to whom it has been spoken. God tells the fish to swim in the waters, the birds to fly in the air, the reptiles to creep on the earth, the sun to shine, as we read in the first book of Moses, chap. 1, 20ff. There we have the Word of God. Do you, for that reason, want to become a fish and live in the water, float in the air like a bird? Do you want to turn into sun, moon, and stars? Be careful, how it will suit you. Do they not want to see that Moses has been given to one people only? Do not, therefore, refer him to the

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<sup>22</sup>) III, 12.

whole world, but to his people.”<sup>23</sup>) Keep in mind, Luther wants to tell his readers, that “from the very beginning the Word has come to pass in various ways. One must not only consider, if it is God’s Word, if God has spoken it, but much more to whom it has been spoken, and if it concerns you. Then there will be a separation as between summer and winter. God has said much to David, has commanded him to do this and that; but it does not concern me, it has not been spoken to me. He can, indeed, say it to me, if He wants to. But you must look to the Word that concerns you, that is spoken to you. There is a twofold Word in the Scriptures. The first one does not apply to me, does not concern me, the other one does concern me. On the strength of that same Word that concerns me, I may boldly venture forth and put my trust in it as in a firm rock. If it does not apply to me, I must not undertake anything. The false prophets are impetuous and say: ‘Dear people, this is the Word of God.’ It is true, we cannot deny it. We, however, are not the people to whom He speaks. God has not commanded us to do this or that, as He has commanded them to do. . . . Therefore speak to the enthusiasts thus: Let Moses and his people remain together, it is all over with them, they do not concern me. I will listen to the Word that concerns me. We have the Gospel.”<sup>24</sup>)

Having mentioned the Gospel, Luther compares Moses and the Gospel to show how the latter is to be preached to all men, the former, however, only to the Jews. Luther makes much of this distinction to strengthen his argument that Moses has been given to the Jews alone. He argues: “Christ said, ‘Go and preach the Gospel,’ not alone to the Jews as Moses had said, but ‘to all heathen,’ ‘all creatures’ . . . If Christ had not added, ‘preach to all creatures,’ I would not concern myself with it, would not be baptized, even as I now do not concern myself with Moses, who has not been given to me but alone to the Jews. But when He says: Not to one people, not at this or that place, but to all creatures, then no one is excepted, all are included, no one dare doubt that the Gospel should also be preached to him. Therefore

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<sup>23</sup>) III, 1037f.

<sup>24</sup>) III, 13.

I believe the Word that it also concerns me, that I also belong under the Gospel, under the New Testament, and I will venture forth on the strength of that Word and if it costs me a thousand necks." <sup>24</sup>)

Now Luther admonishes the preachers who teach others, to note this distinction, to comprehend and to evaluate it. Yea, all Christians should do likewise, because everything depends upon it. If only the peasants had understood, Luther exclaims, they would not have been misled and corrupted so deplorably. "And unless we understand it," he continues, "we will be the originators of many sects and factions." These sects will not be able to say anything else but what the peasants had said to him, The Word of God, The Word of God. Therefore Luther again raises the question "whether it has been said to you." "God speaks to the angels and to all creatures. Yet for that reason it does not concern me. I should look to that which concerns me, which has been said to me, whereby He warns, urges, and challenges me." <sup>25</sup>)

For an illustration Luther speaks of the head of a family who assigns certain duties to his wife, daughter, son, maid-servant, and man-servant. Each one, however, takes over the duties of the other. What will the head of the house say and do? He will say: Although it is my commandment, still I did not command you to do this and that, but assigned a specific task to each of you, which you should have performed. The same holds true of the Word of God. If I should take over that which God has said to someone else and say: But you have said it, then the only answer is: I have not said it to you. One must discern clearly whether the Word concerns one person or all of them. What God has said through Moses in reference to the commandments concerns the Jews only. But the Gospel permeates the whole world and is offered to all creatures. Therefore the whole world should receive it and receive it as if it had been offered only to a few. The Word: We should love one another, concerns me, for it concerns all who belong under the Gospel. And we read Moses, not because he concerns us, that we must obey him, but because he agrees with the natural law and because

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<sup>25</sup>) III, 14.

he is couched in words which the heathen could never have coined.<sup>26)</sup>

Having proved that the Law has been given to the Jews only, it was a foregone conclusion for Luther that the Gentiles had never received the Law of Moses. Still the enthusiasts insisted on ruling the people according to the Law of Moses. Therefore Luther is just as emphatic or still more so in denying that the Law has been given to the Gentiles, as he was in proving that it had been given to the Jews only. Over against any attempt to rule the people by the Law of Moses he cries out: "This we do not want," and adds: "We would rather not preach anymore as long as we live than to let Moses enter again and to let them tear Christ out of our hearts. We do not want to have Moses as a ruler or a law-giver any more, even God Himself does not want it. Moses was a mediator of the Jewish people only, to them He has given the Law. . . . Moses does not concern us. If I accept Moses as to one commandment, I must accept all of Moses as my master. I would then have to let myself be circumcised, my clothes be washed according to Jewish rites, I would have to eat and to drink in this and that manner, to dress myself accordingly, and to keep swarms of such things. Therefore we do not want to retain and to accept Moses. Moses is dead. When Christ came his rule was a thing of the past, he did not serve anymore." Consequently "the whole text (of the Law) does not in the least concern the Gentiles. . . . The Gentiles are not bound to obey Moses. Moses is the *Sachsenspiegel* of the Jews."<sup>27)</sup>

In giving reasons from the Law itself, why the Mosaic Law does not bind the Gentiles, Luther again falls back on the words of the First Commandment in Exodus 20, 2. This text proves clearly, he states, that even the Ten Commandments do not concern us, because he has not led us out of Egypt. Consequently we do not want to submit to the enthusiasts who want to burden us with Moses and all his commandments. We want to esteem Moses as a teacher, but we do not want to look upon him as our law-giver, unless he agrees with the New Testament and with

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<sup>26)</sup> III, 15.

<sup>27)</sup> III, 6, 9, 834; XX, 137.

the natural law. Therefore it is quite evident that Moses is the law-giver of the Jews and not of the heathen." 28)

"It also can be proved from the Third Commandment," Luther goes on to say, "that Moses does not concern Gentiles and Christians. For Paul and the New Testament do away with the Sabbath. . . . The prophets also taught that the Sabbath of the Jews should be abrogated. Isaiah in his last chapter says: When He will come, then there will be such a time that one Sabbath will be next to the other, one new moon next to the other, etc. As if he wanted to say: Every day will be a Sabbath-day. Israel" — here, of course, the spiritual Israel, Gentiles and Jews — "will be a people that will not have one day different from another. For in the New Testament the Sabbath day lies on the ordinary level, every day is holy day." 28)

And now Luther reaches a climax in his argumentation that the Law does not bind the Gentiles but only the Jews. It reads: "If someone, therefore, holds Moses up to you with his commandments and urges you to keep them, answer him: Go to the Jews with your Moses. I am no Jew, leave me alone with Moses. If I accept Moses in one instance (Paul says to the Galatians in the fifth chapter), then I am duty bound to keep the whole Law. But not one dot in Moses concerns us." 28)

But how was one to meet the argument of the enthusiasts: "Moses has commanded that we should have one God, trust and believe in him, not swear by his name, should honor father and mother, not steal, not commit adultery, not give false witness, not covet. Is not one to observe this?" 29) In answering this question Luther dwells at length on the natural law. He says: "I have spoken of the Law of Moses as Moses' Law. For to have a God is not only the Law of Moses, but also a natural law, as St. Paul says Romans 1, 20 that the Gentiles know of the godhead, that there is a God. Consequently the law that commands, thou shalt not kill, commit adultery, steal, etc., is not only Moses' Law but also the natural law written into everybody's heart, as St. Paul teaches Romans 2, 1. Christ also, Matth. 7, 12, includes all prophets and the Law in this natural law: 'Therefore all things

28) III, 7.

29) III, 9.



whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.' St. Paul does likewise Rom. 13, 9, where he comprises all the laws of Moses into the law of love, which the natural law quite naturally teaches: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' . . . Wherever the Law of Moses and the law of nature are one and the same, there the Law remains and is not outwardly abrogated, except by faith spiritually which is nothing less than fulfilling the law, Rom. 3, 28."<sup>30</sup>)

This quotation deals mainly with the commandments of the Second Table of the Law. Still what has been said of the Second Table also applies to the First, with the exception of the Third Commandment which is a ceremonial law. The introductory words of the above quotation already bear this out: "For to have a God is not only the Law of Moses, but also a natural law." In another connection Luther is still more explicit in this point. Having spoken of the laws of Moses he says: "Nature also has these laws. Nature tells us to invoke God. The heathen bear testimony to this. For there has never been a heathen who hath not invoked his idols, although they failed, even as the Jews did, to find the right God. The Jews also practised idolatry, no less than the heathen, only that the Jews received the Law. The heathen, however, have it written in their hearts and there is no difference, even as St. Paul points out to the Romans: The heathen, who have no law, have the law written in their hearts. . . . For what God in heaven has given to the Jews through Moses He has also written into the hearts of all men." Therefore we, who have not received the Law of Moses, "also know, worship and revere that God whom the Jews revere, who has led them out of Egypt." This knowledge "we do not gain from Moses or from the written law, but from other writings and from the law of nature. . . . Also St. Paul says Rom. 1, 19-21 that the heathen also have a knowledge of God; 'for God hath showed it unto them that they see the invisible things of him, that is, his eternal power and godhead, being understood by the things that are made from the creation; but they did not glorify him as God.' With these words

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<sup>30</sup>) XX, 151f.

St. Paul declares that all heathen have a knowledge of God, namely that He created all things, provides and preserves everything. Therefore their own conscience constrains them that they should honor Him and thank Him for all benefits.”<sup>31)</sup> The difference between the Jews and the Gentiles is, therefore, not to be sought in this, Luther points out, that the Jews have kept the Law, the heathen not. Although both Jews and Gentiles have one law, nevertheless both have come short of God. No, the difference consists in this that “the Jews have the honor and advantage that God has given them the Ten Commandments by word of mouth and, for a good measure, in writing. . . . Yet we Gentiles, to whom God has given no written law, should nevertheless honor, praise, and thank Him. For He is also our God, even as He is the God of the Jews (Rom 3, 29). We shall speak of this again.”<sup>32)</sup> When he does speak of it again, he finds still other words and, were it possible, still more pointed ones, to emphasize the truth that the Gentiles and Jews, having one law, also have one God. We read: “For Moses with his word is not sent to us. And even if Moses had not come, we nevertheless would have had this natural knowledge written by God in our hearts, that there is a God who has made and preserved all things. For the Gentiles also have worshiped God without Moses’ teaching, although they, even as the Jews, came short of God. . . . Therefore this is the right understanding that both the Gentiles and Jews should have the Lord as one God, who gives everything gratuitously, whether Moses says it or whoever it may be.”<sup>33)</sup> . . . To sum it up,” Luther con-

<sup>31)</sup> III, 1038.

<sup>32)</sup> III, 1039.

<sup>33)</sup> III, 1051. This important passage reads in the original: “So ist das nun der rechte Verstand, dass Heiden und Juden den Herrn für einen Gott haben, der alles umsonst gebe etc., es sage es Moses, oder wer da will.” Rörer’s Nachschrift quoted from the Weimarer Ausgabe (16. Bd. 445, 3f.) has: “Heiden und Juden ghet das an, *ut deum pro deo habeant, et qui omnia det gratis*. Luther can speak of both Gentiles and Jews as such who should have the Lord as one God, because he had emphasized throughout that they have one and the same law and because the “*Wörtlein*: ‘I am the Lord thy God’ does not only pertain to the Jews but to all men in this world, for He cares for all of them; only that they were not led out of Egypt as the Jews were” (1043).

cludes his discussion of this point, "the First Commandment requires an upright faith and trust in God. Nothing that is merely external is offered in this commandment. Such faith no one, however, can have, lest the Holy Spirit previously gives it into his heart."<sup>33</sup>)

But why then at all teach and keep the Ten Commandments, if the Gentiles have the equivalent of the Law in their natural law? Luther's answer reads: "Because the natural law is nowhere drawn up so well and orderly as in Moses. Therefore we have reason to borrow from Moses."<sup>34</sup>) Again if someone asks the question: Why read and study not only the Decalogue, but all of Moses?, Luther gives three answers. First, because the emperor and the government can learn much from these laws, even as the Romans had fine laws. Now Moses is the *Sachsen-spiegel* of the Jews and contains many a fine example of good laws.<sup>35</sup>) Second, I find in Moses what the natural law cannot give me, many promises and predictions of God in regard to Christ. Therefore I am not to let Moses fall under the table, but to accept him.<sup>36</sup>) Third, Moses gives me many fine examples of faith and love and of the cross, so that we may learn to trust in God and to love Him. Moses also gives us many examples of unbelief on the part of the ungodly and of God's wrath. There is no place where one finds such excellent examples of faith and unbelief as in Moses. Therefore we are not to let Moses fall under the table. But thus we understand the Old Testament correctly in that we use the fine promises and examples and the Law according to our pleasure (*nach unserm Wohlgefallen*) and thus let it benefit us.<sup>37</sup>) All these things are written, Luther says in another connection, not only for the sake of the Jews, but also for all heathen. For there are also many things in the Old Testament concerning unbelievers and Gentiles, that serve as an example and doctrine for all the world. Still the Law of Moses concerns the Jews alone.<sup>38</sup>)

<sup>33</sup>) XX, 153.

<sup>35</sup>) III, 9, 11.

<sup>36</sup>) III, 10f.

<sup>37</sup>) III, 16.

<sup>38</sup>) XX, 154.

Thus Luther sought to teach his contemporaries the form and scope of the Law of Moses. He is especially concerned about those who are to teach others, that they learn to understand Moses correctly. In his *Unterrichtung, wie sich die Christen in Mosen schicken sollen*, one of his sermons on Exodus, Luther closes his instruction for a better understanding of Moses with the words: "I have said that all Christians, and especially those who want to teach other people and treat of the Word of God, should be mindful of teaching Moses correctly. That is, wherever he gives commandments, that we do not follow him any farther than where he agrees with the natural law. Let Moses be a master and doctor of the Jews. We have our master Christ, who has submitted to us what we should know, keep, do and leave undone." <sup>39)</sup> But who is able to teach Moses correctly? "Many great and excellent men," Luther tells us, "have erred in this matter, and many great preachers now take offense at it, do not know how to preach Moses, can not very well become reconciled to it, are foolish, rage and rave, and say to the people: God's Word, God's Word, God's Word. . . . Many learned people did not know how far Moses should be taught. Origen, Jerome and the like of them did not show clearly, to what extent Moses is to serve us." <sup>40)</sup> "Therefore I want to warn all preachers once more at this point," Luther adds in his sermon on Exodus 20, 2. "For I see, that it is necessary that they really learn how to make use of Moses, and not to entangle the people with Moses, and not to let him have any further influence, than as an example and where he is an evangelist and a prophet." <sup>41)</sup>

Thus Luther leads his readers back to the correct use of Moses by pointing to the Gospel truth in Moses, to those "much better articles, namely the prophecies and promises of Christ's

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<sup>39)</sup> III, 16. This emphasis which Luther places on Christ's commandments we also find expressed in the following words: "We have . . . enough laws in the New Testament; therefore we do not want to have him in our consciences, but are only concerned in keeping Christ undefiled" (1032).

<sup>40)</sup> III, 17.

<sup>41)</sup> III, 1036.

Advent.”<sup>42)</sup> He had fought the enthusiasts because they “had in mind to undo the whole doctrine of the Gospel . . . with a crafty treatment of the Scriptures.”<sup>43)</sup> Thus he had already warned in the opening words of his polemic *Against the Celestial Prophets*. To defend his Gospel work against the inroads of these enthusiasts Luther had entered the lists, had manned the breach, clearly setting forth the right understanding and use of Moses. Not his laws but his prophecies and promises concerning Christ “are the best thing in all of Moses, which also concern us as Gentiles. . . . The first thing, namely the commandments, does not concern us, but the other thing we should apprehend with our hearts. Therefore we should read Moses, since such precious and comforting promises are to be found in him, wherewith I may strengthen my weak faith. For thus it actually comes to pass in Christ’s kingdom, as I read it in Moses, wherein I also find the right foundation. And therefore, in this wise, I should accept Moses and not let him fall under the table.”<sup>44)</sup>

P. PETERS.

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<sup>42)</sup> XX, 153.

<sup>43)</sup> XX, 133.

<sup>44)</sup> III, 10. 11.

## NEWS AND COMMENTS

**Committee on Doctrinal Unity Resumes Activities.** (Under the above heading the following important announcement appeared in the *Lutheran Witness* of February 24. For the information of our readers we have reprinted the entire text. — E. R.)

The Committee on Doctrinal Unity, authorized by Synod's resolution adopted at the Centennial Convention in Chicago and appointed pursuant to this resolution by President Behnken in consultation with the Vice-Presidents of Synod, held its first meeting of the current triennium Friday, January 8, at Concordia College, St. Louis. All the members of the former committee were reappointed, Dr. W. Arndt, and the writer of this article.

The committee consists of three professors, three pastors, and two laymen: Dr. W. Arndt and Dr. J. H. C. Fritz of St. Louis; Prof. W. A. Baepler of Springfield; Pastor H. W. Jurgens, Leavenworth, Kansas.; Pastor George J. Meyer, Bristol, Connecticut; the undersigned; Mr. Herbert W. Knopp, Nashville, Tennessee; and Mr. John Wegner, Kirkwood, Missouri. Dr. Behnken attended the meeting, but the two laymen were unable to be present.

At the first meeting after Synod's Centennial Convention the committee reminded itself of Synod's resolutions and instructions, being especially mindful of Synod's declaration, *Proceedings*, page 501, that though progress had been reported from some areas of Synod, and Synod rejoiced over any progress that under the blessing of God had been achieved, yet full agreement in doctrine and practice between our Synod and the American Lutheran Church had not been reached, and that Synod therefore was not ready at this time to enter into fellowship with the American Lutheran Church.

The committee was also mindful of Synod's resolution, *Proceedings*, pages 510 and 511, that the 1938 Resolutions shall no longer be considered as a basis for the purpose of establishing fellowship with the American Lutheran Church, that Synod, however, expressed its sincere desire that true Scriptural unity with the American Lutheran Church and with other Lutheran bodies may be achieved.

The committee was mindful of Synod's resolution, *Proceedings*, page 476, that our Synod solemnly reaffirms its unwavering loyalty to the Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God and the only norm and rule of faith and life, and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church as the correct exposition of the doctrines of the Scriptures, and that our Synod declares the Brief Statement to be the correct expression of its doctrinal position.

Mindful of these resolutions of Synod, the Committee on Doctrinal Unity took to heart Synod's instructions to continue discussions with the American Lutheran Church on a soundly Scriptural basis, using the Brief

Statement and such other documents as are already in existence or as it may be necessary to formulate. The committee realizes that true unity cannot be established by social intercourse and joint endeavors attended by a disregard of existing differences, but only by the removal of such differences and by full agreement in doctrine and practice on the basis of the Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Committee on Doctrinal Unity proceeded to put into effect Synod's resolution and invited the Fellowship Committee of the American Lutheran Church to a meeting immediately after Easter.

F. H. BRUNN, *Secretary,*  
*Committee on Doctrinal Unity.*

Rockford, Illinois, January 19, 1948.

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To the undersigned it seems that this prospective meeting presents the representatives of our sister synod with a golden opportunity. Since, as the above announcement states, the synod itself at its Centennial Convention declared that full agreement with the American Lutheran Church has not been reached, since furthermore the synod has reaffirmed its doctrinal stand, specifically declaring the Brief Statement to be the correct exposition of its position, and since finally it seems to have been the desire of the synod to have its Brief Statement stand unencumbered by the Declaration and the Resolutions of 1938, the committee is certainly in a strong position to insist on an uncompromising application of its declared principle: that true unity can be established "only by the *removal* of such differences and by *full agreement* in doctrine and practice on the basis of the Scriptures and the Confessions." (Emphasis by the undersigned.)

In taking this position the committee will have to come to grips with the contrasting principle of the American Lutheran Church, stated at Sandusky in 1938 and reiterated by its Committee on Intersynodical Fellowship, namely that it is *neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines*, or with the amplification of this principle as it was set forth by the same committee in its Friendly Invitation: "that the slight divergencies (!) in language and point of view between the Brief Statement and the Declaration all lie in areas where there exists an *allowable and wholesome latitude of theological opinion on the basis of the teachings of the Word of God.*"

If the issue is thus squarely joined and honestly faced it should result either in a renunciation of this unionistic principle by the A. L. C. Committee, and eventually by the American Lutheran Church itself, or a clear recognition by the Missouri Committee of the futility of further negotiations. These two principles are so clearly opposed to each other, so mutually exclusive, that they cannot stand side by side. Nor can constructive negotiations be carried on on the basis of such contradictory

premises. But if the issue is met as it should be, a confused situation will become clarified.

A third possibility exists, of course, but will not be discussed in these lines. For I do not believe that the Committee on Doctrinal Unity will surrender the principle which it has so clearly stated. I prefer to hope that the Committee will make the most of the opportunity which has come to it.

E. REIM.

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**Champaign School Case.** Leaders of religious denominations and of educational systems throughout the country are aware of the importance attached to the opinion of the Supreme Court on the Champaign School Case. In fact, the great majority of our citizens is either already deeply interested in the outcome of this highly publicized test case or will find its interest aroused when the full purport of the Court's opinion in regard to the relation between the Church and the public schools becomes more generally understood.

Many of our readers, no doubt, have shared our desire to obtain a complete text of the majority and minority opinion in the 8-1 decision by the United States Supreme Court on this case. We are very happy to report, therefore, that we have now received a reprint of this text from the *Religious News Service* and have decided to publish it in its entirety in the *Quartalschrift* in spite of the fact that it is a very voluminous document, since we believe our pastors, professors, and teachers will find it highly interesting, illuminative, and instructive. Apart from under-scoring some statements in the first section for the purpose of indicating the line of argument, and eliminating the references to sections in the laws, we have, of course, made no changes in the text.

#### TEXT OF THE SUPREME COURT OPINION ON THE CHAMPAIGN SCHOOL CASE

##### *Majority Opinion*

This case relates to the power of a state to utilize its tax-supported school system in aid of religious instruction insofar as that power may be restricted by the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Federal Constitution.

The appellant, Vashti McCollum, began this action for mandamus against the Champaign Board of Education in the Circuit Court of Champaign County, Illinois. Her asserted interest was that of a resident and taxpayer of Champaign and of a parent whose child was then enrolled in the Champaign public schools. Illinois has a compulsory education law, which, with exceptions, requires parents to send their children, aged seven to sixteen, to its tax-supported public schools where the children are to remain in attendance during the hours when the schools are regularly



in session. Parents who violate this law commit a misdemeanor punishable by fine unless the children attend private or parochial schools which meet educational standards fixed by the state. District boards of education are given general supervisory powers over the use of the public school buildings within the school districts.

Appellant's petition for mandamus alleged that religious teachers, employed by private religious groups, were permitted to come weekly into the school buildings during the regular hours set apart for secular teaching, and then and there for a period of thirty minutes substitute their religious teaching for the secular education provided under the compulsory education law. The petitioner charged that this joint public-school religious-group program violated the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. The prayer of her petition was that the board of education be ordered to "adopt and enforce rules and regulations prohibiting all instruction in and teaching of all religious education in all public schools in Champaign District Number 71, . . . and in all public school houses and buildings in said district when occupied by public schools."

The board first moved to dismiss the petition on the ground that under Illinois law appellant had no standing to maintain the action. This motion was denied. An answer was then filed, which admitted that regular weekly religious instruction was given during school hours to those pupils whose parents consented and that those pupils were released temporarily from their regular secular classes for the limited purpose of attending the religious classes. The answer denied that this co-ordinated program instruction violated the State or Federal Constitution. Much evidence was heard, findings of fact were made, after which the petition for mandamus was denied on the ground that the school's religious instruction program violated neither the Federal nor State constitutional provisions invoked by the appellant. On appeal the State Supreme Court affirmed. Appellant appealed to this court<sup>1)</sup> and we noted probable jurisdiction.

The appellee<sup>2)</sup> presses a motion to dismiss the appeal on several grounds, the first of which is that the judgment of the State Supreme Court does not draw in question the "validity of a statute of any state." This contention rests on the admitted fact that the challenged program of religious instruction was not expressly authorized by statute. But the State Supreme Court has sustained the validity of the program on the ground that the Illinois statutes granted the board authority to establish such a program. This holding is sufficient to show that the validity of an Illinois statute was drawn in question.

1) The U. S. Supreme Court.

2) Illinois State Supreme Court.

A second ground for the motion to dismiss is that the appellant lacks standing to maintain the action, a ground which is also without merit. A third ground for the motion is that the appellant failed properly to present in the State Supreme Court her challenge that the state program violated the Federal Constitution. But in view of the express rulings of both state courts on this question, the argument cannot be successfully maintained. The motion to dismiss the appeal is denied.

Although there are disputes between the parties as to various inferences that may or may not properly be drawn from the evidence concerning the religious program, the following facts are shown by the record without dispute. In 1940 interested members of the Jewish, Roman Catholic, and a few of the Protestant faiths formed a voluntary association called the Champaign Council on Religious Education. They obtained permission from the Board of Education to offer classes in religious instruction to public school pupils in grades four to nine inclusive.

Classes were made up of pupils whose parents signed printed cards requesting that their children be permitted to attend; they were held weekly, thirty minutes for the lower grades, forty-five minutes for the higher. The council employed the religious teachers at no expense to the school authorities, but the instructors were subject to the approval and supervision of the superintendent of schools.

The classes were taught in three separate religious groups by Protestant teachers, Catholic priests, and Jewish rabbis, although for the past several years there have been apparently no classes instructed in the Jewish religion. Classes were conducted in the regular classrooms of the school building. Students who did not choose to take the religious instruction were not released from public school duties; they were required to leave their classrooms and go to some other place in the school building for pursuit of their secular studies. On the other hand, students who were released from secular study for the religious instructions were required to be present at the religious classes. Reports of their presence or absence were to be made to their secular teachers.

The foregoing facts, without reference to others that appear in the record, show the use of tax-supported property for religious instruction and the close cooperation between the school authorities and the religious council in promoting religious education. The operation of the state's compulsory education system thus assists and is integrated with the program of religious instruction carried on by separate religious sects. Pupils compelled by law to go to school for secular education are released in part from their legal duty upon the condition that they attend the religious classes. This is beyond all question a utilization of the tax-established and tax-supported public school system to aid religious groups to spread their faith. And it falls squarely under the ban of the First Amendment (made

applicable to the states by the Fourteenth) as we interpreted it in Everson v. Board of Education.

There we said: "neither a state nor the Federal government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another. Neither can force or influence a person to go to or to remain away from church against his will or force him to profess a belief or disbelief in any religion. No person can be punished for entertaining or for professing religious beliefs or disbeliefs, for church attendance or non-attendance. No tax, in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion.

"Neither a state nor the Federal government can, openly or secretly, participate in the affairs of any religious organizations or groups, and vice versa. In the words of Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect a wall of separation between church and state.'" The majority in the Everson case, and the minority as shown by quotations from the dissenting views in our notes 6 and 7, agreed that the First Amendment's language, properly interpreted, had erected a wall of separation between church and state. They disagreed as to the facts shown by the record and as to the proper application of the First Amendment's language to those facts.

Recognizing that the Illinois program is barred by the First and Fourteenth Amendments if we adhere to the views expressed both by the majority and the minority in the Everson case, counsel for the respondents challenge those views as dicta and urged that we reconsider and repudiate them. They argue that historically the First Amendment was intended to forbid only government preference of one religion over another, not an impartial governmental assistance of all religions. In addition they ask that we distinguish or over-rule our holding in the Everson case that the Fourteenth Amendment made the "establishment of religion" clause of the First Amendment applicable as a prohibition against the states. After giving full consideration to the arguments presented we are unable to accept either of these contentions.

To hold that the state cannot consistently with the First and Fourteenth Amendments utilize its public school system to aid any or all religious faiths or sects in the dissemination of their doctrines and ideals does not, as counsel urge, manifest a governmental hostility to religion or religious teachings. A manifestation of such hostility would be at war with our national tradition as embodied in the First Amendment's guarantee of the free exercise of religion. For the First Amendment rests upon the premise that both religion and government can best work to achieve their lofty aims if each is left free from the other within its respective sphere. Or, as we said in the Everson case, the First Amendment has

erected a wall between Church and State which must be kept high and impregnable.

Here not only are the state's tax-supported public school buildings used for the dissemination of religious doctrines. The state also affords sectarian groups an invaluable aid in that it helps to provide pupils for their religious classes through use of the state's compulsory public school machinery. This is not separation of Church and State.

The cause is reversed and remanded to the State Supreme Court for proceedings not inconsistent with this opinion.

Mr. Justice Jackson, concurring.

I join the opinion of Mr. Justice Frankfurter, and concur in the result reached by the Court, but with these reservations: I think it is doubtful whether the facts of this case establish jurisdiction in this Court, but in any event that we should place some bounds on the demands for interference with local schools that we are empowered or willing to entertain. I make these reservations a matter of record in view of the number of litigations likely to be started as a result of this decision.

A Federal Court may interfere with local school authorities only when they invade either a personal liberty or a property right protected by the Federal Constitution. Ordinarily this will come about in either of two ways:

First: When a person is required to submit to some religious rite or instruction or is deprived or threatened with deprivation of his freedom for resisting such unconstitutional requirement. We may then set him free or enjoin his prosecution. Typical of such cases was *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*. There penalties were threatened against both parent and child for refusal of the latter to perform a compulsory ritual which offended his convictions. We intervened to shield them against the penalty. But here, complainant's son may join religious classes if he chooses and if his parents so request, or he may stay out of them. The complaint is that when others join and he does not, it sets him apart as a dissenter, which is humiliating. Even admitting this to be true, it may be doubted whether the Constitution which, of course, protects the right to dissent, can be construed also to protect one from the embarrassment that always attends nonconformity, whether in religion, politics, behavior, or dress. Since no legal compulsion is applied to complainant's son himself and no penalty is imposed or threatened from which we may relieve him, we can hardly base jurisdiction on this ground.

Second: Where a complainant is deprived of property by being taxed for unconstitutional purposes, such as directly or indirectly to support a religious establishment. We can protect a taxpayer against such a levy. This was the *Everson Case*, as I saw it then and see it now. It was

complained in that case that the school treasurer drew a check on public funds to reimburse parents for a child's bus fare if he went to a Catholic parochial school or a public school, but not if he went to any other private or denominational school. Reference to the record in that case will show that the School District was not operating busses, so it was not a question of allowing Catholic children to ride publicly owned busses along with others, in the interests of their safety, health or morals. The child had to travel to and from parochial school on commercial busses like other paying passengers, and he was exposed to the same dangers. If it could, in fairness, have been said that the expenditure was a measure for the protection of the safety, health or morals of youngsters, it would not merely have been constitutional to grant it; it would have been unconstitutional to refuse it to any child merely because he was a Catholic. But in the Everson Case there was a direct, substantial and measurable burden on the complainant as a taxpayer to raise funds that were used to subsidize transportation to parochial schools. Hence, we had jurisdiction to examine the constitutionality of the levy and to protect against it if a majority had agreed that the subsidy for transportation was unconstitutional.

In this case, however, any cost of this plan to the taxpayers is incalculable and negligible. It can be argued, perhaps, that religious classes add some wear and tear on public buildings and that they should be charged with some expense for heat and light, even though the sessions devoted to religious instruction do not add to the length of the school day. But the cost is neither substantial nor measurable, and no one seriously can say that the complainant's tax bill has been proved to be increased because of this plan. I think it is doubtful whether the taxpayer in this case has shown any substantial property injury.

If, however, jurisdiction is found to exist, it is important that we circumscribe our decision with some care. What is asked is not a defensive use of judicial power to set aside a tax levy or reverse a conviction, or to enjoin threats of prosecution or taxation. The relief demanded in this case is the extraordinary writ of mandamus to tell the local Board of Education what it must do. The prayer for relief is that a writ issue against the Board of Education "ordering it to immediately adopt and enforce rules and regulations prohibiting all instruction in and teaching of religious education in all public schools . . . and in all public school houses and buildings in said district when occupied by public schools." The plaintiff, as she has every right to be, is an avowed atheist. What she has asked of the courts is that they not only end the "released time" plan but also ban every form of teaching which suggests or recognizes that there is a God. She would ban all teaching of the Scriptures. She especially mentions as an example of invasion of her rights "having pupils learn and recite such statements as, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want'." And she objects to teaching that the King James

version of the Bible "is called the Christian's Guide Book, the Holy Writ and the Word of God," and many other similar matters. This Court is directing the Illinois courts generally to sustain plaintiff's complaint without exception of any of these grounds of complaint, without discriminating between them and without laying down any standards to define the limits of the effect of our decision.

To me, the sweep and detail of these complaints is a danger signal which warns of the kind of local controversy we will be required to arbitrate if we do not place appropriate limitation on our decision and exact strict compliance with jurisdictional requirements. Authorities list 256 separate and substantial religious bodies to exist in continental United States. Each of them, through the suit of some discontented but unpenalized and untaxed representative, has as good a right as this plaintiff to demand that the courts compel the schools to sift out of their teaching everything inconsistent with its doctrines. If we are to eliminate everything that is objectionable to any of these warring sects or inconsistent with any of their doctrines, we will leave public education in shreds. Nothing but educational confusion and a discrediting of the public school system can result from subjecting it to constant law suits.

While we may and should end such formal and explicit instruction as the Champaign plan, and can at all times prohibit teachings of creed and catechism and ceremonial and can forbid forthright proselyting in the schools, I think it remains to be demonstrated whether it is possible, even if desirable, to comply with such demands as plaintiff's completely to isolate and cast out of secular education all that some people may reasonably regard as religious instruction. Perhaps subjects such as mathematics, physics or chemistry are, or can be, completely secularized. But it would not seem practical to teach either practice or appreciation of the arts if we are to forbid exposure of youth to any religious influences. Music without sacred music, architecture minus the cathedral, or painting without the scriptural themes would be eccentric and incomplete, even from a secular point of view. Yet the inspirational appeal of religion in these guises is often stronger than in forthright sermon. Even such a "science" as biology raises the issue between evolution and creation as an explanation of our presence on this planet. Certainly a course in English literature that omitted the Bible and other powerful uses of our mother tongue for religious ends would be pretty barren. And I should suppose it is a proper, if not an indispensable, part of preparation for a worldly life to know the roles that religion and religions have played in the tragic story of mankind. The fact is that, for good or for ill, nearly everything in our culture worth transmitting, everything which gives meaning to life, is saturated with religious influences, derived from paganism, Judaism, Christianity — both Catholic and Protestant — and other faiths accepted by a large part of the world's people. One can hardly respect a system of

education that would leave the student wholly ignorant of the currents of religious thought that move the world society for a part in which he is being prepared.

But how one can teach, with satisfaction or even with justice to all faiths, such subjects as the story of the Reformation, the Inquisition, or even the New England effort to found "a Church without a Bishop and a State without a King," is more than I know. It is too much to expect that mortals will teach subjects about which their contemporaries have passionate controversies with the detachment they may summon to teaching about remote subjects such as Confucius or Mohammed. When instruction turns to proselyting and imparting knowledge becomes evangelism is, except in the crudest cases, a subtle inquiry.

The opinions in this case show that public educational authorities have evolved a considerable variety of practices in dealing with the religious problem. Neighborhoods differ in racial, religious, and cultural compositions. It must be expected that they will adopt different customs which will give emphasis to different values and will induce different experiments. And it must be expected that, no matter what practice prevails, there will be many discontented and possibly belligerent minorities. We must leave some flexibility to meet local conditions, some chance to progress by trial and error. While I agree that the religious classes involved here go beyond permissible limits, I also think the complaint demands more than plaintiff is entitled to have granted. So far as I can see this Court does not tell the State court where it may stop, nor does it set up any standards by which the State court may determine that question for itself.

The task of separating the secular from the religious in education is one of magnitude, intricacy and delicacy. To lay down a sweeping constitutional doctrine as demanded by complainant and apparently approved by the Court, applicable alike to all school boards of the nation, "to immediately adopt and enforce rules and regulations prohibiting all instruction in and teaching of religious education in all public schools," is to decree a uniform, rigid and, if we are consistent, an unchanging standard for countless school boards representing and serving highly localized groups which not only differ from each other but which themselves from time to time change attitudes. It seems to me that to do so is to allow zeal for our own ideas of what is good in public instruction to induce us to accept the role of a super board of education for every school district in the nation.

It is idle to pretend that this task is one for which we can find in the Constitution one word to help us as judges to decide where the secular ends and the sectarian begins in education. Nor can we find guidance in any other legal source. It is a matter on which we can find no law but our own prepossessions. If with no surer legal guidance we are

to take up and decide every variation of this controversy, raised by persons not subject to penalty or tax, but who are dissatisfied with the way schools are dealing with the problem, we are likely to have much business of the sort. And, more importantly, we are likely to make the legal "wall of separation between church and state" as winding as the famous serpentine wall designed by Mr. Jefferson for the University he founded.

Mr. JUSTICE FRANKFURTER delivered the following opinion in which Mr. JUSTICE JACKSON, Mr. JUSTICE RUTLEDGE and Mr. JUSTICE BURTON join.

We dissented in *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U. S. 1, because in our view the Constitutional principle requiring separation of Church and State compelled invalidation of the ordinance sustained by the majority. Illinois has been authorized the commingling of religious with secular instruction in the public schools. The Constitution of the United States forbids this.

This case, in the light of the *Everson* decision, demonstrates anew that the mere formulation of a relevant Constitutional principle is the beginning of the solution of a problem, not its answer. This is so because the meaning of a spacious conception like that of the separation of Church from State is unfolded as appeal is made to the principle from case to case. We are all agreed that the First and the Fourteenth Amendments have a secular reach far more penetrating in the conduct of Government than merely to forbid an "established church." But agreement, in the abstract, that the First Amendment was designed to erect a "wall of separation between Church and State," does not preclude a clash of views as to what the wall separates. Involved is not only the Constitutional principle but the implications of judicial review in its enforcement. Accommodation of legislative freedom and Constitutional limitations upon that freedom cannot be achieved by a mere phrase. We cannot illuminatingly apply the "wall-of-separation" metaphor until we have considered the relevant history of religious education in America, the place of the "released time" movement in that history, and its precise manifestation in the case before us.

To understand the particular program now before us as a conscientious attempt to accommodate the allowable functions of Government and the special concerns of the Church within the framework of our Constitution and with due regard to the kind of society for which it was designed, we must put this Champaign program of 1940 in its historic setting. Traditionally, organized education in the Western world was Church education. It could hardly be otherwise when the education of children was primarily study of the Word and the ways of God. Even in the Protestant countries where there was a less close identification of Church and State, the basis of education was largely the Bible, and its chief purpose inculca-



tion of piety. To the extent that the State intervened, it used its authority to further aims of the Church.

The emigrants who came to these shores brought this view of education with them. Colonial schools certainly started with a religious orientation. When the common problems of the early settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony revealed the need for common schools, the object was the defeat of "one chief project of that old deluder, Satan, to keep men from the knowledge of the Scriptures." *The Laws and Liberties of Massachusetts*, 1648 edition (Cambridge 1929) 47.

The evolution of colonial education, largely in the service of religion, into the public school system of today is the story of changing conceptions regarding the American democratic society, of the functions of State-maintained education in such a society, and of the role therein of the free exercise of religion by the people. The modern public school derived from a philosophy of freedom reflected in the First Amendment. It is appropriate to recall that the Remonstrance of James Madison, an event basic in the history of religious liberty, was called forth by a proposal which involved support to religious education. See Mr. Justice Rutledge's opinion in the *Everson* case, *supra*, 330 U. S. at 36-37. As the momentum for popular education increased and in turn evoked strong claims for State support of religious education, contests not unlike that which in Virginia had produced Madison's Remonstrance appeared in various form in other States. New York and Massachusetts provide famous chapters in the history that established dissociation of religious teaching from State-maintained schools. In New York, the rise of the common schools led, despite fierce sectarian opposition, to the barring of tax funds to church schools, and later to any school in which sectarian doctrine was taught. In Massachusetts, largely through the efforts of Horace Mann, all sectarian teachings were barred from the common school to save it from being rent by denominational conflict. The upshot of these controversies, often long and fierce, is fairly summarized by saying that long before the Fourteenth Amendment subjected the States to new limitations, the prohibition of furtherance by the State of religious instruction became the guiding principle, in law and feeling, of the American people. In sustaining *Stephen Girard's* will, this Court referred to the inevitable conflicts engendered by matters "connected with religious polity" and particularly "in a country composed of such a variety of religious sects as our country." That was more than one hundred years ago.

Separation in the field of education, then, was not imposed upon unwilling States by force of superior law. In this respect the Fourteenth Amendment merely reflected a principle then dominant in our national life. To the extent that the Constitution thus made it binding upon the States, the basis of the restriction is the whole experience of our people. Zealous watchfulness against fusion of secular and religious activities by

Government itself, through any of its instruments but especially through its educational agencies, was the democratic response of the American community to the particular needs of a young and growing nation, unique in the composition of its people. A totally different situation elsewhere, as illustrated for instance by the English provisions for religious education in State-maintained schools, only serves to illustrate that free societies are not cast in one mould. Different institutions evolve from different historic circumstances.

It is pertinent to remind that the establishment of this principle of separation in the field of local education was not due to any decline in the religious beliefs of the people. Horace Mann was a devout Christian, and the deep religious feeling of James Madison is stamped upon the Remonstrance. The secular public school did not imply indifference to the basic role of religion in the life of the people, nor rejection of religious education as a means of fostering it. The claims of religion were not minimized by refusing to make the public schools agencies for their assertion. The non-sectarian or secular public school was the means of reconciling freedom in general with religious freedom. The sharp confinement of the public schools to secular education was a recognition of the need of a democratic society to educate its children, insofar as the State undertook to do so, in an atmosphere free from pressures in a realm in which pressures are most resisted and where conflicts are most easily and most bitterly engendered. Designed to serve as perhaps the most powerful agency for promoting cohesion among the heterogeneous democratic people, the public school must keep scrupulously free from entanglement in the strife of sects. The preservation of the community from divisive conflicts, of Government from irreconcilable pressures by religious groups, of religion from censorship and coercion however subtly exercised, requires strict confinement of the State to instruction other than religious, leaving to the individual's church and home indoctrination in the faith of his choice.

The development of the public school as a symbol of our secular unity was not a sudden achievement nor attained without violent conflict. While in small communities of comparatively homogeneous religious beliefs, the need for absolute separation presented no urgencies, elsewhere the growth of the secular school encountered the resistance of feeling strongly engaged against it. But the inevitability of such attempts is the very reason for Constitutional provisions primarily concerned with the protection of minority groups. And such sects are shifting groups, varying from time to time, and place to place, thus representing in their totality the common interest of the nation.

Enough has been said to indicate that we are dealing not with a full-blown principle, nor one having the definiteness of a surveyor's metes and bounds. But by 1875 the separation of public education from Church

entanglements, of the State from teaching of religion, was firmly established in the consciousness of the nation. In that year President Grant made his famous remarks to the Convention of the Army of the Tennessee:

"Encourage free schools and resolve that not one dollar appropriated for their support shall be appropriated for the support of any sectarian schools. Resolve that neither the state nor the nation, nor both combined, shall support institutions of learning other than those sufficient to afford every child growing up in the land the opportunity of a good common school education, unmixed with sectarian, pagan, or atheistical dogmas. Leave the matter of religion to the family altar, the church, and the private school, supported entirely by private contributions. Keep the church and state forever separated." "The President's Speech at Des Moines," 22 *Catholic World* 433, 434-35 (1876).

So strong was this conviction, that rather than rest on the comprehensive prohibitions of the First and Fourteenth Amendments, President Grant urged that there be written into the United States Constitution particular elaborations, including a specific prohibition against the use of public funds for sectarian education, such as had been written into many State constitutions. By 1894, in urging the adoption of such a provision in the New York Constitution, Elihu Root was able to summarize a century of the nation's history: "It is not a question of religion, or of creed, or of party; it is a question of declaring and maintaining the great American principle of eternal separation between Church and State." The extent to which this principle was deemed a presupposition of our Constitutional system is strikingly illustrated by the fact that every State admitted into the Union since 1876 was compelled by Congress to write into its constitution a requirement that it maintain a school system "free from sectarian control."

Prohibition of the commingling of religious and secular instruction in the public school is of course only half the story. A religious people was naturally concerned about the part of the child's education entrusted "to the family altar, the church, and the private school." The promotion of religious education took many forms. Laboring under financial difficulties and exercising only persuasive authority, various denominations felt handicapped in their task of religious education. Abortive attempts were therefore frequently made to obtain public funds for religious schools. But the major efforts of religious inculcation were a recognition of the principle of Separation by the establishment of church schools privately supported. Parochial schools were maintained by various denominations. These, however, were often beset by serious handicaps, financial and otherwise, so that the religious aims which they represented found other directions. There were experiments with vacation schools, with Saturday as well as Sunday schools. They all fell short of their purpose. It was urged that by appearing to make religion a one-day-a-week matter, the

Sunday school, which acquired national acceptance, tended to relegate the child's religious education, and thereby his religion, to a minor role not unlike the enforced piano lesson.

Out of these inadequate efforts evolved the week-day church school, held on one or more afternoons a week after the close of the public school. But children continued to be children; they wanted to play when school was out, particularly when other children were free to do so. Church leaders decided that if the week-day church school was to succeed, a way had to be found to give the child his religious education during what the child conceived to be his "business hours."

The initiation of the movement may fairly be attributed to Dr. George U. Wenner. The underlying assumption of his proposal, made at the Interfaith Conference on Federation held in New York City in 1905, was that the public school unduly monopolized the child's time and that the churches were entitled to their share of it. This, the schools should "release." Accordingly, the Federation, citing the example of the Third Republic of France, urged that upon the request of their parents children be excused from public school on Wednesday afternoon, so that the churches could provide "Sunday school on Wednesday." This was to be carried out on church premises under church authority. Those not desiring to attend church schools would continue their normal classes. Lest these public school classes unfairly compete with the church education, it was requested that the school authorities refrain from scheduling courses or activities of compelling interest or importance.

The proposal aroused considerable opposition and it took another decade for a "released time" scheme to become part of a public school system. Gary, Indiana, inaugurated the movement. At a time when industrial expansion strained the communal facilities of the city, Superintendent of Schools Wirt suggested a fuller use of the school buildings. Building on theories which had become more or less current, he also urged that education was more than instruction in a classroom. The school was only one of several educational agencies. The library, the playground, the home, the church, all have their function in the child's proper unfolding. Accordingly, Wirt's plan sought to rotate the schedules of the children during the school-day so that some were in class, others were in the library, still others in the playground. And some, he suggested to the leading ministers of the City, might be released to attend religious classes if the churches of the City cooperated and provided them. They did, in 1914, and thus was "released time" begun. The religious teaching was held on church premises and the public schools had no hand in the conduct of these church schools. They did not supervise the choice of instructors or the subject matter taught. Nor did they assume responsibility for the attendance, conduct or achievement of the child in a church school; and he received no credit for it. The period of attendance in the religious

schools would otherwise have been a play period for the child, with the result that the arrangement did not cut into public school instruction or truly affect the activities or feelings of the children who did not attend the church schools.

From such a beginning "released time" has attained substantial proportions. In 1914-15, under the Gary program, 619 pupils left the public schools for the church schools during one period a week. According to responsible figures almost 2,000,000 in some 2,200 communities participated in "released time" programs during 1947. A movement of such scope indicates the importance of the problem to which the "released time" programs are directed. But to the extent that aspects of these programs open to Constitutional objection, the more extensively the movement operates, the more ominous the breaches in the wall of separation.

Of course, "released time" as a generalized conception, undefined by differentiating particularities, is not an issue for Constitutional adjudication. Local programs differ from each other in many and crucial respects. Some "released time" classes are under separate denominational auspices, others are conducted jointly by several denominations, often embracing all the religious affiliations of a community. Some classes in religion teach a limited sectarianism; others emphasize democracy, unity and spiritual values not anchored in a particular creed. Insofar as these are manifestations merely of the free exercise of religion, they are quite outside the scope of judicial concern, except insofar as the Court may be called upon to protect the right of religious freedom. It is only when challenge is made to the share that the public schools have in the execution of a particular "released time" program that close judicial scrutiny is demanded of the exact relation between the religious instruction and the public educational system in the specific situation before the Court.

The substantial differences among arrangements lumped together as "released time" emphasize the importance of detailed analysis of the facts to which the Constitutional test of Separation is to be applied. How does "released time" operate in Champaign? Public school teachers distribute to their pupils cards supplied by church groups, so that the parents may indicate whether they desire religious instruction for their children. For those desiring it, religious classes are conducted in the regular classrooms of the public schools by teachers of religion paid by the churches and appointed by them, but, as the State court found, "subject to the approval and supervision of the Superintendent." The courses do not profess to give secular instruction in subjects concerning religion. Their candid purpose is sectarian teaching. While a child can go to any of the religious classes offered, a particular sect wishing a teacher for its devotees requires the permission of the school superintendent "who in turn will determine whether or not it is practical for said group to teach in said school system." If no provision is made for religious instruction in the

particular faith of a child, or if for other reasons the child is not enrolled in any of the offered classes, he is required to attend a regular school class, or a study period during which he is often left to his own devices. Reports of attendance in the religious classes are submitted by the religious instructor to the school authorities, and the child who fails to attend is presumably deemed a truant.

Religious education so conducted on school time and property is patently woven into the working scheme of the school. The Champaign arrangement thus presents powerful elements of inherent pressure by the school system in the interest of religious sects. The fact that this power has not been used to discriminate is beside the point. Separation is a requirement to abstain from fusing functions of Government and of religious sects, not merely to treat them all equally. That a child is offered an alternative may reduce the constraint; it does not eliminate the operation of influence by the school in matters sacred to conscience and outside the school's domain. The law of imitation operates, and non-conformity is not an outstanding characteristic of children. The result is an obvious pressure upon children to attend. Again, while the Champaign school population represents only a fraction of the more than two hundred and fifty sects of the nation, not even all the practicing sects in Champaign are willing or able to provide religious instruction. The children belonging to these non-participating sects will thus have inculcated in them a feeling of separatism when the school should be the training ground for habits of community, or they will have religious instruction in a faith which is not that of their parents. As a result, the public school system of Champaign actively furthers inculcation in the religious tenets of some faiths, and in the process sharpens the consciousness of religious differences at least among some of the children committed to its care. These are consequences not amenable to statistics. But they are precisely the consequences against which the Constitution was directed when it prohibited the Government common to all from becoming embroiled, however innocently, in the destructive religious conflicts of which the history of even this country records some dark pages.

Mention should not be omitted that the integration of religious instruction within the school system as practiced in Champaign is supported by arguments drawn from educational theories as diverse as those derived from Catholic conceptions and from the writings of John Dewey. Movements like "released time" are seldom single in origin or aim. Nor can the intrusion of religious instruction into the public school system of Champaign be minimized by saying that it absorbs less than an hour a week; in fact, that affords evidence of a design constitutionally objectionable. If it were merely a question of enabling a child to obtain religious instruction with a receptive mind the thirty or forty-five minutes could readily be found on Saturday or Sunday. If that were all, Champaign

might have drawn upon the French system, known in its American manifestation as "dismissed time," whereby one school day is shortened to allow all children to go where they please, leaving those who so desire to go to a religious school. The momentum of the whole school atmosphere and school planning is presumably put behind religious instruction, as given in Champaign, precisely in order to secure for the religious instruction such momentum and planning. To speak of "released time" as being only half or three quarters of an hour is to draw a thread from a fabric.

We do not consider, as indeed we could not, school programs not before us which, though colloquially characterized as "released time," present situations differing in aspects that may well be constitutionally crucial. Different forms which "released time" has taken during more than thirty years of growth include programs which, like that before us, could not withstand the test of the Constitution; others may be found unexceptionable. We do not now attempt to weigh in the Constitutional scale every separate detail or various combination of factors which may establish a valid "released time" program. We find that the basic Constitutional principle of absolute separation was violated when the State of Illinois, speaking through its Supreme Court, sustained the school authorities of Champaign in sponsoring and effectively furthering religious beliefs by its educational arrangement.

Separation means separation, not something less. Jefferson's metaphor in describing the relation between Church and State speaks of a "wall of separation," not of a fine line easily overstepped. The public school is at once the symbol of our democracy and the most pervasive means for promoting our common destiny. In no activity of the State is it more vital to keep out divisive forces than in its schools, to avoid confusing, not to say fusing, what the Constitution sought to keep strictly apart. "The great American principle of eternal separation" — Elihu Root's phrase bears repetition — is one of the vital reliances of our Constitutional system for assuring unities among our people stronger than our diversities. It is the Court's duty to enforce this principle in its full integrity.

We renew our conviction that "we have staked the very existence of our country on the faith that complete separation between the state and religion is best for the state and best for religion." *Everson v. Board of Education*. If nowhere else, in the relation between Church and State, "good fences make good neighbors."

MR. JUSTICE REED, DISSENTING.

The decisions reversing the judgment of the Supreme Court of Illinois interpret the prohibition of the First Amendment against the establishment of religion, made effective as to the states by the Fourteenth Amendment, to forbid pupils of the public schools electing, with the

approval of their parents, courses in religious education. The courses are given, under the school laws of Illinois as approved by the Supreme Court of that state, by lay or clerical teachers supplied and directed by an interdenominational, local council of religious education. The classes are held in the respective school buildings of the pupils at study or released time periods so as to avoid conflict with recitations. The teachers and supplies are paid for by the interdenominational group. As I am convinced that this interpretation of the First Amendment is erroneous, I feel impelled to express the reasons for my disagreement. By directing attention to the many instances of close association of church and state in American society and by recalling that many of these relations are so much a part of our tradition and culture that they are accepted without more (? Ed.), this dissent may help in an appraisal of the meaning of the clause of the First Amendment concerning the establishment of religion and of the reasons which lead to the approval or disapproval of the judgment below.

The reasons for the reversal of the Illinois judgment, as they appear in the respective opinions may be summarized by the following excerpts. The first opinion, after stating the facts, says: "The foregoing facts, without reference to others that appear in the record, show the use of tax-supported property for religious instruction and the close cooperation between the school authorities and the religious council in promoting religious education. . . . And it falls squarely under the ban of the First Amendment (made applicable to the States by the Fourteenth) as we interpreted it in *Everson v. Board of Education*." The other opinion phrases it thus: "We do not now attempt to weigh in the Constitutional scale every separate detail or various combination of factors which may establish a valid 'released time' program. We find that the basic Constitutional principle of absolute separation was violated when the State of Illinois, speaking by its Supreme Court, sustained the school authorities of Champaign in sponsoring and effectively furthering religious beliefs by its educational arrangement." These expressions in the decisions seem to leave open for further litigation variations from the Champaign plan. Actually, however, future cases must run the gantlet not only of the judgment entered but of the accompanying words of the opinions. I find it difficult to extract from the opinions any conclusion as to what it is in the Champaign plan that is unconstitutional. Is it the use of school buildings for religious instruction; the release of pupils by the schools for religious instruction during school hours; the so-called assistance by teachers in handing out the request cards to pupils, in keeping lists of them for release and records of their attendance; or the action of the principals in arranging an opportunity for the classes and the appearance of the Council's instructors? Neither of the reversing opinions say whether the purpose of the Champaign plan for religious instruction during school



hours is unconstitutional or whether it is some ingredient used in or omitted from the formula that makes the plan unconstitutional.

From the tenor of the opinions I conclude that their teachings are that any use of a pupil's school time whether that use is on or off the school grounds, with the necessary school regulations to facilitate attendance, falls under the ban. I reach this conclusion notwithstanding one sentence of indefinite meaning in the second opinion: "We do not consider, as indeed we could not, school programs not before us which, though colloquially characterized as 'released time,' present situations differing in aspects that may well be constitutionally crucial." The use of the words "cooperation," "fusion," "complete hands-off," "integrate" and "integrated" to describe the relations between the school and the Council in the plan evidences this. So does the interpretation of the word "aid." The criticized "momentum of the whole school atmosphere," "feeling of separatism" engendered in the non-participating sects, "obvious pressure . . . to attend," and "divisiveness" lead to the stated conclusion. From the holding and the language of the opinions, I can only deduce that religious instruction of public school children during school hours is prohibited. The history of American education is against such an interpretation of the First Amendment.

The opinions do not say in words that the condemned practice of religious education is a law respecting an establishment of religion contrary to the First Amendment. The practice is accepted as a state law by all. I take it that when the first opinion says that "The operation of the state's compulsory education system thus assists and is integrated with the program of religious instruction carried on by separate religious sects" and concludes "This is beyond all question a utilization of the tax-established and tax-supported public school system to aid religious groups to spread their faith," the intention of its author is to rule that this practice is a law "respecting an establishment of religion." That was the basis of *Everson v. Board of Education*. It seems obvious that the action of the School Board in permitting religious education in certain grades of the schools by all faiths did not prohibit the free exercise of religion. Even assuming that certain children who did not elect to take instruction are embarrassed to remain outside of the classes, one can hardly speak of that embarrassment as a prohibition against the free exercise of religion. As no issue of prohibition upon the free exercise of religion is before us, we need only examine the School Board's action to see if it constitutes an establishment of religion.

The facts, as stated in the reversing opinions, are adequately set out if we interpret the abstract words used in the light of the concrete incidents of the record. It is correct to say that the parents "consented" to the religious instruction of the children, if we understand "consent" to

mean the signing of a card like the one in the margin.\* It is correct to say that "instructors were subject to the approval and supervision of the superintendent of schools," if it is understood that there were no definitive written rules and that the practice was as is shown in the excerpts from the findings below. The substance of the religious education course is determined by the members of the various churches on the council, not by the superintendent. The evidence and findings set out in the two preceding notes convince me that the "approval and supervision" referred to above are not of the teachers and the course of studies but of the orderly presentation of the courses to those students who may elect the instruction. The teaching largely covered Biblical incidents. The religious teachers and their teachings, in every real sense, were financed and regulated by the Council of Religious Education, not the School Board.

\* "CHAMPAIGN COUNCIL OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1945-46

*Parent's Request Card*

Please permit ..... in Grade ..... at .....  
 School to attend a class in Religious Education one period a week under  
 the Auspices of the Champaign Council of Religious Education.

(Check which)

Date .....

- ( ) Interdenominational
- ( ) Protestant
- ( ) Roman Catholic
- ( ) Jewish

Signed .....

(Parent Name)

Parent's Church .....

Telephone No. .... Address .....

A fee of 25 cents a semester is charged each pupil to help cover the cost of material used.

If you wish your child to receive religious instruction, please sign this card and return to the school.

MAE CHAPIN, *Director.*"

Mae Chapin, the Director, was not a school employee.

The phrase "an establishment of religion" may have been intended by Congress to be aimed only at a state church. When the First Amendment was pending in Congress in substantially its present form, "Mr. Madison said, he apprehended the meaning of the words to be, that Congress should not establish a religion, and enforce the legal observation of it by law, nor compel men to worship God in any manner contrary to their conscience." Passing years, however, have brought about acceptance of a broader meaning, although never until today, I believe, has this Court widened its interpretation to any such degree as holding that recognition of the interest of our nation in religion, through the granting, to qualified representatives of the principal faiths, of opportunity to present religion as an optional, extracurricular subject during released school time in public school buildings, was equivalent to an establishment of religion. A reading of the general statements of eminent statesmen of former days, referred to in the opinions in this and *Everson v. Board of Education*, *supra*, will show that circumstances such as those in this case were far from the minds of the authors. The words and spirit of those statements may be wholeheartedly accepted without in the least impugning the judgment of the State of Illinois.

Mr. Jefferson, as one of the founders of the University of Virginia, a school which from its establishment in 1819 has been wholly governed, managed and controlled by the State of Virginia, was faced with the same problem that is before this Court today: the question of the constitutional limitation upon religious education in public schools. In his annual report as Rector, to the President and Directors of the Literary Fund, dated October 7, 1822, approved by the Visitors of the University of whom Mr. Madison was one, Mr. Jefferson set forth his views at some length. These suggestions of Mr. Jefferson were adopted and ch. II, par. 1, of the Regulations of the University of October 4, 1824, provided that:

"Should the religious sects of this State, or any of them, according to the invitation held out to them, establish within, or adjacent to, the precincts of the University, schools for instruction in the religion of their sect, the students of the University will be free, and expected to attend religious worship at the establishment of their respective sects, in the morning, and in time to meet their school in the University at its stated hour."

Thus the "wall of separation between church and state" that Mr. Jefferson built at the University which he founded did not exclude religious education from that school. The difference between the generality of his statements on the separation of church and state and the specificity of his conclusions on education are considerable. A rule of law should not be drawn from a figure of speech.

Mr. Madison's Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assess-

ments relied upon by the dissenting Justices in *Everson* is not applicable here. Mr. Madison was one of the principal opponents in the Virginia General Assembly of A Bill Establishing a Provision for Teachers of the Christian Religion. The monies raised by the taxing section of that bill were to be appropriated "by the Vestries, Elders, or Directors of each religious society . . . to a provision for a Minister or Teacher of the Gospel of their denomination, or the providing places of divine worship, and to none other use whatsoever . . ." The conclusive legislative struggle over this act took place in the fall of 1785 before the adoption of the Bill of Rights. The Remonstrance had been issued before the General Assembly convened and was instrumental in the final defeat of the act which died in committee. Throughout the Remonstrance, Mr. Madison speaks of the "stablishment" sought to be effected by the act. It is clear from its historical setting and its language that the Remonstrance was a protest against an effort by Virginia to support Christian sects by taxation. Issues similar to those raised by the instant case were not discussed. Thus, Mr. Madison's approval of Mr. Jefferson's report as Rector gives, in my opinion, a clearer indication of his views on the constitutionality of religious education in public schools than his general statements on a different subject.

The Court summarized the amendment's accepted reach into the religious field, as I understand its scope, in *Everson v. Board of Education*, supra. The first opinion quotes the gist of the Court's reasoning in *Everson*. I agree as there stated that none of our governmental entities can "set up a church." I agree that they cannot "aid" all or any religions or prefer one "over another." But "aid" must be understood as a purposeful assistance directly to the church itself or to some religious group or organization doing religious work of such a character that it may fairly be said to be performing ecclesiastical functions. "Prefer" must give an advantage to one "over another." I agree that pupils cannot "be released in part from their legal duty" of school attendance upon condition that they attend religious classes. But as Illinois has held that it is within the discretion of the School Board to permit absence from school for religious instruction no legal duty of school attendance is violated. If the sentence in the first opinion, concerning the pupils' release from legal duty, is intended to mean that the Constitution forbids a school to excuse a pupil from secular control during school hours to attend voluntarily a class in religious education, whether in or out of school buildings, I disagree. Of course, no tax can be levied to support organizations intended "to teach or practice religion." I agree too that the state cannot influence one toward religion against his will or punish him for his beliefs. Champaign's religious education course does none of these things.

It seems clear to me that the "aid" referred to by the Court in the *Everson* case could not have been those incidental advantages that religious bodies, with other groups similarly situated, obtain as a by-product of

organized society. This explains the well-known fact that all churches receive "aid" from government in the form of freedom from taxation. The Everson decision itself justified the transportation of children to church schools by New Jersey for safety reasons. It accords with *Cochran v. Louisiana State Board of Education*, where this Court upheld a free textbook statute of Louisiana against a charge that it aided private schools on the ground that the books were for the education of the children, not to aid religious schools. Likewise the National School Lunch Act aids all school children attending tax exempt schools. In *Bradfield v. Roberts*, 175 U. S. 291, this Court held proper the payment of money by the Federal Government to build an addition to a hospital, chartered by individuals who were members of a Roman Catholic sisterhood, and operated under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church. This was done over the objection that it aided the establishment of religion. While obviously in these instances the respective churches, in a certain sense, were aided, this Court has never held that such "aid" was in violation of the First or Fourteenth Amendments.

Well-recognized and long-established practice support the validity of the Illinois statute here in question. That statute, as constructed in this case, is comparable to those in many states. All differ to some extent. New York may be taken as a fair example. In many states the program is under the supervision of a religious council composed of delegates who are themselves communicants of various faiths. As is shown by *Bradfield v. Roberts*, *supra*, the fact that the members of the council have religious affiliations is not significant. In some, instruction is given outside of the school buildings; in others, within these buildings. Metropolitan centers like New York usually would have available quarters convenient to schools. Unless smaller cities and rural communities use the school building at times that do not interfere with recitations, they may be compelled to give up religious education. I understand that pupils not taking religious education usually are given other work of a secular nature within the schools. Since all these states use the facilities of the schools to aid the religious education to some extent, their desire to permit religious education to school children is thwarted by this Court's judgment. Under it, as I understand its language, children cannot be released or dismissed from school to attend classes in religion while other children must remain to pursue secular education. Teachers cannot keep the records as to which pupils are to be dismissed and which retained. To do so is said to be an "aid" in establishing religion; the use of public money for religion.

Cases running into the scores have been in the state courts of last resort that involved religion and the schools. Except where the exercises with religious significance partook of the ceremonial practice of sects or groups, their constitutionality has been generally upheld. Illinois itself

promptly struck down as violative of its own constitution required exercises partaking of a religious ceremony. In that case compulsory religious exercises — a reading from the King James Bible, the Lord's Prayer and the singing of hymns — were forbidden as "worship services." In this case, the Supreme Court of Illinois pointed out that in the Ring case, the activities in the school were ceremonial and compulsory; in this, voluntary and educational.

The practices of the federal government offer many examples of this kind of "aid" by the state to religion. The Congress of the United States has a chaplain for each House who daily invokes divine blessings and guidance for the proceedings. The armed forces have commissioned chaplains from early days. They conduct the public services in accordance with the liturgical requirements of their respective faiths, ashore and afloat, employing for the purpose property belonging to the United States and dedicated to the services of religion. Under the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, eligible veterans may receive training at government expense for the ministry in denominational schools. The schools of the District of Columbia have opening exercises which "include a reading from the Bible without note or comment, and the Lord's prayer."

In the United States Naval Academy and the United States Military Academy, schools wholly supported and completely controlled by the federal government, there are a number of religious activities. Chaplains are attached to both schools. Attendance at church services on Sunday is compulsory at both the Military and Naval Academies. At West Point the Protestant services are held in the Cadet Chapel, the Catholic in the Catholic Chapel, and the Jewish in the Old Cadet Chapel; at Annapolis only Protestant services are held on the reservation, midshipmen of other religious persuasions attend the churches of the city of Annapolis. These facts indicate that both schools since their earliest beginnings have maintained and enforced a pattern of participation in formal worship.

With the general statements in the opinions concerning the constitutional requirement that the nation and the states, by virtue of the First and Fourteenth Amendments, may "make no law respecting an establishment of religion," I am in agreement. But, in the light of the meaning given to those words by the precedents, customs, and practices which I have detailed above, I cannot agree with the Court's conclusion that when pupils compelled by law to go to school for secular education are released from school so as to attend the religious classes, churches are unconstitutionally aided. Whatever may be the wisdom of the arrangement as to the use of the school buildings made with The Champaign Council of Religious Education, it is clear to me that past practice shows such cooperation between the schools and a non-ecclesiastical body is not forbidden by the First Amendment. When actual church services have always been permitted on government property, the mere use of the school buildings by a

non-sectarian group for religious education ought not be condemned as an establishment of religion. For a non-sectarian organization to give the type of instruction here offered cannot be said to violate our rule as to the establishment of religion by the state. The prohibition of enactments respecting the establishment of religion do not bar every friendly gesture between church and state. It is not an absolute prohibition against every conceivable situation where the two may work together any more than the other provisions of the First Amendment — free speech, free press — are absolutes. If abuses occur such as the use of the instruction hour for sectarian purposes, I have no doubt, in view of the Ring case, that Illinois will promptly correct them. If they are of a kind that tend to the establishment of a church or interfere with the free exercise of religion, this Court is open for a review of any erroneous decision. This Court cannot be too cautious in upsetting practices embedded in our society by many years of experience. A state is entitled to have great leeway in its legislation when dealing with the important social problems of its population. A definite violation of legislative limits must be established. The Constitution should not be stretched to forbid national customs in the way courts act to reach arrangements to avoid federal taxation. Devotion to the great principle of religious liberty should not lead us into a rigid interpretation of the constitutional guarantee that conflicts with accepted habits of our people. This is an instance where, for me, the history of past practices is determinative of the meaning of a constitutional clause, not a decorous introduction to the study of its text. The judgment should be affirmed.

A. SCHALLER.

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**Is Judge Tooze Right?** The Methodist Book Concern, an Ohio corporation, operating a book and supply store in Portland, was ruled by Walter L. Tooze, Portland circuit court judge, to be a charitable corporation and its net earnings not to be subject to payment of excise tax to the State of Oregon. Under the rules and regulations of the Methodist Church, Judge Tooze pointed out, its net earnings are placed in a fund and used to pay pensions to superannuated and disabled ministers and to their widows and dependent minor children. Judge Tooze said that of direct public concern is the proposition that, unless the Church itself takes care of these disabled and retired ministers who are without funds or estate to care for themselves, they become a public charge to be cared for at public expense. "It is a matter of common knowledge," Judge Tooze carries out in his statement, "that the average minister of the Gospel during the entire period of his services experiences considerable financial difficulty in making both ends meet. He reaches the age of retirement, or a condition of physical disability, with no reserve funds to care for himself and family during his declining years. In case of his death, no estate is left to protect his widow and educate his children. Having devoted the best years of his life to the Church, he is no longer

able to carry on the duties of his calling. Does it not then become a primary responsibility of the Church to care for him during that period of his life? Is not the discharge of this duty on the part of the Church purely religious and charitable in character?"

"What is the public interest or policy involved?" Judge Tooze goes on to ask and adds: "Is not the Church the greatest stabilizing influence in the world today? Does it not stand between us and absolute chaos? Without the Church where would we as individuals be? Where would the nation be? Do we not look to the Church for leadership in those things so necessary for the preservation of our liberties? If the Church fails, then civilization fails. No higher public policy could or does prevail than to give every encouragement to the Church and its works. Taking proper care of its ministers by the Church is one of the most important steps in carrying out this policy."

Is Judge Tooze right? He is. He himself may not fully realize how truthfully he has spoken, but he certainly is right in saying that the Church stands between the world and absolute chaos. The world is being preserved by God for the sake of the preaching of the Gospel until the last elect will be called into the fold (Mt. 24, 22). Then God will show the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 6, 14f.) and then the final chaos will be on the earth. And is Judge Tooze right in saying that in our times men look to the Church for leadership as the greatest stabilizing influence in the world today? He is. We can point to the period of the Reformation when the Turks were at the gates of Vienna and about to spread chaos over all of Europe. Men in those trying times, when liberty and slavery were the alternatives, did look to the Church for leadership. And what did Luther say in his writings against the Turks? He said that the ministers and the preachers, every one in his sphere, should admonish his people to repent and to pray (St. L. XX, 2119). Today people are looking no less to the Church for leadership and we as ministers and preachers must indeed know that repentance and prayer are necessary for the preservation of our liberties, and preach both. And finally Judge Tooze is quite right in saying that no higher public policy prevails than to give every encouragement to the Church and its works. We have every reason to thank God for officials who take this stand. Certainly, the Church is not dependent on any help of the government for its continuous existence. But when a government is bent on preserving peace and freedom of worship for the Church, then, indeed, we have special reason for giving of thanks for kings and for all that are in authority (1 Tim. 2, 1f.).

P. PETERS.

**Development of U. S. Student Program With Germany and Austria.** "What has been done so far to bring German and Austrian students to the United States and what may be accomplished in the future?" Miss Ruth Hubbard in charge of the Western European Division



of the Institute Student Service asks in the December, 1947, issue of the *New Bulletin* of the Institute of International Education. Her answer reads: "In the summer of 1946 a United States Education Mission composed of leading American educators with Dr. George F. Zook as chairman was sent to Germany in response to the invitation of the Department of State and the War Department. In its report to General Clay, the Department of State and the War Department in Washington, one of the recommendations of the Mission was that as soon as possible plans should be developed by the American Government and private agencies for the establishment of fellowships for students to attend educational institutions in the United States.

"Last March the United States Government announced a policy permitting the resumption of cultural relations with Germany and Austria. Under this policy it was planned to bring a group of especially selected students, trainees and experts from these occupied areas to the United States and the Institute was asked to cooperate. Unfortunately, the budget of the War Department has not yet included an appropriation which would provide funds for fellowships, travel and other expenses involved in a period of study in this country. The Institute of International Education could not provide funds for the purpose. Therefore, the number of German and Austrian students who have come to the United States for the academic year 1947-48 is small. The exact number is not known. Through the Institute, arrangements were made for two German students and for two Austrians.

"In addition to those under Institute auspices, there are a number of German and Austrian students now here. Briarcliff Junior College has granted a scholarship to Benigna Goerdeler, the daughter of Karl Goerdeler, the Mayor of Leipzig who was executed after the attempt to assassinate Hitler in July, 1944. Lutheran Theological Seminary in Chicago has one German, and there is another at Brown University. Various church groups and theological seminaries are cooperating on a plan to bring German students to this country. It is hoped that twelve others may come by the second semester of this year. Austrian students have been accepted by Johns Hopkins University, Swarthmore College, Plymouth Mission House and Haverford College. One, Mr. Albert Heypeter, is expected at the Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College and several other Austrians are expected at various institutions for the second semester.

"At the present time approved German and Austrian nationals may study in the United States for a period up to one year if *sponsored by an institution or organization in the United States*. (*Individuals may not sponsor those interested in coming.*) They will be expected to meet established security requirements; they must have a satisfactory record with regard to past and present political activities and affiliations. Such persons will be brought to the United States in order to complete a carefully

planned program generally lasting between six and twelve months, and they must return to Germany or Austria when the program has been completed. The eligibility of each person and *that of his sponsor* under the provisions of this policy, the length of his stay and the program for his visit must be approved by the Department of State, the War Department, and the United States Military Government in Germany and Austria.

"The Institute of International Education cannot undertake to sponsor students whom friends or relatives plan to bring to this country. Under its regular student program, however, it plans to sponsor students from Germany or Austria recommended by official Selection Committees in the two areas and awarded scholarships or fellowships offered through the Institute, particularly those provided by American colleges and universities, civic groups or organizations.

"It is obvious that for the present at least any programs or arrangements made to bring students from Germany and Austria and to provide them with fellowships as a means of implementing our government's policy must be initiated by private organizations and agencies, by educational institutions or by individuals. The War and State Departments will screen applicants, will assist those who have been cleared in securing travel documents and exit visas, visas for entry into the United States and in making travel arrangements.

"The United States has a unique opportunity," Miss Hubbard closes her report, "to influence the fundamental reorientation of the educational program of Germany. 'We are working', as Dr. Zook states, 'toward the attainment of a goal which is of supreme importance to ourselves and to the world as a whole, and we are working at it at the most critical spot.'"

In answer to a letter of inquiry of February 22 by the undersigned, Miss Hubbard writes as of March 5: "No funds have, as yet, been allocated for traveling expenses, therefore, we cannot give too much encouragement at the present time to young German students."

P. PETERS.

**A Union Declaration.** A copy of the *Einigungs-Erklärung* of the Evangelical-Lutheran Free Church with the Breslau Free Church has been sent by Praeses P. H. Petersen to the Editorial Staff of the *Quartalschrift* for publication. The *Erklärung* reads:

#### Erklärung

Die Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche im früheren Altpreußen und die Evangelisch-Lutherische Freikirche sind nach einer Reihe von Gesprächen in vorbehaltloser Bindung an die Heilige Schrift und die Lutherischen Bekenntnisse einschließlich der Konfordinformel zur völligen Einigkeit im Glauben und in der Lehre gelangt. Für beide Kirchen ist maßgebend der Kirchenbegriff von Augustana Artikel VII, in welchem das *consentire de doctrina evangelii et*

de administratione sacramentorum gefordert wird. Auf diesem Grunde richten sie die Kirchengemeinschaft im Sinne der Kanzel- und Abendmahlsgemeinschaft miteinander auf.

Berlin, im Januar 1948.

Für die Evangelisch-  
Lutherische Freikirche:  
gez. P. G. P e t e r s e n,  
Präsident.  
(Stempel)

Für das Oberkirchenkollegium  
der Evangelisch-Lutherischen  
Kirche Ostpreußens:  
gez. Lic. Dr. E. Z i e m e r,  
Kirchenrat.  
(Stempel)

The "discussions" to which the signatories of this Declaration refer were begun shortly after World War II and have now resulted in a church-unity with pulpit- and altar-fellowship. We rejoice in the fact that the two largest Free Churches of Germany have reached complete unity in faith and doctrine based on the Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions inclusive of the Formula of Concord. The *Einigungssätze*, the publication of which we must postpone to a later date, consist of four theses on the Holy Scriptures, on Conversion and Election, on the Church and the Ministry, and on the Last Things. Further articles of the Christian faith were not under discussion, since there existed no points of difference on these between the two church bodies.

For the sake of those of our readers who are not acquainted with the history of these two Free Churches we append the following data: The Ev. Luth. Church in Prussia, *i. e.*, the Breslau Free Church, also known as Old Lutherans, originated from the opposition to the Union which was introduced into Prussia in 1817 and gradually carried through by 1830. Johann Gottfried Scheibel, assistant preacher at St. Elisabeth's in Breslau, was the leader of the opposition. In a ministerial order, dated June 13, 1831, Scheibel was required to use the new agenda, and the formation of a special Lutheran church was refused. In 1832, after being deposed from his offices in the church and the university, Scheibel left Breslau and settled in Dresden that he might advance the cause of the Lutheran Church by writing, unhindered by Prussian censorship. On April 4, 1834, three pastors, four theological candidates, and thirty-nine laymen united in a synod at Breslau and solemnly protested against the violation of the rights granted to the Lutheran Church in Prussia. In 1835 another synod was formed at Breslau, but all clergymen participating in it were imprisoned. Some congregations even found themselves compelled to emigrate; a part of them went to Australia under the leadership of their pastors Kavel and Fritzsche and formed the nucleus of the Lutheran Church of Australia; others followed Grabau to North America where they organized the Buffalo Synod. Under Frederick William IV., who ascended the throne in 1840, conditions became more favorable for the Old Lutherans and on September 15, 1841, the first public Old-Lutheran General Synod met. The first

attempt at a synodical constitution of the Lutheran Church upon German soil was made and this organization found a certain measure of recognition by the State in the so-called concession of July 23, 1845. In a special concession of August 7, 1847, the board in Breslau was also officially recognized, and twenty-one congregations in the provinces of Silesia, Brandenburg, Pomerania, Prussia, Posen, and Saxony were granted corporate rights. At the meeting of the General Synod in 1860 the total number of 18,644 members in 1845 had increased to 55,017 in sixty-two parochial districts, with sixty-three ministers, thirty-four Lutheran schools, and forty-four teachers. In 1883 there was established a theological seminary. The Breslau Free Church possessed also its own institutions for deaconesses, a pension fund for old pastors, for the widows of pastors, and 140 churches in sixty-four parishes with seventy-five ministers (Cf. further details *The New Schaff Herzog Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. VII, pp. 81f.).

Concerning the Ev. Luth. Free Church we refer our readers to an article entitled "Religious Instruction in the Free Church of Germany" in the 1941 issue of *Quartalschrift* from which we reprint the following: "In speaking of the Free Church in Germany we must mention two different movements in its history. We must speak of a movement going back to the forepart of the 19th century when single congregations declared their withdrawal from the State Church because of its strong unionistic and liberal tendencies. Such congregations were those of Friedrich August Brunn in Hessen-Nassau and later on congregations of Louis and Theodor Harms in Hannover. On the other hand we have to speak of a movement brought about by laymen forming a Lutheran Society and finally leaving the State Church because of its unionistic and un-Lutheran practices. In the beginning these little groups were without pastors seeking, however, to contact true Lutheran pastors in Germany and America. . . . Finally in 1871 Pastor H. Ruhland, a member of the Missouri Synod, was called and in 1876 four congregations organized the 'Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Saxony and other States'. Soon after the congregations in Hessen-Nassau joined them and today this Synod numbers 52 pastors, 55 congregations, 124 preaching-stations, and 12,000 souls" (p. 194). This Free Church did not suffer that great loss of members that fell to the lot of its sister synod, the Breslau Free Church. It still has about the same number of pastors and with the exception of a few congregations in Eastern Germany, as for instance in Kolberg and Königsberg, it will still have the same number of congregations. In other words, it will still number some 12,000 souls and together with some 30,000 members of the Breslau Free Church — a figure which may be too low or too high — the two Free Churches will have a membership of 40,000 to 45,000 souls.

In times when the very future of the Lutheran Church in the Land of the Reformation is at stake, the union of these two Free Churches can

only be welcomed as a dam against the onrushing waters of modern unionistic endeavors and alliances. God grant that this union may grow inwardly and outwardly and prove itself to be a bulwark against all the great temptations of these last days.

P. PETERS.

**Dedication of the Lutherische Theologische Hochschule.** On Sunday, November 9, 1947, the *Lutherische Theologische Hochschule* of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Germany and of the Breslau Free Church was dedicated to the glory of the Triune God. The dedication services took place in Gross-Oesingen (Hannover) in the midst of the local Free Church congregation, of which the Rev. Martin Hein is pastor. Dr. J. W. Behnken, president of our sister-synod, Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, preached the dedicatory sermon on 2 Timothy 2, 15 and inducted the newly called professors into office, namely the Rev. Hans Kirsten, who was called as director of the *Hochschule* and as professor of Practical Theology, and Kirchenrat Lic. Martin Kiunke, member of the Breslau Free Church, called as professor of Church History. The teaching of Exegesis and of Dogmatics has been entrusted to two pastors, Kirchenrat Dr. W. Günther of the Breslau Free Church and Rev. Wm. Oesch of the Ev. Luth. Free Church respectively. In the induction service Dr. Behnken was assisted by three pastors of the Ev. Luth. Free Church, three pastors of the Breslau Free Church, and one pastor, the Rev. Alfons Wagner, of our Ev. Luth. Refugee-Mission Church. A second service was conducted in the afternoon of November 9 by the Rev. H. Stallmann, vice-president of the Ev. Luth. Free Church, and by Kirchenrat Dr. W. Günther of the Breslau Free Church. The two services were well attended by the members of the local congregation and by pastors, teachers and students of both Synods. Eighteen students had enrolled for the opening of the first semester in the history of this newly dedicated seminary. On the following day, on Luther's birthday, the two newly inducted professors, Kirsten and Kiunke, delivered their inaugural lectures, and the ministerial education of promising young men for work in the vineyard of the Lord had begun. It is the first joint work of these two Free Churches in Germany after having established pulpit and altar fellowship with one another. Prior to World War II both churches had their own seminaries, one at Zehlendorf, the other in Breslau. Both of these seminaries have fallen victim to the ravages of a great world conflict. Now both Free Churches have joined forces to teach to a constantly increasing number of students — at present more than thirty students are enrolled — an unadulterated Lutheran theology, the theology of our Lutheran fathers founded on the Scriptures and laid down in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. May the Lord of the Church bless this institution with teachers and students who continuously study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim. 2, 15).

P. PETERS.

**Germany's Need.** Three years after World War II the German people are still on a starvation diet. A Berlin housewife writes as of March 6: "Living conditions are growing worse instead of better. It must be clear to everyone that we are often on the verge of despair. For months we have not even received any butter. Milk has been an unknown quantity in the past three years. Our daily ration of fat is 10 grams, meat 40 grams, sugar 20 grams, etc., etc." The reader will know that with about 30 grams to an ounce, this is really a starvation diet. In other parts of Germany the rations issued to the populace are still less. An Erlanger professor writes in his letter dated Sexagesima 1948: "When our government in all earnestness discusses the question whether it should reduce the fat-ration of 150 grams a month to 75 grams or cancel it altogether, and when it finally decides in favor of the reduction because it stands in fear of riots, not because that amount of fat is still at its disposal, then a state of need has been reached which only that person can estimate who experiences it. When we are in such dire need and receive a gift-package, then such a gift is indeed an answer to our prayers. Our children learn through such gifts what miracles are and that there is a communion of saints on earth, which no war and no earthly need can tear in pieces. Therefore let me thank you and those kind donors, who are backing you."

This letter was addressed to our Committee On Relief For War-Sufferers. According to a letter written by a member of our committee on March 12 "the total collected as of February 29 amounted to \$234,810.23. It was two years ago last February," we read on, "that our program was called into being, and the amount we have thus far collected does not represent a heroic effort on the part of our Synod. I do not have a recent report of our expenditures, but I do know that our present program cannot long continue, if collections for relief purposes do not improve. I regret very much that there are not larger funds at our disposal. We have reached the point now where our work is just taking on the dimensions we strove to reach before — shipping books, medicine, etc."

Certainly, we should all strive to do still more for our Committee on Relief in view of the growing need in Germany, which the members of our Refugee Mission Church will also experience to the full, and who above all will be benefited by our efforts.

P. PETERS.

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## NEWS WITHOUT COMMENT

*From Religious News Service:*

The Waldensian Theological Library in Rome is being modernized by Dr. Valdo Vinay, professor of church history at the Waldensian Theological Seminary in Rome, as a service to the Italian community and especially to Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish groups. Professor Vinay says the library is particularly important to the religious and intellectual life of Italy, because it is the only Protestant theological library in Italy. It is open to all comers and is frequently visited by Catholic priests, Jewish rabbis, university professors and students. To modernize the library Professor Vinay plans to exchange Italian theological publications for books and magazines printed in the United States, England, and other countries. He asks that anyone interested in such an exchange write to him at the Waldensian Theological Library, Via Pietro Cossa 42, Rome, Italy. The Waldensian Theological Library has 25,000 books, including some priceless volumes which are either unobtainable elsewhere or very scarce. It has a copy of the five-language polyglot Bible of Complutum printed in 600 copies between 1505 and 1517 by the Spanish Cardinal Ximenes. The library also owns a copy of the only Italian translation of John Calvin's "Institutio Christiana" made by Giulio Cesare Pascale and published in Geneva during 1558. Recent publications in Italy which might interest libraries or church leaders abroad are a book about Martin Luther by Giovanni Miegge, a bi-monthly magazine *Protestantesimo*, and a bi-weekly paper of the Waldensian Church, *La Luce*.

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German Church Representatives have been assigned twenty places at the first assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam, next summer. This includes all the Lutheran, Reformed, and Union Churches in Germany, but does not include the Old Catholic Church in Germany or the Mennonite Church. Selection of the German delegates has been made by the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany, and will include six members of the Council as delegates and two as alternates. The delegation will consist of five church leaders, five advisers, four representatives of church administration, and six laymen. The church leaders chosen to attend the sessions at Amsterdam are Bishop Theophil Wurm of Stuttgart, Bishop F. Otto Dibelius of Berlin, Bishop Hanns Lilje of Hannover, Dr. Martin Niemoeller of Frankfurt, and Pastor Niesel of Dornap, all members of EKID'S Council.

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Ordination of Women has been provided for in Denmark's State Lutheran Church by an act of the Danish parliament. Two women are expected to be ordained in the next three or four weeks as a result of the new legislation. Passage of the bill has led to speculation whether

ministers and laymen who regard the ordination of women as contrary to the conservative interpretation of Holy Scripture may decide that the Danish Church is no longer a true Church and form a "confessional front." In a recent memorandum to the Danish bishops, a group of laymen urged that the seven bishops who have declined to ordain women continue to maintain their stand and, furthermore, refuse to recognize the validity of any ordination conferred by other bishops on women. During hearings on the bill, opponents charged that leftwing parties in parliament showed no compunction in passing laws dealing with internal affairs of the Church without consulting the Congregational Council, which is composed of elected ecclesiastical representatives of the congregations.

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**An Indianapolis Survey** showed that: 1. Only 29.2 per cent of all Protestant church members are males. 2. Laborers — who comprise over 26 per cent of the employed population — make up only 8.6 per cent of Protestant church membership. 3. Between 1930 and 1945, when Indianapolis grew 15.6 per cent, church membership increased by 16 per cent. 4. In spite of the population growth, Sunday school enrollment between 1930 and 1945 dropped 10.3 per cent. 5. An average of only 31.4 per cent of Indianapolis Protestants attend Sunday morning services and only 6.9 per cent attend evening services. 6. An estimated 50,000 persons of the Protestant faith are unreached by the churches. — Other findings disclosed by the survey were that less than half of the Protestant church membership contributes regularly to the churches; and Protestant preachers are poorly paid. The survey indicated that 37.1 per cent of the ministers make between \$2,000 and \$3,000; 17.7 per cent earn between \$1,000 and \$2,000; 24.8 per cent get \$3,000 to \$4,000; and only 7.1 per cent receive over \$5,000.

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**The International Lutheran Walther League** in cooperation with the Lutheran Free Church of Germany plans the establishment of a summer camp in Germany. The camp, which will be able to accommodate 1,500 youngsters during a two-weeks' vacation period, will be directed by the Rev. Gottfried Reuter of the Free Church. American director of the project is the Rev. Walter M. Wangerin of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Food for those attending the camp will be provided from CARE packages supplied by 300 Lutheran societies in the United States.

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**Public Schools in Michigan** have been denied official cooperation in promoting religious education by the Michigan Department of Public Instruction. The department's verdict was based on a study of the recent U. S. Supreme Court decision in the Champaign case. The decision means, Mrs. Caroline W. Thrun, the department's legal adviser, declared, that there



is no way in which a local school board can cooperate with a religious group in making religious education a part of the public school day or using public school buildings for that purpose. The local board is simply without authority to cooperate. However, both Dr. Thurston, deputy superintendent of state public instruction, and Mrs. Thrun, who jointly issued the department's opinion, believe there can be no objection to reading the Bible in public schools, so long as there is no comment or discussion of a sectarian nature. Dr. Thurston even said that the court indicated that you can't go so far as to remove all evidence of religious thinking from the schools and that the U. S. Supreme Court decision definitely does not put an end to the system of religious education followed in many Michigan school districts where school days are shortened on certain days of the week to permit children to attend religious classes in churches. In other words, the department's opinion claimed that the Supreme Court decision does not upset a long-standing state law allowing children from 12 to 14 years to be excused from school to attend confirmation classes, nor, according to Mrs. Thrun, does the court verdict disturb another Michigan statute permitting "limited" transportation of parochial school students on public buses.

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**Relief Shipments to Germany** have been on the increase, CRALOG, a federation of seventeen voluntary foreign relief agencies, eleven of which are church groups, having shipped twice as much in 1947 as in the previous year. More than 73,000,000 pounds of food, clothing, and medical supplies have been shipped to Germany in the past two years. The supplies, valued at \$40,000,000, were collected from the American people by CRALOG agencies and have brought relief from hunger and cold to hundreds of thousands of German civilians, particularly children.

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**Dr. Eugen Gerstenmaier**, director of Hilfswerk, relief agency of the Evangelical Church in Germany, conferred here in St. Louis with five representatives of the Missouri Lutheran Synod who are being sent to Germany this summer to hold a series of seminars at which vital church and relief matters will be discussed.

The German churchman, who is in the United States on an extended visit, came to St. Louis at the invitation of the Missouri Synod's Emergency Planning Council which is sponsoring the seminars. The meetings will be held at Bad Boll, a resort 40 miles outside Stuttgart, from June 27 to July 23.

It was announced that three groups, each consisting of prominent European clergymen, will be invited to attend seminars lasting ten days. They will discuss with the American representatives the position of the Missouri Synod in regard to relief measures for Europe as well as doctrinal and pastoral matters affecting the Lutheran Church generally.

Dr. Gerstenmaier will also discuss with the Emergency Planning Council the feasibility of sending a group of young men over to Germany to introduce the American system of vacation Bible schools. It is hoped, in addition, that the Missouri Synod will have its own men help with the European youth problem.

The Hilfswerk director has been the Missouri Synod's contact man for its physical and spiritual relief program in Germany. This program has amounted to from two to three million dollars a year for the past three years. Dr. Gerstenmaier came to the United States at the joint invitation of the Missouri Synod and the National Lutheran Council.

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**Forced Attendance At Catholic Services.** — A hearing on a charge that public school pupils in a Central Kentucky county were "being forced to attend Catholic church services was held the same day that the Supreme Court ruled against religion in school systems, it was disclosed here by Dr. Hugh Brimm, executive secretary of the Social Service Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. . . . The hearing concerned a charge by Mrs. G. W. Griffith, whose four children attend Holy Cross School, a County school in Marion County. Hugh Spalding, Lebanon, the Marion County superintendent, who said he had not heard of the hearing before Dr. Brimm disclosed it, denied emphatically that "we force anybody to go to the Catholic church." He said Holy Cross is a Catholic community and that the teachers were all Catholics and wore the habits of their order. But he pointed out "there are plenty of schools where all the teachers are non-Catholics."

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**Discovery of Earliest Known Manuscript of Isaiah** was announced by Professor Millar Burrows of Yale University, Director of the American School of Oriental Research at Jerusalem. This discovery is of particular significance since its origin is dated about the first century B. C. Other complete texts of Isaiah are known to exist only as recently as the ninth century A. D. Found in a well-preserved scroll of parchment, the book of the prophet Isaiah was examined by Dr. John C. Trever, a Fellow of the School, who recognized the similarity of the script to that of the Nash Papyrus — believed by scholars to be the oldest known copy of any part of the Hebrew Bible (containing the Ten Commandments and the *Shema'* composed of texts from Deuteronomy and dated by Albright as coming from the Maccabean period. Ed.). This ancient scroll together with three other unpublished ancient Hebrew manuscripts have been preserved for many centuries in the library of the Syrian Orthodox Monastery of St. Mark in Jerusalem. Metropolitan Athanasius Yeshue Samuel and Father Butros Sowmy of the Monastery submitted them to the American School of Oriental Research for study and identification.

## REVIEWERS' DESK

**The Essentials of Preaching.** By John H. C. Fritz; a refresher course in homiletics for pastors. 73 pages. 5½×7¼. Red cloth. Price, \$1.50.

This little volume hardly requires words of praise from reviewers. Dr. Fritz has established his repute as a talented author and as a homiletician of the first rank. Let it be known that he has published a new book on preaching, and a host of preachers will want to read and study it. We assure them they will not be disappointed in this latest effort of Dr. Fritz. The publishers speak our own mind when they state that "preaching can never be done too well. Even the most gifted of preachers should analyze their sermon work constantly. . . . Preachers young and old as well as ministerial candidates will derive real benefit from this stimulating course."

ADALBERT SCHALLER.

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**The Abiding Word.** Vol. I. An Anthology of Doctrinal Essays for the year 1945. 27 essays. 593 pages. Price, \$2.00.

**The Abiding Word.** Vol. II. An Anthology of Doctrinal Essays for the year 1946. 28 essays. 783 pages. Price, \$2.00. Both volumes were edited by Theodore Laetsch, D.D., Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, and copyrighted by the Concordia Publishing House.

The Preface to Volume II says: "The *Abiding Word* is the title chosen for two volumes published by our Concordia Publishing House under the auspices of the Centennial Committee." The essays "are based on the writings of the fathers and founders of our Synod," and thus "do not intend to bring any new doctrine" but present "the gist of doctrinal treasures laid down in the reports of early synodical conventions" (last phrase is taken from the Preface to Volume I).

The founders of the Missouri Synod left their fatherland for conscience sake, in order to escape from Rationalism. They believed in the Word of God as the only source of spiritual life. They loved it as liberating their consciences, and at the same time binding them. They searched the Scriptures. — They had escaped from the unbelief of Europe, but over here they also met with opposition to the Word of God. They found error even among Lutherans. They searched the Scriptures against the errors which they faced. — The results of their searching, both for edification and for polemical purposes, they deposited in many doctrinal essays for synodical meetings, in articles for their church papers, and in numerous books and pamphlets.

Children always do well to profit by the labors of their fathers. The fathers' "expositions of the Holy Scriptures, refutations of errors, expla-

nations of doctrinal articles" should be studied carefully and gratefully by their children.

Yet, a caution may not be out of place. In a controversy all statements of the truth will naturally be pointed against the error, and will be formulated and phrased accordingly. Thus, when the Buffalo Synod insisted that a synod as such possesses, by divine right, certain authority over its member congregations, Dr. Walther, while vindicating for a synod that it is a "part of the Church of God on earth" and that also "to it is given the command" by the ascending Savior to "teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," rightly maintained that even the smallest congregation was endowed by Christ with all spiritual power and is not in the least dependent on the authority of some super-church body.

These truths must be upheld in their full extent. But there is danger that, while the phraseology is maintained as it was pointed against the error of the day, the truth itself may be imperfectly presented; yes, when the phraseology that was pointed against a very definite error is pointed in another direction, there is danger of warping the truth. A valuable truth is lost when divine institution is claimed for a local congregation over against a larger church body, such as a synod, which is declared to be "not a divine but a human institution." A synod is a church.

We are not now going to discuss the doctrine of the Church, but wish to illustrate how one's reading of the Scriptures may be affected by certain fixed preconceptions. Vol. II, p. 449, we read in an essay dealing with *The Lutheran Congregation*, part II, *Its Origin and Character*: "Peter tells the congregations of Asia Minor: '*Ye are the chosen generation*', etc. The *local congregation* stands supreme, unequaled in splendor, power, and influence among the organizations of the world and surpasses in importance all other institutions."

Where does St. Peter speak of *congregations*? He, indeed, addresses certain classes of Christians in his epistle, as, servants, wives, husbands; but the word "congregation" does not even occur in his entire letter. In the salutation he tells us to whom he is speaking, namely, to the elect who are strangers "scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." Believing as we do that also the salutation is given by inspiration of God, we hold that Peter thinks of his readers throughout his letter as just that which he calls them in the salutation, as elect strangers of the diaspora in the provinces which he enumerates. The fact that they constitute local congregations does not enter his thought. As Christians joined geographically in the named district he calls them by the collective names: "chosen generation," "royal priesthood," "holy nation," "peculiar people." Just as the Holy Spirit in other epistles calls the Christians of some city the "church" of that place, so He here through the pen of

Peter addresses the Christians of this wider territory as God's *laos eis peripoiēsin*, etc.

In paging through the books I was puzzled by a statement in Vol. I, p. 490: "Almost every branch of the Church is found among the 250 religious groups in America."

What about the statement in Vol. II, p. 172: "God gave the first man a body constructed with special care. Into this body God breathed *His own Spirit*, and man became a living soul." Who is this "*own Spirit*" of God, which God breathed into the nostrils of Adam as a constituent part of his being? Was it the Holy Spirit? Was it an emanation from God's spiritual essence? That would be Pantheism of a kind. The human spirit is a creation of God.

As remarked before, we consider the plan underlying the publication of these two volumes at this time as a very good one. We conclude with a quotation from Vol. I, p. 493: "*We have pure doctrine*. The others do not have it. We are in danger of exhibiting pure doctrine as a young girl sports a diamond on her finger. . . . Remember that the present generation has received the body of pure doctrine as a heritage. We did not have to battle for it. It was given to us. Even as the son of a rich man gets sick and tired of money, so we are in danger of becoming satiated."

May God ever preserve in us a fervent love for His Word, the bread of life to nourish our faith. M.

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**The Lutheran Liturgy**, by Luther D. Reed. Muehlenberg Press, Philadelphia. XX and 692 pages. Price: \$7.50.

This work of the President Emeritus of Philadelphia Seminary certainly constitutes a major contribution to the literature of the Liturgy in general, and Lutheran Liturgics in particular. It is written in a way that reveals the profound interest of the writer in his subject and which holds the attention of the reader throughout. Future discussions of matters liturgical will be incomplete if they do not take to account this thorough presentation.

The book is important as a reference work. It makes available a mass of well documented information on liturgical forms, their origin, meaning, and use. In discussing the many items which come under this head Dr. Reed reveals sound and sober judgment. He is not carried away by liturgical enthusiasm. Even when he speaks with obvious personal approval of services "of a fuller and more ornate type than others" (p. 215), he does so with moderation and restraint, warning against "too aggressive an emphasis upon externalities, such as vestments, lights, ceremonial, etc." Another instance of the author's fine sense of balance in these matters occurs when he speaks of "the sharp distinction between the sacramental and the sacrificial elements in worship" which in his judgment was "carried

to undue lengths" by nineteenth-century Lutherans. It is the settled conviction of this reviewer that any attempt to apply this distinction to all the many parts out of which, *e. g.*, the Common Service is made up, must inevitably result in a classification which in many instances will be arbitrary and strained, to say the least.

This book is important also as a history of liturgy. In tracing the development of worship from the dawn of Christianity to modern times it follows the accepted outlines, though with unusual thoroughness and attention to detail. But its greatest value lies in making available to wider circles the record of the work done some sixty years ago by the Joint Liturgical Committee of the General Council, the General Synod, and the United Synod of the South in preparing the Common Service and subsequently the Common Service Book. Here Dr. Reed speaks with authority, having himself entered into the later phases of the committee's work. We who are using the Common Service today will profit by learning more about its genesis, and will surely grant more than grudging recognition to the pioneering of the Eastern Synods in this field.

The book is most important, however, because of the influence it will have on current liturgical trends. We agree with the author when he says (p. 212) that the liturgical movement "is not a spent force." We may differ, however, when we look at the direction which this movement is taking, and ask ourselves to what length it may eventually go. For that very reason, however, it is certainly in order to weigh the author's opinions critically, and to try to determine the validity of the position which he takes on a number of issues.

In a number of passages Dr. Reed speaks disparagingly of a service that begins with the traditional liturgy but ends without a celebration of the Sacrament. He calls it a "truncated service" (p. 233), a "Half Mass" (p. 215), speaks of "reducing the Sunday morning service to a preaching service" (p. 78), commends Calvin because he did not "seek to dethrone the Eucharist from its historic place as the culmination of the Lord's Day worship" (p. 81). In this connection it should be noted that Luther, to whose example the author appeals quite frequently, did in his *Formula Missae* use the term "Half Mass," (*semimissa*). But his reference is not to an omission of the Sacrament after a service of preaching. In fact he makes specific provisions for an order that is to be followed when there are no communicants ("so des Sonntags keine Kommunikanten vorhanden sind," St. L. XIX, 1197). The *semimissa* against which Luther inveighed was the so-called Mass of the Presanctified for Good Friday, in which the priest celebrated mass under one kind only, with a host that had been consecrated on the day before, for which reason it is also called the "Dry Mass." It hardly seems a fair term to use against Lutherans. Nor is it a constructive approach to a problem that will only be solved when

— with the Word — we awaken in our people a genuine desire for more frequent communing.

This criticism, of course, does not apply when in another context the author claims that "Christian worship from the beginning had its center in the unique corporate celebration of the Eucharist . . ." (p. 46). If this stands, then the case against the service without communion becomes far stronger. But can it be proved? In chapters 11-14 of his First Epistle to the Corinthians Paul speaks at length of questions of worship, particularly of the use of the Sacrament in chapter 11, and in chapter 14 of the charismatic gifts, of curbing the "speaking in tongues" and cultivating the speaking with understanding, the gifts of prophecy and teaching. Putting these things together, the author on page 26 seems to conclude that this is already "the Service," with a first part which was general in character and to which non-Christians were admitted, and a second which was for believers only. The parallel to the *missa catechumenorum* and *missa fidelium* would in that case be quite obvious. But then it would seem strange that Paul should speak first of the Sacramental service, and thereafter take up the question of the part which preceded it. Furthermore, Weizsaecker has in his *Apostolisches Zeitalter* (p. 248ff., but also the entire chapter) shown conclusively that there were two separate and distinct types of assembly, held on separate occasions. And history records that it was not until in the Second Century that the celebration of the Lord's Supper was separated from the Agape and the evening hour at which these ceremonial meals were usually held, and transferred to the morning service, the Service of the Word. Only then did the distinction between the two parts of the service gradually come into use. The advocates of a chief service which in every instance must culminate in Communion may claim ancient tradition, but not Biblical precedent for their position.

In a discussion of the "idea of sacrifice" in connection with the Sacrament a number of expressions occur which — we hate to say it — carry a distinctly Romanizing flavor: ". . . the faithful are required to do something (emphasis by the author), to bring something before God . . ." — "The Liturgy is more than a literary composition. It is a sacred action . . ." — "The substitution of mere edification (!) for this sense of corporate action definitely weakens the Church's worship." And finally: "We must bring more than bread and wine to the altar. We must offer ourselves in love and devotion, in selfdenial and consecrated service, in an action which is the fruit and the proof of our faith" (pp. 227, 228). Subsequently it is stated that "sanctification of spirit and life must follow . . ." For this last statement we are grateful. But then it would have been better not to have connected this thought in the first place with the "coming" and "bringing" on the part of the believer in the Sacrament. We can only deplore this un-Lutheran shifting of emphasis from

the sacramental giving of our gracious Lord to a sacrificial doing and offering on the part of man. Appeal is made to the words "This *do*." But when we consider the rest, ". . . in remembrance of Me," then even this *doing* is nothing more than a *receiving* of what is offered by Him who said: *Take*, eat, drink; this is *My Body*, *My Blood*, *given* and shed *for you*. That is where the emphasis belongs in a Lutheran communion. Let it remain there, and the "new obedience" by which we present our bodies "a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable to God," will follow naturally.

On page 348f. we note a reference to self-communion of the minister, not apart from the congregation, but as a mark of his fellowship with it. Your reviewer would welcome a restudy of this question, but based on other grounds than those advanced here, namely that the reception by the officiant "belongs to the integrity of the Rite," or that it is the "natural and fitting completion of a liturgical action which has other than personal values." The sooner we see that the Liturgy is not a Law unto itself, and that the study of Liturgics is not an end to be pursued for its own sake, the better we shall serve and guide our congregations. These things are still "rites or ceremonies, instituted by men." (Conf. Aug. Art. VII.)

E. REIM.

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**The Eternal Why.** The Prophet Habakkuk Answers a Timeless Question. By Dr. Ludwig Fuerbringer. Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri. Price, \$1.50.

This book may well be called a running commentary in that the student is being guided by a scholarly exegesis from verse to verse and from chapter to chapter into an understanding of the prophet's own answer to his question: "Why dost Thou let me see wickedness, and (why) dost Thou look upon distress?" (p. 10). The author dwells long enough on each verse to point out the difficulties involved and the correct interpretation and understanding of the text. Verse 4 in chapter 2 is a case in point. This important verse with its "but the just through his faith he will live" is interpreted by the author in due consideration of its context: "Faith, a humble but firm confidence in God in contrast to the self-exaltation of the Chaldean over against God. . . . St. Paul has given us the full and deep significance of the passage and made it the foundation of the central doctrine of the saving Gospel message, justification by faith, using, yet correcting the Septuagint. (Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3, 11; cp. also Heb. 10:38.) Paul's use of this passage is absolutely correct, for he, as well as Habakkuk, contrasts constancy of faith to the proud boasting of, and reliance on, one's own strength. To both of these writers faith is the adhering to the word of divine promise, holding fast with firm trust to things not seen in spite of the contrariness of present appearance. (Heb. 11:1.) However, Habakkuk, in the narrower sense, stresses the just man's



trust in the forgiving and saving grace of God." We recommend this book as a discerning exegetical study to all Bible scholars.

P. PETERS.

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**Guide to Philosophy.** By C. E. M. Joad. Dover Publications, New York. First American Printing. 1946. Price, \$3.50.

The scope and range of this book on philosophy is clearly set forth by the author in his introduction: "I have not sought to cover the whole field of philosophy; I have not tried to bring in all the philosophers — not even all the great philosophers — and I have not delt fully with the work of any single philosopher. My object has been to provide a general survey of the main field of philosophy; to introduce in the course of the survey the chief problems that philosophers discuss, to show why they discuss them and to give some illustrations of the methods by which their discussions are pursued." And as to the use of philosophical terms the author has this to say: "Writing primarily for the intelligent layman, I have taken special pains to be intelligible. I have, for example, endeavored never to introduce a technical term without first explaining the precise sense in which it is being used." Having thus been assured by the author that he has included no philosophical theory which was not capable of being made intelligible and no technical term which he has not first explained, the reader has every reason to follow this *Guide to Philosophy* with the hope of not encountering too much "stiff reading." The special bibliographies at the end of each chapter and the general bibliography on the last page (p. 587) together with a complete index serve to enhance the practical value of this book.

P. PETERS.

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**The Devotional Bible.** Volume One. The Gospels according to Saint Matthew and Saint Mark. Centennial Series. 404 pages. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1948. Price: \$3.00.

The Missouri Synod Centennial Committee herewith offers the first volume of an English devotional work of the nature of the Altenburger Bibelwerk, reprinted at St. Louis during Dr. Walther's time. The eighty meditations and prayers on Saint Matthew's Gospel are by Alfred Doerffler, well-known for his fine devotional books for the sick and shut-in; the thirty-nine on Saint Mark's Gospel are by M. F. Kretzmann. Each set of meditations is preceded by two historical meditations, in which the late Dr. L. Fuerbringer offers instructive material on the inspired author and his Gospel. The introductory meditation: "Search the Scriptures," is written by Theodore Hoyer of the Synodical Centennial Committee.

This book merits a hearty recommendation as Lutheran devotional literature which can truly lead into the Scriptures, inasmuch as these meditations embody the entire text of the two Gospels and at the same

time guide the Christian reader "to understand what he reads and to apply it with wholesome effect." The meditations are so arranged that the first part usually prepares for the main thought of a sizable portion of the Gospel text, which is then followed up by a concluding section and a prayer in which its truths for faith and life are applied in a practical manner.

The meditation on Matthew 3, 13-17, begins with the exposition: "The Baptism of John was not the New Testament Sacrament. This is clearly indicated in Acts 19 (verses 1-5 are then quoted). John's Baptism was, then, a ceremonial cleansing of the Old Testament dispensation, to which Jesus submitted to fulfill all Law. Luke tells us that another ceremonial law was observed when Jesus was brought to the Temple forty days after His birth (Luke 2:22-23). . . . After His resurrection Jesus instituted the New Testament Sacrament of Baptism as a means of grace by which we are to be made His disciples." Does this not leave the reader with the impression that John's Baptism was not a means of grace, not "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1, 4; Luke 3, 3), but merely a ceremonial ordinance?  
C. J. L.

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**Family Affairs.** By Harold B. Kildahl, Jr. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Price, 75 cents.

The author, a member of "The Evangelical Lutheran Church" (Norwegian), states that, although there is no dearth of study material pertaining to the family and its functions in our day, these studies are almost exclusively written from the secular view point. He is convinced the secular treatment of this subject runs contrary to the Christian view of the family. No wonder! For the sociologists, psychiatrists, and philosophers, almost to a man, are completely ignoring the Bible as a source book in their search for the truth. Consequently they are hopelessly floundering about in a maze of theories. The Bible, the inerrant Word of God, is telling every one who wishes to listen in simple words of the origin and the function of the family. It reveals how the Creator of heaven and earth instituted marriage, thus founded the family, and then protected it with the Sixth Commandment.

It is pleasing to note how the writer of our book stresses the necessity of going back to the Scriptures, if we wish to apply effective remedial measures against the many evils of present-day society, stemming from the decay of the family as a powerful social agency. We likewise approve when he says that legislation and law enforcement cannot achieve more than check by a degree certain corrupt practices, but they do not get at the root of the evil. He correctly emphasizes the one great need of an ailing society is a change of heart in the individual, his conversion. This only the Gospel of the Grace of God in Christ Jesus can bring about. The person that has experienced in his own heart the love of God which has

wiped away all his sin and guilt with the blood of Jesus, in other words, the converted sinner, is anxious to know and do what pleases his heavenly Father. The historical chapters dealing with family life in the pre-Christian era as also those which speak of the family under the influence of the Christian Church down to our own time will certainly prove to be profitable reading. The whole book, including the appendix on Mixed Marriages, can be recommended "in the hope that it may stimulate others of the Lutheran faith to study the whole science of social relations."

The reviewer regrets that the author fails to mention the Christian Day School, beside the family, as the most efficacious means in preparing the up-growing generation, for the task of defending the divine institution of the family by word and deed. The Church remains in its proper sphere when through the faithful work of consecrated teachers it aims to bring up the children in the nurture and amonition of the Lord, and thus is striving to lay a sound foundation for a happy family life.

We cannot agree with the author when he deplors the fact that the Lutheran Church has not taken a definite stand with regard to birth control, and wishes for "an official statement" by the Church to clear up doubt in the minds of our members. The truth regarding family and related matters, as God has revealed it to us in His Word and as it is taught in our Church, needs no bolstering up or strengthening by the passing of resolutions on the part of church bodies. Our pastors and, for that matter, our church members need no special resolutions of their Synod, we trust, in order to testify to the truth against the pernicious errors of birth control and kindred subjects.

M. L.

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**Behold He Prayeth.** By S. C. Ylvisaker. Lutheran Synod Book Co., Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota. Price, 25 cents.

This essay on Prayer by Dr. Ylvisaker, the President of Bethany College, delivered at a meeting of our Norwegian brethren, is printed by request in a booklet form for dissemination in wider circles. It is a heart-warming and spiritually refreshing exposition of a subject dear to the heart of every Christian. Its publication is especially timely in our day when Joint Prayer and Prayer Fellowship — whether one includes the other, or a distinction between the two can properly be maintained — is under discussion in our Church. The position of the author finds our approval, and we recommend a careful study of the booklet to the brethren.

M. L.

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**Lutheran Men of America in Wisconsin.** By G. W. Fischer. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. 5 cents per copy, 100 copies \$2.25, 300 or more at \$1.75 a hundred. This tract by Pastor G. W. Fischer answers the questions: Is this Organization Scriptural, Lutheran, Charitable?

The above-named organization is actively engaged in soliciting members also in our congregations. It is, therefore, of vital importance for every Lutheran Christian to become fully informed with regard to the questions our tract raises. We urge a wide distribution of it in our congregations. We add that it was adopted by the Milwaukee City Delegate Conference of our Synod.

M. L.

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**Catholic Marriage Contract.** By G. W. Fischer. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. List price, paper, 10 cents; dozen, \$1.00.

This is a reprint of the Catholic Marriage Contract. It consists of an anti-nuptial agreement which must be signed by both contracting parties before a Catholic priest when a marriage between a Catholic and Protestant is contemplated. This must be sent to the office of the archbishop with a request by the priest for a special dispensation before the priest is permitted to solemnize the marriage. The reading of this contract together with the explanation given by Pastor Fischer under the heading "Look Before You Leap Into the Roman Marriage Contract" should be enough for any one, who does not wilfully blind himself, to see that a marriage under these conditions is for a Lutheran Christian tantamount to a denial of his faith. May our congregations get busy to spread this information among their members.

M. L.

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All of the above items may be purchased from our Northwestern Publishing House, 935-937 North Fourth Street, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

# Quartalschrift

## Theological Quarterly

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Volume 45

July, 1948

Number 3

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### CLOSING ADDRESS

#### LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Thiensville, Wisconsin, May 27, 1948

*Text: 2 Cor. 2, 14-17: Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life. — And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.*

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*Dear Friends of Our Seminary, Especially,  
Dear Members of the Graduating Class:*

You are ready to enter the ministry of the Church. You hope for success in your work. God promises to give you success.

Paul, in our text, compares his ministry to a triumphal procession, granted to him by God.

Paul wrote these words about twenty years after he had been called to faith. About ten of these years he had spent in very active mission work. He had done pioneer work for the Gospel in Syria and Cilicia, especially in Galatia, in Asia, in Macedonia, in Achaia, and also in Illyricum. He had filled all these provinces with the preaching of the Gospel.

Outwardly considered, his work did not look very much like a triumphal procession. Listen to Paul's own summary description in 2 Cor. 11, 23-27: "Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as a fool, I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

Nevertheless it was a triumphal procession. In all cities through which Paul passed the strongholds of Satan had been pulled down, men had been brought to faith in Christ Jesus. They had been rescued out of the kingdom of darkness and transferred into God's marvelous light.

Paul thanks God for this.

You also hope that God will grant you success in your ministry. Do not look for outward success: financial success, great numbers, honor among men, popularity, and the like. The very opposite may be in store for you. The things just mentioned are not marks of success; really they may accompany utter spiritual failure.

Paul tells us in our text what factors, under God, made his ministry so eminently successful.

## I.

### The First Is that He Made Manifest the Savor of Christ's Knowledge

In his first letter to the Corinthians he wrote: "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Paul preached Christ crucified, and only Christ.

This did not come natural to Paul. He had been raised and trained as a Pharisee. He believed that every man must work out his own righteousness. So he lived very strictly according

to all ordinances of the Law. His life was blameless. And when Christians taught salvation through faith in Christ Jesus he persecuted them for it, and by all means tried to stamp out this, as he considered it, most pernicious heresy.

But when the Lord in His mercy checked him in his mad career, he learned that, what he had considered as gain was loss; the things of which he had been most proud were in reality nothing but shame. The only thing that counts is Christ crucified.

He preached Christ crucified: how God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Follow Paul on his mission journeys, listen to his sermons as they are recorded in the Book of Acts in full or in outline; read his letters, which he wrote to his various congregations: it is always Christ crucified whom he proclaims. No matter what problems puzzled those congregations, no matter what difficulties confronted them, Paul always pointed out the solution in Christ crucified.

Christ crucified was a sweet smelling sacrifice to God, a sacrifice by which the world was reconciled to God. God had laid the sins of us all on Christ, who by His sacrifice made atonement for them. Our entire guilt was wiped out by His death. The sweet odor of His sacrifice fully neutralized the stench of our sins, so that God no longer notices them, but rejoices in the sacrifice of His Son.

By spreading the knowledge of Christ Paul made manifest and spread the sweet savor of His sacrifice among the Gentiles.

Paul did nothing but this. There were the Greeks who boasted of their philosophy. Their Stoics and their Epicureans taught them how to obtain happiness by their own efforts. The two schools disagreed among themselves on what true happiness is, and what steps are necessary to achieve it; but they were agreed that all depends on man himself. Paul would not compromise with them. He would not blend the odor of their efforts with the sweet odor of Christ's sacrifice. He preached Christ in opposition to Greek philosophy. There were the Jews, particularly the Pharisees, who with painstaking care tried to observe the commandments of God in order to merit His favor. Over against them Paul preached nothing but the knowledge of Christ,

and vehemently denounced the Judaizers for adulterating the sweet odor of His sacrifice.

Since both Jews and Greeks opposed the sacrifice of Christ — the ones considered it as a stumblingblock to true righteousness, and the others as ruinous folly — it might appear as though the lonely witness of the all-sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice would be utterly routed with his message. He was not. On the contrary, if he had yielded or compromised, that would have spelled defeat; but since he persisted in manifesting the savor of the knowledge of Christ, God thereby granted him one grand triumphal procession.

Let Paul's example be an inspiration to you. The success of your office depends entirely on this factor that you limit your work to one thing: to lead your people to a knowledge of their Savior.

But will it not detract from your success if people reject the Gospel, and withdraw from you because you preach only Christ to them? Paul did not think so. He says in our text: "We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life."

Look at the all-decisive position which the Gospel of Christ crucified holds. God offers it to all men for their salvation. It is a power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. If any one accepts the promise of life which the Gospel holds out to him, he will not be disappointed. Salvation and life eternal are his. No death, no devil, no hell can take it from him. But if any one rejects the Gospel, then there is no other way open for him to escape his doom. He will perish. Such is God's arrangement.

Paul submitted to that arrangement. He restricted himself to proclaiming Christ, to make manifest the savor of His knowledge in every place, without allowing any admixture of human wisdom or human merit. Therefore his entire career of mission work was one grand triumphal procession, whether men were moved to accept his Gospel, or whether they rejected it to their own damnation. The Gospel was vindicated in every case as the only savor of life.



Learn from Paul to accord this unique position to the knowledge of Christ in your ministry. Then your work will be successful before God and in your own conscience. If you compromise the knowledge of Christ with other elements, then you change the Gospel of Christ into another Gospel which is not another, is no Gospel at all. And no matter how successful your work may appear to men's eyes, before God it will be a failure.

## II.

Paul now asks the very pertinent question: "And who is sufficient for these things?" They are, indeed, great things: to be a savor of death unto death to some, and a savor of life unto life to others: what more stupendous commission can we conceive? Well may one ask: And who is competent to achieve such great things?

In answering this question Paul mentions the second factor which under God made his ministry so eminently successful:

### He Preached the Word of God in Sincerity

He says in our text: "We are not as many which corrupt the word of God." Where our English Bible has the word "corrupt" Paul uses a Greek word that is difficult to translate. Some modern translations use the word "adulterate," or "peddle"; also to "haggle over" and to "huck" are suggested. The idea is to try to sell something, but not on its own merits. It may be by offering special inducements, as, prizes, bargain rates, and the like; or by covering up some defect; or in some other shady way.

Paul says that many do similar things to the Word of God. They know that the Word of God is not attractive to natural man, because it claims for itself an absolute authority, to which all must submit unconditionally; because it concludes all men under sin and allows no human merit; because it proclaims Jesus as the Son of God, who alone by His suffering and death atoned for our sin, and offers salvation as a free gift to all alike, to the respectable man as well as to the vilest scoundrel. And knowing that the Word of God is an offense to natural man, they try to make it more attractive by covering up or glossing over the most offensive features, at least for the time being, by offering the

Word in an appealing manner, *e. g.*, in a beautiful service with a rich liturgy, with insinuating music, elegant oratory, and the like. These things are thought to attract the people and make them willing to listen to the Word, which in itself they do not like.

Thus compromising the Word of God may, indeed, produce outward results. It may make people willing to come to church: not because the Word of God has taken hold of their hearts, but because they are attracted by the outward inducements. In fact, by trying to win people in such a way to tolerate the preaching of the Word we really close their hearts more tightly. If the Word were presented to them in its purity they would decline; but since the outward manner of presentation and the other embellishments appeal to them they are willing to listen even to the Word because of them. By your stress on such externals you are teaching the people to regard them as the most important thing, as the chief characteristic of the Word, while the truth of the Word remains hidden to them more deeply than ever just because of the accompanying attractions and your stressing of them.

God gave us His Word as the means for doing our work. His Word not only presents to us His wonderful truth, His grace and mercy, His salvation, His righteousness together with directions for obtaining these blessings; it not only offers and conveys and seals His truth to our heart: it also creates in us the very faith with which we appropriate the forgiveness of our sins and with which a new life is begun, a life of consecration and holiness.

If we, therefore, wish to attain success in our ministry, we must employ this means, the Word. The Gospel of Christ is a power of God unto salvation. If this Gospel, which offers forgiveness and peace to a conscience that is troubled by its sin, does not win the hearts, then nothing that you may add will do it. What greater blessing can you offer to a terror-stricken conscience than a removal of its guilt, a covering of its sin before the eyes of God?

If you add anything to the Gospel, if you substitute anything for the Gospel, if you cover up any part of the Gospel, you would show thereby that you yourself are not fully convinced of the

Gospel power, that you doubt its efficacy — for else, why should you offer other inducements? You would be acting as though you were ashamed of the Gospel, and had more confidence in some human device. For else, why not preach the Word in its purity? Outwardly you may be making strenuous propaganda for the Gospel, while inwardly you would be undermining it by your very efforts. “Hidden things of dishonesty,” secret shame, Paul calls such a procedure in another chapter of Second Corinthians.

Many temptations will come to you in your ministry to neglect the Word of God. Let me mention only the enthusiasm of the present time for the so-called Social Gospel, substituting a cure of the evils of the present world for an attack on the root of all evil, our sin and guilt. I mention also a softening of our attitude over against error, especially when found with people who are nominally Lutheran, a denial that Scripture passages which warn us not to fellowship with errorists apply to them; a tendency to co-ordinate our own educational efforts with those of the world and to integrate the two systems. Many more symptoms might be added.

In all trials and temptations remember how Paul answered the question: “And who is sufficient for these things?” *i. e.*, for making a triumphal procession out of his ministry, in these words: “For we are not as many which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.”

May God bless you in your work that you make manifest the sweet savor of the knowledge of Christ by preaching the Word of God without adulteration. He has promised to bless both you and them that hear you. Amen.

M.

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## THE LITURGICAL CRISIS IN WITTENBERG, 1524

It is generally conceded that a proper understanding of Luther's liturgical writings not only calls for careful study of the documents themselves, but also presupposes thorough familiarity with the general historical background as well as the particular circumstances under which the individual papers were written. One gains a far better understanding of the tentative *Von der Ordnung des Gottesdienstes in der Gemeinde* and the sober and thoughtful *Formula Missae* if one considers the disorderly excesses which Carlstadt had provoked in his misguided attempts to reform the worship of the Wittenberg congregation. Further light is thrown on the subject if one is aware of the difficult conditions under which Luther's friend Hausmann was laboring at Zwickau where he was opposing the radical tendencies of Muenzer and yet had no constructive and conservative counter-proposals to offer. These and other contributing factors usually receive ample consideration when this major liturgical work of Luther is under consideration.

Too little attention is, however, being given to a subsequent pamphlet of Luther, "Concerning the Abomination of the Canon of the Mass," (*Vom Greuel der Stillmesse*). It was an unprecedented and drastic step when Luther not only published but also translated into German that part of the Mass which contained the Consecration with the supposed transubstantiation of the elements into the Body and Blood of Christ. For this part was considered so sacred that in compliance with the rubrics it was said in a tone of voice so low as to be inaudible to the congregation — hence the German name: *Stillmesse*. It was even more serious a matter when Luther illustrated this text with a running commentary in which he exposed the idolatrous character of the prayers and the constant reference to the propitiatory sacrifice which was supposedly there being performed by the hands of the priest. For this was pungent and caustic comment, indeed, and withering criticism, such as Luther was capable of when thoroughly aroused. It was Luther at his best — or worst — depending on how one feels about the matter. But regardless

of any one's personal leanings, it is historically and liturgically an important document.

It is with a peculiar sense of unreality, therefore, that one reads the English translation of this pamphlet as it appears in Vol. VI of the Works of Martin Luther (Philadelphia Edition). For here we have the Canon alone, without Luther's comments: the object of criticism without the critique! Whether this procedure is justified by the remark of the editor, Dr. Paul Zeller Strodach, that Luther's "comments are not always in good spirit or good taste or fair," the reader may judge for himself by reading the unexpurgated version in some of the other available editions (*e. g.*, St. Louis, XIX, 1198-1213). Dr. Strodach finds the chief value of the document in this that it supplies the exact text of the Mass which was used by Luther. When he then concludes: "As our interest in this pamphlet is a liturgical one only, the Canon alone has been translated," one is tempted to ask whether the form of the text is to constitute the chief interest of the student of Lutheran liturgics, or whether subject matter and historical background are not even more important. It is with the intention of supplying this background, which in turn will enable one to judge the propriety of Luther's vehemence in speaking of the "Abomination of the Canon," that this article is written. \*)

The liturgical crisis which came to a head in Wittenberg in 1524 developed gradually. Luther's chief concern had been, and indeed always remained, about matters of doctrine. But for that very reason it was inevitable that he touched on practices which were inseparably connected with the prevailing forms of worship, particularly the withholding of the cup, the saying of private masses, and the manner in which the Sacrament had been turned into a propitiatory sacrifice. Against these errors Luther testified repeatedly and plainly in his sermons and writings, even after he

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\*) The material is drawn chiefly from the excellent general introduction to Vol. XIX of the St. Louis Edition of Luther's Works in which the editors incorporate many details to which the average reader has no ready access. The special introduction in Vol. XVIII of the Weimar Edition was also consulted, as were the Luther biographies of Koestlin and Kolde.

was confined to the Wartburg. The result was that things began to change in Wittenberg, in spite of the absence of Luther. In September, 1521, communion under both kinds was celebrated in the Parish Church. A month later the reading of masses in the Chapel of the Augustinian Monastery was discontinued. Even at the Castle Church it became impossible to keep up the daily program of masses because of numerous resignations of priests who no longer could reconcile these duties with their newly enlightened consciences.

Luther's elation over these quiet victories of the Word was soon disturbed by the excesses of a radical element which under the leadership of Carlstadt shattered the peace of Wittenberg with the violence of their reforms. This moved Luther to return to Wittenberg (March 6, 1522) where his famous Eight Sermons were soon instrumental in restoring order. The conservative character of his reformation was reestablished and vindicated. Radicalism was emphatically disavowed.

But by this same turn of events ultra-conservatism had also survived in Wittenberg. It soon became apparent that the Castle Church was to prove a stronghold in which was firmly entrenched a spirit of reaction which stubbornly resisted all reform of worship, even the conservative and evangelical changes advocated by Luther. What was to make matters more difficult was the fact that here Luther found himself constrained to attack an institution which was very dear to the heart of the Elector Frederic the Wise, the very man who had been such a staunch supporter at Worms and who had made the Wartburg a sheltering haven for Luther during the dangerous months that had followed.

The Castle Church, from whose very door Luther had launched his Ninety-five Theses in 1517, was a monument to the piety of Frederic the Wise. It was a church without a regular congregation, since the Parish Church served the citizens of Wittenberg and the Augustinian Chapel the Monastery and the University. Only when the Elector was in residence at Wittenberg was there a congregation which attended. Yet we are told that shortly before the above mentioned resignations this church was staffed with a college of eighty-three clerics of various degrees. It was an endowed church, maintained by lavish grants made by

the ancestors of Frederic, to which the Elector had made material additions. The original chapter consisted of fourteen prebendary canons, fourteen vicars, and a considerable number of lesser clergy. These were in charge of general devotions and a large program of special masses. To these Frederic added a "Lesser Choir" (in contrast to the other, the "Great Choir"), four priests, eight canons, and sixteen choirboys, whose sole assignment was to conduct devotional masses in honor of the Blessed Virgin. Another group was added by the Elector as late as 1519, this time for the purpose of a year round program of masses in commemoration of the Passion of Christ. Luther declined to write the orders for this project on the ground that there was already too much ceremonial and ritual. Spalatin states that at this time the number of masses per year amounted to 11,039. The annual consumption of candles was over 35,000 pounds. Twenty-nine sets of sacramental vessels were required, two of them being of solid gold. No statistics are available as to the number of sacred vestments, except that more than a hundred sets were of the finest and heaviest silk damask, richly embroidered with gold. As late as 1522 Frederic was still adding to the almost incredible number of sacred relics (over 5,000, cf. *Concordia Theol. Monthly*, December, 1943, p. 879) which were exhibited at this church and which made it a shrine that was visited by great crowds of pilgrims, particularly on the Day of All Saints (to whose memory the church was dedicated).

In view of these deeply rooted traits of character and this ingrained love of pomp and ritual the Elector was obviously going to be difficult when it came to applying the principles of the Reformation to this pet project. He had already proved that when the Deans of the two Choirs had complained of the manner in which their staffs had been depleted by the fact that some of their number had taken Luther's preaching to heart. For then Frederic had instructed them to make every effort to maintain their full program of masses. Nevertheless, before the close of 1522 Luther began testifying against the system as well as against the personal conduct of at least some of the clergy of All Saints, calling the Castle Church a "Beth Aven," a House of Idols. After February, 1523, the discussions turned around a practical problem, that of

finding a successor for the Dean of the Great Choir, who had died. Luther proposed Amsdorf who, however, felt conscience-bound to declare that he would move for a reform of worship, and whose nomination was therefore not approved by the Elector. Luther had also addressed a letter to the Provost of the chapter, Justus Jonas (who was against the continuation of the old forms) and also to the entire chapter. In this he called upon them to remove those customs which were clearly an offense against the Gospel. When the matter was reported to the Elector by some who opposed this demand, Frederic declared that there was to be no change. A similar letter written by Luther in July met with the same fate.

Almost immediately Luther began to treat the matter from the pulpit of the Parish Church. Thus the issue was made public, and became more urgent than ever. Now Jonas informed the Elector that he could no longer conform, would not even attend mass in the future, and that he was awaiting the decision of the Elector on his stand. Frederic's answer was that those canons who objected to serving in this capacity should resign. He seems to have modified this hasty decision, however, for on Michaelmas Day lessons from the Old Testament were read in place of the mass for souls. Nor were there any resignations.

But Luther was not satisfied. Since many of the objectionable features were still retained, the settlement savored of compromise. It is at this time that he published his *Formula Missae*, apparently not merely yielding at last to the persistent entreaties of his friend Hausmann, but showing what in his judgment constituted an evangelical mass and what he was practicing in his own church in Wittenberg. Not only did he remove the secretive Canon of the Mass, the mysterious *Stillmesse*, as well as all references to the intercession of the saints and to their supposed merits, but he also stressed the need of preaching, in order that the people might receive the instruction of which they were so sorely in need. And yet he preserved the basic structure and the historic elements of the service. One marvels at the moderation of the man who in the midst of such a tense controversy did not permit himself to be carried away to extremes. But that his basic position had undergone no change is apparent from the



way in which he entreats Hausmann in the closing paragraphs of this treatise not to be offended at the fact that the "sacrilegious Tophet" was still continuing at All Saints.

This was the state of affairs at the end of 1523. Matters might have remained in this unsatisfactory condition if a final crisis had not been precipitated by the action of one of the Deans who in the following year reverted to the Roman withholding of the cup in the communion of a lay person. Luther not only protested immediately, but demanded a final decision from the entire chapter, indicating that if it were not forthcoming, he would resort to sterner measures. Since the chapter supported its Dean and appealed the case to the Elector, the issue was now squarely joined. The Elector requested a statement from Luther. Luther's answer seems to have been a document which was subsequently published under the title, "Concerning the Abomination of the Canon of the Mass," in which he exposed the secret of the Canon and subjected it to his annihilating criticism. The editors of the Weimar edition consider this a resume of a sermon preached by Luther on Advent Sunday, 1524. This attack on the Canon of the Mass was made the substance of a final accusation against Luther by the clergy of All Saints, probably in a desperate attempt to retrieve the ground which they had lost. It was in vain, however, for Luther had the endorsement and support of the people, of the Augustinian Friars, and of the University. In a letter to the Elector the Dean of the Lesser Choir (not the one who was under fire) informed Frederic that he could no longer defend the old system, and a few days later the entire chapter signed the "New Order of Worship for the Castle Church at Wittenberg." The Elector gave silent consent. The New Order was inaugurated on Christmas Eve, 1524.

It had been a struggle that was not decided until the very last. More was at stake than we can determine at this distance. On the very day when Luther had preached his sermon against the Canon of the Mass, only four weeks before the end of the struggle, he had informed Spalatin that he would leave Wittenberg if the mass were to be retained. But now ultra-conservatism and liturgical reaction were disavowed, as extremism

and radicalism had been before. The "Golden Mean" was emerging as the ideal of the Lutheran Liturgy.

This episode had an interesting and instructive sequel. The Elector Frederic died in May of the following year, 1525. He was succeeded by his brother John, "the Constant," the Confessor of Augsburg. There may be some connection between this change of rulers and the fact that the elaborate forms of worship at the Castle Church were simplified still more, *e. g.*, by discontinuing the use of the rich and ornate Eucharistic vestments of which its college of clerics had such a plentiful supply. But in one respect there was no change. Every service that was held was still a mass. Although it had been agreed in the previous year that the Sacrament was to be celebrated only on Sundays and high festivals, and then only if there were communicants who desired it, and though, as has been said above, there was no regular congregation which belonged to All Saints, yet it would often happen that there was just one communicant. It soon became clear that a few diehard members of the chapter had made this arrangement among themselves in order to insure that the service would always end with communion. Since this was obviously not a matter of ministering to a spiritual need, but rather of upholding a liturgical form, the question was opened up once more, with the result that it was agreed that henceforth there were to be communion services at the Castle Church only when the Elector or some members of his Court were present and desired it. Otherwise the clergy of All Saints were to partake of the Sacrament in the Parish Church with the Wittenberg Congregation.

This might be interpreted as an indication of a petty and vindictive spirit on the part of Luther. But Koestlin correctly points out that an important principle was at stake. In his conservative revision of the Liturgy Luther had retained the thought that the service comes to its climax in the Communion. But this should not be maintained as an empty form, nor should it be given the status of a mandatory requirement. For Luther the very greatness of the Sacramental Gift presupposed a genuine, unfeigned demand for its administration.

Our generation can learn much from this attitude of Luther. If the Liturgical Movement of our day will see its mission in

reviving the interest of the Church in the Sacrament which has been entrusted to it, and in stimulating an increased desire in our congregations for the blessings which are thereby conferred upon us, and if the exponents of this movement will content themselves with patient Scriptural indoctrination and evangelical invitation and persuasion as their means for attaining this end, then they will certainly be rendering a service of the highest order. And if such efforts will lead to a situation where it becomes advisable to provide more frequent opportunities for communion, such steps will surely be welcomed by all concerned. But if the argument for a more frequent celebration of the Sacrament is to consist of attempts to discredit our present Sunday worship because it often is "merely" a service of the Word, if the communion is treated as a liturgical requirement which is needed either for the sake of completeness of the service or for the sake of ancient tradition, then we are on the way to the ritualism against which Luther protested so vigorously.

Dr. Hermann Sasse of Erlangen has summed it up in an article contributed to the latest issue of *Una Sancta*: "It has nevertheless become more abundantly clear that there can be no worship revival without a rediscovery of the Real Presence. The worshippers must know what they receive in the Holy Communion before they can desire it again. It is not the beauty of the Communion Liturgy that can renovate the celebration of Holy Communion, which has fallen into desuetude even in some Lutheran churches. That can be accomplished only by a hunger and a thirst after that which is received at the Lord's Table. Only faith in the Sacramental Gift to which the Catechism testifies can renovate our celebrations of Holy Communion and therewith our services. Everything else will remain mere fruitless religious estheticism which one can have in other religions as well."

This recital of the events which transpired in Wittenberg during these critical years may serve another purpose, namely toward an evaluation of the relative merits of the two major liturgical works of Luther, his *Formula Missae* of 1523 and the *Deutsche Messe* of 1526. For some time it has been the fashion to praise the former at the expense of the latter. The Latin order is said to show Luther at his liturgical best, while the

German is considered inferior by far. Strodach, in his introduction to Vol. VI of the Works of Martin Luther, considers it a pity that Luther did not stop with the *Formula*. He criticizes the *Messe* for what he calls "a forced and entirely over-emphasized introduction of the congregational hymn, with its kindred versification of liturgical parts, — the poorest versification of which Luther was guilty." This harsh judgment is supported by Reed in his newly published book, though in considerably less strident terms. It would seem, indeed, that the events which lie between the writing of these two works were of such an irritating nature, particularly because of the stubborn character of the opposition, that they might well account for a drastic change in the attitude of Luther, amounting practically to an abandonment of his earlier moderate and conservative position.\*) That is the plausible theory upon which the foregoing judgment is based. But a closer examination will prove that the facts do not justify this conclusion.

It is a mistake to assume (as Strodach does) that the controversy with the clergy of the Castle Church came after the writing of the *Formula*. It has been shown above that this document was published shortly after the first phase of that bitter controversy had already been fought, at a time when Luther was still deeply dissatisfied because the entire settlement savored of compromise. Yet he did not permit these matters to affect his judgment when it came to setting down the principles for a proper and evangelical form of worship. Another period of strife followed, and led to his writing *Concerning the Abomination of the Canon of the Mass*. There Luther did relieve his mind of considerable accumulated tension. But when the *Messe* was written the controversy was over. The outcome had been entirely to Luther's satisfaction. The new Elector was in complete sympathy with Luther's stand. The work that was done in preparation for the *Messe* was very much to Luther's liking. For now he was writing one after another of his immortal hymns, among them *A Mighty Fortress*, and Johann Walther and Conrad Rupff were combining their musical knowledge and training with Luther's

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\*) Strodach calls the *Deutsche Messe* a "break with the conservative past in spirit and in fact." (Works of Martin Luther, VI, p. 121.)

native talent in fitting the ancient chants to the translated liturgical texts. Whether the metric versions of the Creed and the Sanctus are merely crude efforts, or whether the quality which offends the modern critic is one of boldness and vigor, is after all a matter of taste. It was the privilege of this writer recently to hear Luther's *Jesaia, dem Propheten, das geschah* (from the *Deutsche Messe*) sung by a well trained choir. The impression it made on us was definitely not one of crudity, but of overpowering majesty.

It is likewise a mistake to draw unwarranted conclusions from the fact that the *Messe* was entirely in German and made far-reaching provisions for granting the congregation an extensive active role in the service by the singing of hymns and liturgical parts. This is by no means an indication that Luther was yielding to a popular demand of which he really did not approve. Nor does it constitute a lapse from the more ideal liturgical plane of the *Formula*. On the contrary, the writing of a German mass in which the congregation should have a voice is merely the carrying out of a plan already formulated and announced in the earlier work. For in the concluding section of the *Formula Missae* Luther expresses the wish that as many of the songs as possible be in the vernacular, and that thus an increasing measure of participation in the service be assured to the congregation "UNTIL THE ENTIRE MASS SHALL BE MADE VERNACULAR." In the meantime he hoped that German poets might be moved to work out "pious poems" for this purpose.

In order to be properly understood the two great liturgical writings of Luther should not be set against each other, one being favored at the expense of the other, but they should be recognized as what they truly are, successive steps in a carefully planned and clearly unified program for a sorely needed reform of worship.

A final matter for our consideration deals with the tendency which crops out in almost every liturgical movement, namely to concern one's self unduly with punctilious matters of form, to make much of garb and ceremony, to bow before the authority of ancient tradition, and to neglect the underlying problem of doctrine. Lest we be misunderstood, let it be said that we do not mean to imply that every student of liturgy is preoccupied with such external and superficial matters, or that this study in

itself will lead to such ill-conceived results. But if we draw one last comparison between the things which interested Luther and those which were favored by his ritualistic opponents, there can be no uncertainty as to our attitude toward these symptoms of traditionalism whenever and wherever they may arise. Nor can there be any doubt as to the direction in which such a movement leads. Dr. Sasse states it very clearly in the article which has already been mentioned: "If one does not take the doctrinal content of the Liturgy seriously, all liturgical restoration will remain an external thing, a mere borrowing of formulas, rites, and ecclesiastical forms which one can find done much better in a Roman Catholic church."

We are frank to say that much is being said and done in these matters that we do not like, much that is symptomatic of an unsound trend. Why must we copy the speech of Rome and speak of a "Tre Ore Service"? Why not use the vernacular, — good plain English words? Why adopt the Roman or High Church collar and vest for street wear? Why has it suddenly become "Blessed \* Martin Luther?" Why set one's self apart from the rank and file of Lutherans by an ostentatious genuflection and "signing" one's self in the presence of the Altar? Why do our conferences become "Retreats" and our books of prayer "Breviaries"? Why the persistent efforts to reintroduce the Elevation, or to emphasize "the sacrificial element" in the Sacrament? We know well that the prayers of praise and thanksgiving with which Christians receive the Body and Blood of their Lord *are* a sacrifice that is well-pleasing to God. But surely, we do not *offer* them with that thought in mind, for then they cease to be what they should always remain, truly humble expressions of gratitude for the undeserved mercy of God.

Why should we seek our liturgical ideals in the traditions of Rome, when we have a better source? Let us hold fast to our good, sound, evangelical, Lutheran precedent. It demonstrates an ideal that follows the sober middle way. It is the ideal of the "Golden Mean," as Dr. Fuerbringer so aptly called it. That is our Lutheran heritage.

E. REIM.

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\*) Merriam-Webster, Def. 5: *R. C. Ch.* Beatified.

## THE END OF CUIUS REGIO EIUS RELIGIO

### The Implications of the Formula

The formula *cuius regio eius religio* first appeared on the stage of political and religious history as a recognized doctrine of politics in the Religious Treaty of Augsburg, 1555. Here it was raised by the consent of the Lutheran Princes of the Empire, for the Calvinist branch of Protestantism was excluded, to the dignity of a principle in the affairs of Church and State and accepted by the Catholic Emperor Charles V as a politically expedient concession for the intended peace of the realm. For a hundred years this unhappy enunciation controlled the religious and political theory of government, not merely in Germany, but throughout Western Europe and made its last ineffectual and vitiated sally for control in the Treaty of Westphalia, 1648.

It would probably be an unhistorical judgment to insist that the churchmen and statesmen of that time should have foreseen the bloody role this vicious formula was about to play in the tragic struggle for religious freedom, the divorcement of religion from the political destinies of the state, and the right of the Christian man to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience. Nevertheless, the adoption of the fatal formula demonstrates rather conclusively the inexorability of the processes of history. Even the Church, against its better knowledge, cannot escape the struggle for power between the contending forces and factions in an immoral society. Unhappily, in its social environment it only too frequently subordinates its transcendental purpose to the immediate exigencies of the time and social pressures.

The fact that "he that is spiritual judgeth all things" (1 Cor. 2, 15; cf. also 1 Thess. 5, 21) implies just that. The Christian Church having to deal with men in society, although in this society but not of it, must instruct the whole man in his total obligations and hence it must be alert not only to the immediate, external tensions in society, but also to the far more subtle forces and trends in the area of the social and political intangibles, the totality of whose ultimate effect is cumulative and continuous, rather than spontaneous and ephemeral. This is not advocating the modern idea of socializing the Gospel to make it fit and

acceptable to the erstwhile ideologies and ethics of the social order. On the contrary, it must declare the whole will of God to sinful man and evaluate the social institutions and ideologies in relation to that will, without assuming, however, the obligation to construct a Christian social order.

The dominant influence and the immediacy of the material in the lives of men must be recognized as a reality. Even for Christians it means a constant struggle to slough off the daily concerns of existence and substitute therefore the celestial goal of salvation as paramount. There is no process of segmentation whereby the transcendental and the material can be compartmentalized, for even going out of the world, as did the hermits, was not successful. Under the circumstances honesty of purpose and consistency of effort or even the strictest orthodoxy are not sufficient to meet the impact of a bad, exhausted methodology regarding environmental influences which engross men's minds and shape the direction of their lives. Hence in matters of this nature, as the secularization of religion and the modern ideology of the mass man, it is never a question of the imperative, but always a question of understanding cause and effect and of methodology. In this area the confusion arises and embroils Christianity in tragic consequences, as did the formula of *cuius regio eius religio*.

### The Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Princes

Charles V had never quite abandoned the lingering hope of reconciling the religious differences between the Lutherans and the Catholics and re-establishing the unity of the Empire. For obvious reasons religious disagreements even then were recognized as potential sources of political disorder in the body politic and incompatible with the unity of the realm. Under the political conceptions of the times churchmen and statesmen alike held the belief that unity of doctrine ought to be maintained by the authority of the state and was an indispensable condition of the public order. In viewing the situation then obtaining the historical fact must be recognized that for a thousand years the tradition prevailed in Western Christendom that civilization under the influence of the Papacy constituted an organic *Respublica Chris-*



*tiana* within whose frame both the Church and the State functioned and were incorporated. The *regnum* and *sacerdotium* were conjoined in the *plenitudo potestatis* of the person of the Pope who held himself to be the head of this *Corpus Christianum*.

The conflicts arising within this totality between the papacy and the *Imperium* were primarily jurisdictional. No one, whether theologian or civilian, seriously undertook to dispute the doctrine of the papal *plenitudo potestatis* prior to Marsiglio in his *Defensor Pacis*. But even he in his argument did not question the unity of the *Corpus Christianum*. His thesis was an attempt to assign the proper place to the clergy and the Church on the one side and to secular authority on the other, granting to the State the jurisdictional prerogative to impose a penalty against heretical religion within the State. God's law could thus be supplemented by the coercive power of the government.

The Reformation did not instantly substitute a new conception in the jurisdictional relation of the State and the Church. For Lutheran scholars vigorously to assert that it is to the great glory of the Reformers to have evolved and understood the modern conception of separation of Church and State, is not only reading history in retrospect, but in reality is putting into the thought of the Reformers a content which was wholly foreign and inconceivable in their thinking. In this respect the Preface to the Confession clearly recognizes the jurisdiction of the Emperor and the Diet in matters of religion. Nowhere is there any denial of this jurisdiction but merely a demand of legal co-equality for their confession with that of the Catholics.

Nevertheless, there is a novelty in the demand for equality, although it may be doubted that either Luther or Melancthon envisioned its full implication of a dual religious system in the state, in view of their opposition to the Calvinists. They were determined at most to substitute the secular power and authority for the popish hierarchy. Yet, in this approach lies the approval of the formula a quarter of a century later. Both parties, no doubt, desired peace and the acceptance of *cuius regio eius religio* indicates much more than a mere escape from a political impasse, although this desire was dictated by divergent motivations. The Lutheran princes, once they had renounced their passive obedience

to the Emperor, tenaciously demanded the right of religious autonomy, not exclusively for the sake of religion, but also for the purpose of maintaining their political independence gained through the Reformation. On the other hand, Ferdinand who represented the Emperor at the Diet was determined to avoid further bloodshed, despite the insistence of the papal nuncio to the contrary, since he hoped to inherit from his brother a unified empire. Thus while this agreement constituted in fact a political compromise, it cannot in any way be construed in the modern sense as a divorcement of religion from politics. It merely terminated the traditional idea of the universality of the *Corpus Christianum* and made the nationalized Church henceforth the political pawn in the struggle for dynastic power.

#### Luther's Position and Progress

In order to understand the position of the Lutheran princes so shortly after the death of Luther and the complacent acceptance by the Lutheran churches of the pernicious principle that the unity of the political organization demands the control of the faith of the citizen, it is necessary to examine briefly the pronouncements of Luther and his progressive advancement from one political position to another. In his pamphlet *On Secular Authority* he expressed far in advance of his time the sound principle concerning the treatment of the modern understanding of religious dogma and doctrine on heresy as follows:

Heresy can never be kept off by force. For that another tool is needed, and it is another quarrel and conflict than that of the sword. God's Word must contend here. If that avail nothing, temporal power will never settle the matter, though it fill the world with blood.<sup>1</sup>

The substance of the Christian religion lay for Luther in the inner experience of faith; and thus on the basis of the above clear and unmistakable pronouncement, which could be duplicated many times in substantially the same form and intent, the logical and consistent result should have been religious freedom for the individual and a separation of religion from politics. But Luther's theory was as one born nearly two centuries out of time, for

<sup>1</sup>) Werke, Weimar Ed., Vol. XI, p. 268.

he himself could not escape the thrall of tradition, and certainly as a man he was enmeshed in the ideologies and tensions of his time and environment.

Although nothing was farther from his intention than to make the prince and government the judge of heresy and he would have regarded a national Church as a religious monstrosity,<sup>2</sup> nevertheless, his concession to secular authority leads straight to the principle of *cuius regio eius religio*. Not with his consent to be sure, but as the inevitable consequences of a wrong methodology. In his tract *On Good Works* he gave expression to the religious and traditional reverence for authority and saw in the secular regime, as instituted of God, only a benevolent protector and guide for the Christian Church:

But this would be the best, and also the only remedy remaining, if kings, princes, nobility, cities and communities themselves began and opened a way for reformation, so that the bishops and clergy who now are afraid, would have reason to follow.<sup>3</sup>

Just before the above quotation in the same tract he had said of the great merit of good works — which expression had certainly been quickly appropriated by the politically minded nobility — as follows:

I would rather suffer a prince doing wrong than a people doing right. It is in no wise proper for anyone who would be a Christian to set himself up against the government, whether it act justly or unjustly. There are no better works than to obey and serve all those who are set over us as superiors. For this reason also disobedience is a greater sin than murder, unchastity, theft and dishonesty, and all that those include.<sup>4</sup>

Of course, it must be recognized that Luther was first and foremost a theologian, concerned with God's revealed plan for the salvation of souls, and only incidentally when confronting an

<sup>2</sup>) Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*, p. 360.

<sup>3</sup>) *On Good Works*, Translated by Lambert, Werke, Weimar Ed., Vol. VI, p. 258.

<sup>4</sup>) Quoted by Preserved Smith, *The Age of the Reformation*, p. 594ff.

actual emergency in the social order did he give serious thought to politics. Unlike Calvin and Melancthon he never evolved any consistent, systematic theories of law and government, as they obtained in the social and political order by virtue of the fact that human beings are destined to live in association. This would be under the circumstances quite the normal process, for these things he held to be irrelevant to salvation. Hence this omission should not be charged to him as a delinquency anymore than one would think of accusing the writers of the New Testament of a similar omission, for not having constructed a systematic theory of social and political institutions.

After the Peasant War and as late as November, 1539, we find Luther solemnly warning the Elector of Saxony against active participation in the formation of a League then under contemplation for the protection of the Reformers and their cause and against any attempt to resist the Emperor. He posited his opposition on the constitutional law of the realm without stopping to inquire where the source of the constitutional tradition might lie. We quote the conclusion of a letter in which he joined with others:

Und befinden, dass vielleicht nach kaiserlichen und weltlichen Rechten, etliche möchten schliessen, dass man in solchem Falle möchte wider Kaiserliche Majestät sich zur Gegenwehr stellen, sonderlich weil Kaiserliche Majestät sich verpflichtet und vereidet, niemand mit Gewalt anzugreifen, sondern bei aller vorigen Freyheit zu lassen, wie denn die Juristen handeln von den Repressalien und Diffidation. Aber nach der Schrift will sichs in keinem Weg ziemen, dass sich jemand, wer ein Christ sein will, wider die Oberkeit setze, Gott gebe sie thun Recht oder Unrecht; sondern ein Christ soll Gewalt und Unrecht leiden, sonderlich von seiner Oberkeit. Denn obgleich Kaiserliche Majestät Unrecht thut und ihr Pflicht und Eid übertrifft, ist damit sein Kaiserlich Oberkeit und seiner Unterthanen Gehorsam nicht aufgehbt, weil das Reich und die Kurfürsten ihn für Kaiser halten und nicht absetzen \* \* \* \* und Summa Sünde hebt Gehorsamkeit und Oberkeit nicht auf; aber

die Strafe hebt sie auf, das ist, wenn das Reich und die Kurfürsten einträchtiglich den Kaiser absetzen, dass er nimmer Kaiser wäre.<sup>5</sup>

From a reading of this letter it becomes abundantly plain that Luther's earlier application of the principle of obedience has undergone a change. The matter of obedience is no longer a unilateral obligation on the part of the subject, but also the ruler is bound by the law of the realm and his oath of office. If the Emperor violates the constitutional law and his oath, those who have the power and obligation under that same constitution may depose him. However, Luther is not ready to concede that the Christian, an individual citizen, acquires any such right, but solely on the basis of the law. The individual Christian and the Church must still obey and suffer.

But within the year he had completely bridged the gap between theory and practical exigencies of the social and political order under the law. In 1531, he wrote his pamphlet, *Warnung an seine lieben Deutschen*, in which he admitted that the decision on matters of law must be left to the jurists, whose duty it is to interpret the law of the empire. When they have rendered their decision on what the law is then the individual Christian has the right to refuse obedience. He then says, predicating his advice upon the interpretation of the lawyers: "But this is my faithful advice. Should the Emperor issue a call to arms against our party for the purpose of enforcing the claims of the pope or would carry on war against our doctrine, then in such case no person should answer the call and become a party thereto and obey the Emperor." (Writer's translation.)

Further light is shed upon the advice which Luther gave to the princes, if the Emperor should overstep his authority, by the following. While Luther, Melancthon, Bugenhagen and others were at Torgau, in October, 1530, there was formally placed before them a statement from a number of jurists under what circumstances it might be lawful to resist the Emperor as the Supreme Authority. It appears that the opinion of the jurists

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<sup>5</sup>) Edition De Wette, Luthers Briefe, Vol. III, p. 560.

was drawn from the *Sachsenspiegel*. In reply Luther and his colleagues said:

Uns ist ein Zetel fürgetragen, daraus wir befinden, was die Doktores der Rechte schliessen auf die Frage, in welchen Fellen man muge die Oberkeit widerstehen. Wo nu das bey denselbigen Rechtsdoktoren oder verstandigen gegründet ist, und wir gewislich in solchen Fellen sehen, in welchen, wie sie anzeigen, man muge die Oberkeit widerstehen, und wir alle Zeit gelehrt haben, dass man weltlich Recht solle lassen gehen, gelten und halten, was sie vermugen, und das Evangelion nicht wider die weltliche Recht leret, so können wir's nicht mit der Schrift anfechten, wo man sich des Falls weren musste, es sei gleich der Kaiser in eigener Person, oder wer es thut unter seinem Namen . . . so wil sichs gleichwol zimen, dass man sich russte und als auf eine Gewalt, so plotzlich sich erheben mochte, bereit sei, wo sichs denn nach Gestalt und Leuffte der Sache leichtlich begeben kann.

Denn was wir bisher geleret, stracks nicht wider zustehen der Oberkeit, haben wir nicht gewusst, das solch's der Oberkeit Rechte selbs geben, welchen wir doch allenthalben zu gehorchen vleissig geleret haben. (Quoted by K. Müller, *Luthers Aeusserungen über das Recht des Widerstandes gegen den Kaiser*, Beilage 3.)

In a letter written to Lazarus Spengler of Nürnberg, 1531, he says that he had heard that it was reported that Luther and the Reformers had withdrawn their previous advice that the Emperor must not be resisted, Luther answers to the effect, that they were now informed that the Imperial Law permitted resistance in the case of obvious injustice. He himself had no opinion of his own as to the law, but must leave that to the jurists to decide. If this was the law of the Empire, they were no doubt bound to obey it.

Weiter, wo es zum Kriege kommt, da Gott für sei, so wil ich das Teil so sich wider die mörderische und blutgyrige Papisten zur Were setzt, nicht auffrührisch gescholten haben, noch schelten lassen, sondern wills lassen

gehen, dass sie es eine Notwere heissen, und wil sie damit ins Recht und zu den Juristen weisen. (Weimar Ed., Vol. xxx, page 111, Warnung an seine lieben Deutschen. Luther-Briefwechsel, Ed. Enders, Vol. VIII, page 343-344.)

Another formal statement signed by Luther, Justus Jonas, Bugenhagen and Melanchthon, 1536, appears in Melanchthon's *Opera Omnia in Corpus Reformatorum*, Vol. III, Epistle 1458, page 129:

Nu ist erstlich klar, dass jede Oberkeit über andere gleich Oberkeit, oder 'privatos', schuldig ist ihre Christen und die Lehre zu schützen. Hie ist weiter die Frage, was einem Fürsten widder seinen Herren, als den Kaiser, in solchem Falle zu thun gebühre. Darauf ist auch gleiche Antwort. Erstlich diewohl das Evangelium bestätigt weltliche, leibliche Regiment, so soll sich ein idlicher Christlicher Fürst gegen seinen Herrn oder Kaiser halten vermöge darselbigen natürlichen und weltlichen Regiment und Ordnung.

Wenn der Kaiser nicht Richter ist, und will gleich wohl Straf üben, als 'pendente appellatione', so heisst sein tätlich Vornehmen, 'notaria injuria'. Nu ist dieses natürliche Ordnung, dass man sich schützen möge und die Gegenwehr gebrauchen wieder solch 'notariam injuriam'. Darum, so der Kaiser etwas thätlich vornimmt vor dem concilio pendente appellatione, in Sachen welche die Religion betreffen, und den zugesagten Frieden wahrhaftiglich und ohne Sophisterei belangen: so ist er zu halten als eine Privat-person und ist solche 'injuria' wider die appellation und zugesagten Frieden angenommen, eine öffentliche 'notaria injuria'.

Though we are left with the impression that Luther sanctioned and advocated armed resistance against the Emperor only on constitutional grounds, this was readily forgotten by the princes in the midst of the struggle. They thought only of the defense of their Evangelical cause. And where that was the case, the full application of the formula of *cuius regio eius religio* was only a further short step. But for this proposition there is a

corollary which may be expressed in the formula, *religio regionis religio regis*. Rulers were not always concerned about the religion of their individual subjects and the salvation of their souls, but definitely favored the religious convictions of the majority, or at any rate the religion of the most vociferous, because it was politically wise and expedient to do so. Moreover, this political theory in its ultimate effect constituted one of the primary factors in arresting the progress of the Reformation from embracing the whole Christian Church, in definitely giving aid and comfort to the Catholic hierarchy in the struggle to hold the remainder of its territory, and in promoting the achievement of the Jesuit Order to recapture much lost territory in the Counter Reformation.

Churches no less than princes were frequently and actively engaged in procuring their own political advantage and maintaining their power. To oppose the erstwhile dominant religion in the realm was considered blasphemy against the Church and an unlawful disruption of the public order and no less a detriment to the Church than to the State. That the Lutheran faith did not escape this social progress from subordination to domination, even in the matter of heresy, may be clearly inferred from the round robin issued by the clergy of Magdeburg, in 1550, and addressed to the Christian churches:

Wir wollen aber uns fürnehmen zu beweisen, dass eine christliche Oberkeit mag und soll ihre Unterthanen verteidigen auch widder eine höhere Oberkeit, so die Leute mit Gewalt zwingen, und Gottes Wort und rechte Gottes Dienst zu verleugnen und Abgötterei anzunehmen.<sup>6</sup>

#### A Century of Religious Wars and the New Theory of the State

The century from 1555 to 1648 having adopted as the *raison d'état cuius regio eius religio*, was without doubt, the most gruesome and perverted in the annals of Christian thought. In the emphasis on religious warfare it must not be assumed that in practical effect the formula evolved in the Treaty of Augsburg

<sup>6</sup>) Quoted by Carlyle, In *Medieval Political Theory in the West*, p. 286, note 2.



had its repercussions only in Germany and ended with the Thirty Year's War. On the contrary such a perspective would be altogether too narrow. Its principles embraced every European nation impregnated with the ideas of the Reformation and became the constitutional norm for the ecclesiastical and political policy of the state. It was clearly an attempt to import into the State the ideology of the Israelitic theocracy where disloyalty to the State was blasphemy against Jehovah. The literature of the time abounds with repetitious references to personages and incidents of the Old Testament in proof that the State is God's direct institution, as was the Church, and therefore it must not only protect religion, it must sponsor and advance true doctrine.

However, it is not our intention to discuss the physical aspects of the religious wars of this period. These facts can be found in any textbook. Our intention is to trace social and political ideas and their impact upon the Christian Church. Hence, before proceeding farther in our investigation to discover the new ideas, tendencies, and movements in this world, it is quite important for comparative purposes to advert once more to the position of Luther. He had indicated precisely the area of activity for Church and State in matters of heresy. On the question of absolute and passive obedience to secular authority, he had conceded the implicit right to resistance and even deposition of the Emperor, if he violated his oath of office and refused compliance with the constitutional prescriptions. In other words, he had substituted a regimen of law for ruled and ruler, instead of the arbitrary will of the ruler regardless of law.

Although Luther's perspicacity into the reality of things was never pursued to its logical end, yet this view established in the progress of political theory two basic principles: First, no emperor, ruler, or king is above the constitutional law of the state and his oath of office, or to use the phrase of the Civilians, he is not any longer to be regarded as *princeps legibus solutus*; secondly, although less precisely, the individual Christian may refuse obedience to secular powers, when his religious convictions are the object of the attack. Thus in the orderly process of social and political development the century here under review should have compelled the conclusion in Lutheran thinking that man

functions in a dual capacity in the social and political order. He is bound by the social institutions of time in his secular existence, but transcends time in his divinely preordained destiny for eternity. In the one area the state and secular institutions function by trial and error and are the result of social experience; in the other the divine institution of the Church functions by revelation.

Therefore, in the evolution of the idea of freedom from the state-control of religion and in the development of the new conception of religious liberty and of the separation of religion from institutionalism and animosities the contribution of theological thinkers was admittedly inconsequential. Progress toward and consummation of an explicit doctrine of separation must be credited to the Civilians, who were not so much interested and motivated in securing peace for the Church as they were in stabilizing the political foundations of the State. But it must not be inferred that the tendency ripened at once into maturity. A new idea is a delicate plant and needs the utmost care and cultivation. Its final fruition came in the constitutionalism of America through the enlightened rationalism of Jefferson despite the opposition from the politically entrenched religion. Hence the theory was juridical and not theological. The dominant concept of the Christian religion is the love of God. The dominant characteristic of society and the social institution of the State is the sanction and coercion of the law. In their antithesis neither the State nor the Church can adopt the function of the other without denying its specific purpose and attributes.

#### Pacta Sunt Servanda

Although the inception of the emerging theory of State and its true functions predates the current century of *cuius regio eius religio* and has its roots in the controversy between the Canonists and Civilians regarding the *plenitudo potestatis* of the Pope, the Reformation transferred the dialectics to the political arena. Throughout the controversy thereafter the question was one of jurisdiction and authority between the Church and the State concerning the enforcement of doctrine by the latter, while previously the issue was the control of the Church over the civil law of the State.

As the limitations of each institution in the social process were gradually defined and each relegated to its true position in the social order, a definite ethical basis justifying the coercive power of the State became imperative, if society was not to dissolve into anarchy or wilful dictatorship by whosoever commanded the power. *Pacta sunt servanda* furnished the new ethical pattern and the substitute for the old concept of *plenitudo potestatis*, expressed in the idea of *princeps legibus solutus est*. Man by his very nature was not only an individual personality, but also a "social animal," predestined to live in society. In the social aggregate there was no escape from the moral law of doing unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Since we are concerned to trace the progress of an idea in the transition from the old to a new political philosophy, which eventually found universal acceptance, it would seem most expedient to concentrate attention on the advocates who succeeded in leaving the imprint of their philosophy on the political order. Since this essay deals with the end of an era, it cannot be concerned at this point with a Christian judgment of ultimate values as they now affect the political ideologies of the modern world. They were selected as exhibits to demonstrate the dynamics of social progress terminating for all times the medieval idea of a *Respublica Christiana*. We shall find that they successfully initiated and instilled a substantial content into the abstractions of toleration, sovereignty, the rule of law, and the consent of the governed. The idea of contract is implicit in each of these terms and hence the ethical obligation in the social institution of the State is not dictated by the Christian religion of love but solely by a political imperative. *Pacta* are matters of mutual consent between individuals or in relation to the social community, while religion implies a relationship to God transcending external, social institutions and systems. Therefore, law cannot reach the situation by coercion.

### Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos

Although others, like Machiavelli, had wrestled with the problem, it may still be asserted with considerable confidence that this is the first serious effort at a philosophical inquiry into the

theory of the state digressing from the prevailing Aristotelean conception of the Middle Ages. The authorship of the *Vindiciae* is still a controversial question, but its influence upon the political world is beyond question. It was probably written by the Frenchman Philippe du Plessis-Mornay about 1575. It was not free from theological implications and bias in its attempts to harmonize the two kingdoms into a social unity. "The whole book contemplated a situation in which the prince was of one religion and a substantial number of his subjects were of another."<sup>7</sup> The author had not yet arrived at a point in his thinking where he could envision a state which could take a neutral attitude toward religious truth and pure doctrine. Nevertheless, the significance of the *Vindiciae* lies in the contract-consent theory as the basis of government, as opposed to the absolute right of the ruler to dictate the law of the State and the faith of his subjects. He is bound by the pact which he must obey.

It sets up the thesis of a tri-partite agreement in which God is the one party and the king and the people jointly constitute the other party. Out of this contractual arrangement emerges the community as the Church. In the administration of secular affairs the agreement is between the king and the people. How this agreement comes about he fails to explain. But through this compact the State is created as a social organization, and in this organization resides the ultimate sovereignty of the State which can make the laws, determine the form of its constitution and government, and by whose consent the king rules. Hence if the king violates his solemn pact with the people, he forfeits the obedience of his subjects, who may resist and even depose him, not individually, but through the representatives of the people.

This conclusion is rather closely related to Luther's later view of the legal authority of the Electors and the representatives of the Estates assembled in a Diet, who would have the power to remove the Emperor from office for cause. Luther denied the right of resistance to the individual simply in his status as an individual citizen, but in his status as a Christian clothed with magisterial authority he could and had the right to act. Likewise

<sup>7</sup>) Sabine, A History of Political Theory, p. 387.

the author of the *Vindiciae* denies the right of action and resistance to the individual, but in his capacity as representative of the sovereign he has the right to take action if the compact has been violated by the king. This agreement between the people and the king, either implicitly or explicitly, constitutes the law and comes from the people and not from the king by virtue of his office or any divine right. This law can be changed only by and with the consent of the sovereign people either directly or through their representative. *Lex facit regem* and only in accordance with this *lex* can the king dispose of the lives and property of his subjects.

### The Republic of Jean Bodin

The night is darkest before the dawn and the advent of a new day. And so three years after the bloody night of St. Bartholomew the two great epoch-making books appeared which proclaimed a new era in political thought: The *Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos* and the *Republic*. This second monument dedicated to the science of government, which the passage of time has not effaced, is the *Six Livres de la Republique* of Jean Bodin, generally cited under the abbreviated title of the *Republic*.

In the current terminology of today Jean Bodin would probably be dubbed a liberal-conservative in politics and a modernist in religion. No man knew whether he espoused the cause of the *Politiques* or that of the *Monarchomachs*, and likewise in religion no man knew whether he was Catholic or Protestant. Some of his enemies even charged that he was a Jew or an infidel. However, the fact remains that he stood above momentary political opportunism and avoided the bitter animosities and the partisan, religious conflicts. And while his *Republic* was written with the avowed purpose of supporting the royal power, his was not an abject obeisance to royalty. Rather his was an objective search for general principles to justify the paramount authority of the national State through the unity of law. And thus he saw in the royal power the unifying and stabilizing foundation as the minimum for national existence. Bodin was no hermitic theorist in the science of government. He was trained in the civil law and spent most of his life in the public service,

so that his theories represent the result of practical experience and constitute in fact the transitional stage in the theory of government from the Aristotelean conception of the Middle Ages to the social contract speculation of Locke and Rousseau.

Bodin's *Republic* was a complete and clean break with the theory of *cuius regio eius religio*. Although it received wide circulation for his time, the preconceived notions and prejudices of his time were not yet amenable to reason and right thinking, no more in the area of political science than in the area of religious freedom and toleration. It is readily understandable from our vantage point — one need only recall the experience of Jefferson — why he should be charged with atheism by his contemporaries. To them it must have appeared as an invention of the Evil Foe to advocate so soon after St. Bartholomew the toleration of all religions in the State, indeed, to seriously contend that religion was no business of the State. Such a thesis was inconceivable to politician and theologian alike.

But not only from a negative approach were his strictures upon the authority of the State revolutionary. He was just as fundamental and creative in his positive analysis of the nature and jurisdiction of the State. The State he defined "as an aggregation of families ruled by a sovereign power and reason." Thus he posits the origin of the State on the *pater familias*, held together by natural association; and throughout his extensive elaboration of the theory of the State he assumes that a supreme power is indispensable to the maintenance of an effective orderly State and that its government is conditioned by a moral end. Out of the human associational instinct comes the unity of society, but the State takes its origin in force from wars of the superior associational power of one group over the other. Where the sovereign power exists, there is the State.

Hence in the idea of sovereign power as a social development lies the startling innovation of Bodin's political philosophy. The State is not an immediate divine institution but the consequence of association of the *patres familias*. He defines the concept of sovereignty thus: "Sovereignty is the supreme power over citizens and subjects, unrestrained by the laws." Without further explanation this definition might seem to carry in it the

germ of absolutism as expressed by Louis XIV in his famous aphorism: *L'état, c'est moi*. But the author is very careful to elucidate the extent and implication of his definition.

While the sovereign authority by the very nature of the case must be free from the binding force of laws, insofar as it can make or repeal them, he assumes as the premises of his definition that sovereign and subject alike are bound by the law of God and the law of nature. From this plane of the *jus naturale*, higher than the positive law of the sovereign, the limitations upon the sovereignty of the State are determined. In concluding our brief and inadequate summary of Bodin, we will quote from Professor Sabine's evaluation:

The ends of a well-ordered state, the nature of the subject's obligation to obey, and the relation between the state and its constituent families all require further analysis. But from this unclearness two problems emerged which largely occupied the attention of political philosophy in the century after Bodin. One was the theory of sovereignty in terms of power — the definition of the state as a relation between political inferiors and a political superior and the law as command. . . . The other was a modernizing and secularizing of the ancient theory of natural law, in order to find if possible an ethical and yet not merely an authoritarian foundation for political power. This revision was chiefly the work of Grotius and Locke.<sup>8</sup>

#### Grotius and his *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*

Grotius was one of the intellectual prodigies of history. At the age of eight years he was writing acceptable Latin poetry; at twelve he composed Pindaric odes in Greek and at fourteen he had completed his course in jurisprudence and philosophy at the University of Leyden. Before he was twenty-five years of age he had published his treatise *Mare liberum*, establishing his reputation as a jurist and indicating definitely the bent of his future career. Had he written nothing else, he would still have laid

<sup>8</sup>) Sabine, *Ibid.*, p. 414.

posterity under obligation by his *Law and Peace*, which was given to the world, 1625. It was written in exile, where he languished, a victim of the religious controversies of the age and of *cuius regio eius religio*.

In his native land he became involved in the theological controversy between the Gomarists and the Arminians, taking the side of Arminianism. He was tried for heresy and sentenced to life imprisonment. He escaped, however, with the aid of his faithful wife to France and resided the rest of his life away from his native land. No one will ever know exactly to what extent this experience influenced his mental reactions, but the world must be grateful for the Providential design in causing Grotius to leave to the future of mankind the pattern for its social and political conduct in the affairs and relations of men and nations.

Grotius was not the first to discuss the law of nations. The Spanish Catholics Vitoria and Suarez and the Italian Protestant Gentili before him had dealt with the same subject. However, with the great schism in the Western religious world, Protestantism had definitely rejected the approach of these writers through the Canon Law and the scholastic interpretation of the natural law. The tendency to liberate social and political theory from the restraints of theological dogmatism also demanded an explicit re-interpretation in the light of social reality as the rational basis of the state. And it is one of the ironies of history that both Jesuit and Calvinist contributed to a theory of State which neither the Jesuit nor the Calvinist contemplated.

In the religio-political controversy as to the respective place and power of the State and the Church the Lutherans contributed little to the final settlement and solution of the issue in marking the jurisdictional boundaries between the two. This condition is probably due first to the bitter doctrinal contentions within the Lutheran Church itself, then to a certain indifference toward political institutions in the social order generally. Their stress upon the pure inwardness of religious experience and faith inculcated an attitude of quietism toward the social problems of life, since after all worldly institutions were irrelevant to the ultimate destiny of the Christian. Finally, the comparative political peace which existed until the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War



discouraged serious thinking about the jurisdiction of the State and the Church. This seems to be the conclusion of Kaltenborn.<sup>9</sup> After the war Germany split into numerous small States and the authority of the Empire was merely a nominal sovereignty. Besides, the Lutheran States were completely exhausted economically and had little inclination, much less provocation to concentrate thought upon political questions, which seemed far removed from the reality of things and life.

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to conclude that no thought was given to legal concepts and the content of the law of nature. The law of nature received at their hands the form of a pretty well defined code and thus gained much in concreteness and in assimilation to their general conceptions of law. This is true of Oldendorp, a contemporary of Melanchthon, and expressly of Winkler, whose work makes a perfect transition from Melanchthon to Grotius and who enumerates twenty-one articles in which the law of nature is comprehended and on which the natural rights of men are based.<sup>10</sup> Yet, as was generally the case at this stage of the consideration of the natural law in Protestant thought, it was definitely articulated to the injunctions of God in the Decalogue, and moral virtues and legal rights were confused.

The Jesuits by the beginning of the seventeenth century conceded the defeat of the medieval political theory of the direct power of the papacy in temporal matters, and argued through Bellarmine, their foremost controversialist, that the pope as the spiritual head of the Christian Church still possessed indirect power in the political affairs of the State when the salvation of souls was concerned. Faced with this dilemma to escape the Catholic doctrine of the indirect power of the papacy on the one hand, and on the other to discover another basis for the separation of the State from the political theories and policies of the Church, the growing rationalistic spirit of the age sought and found refuge for the ethical concept of the State in the secularization of the *jus naturale*.

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<sup>9</sup>) Vorläufer des Hugo Grotius.

<sup>10</sup>) Dunning, Political Theory, Vol. II, p. 155.

Grotius himself tells us what inspired him to compose his monumental work:

Fully convinced, by the considerations which I have advanced, that there is a common law among nations which is valid alike for war and in war, I have had many and weighty reasons for undertaking to write upon this subject. Throughout the Christian world I observed a lack of restraint in relation to war, such as even barbarous nations should be ashamed of; I observed that men rushed to arms for slight causes, or for no cause at all, and that when arms have once been taken up there is no longer any respect for law, divine or human; it is as if, in accordance with a general decree, frenzy had openly been let loose for the committing of all crimes.<sup>11</sup>

The most influential and characteristic principles in the philosophy of Grotius may be grouped under three heads: the law of nations, the law of nature, and the sovereignty of governments. Before he could discover the "common law of nations" he had to determine whether there was in fact a universal law and what was its source. Unless he could establish that there was such a universal law, it would be futile, indeed, to attempt to bind the conduct of nations, either in war or peace. For this end it was imperative to investigate the measure of law as the foundation of society and the reason for the functional capacity of the State. He found the basis of law in the impelling desire of man to live in society. "For the very nature of man, even if we had no lack of anything, would lead us into the mutual relations of society. This relation is the mother of the law of nature."<sup>12</sup> He rejects emphatically the modern theory that law is a matter of expediency and utility, since the very nature of society implies agreement and agreements must be observed as

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<sup>11</sup>) All references to the text of *De jure* are found in the Classics of International Law by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and are cited as *De jure*, Vol. II, *Prolegomena*, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup>) *De jure*, *Prolegomena*, Sect. 16.

a matter of morals and ethics. Hence he defines the law of nature as follows:

The law of nature is a dictate of right reason, which points out that an act, according as it is or is not in conformity with rational nature, has in it a quality of moral baseness or moral necessity; and that, in consequence, such an act is either forbidden or enjoined by the author of nature, God.<sup>13</sup>

Although Grotius places the source of the natural law in God, the author of nature, he does not thereby intend to make this law a matter of revelation. The test of right human conduct is for him the rational conformity to the needs of social existence. If natural law depended in fact on revelation, there could be no right conduct in society without it, and thus neither municipal law nor the State could exist. The civil law, insofar as it predicates right conduct and justice in the social order, has its roots in the natural law. Since man is endowed with the power of reason and instinctively impelled to live in social intercourse and relations, the norm of his conduct must be a moral obligation for justice, good faith, and fair dealing transcending the positive law. In distinction from Bodin, not the family but the moral individual is the center of social organization, and the State is not founded on force, but on contract.

Grotius sought and found a new and non-religious ground in political theory based on the natural law. It was a platform on which rationalist and religionist alike could stand, because both were in society by reason of their rational nature and not because God has bestowed upon the one any special preference by the revelation of His will. The social order as a predestination of divine creation confers no special favor on the Church in the sphere of political organization. While his greatest contribution to political science was his formulation of a system of rights and duties applicable to the relations of nation to nation, posited on the concept of the natural law; almost as great was his contribution to the understanding of the nature of law itself.

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<sup>13</sup>) *De jure*, p. 38.

“What Grotius did was to give to speculation on these same lines a character that was eminently adapted to attract the more liberal and rationalistic elements among the Protestants and also the devotees to the new learning which was dominant in his day in the intellectual life of Northern Europe. He thus became a leader of thought in those countries which, for better or for worse, were destined to assume the chief place in respect to political activity, progress, and influence.”<sup>14</sup>

### Conclusion

We have tried to compress within the area of these pages a century of religious-political thought about which volumes have been written. We are keenly conscious of our own limitations. However, we have written with two thoughts in mind. First, as Christians we must be aware of the fact that the Church does become the victim of the historical process, and that its perspective is apt to be circumscribed by the rationalization of environmental influences, notwithstanding divine revelation. The inherent philosophy of *cuius regio eius religio* is an example of this conclusion. Then, we have attempted to demonstrate that the forces operating in the social order are dynamic and not static. Hence the organized Church as an institution in the social order, but not of it, cannot assume that the individual Christian will escape the tendencies and forces shaping his life in the social order. The Church must evaluate all forces in society on the basis of revelation for the individual Christian relative to his ultimate and eternal destiny. Its tool is not the force of law or the power of the State. Our study demonstrates the futility of this endeavor. It must operate with the love of God to man and the love of man to God.

EUGENE WENGERT.

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<sup>14</sup>) Dunning, *Political Theories*, Vol. II, p. 188.

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## NEWS AND COMMENTS

The (Mo.) Committee on Doctrinal Unity Reports. — The *Lutheran Witness* of July 13 brings a long awaited report on the meeting of the representatives of the American Lutheran Church and of the Missouri Synod in the matter of union. We quote in full:

On Pentecost Monday, May 17, the Fellowship Commission of the American Lutheran Church and the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Missouri Synod met in Chicago at the offices of the Northern Illinois District by the courtesy of the genial Stewardship Secretary, Dr. Martin Piehler. The committees were honored by the presence of the President of the Missouri Synod, Dr. Behnken, and of the President of the American Lutheran Church, Dr. Poppen. Both presidents took an active part in the discussions. Pastor Fritzsche, member of the Fellowship Committee, presided, and Pastor Jurgens, member of the Missouri Committee, was chosen secretary.

The discussion began with an attempt to ascertain and analyze the situation as it had been affected by the resolution of the Centennial Convention held in Chicago last summer. That convention adopted a resolution declaring that the 1938 Resolutions shall no longer be considered as a basis for the purpose of establishing fellowship with the American Lutheran Church. The meaning and implications of this resolution were discussed on the basis of the printed *Proceedings* of the convention, which were read in part.

Another point of discussion was the difference in doctrine and practice which still obtains between the two bodies as stated by a resolution adopted by the convention referred to above. Extensive reference was made to a paragraph in the report of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity to Synod in which the Committee enumerated three chief obstacles that stand in the way of fellowship, the manifest lack of doctrinal unity, the difference in conviction regarding the degree of doctrinal unity required for fellowship, and the membership of the American Lutheran Church in the American Lutheran Conference.

Synod's resolution on selective fellowship was quoted at length by Dr. Poppen and also became a topic for discussion.

The meeting ended with a resolution to appoint a subcommittee of two from each of the commissions, with instructions to prepare a program for another meeting, to be called at the direction of the subcommittee.

Rockford, Ill.

F. H. BRUNN, *Secretary*  
Committee on Doctrinal Unity

In our previous issue (p. 115) we expressed the opinion that this meeting presented the Missouri Committee with a golden opportunity to face an issue which was once more brought into the foreground when the A. L. C. Committee reiterated its principle of latitude in matters of doctrine. There is nothing in the above report to indicate that this issue was really faced squarely, or that there was even an awareness of the need of examining carefully the basic premises upon which mutual discussions are to be conducted. In fact, the second paragraph, especially its opening sentence, reads as though the chief concern of the conferees had been to save rather than clarify the situation. In our judgment this meeting goes down as a golden opportunity that was missed.

E. REIM.

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**Theses of Agreement.** — In the April number of the *Quartalschrift* we published the *Einigungs-Erklärung* of the Evangelical-Lutheran Free Church and the Breslau Free Church (pp. 142ff.). In the meantime a translation of this *Einigungs-Erklärung* has been made by *The Committee on Church Union* and published in the *Northwestern Lutheran* of July 4. For the sake of those of our readers who are not subscribers of the *Northwestern Lutheran* we gladly bring this translation to their attention. It reads as follows: "The Ev. Luth. Church in former Old Prussia and the Ev. Luth. Free Church, after a series of colloquies, have reached complete agreement in faith and doctrine on the basis of unconditional submission to the Holy Scriptures and to the Lutheran Confessions, including the Formula of Concord. Both churches recognize the concept of the Church, contained in Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, as decisive in which agreement (*consentire*) concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and concerning the administration of the Sacraments is demanded. On this basis they jointly erect church fellowship in the sense of pulpit and altar fellowship." This translation is followed in the *Northwestern Lutheran* by the following announcement signed by the *Committee on Church Union*, John Brenner, President, E. Reim, Secretary: "In the name of the General Church Council of the Ev. Luth. Church in former Old Prussia Dr. Matthias Schulz petitions our Synod to declare that we recognize church fellowship as having been established also between our church body and theirs. Your committee recommends: 1. That the theses of agreement adopted by the two churches in Germany should be published in our church papers for every one to study during the coming year, so that our Synod at its convention next summer may take God-pleasing action in this matter. 2. That Dr. Schulz be informed by President Brenner that for the sake of previous joint study the entire matter will be sub-

mitted by him to the Synodical Conference at its next convention, and that our Synod's own declaration will then follow in due time."

The *Einigungssätze* or theses of agreement referred to here have been sent by their editor, the Rev. W. M. Oesch of the Free Church of Germany, to the undersigned. They were published a year ago in July, 1947, with the permission of the intelligence department (Nachrichtenkontrolle) of our military government (US-W-1042) by the publishing house G. Schulte-Bulmke, Frankfurt a. M. In the meantime the General Synod of East and West comprising both Free Churches accepted a few changes and additions to the published text, which this writer has simply entered into the text as edited by Rev. Oesch, in order to give the readers of the *Quartalschrift* the advantage of reading and studying a connected text. A second edition of the theses is already in print, but has not as yet reached our desk. This second edition differs from the first only in that it includes the complete wording of all the quotations and will be known as the *Vollausgabe*. Otherwise there is to be no change and the theses, of course, will be unchanged. They read as follows in the first edition:

### I. Von der Heiligen Schrift

1. Die von Gott eingegebene Schrift, nämlich der Urtext der kanonischen Bücher Alten und Neuen Testaments, ist unter Gottes gnädiger Herablassung von Menschen zu bestimmter Zeit, in bestimmter Lage, mit bestimmten Gaben und Kräften und ihnen eigener Redeweise geschrieben worden und teilt insofern das Geschick und die Geschichte menschlicher Bücher.

2. Die Schrift ist göttlichen Ursprungs und göttlicher Art, weil Gottes Heiliger Geist die Schreiber in seinen Dienst genommen und ihnen die Schrift nach ihrem Sachgehalt (Realinspiration) und nach ihrer Wortgestaltung (Verbalinspiration) eingegeben hat. Sie enthält nicht nur Gottes Wort, so daß Menschen darüber urteilen könnten, was in ihr Gottes Wort sei oder nicht, sondern sie ist in vollem Umfang Gottes unverbrüchliches Wort — uns zum Heil und zur Seligkeit gegeben, die allgemeine Quelle der Wahrheit, „die einzige Regel und Richtschnur, nach welcher zugleich alle Lehre und Lehren gerichtet und geurteilt werden sollen“ (Konfordinformel, 1. Teil, Summ. Begr.). Wenn in untergeordneten Punkten (historischen, naturwissenschaftlichen oder anderen Fragen) Irrtümer oder Widersprüche vorzuliegen scheinen, so ist eine Auflösung zu versuchen. Gelingt sie nicht, so ist, dem Beispiel Luthers folgend, die Sache Gott anheimzustellen und die autoritäre Geltung der Schrift auch in diesen Auslagen festzuhalten.

## II. Von der Befehung und Gnadenwahl

### A. Von der Befehung

1. Die Befehung besteht darin, daß der Mensch, nachdem er vom Gesetz Gottes getroffen ist und sich als einen verdammungswürdigen Sünder erkannt hat, zum Glauben an das Evangelium kommt, das ihm um Christi stellvertretender Genugthuung willen Vergebung der Sünden und die Seligkeit zusagt. Sie geschieht dann, wenn der Heilige Geist das erste Fünklein dieses Glaubens oder ein Sehnen nach der rettenden Gnade im Sünderherzen wirkt. Da nach der Schrift der Mensch seit dem Fall in Sünden tot und nur zum Bösen geneigt ist, die Botschaft vom Kreuz für Torheit hält und Gott und seinem Evangelium bitter feind ist, so ist die Befehung und somit der Glaube weder ganz noch zum geringsten Teil ein Werk des Menschen, sondern ausschließlich ein Werk der göttlichen Gnade und „seiner mächtigen Stärke“. Die Schrift nennt deshalb die Befehung auch eine Erweckung von den Toten, eine Geburt aus Gott, eine Neugeburt aus dem Evangelium, eine Wirkung Gottes wie die Erschaffung des Lichts am ersten Schöpfungstage.

2. Bei dem ganzen Werk des Heiligen Geistes ist festzuhalten, daß Gott nicht anders als durch Mittel, nämlich durch Wort und Sakrament wirkt. Die Menschen sind deshalb an die Gnadenmittel gewiesen. Obwohl der Ruf des Evangeliums in jedem Fall ernst gemeint ist und voll göttlicher Kraft an die Menschen ergeht, ist gleichwohl die rettende Gnade nicht unwiderstehlich und geschieht die Befehung und Erhaltung nicht durch Zwang. Daß die meisten der durch das Evangelium Berufenen entweder nicht zum Glauben kommen oder wieder abfallen, liegt nicht an Gott, sondern an ihrem beharrlichen mutwilligen Widerstreben und ist ihre eigene Schuld.

### B. Von der Gnadenwahl

1. Gottes allgemeiner Gnadentwille bezieht sich von Ewigkeit her auf alle Menschen, so gewiß Christus, der der Welt Sünde trägt, zuvor ersehen ist, ehe der Welt Grund gelegt ward, und so gewiß Christus für alle Menschen am Kreuz gestorben ist und Gott in Christo der Welt alle Sünden schon vergeben hat und will, daß durch die Verkündigung des Evangeliums allen Menschen geholfen werde und sie zur Erkenntnis der Wahrheit kommen.

2. Gottes besonderer Gnadenbeschuß, der auf dem ewigen Rathschluß der Erlösung aller Menschen ruht und ihm dient und durch nichts in den Menschen oder in den Gläubigen verursacht ist, bezieht sich auf die Gläubigen und ist eine „Ursache ihrer Seligkeit, welche er auch schaffet und, was zur selbigen gehöret, ver-



ordnet, darauf unsere Seligkeit so steif gegründet ist, daß sie die Pforten der Hölle nicht überwältigen können“ (Konfordinformel, 1. Teil, Art. XI, § 5). Die „in Christo“ und „in der Heiligung des Geistes und im Glauben der Wahrheit“ vor der Zeit der Welt geschene Herauswahl der Gläubigen aus der Menge der anderen ist die Gnadenwahl (Prädestination).

3. Die Frage, warum Gott beim allgemeinen bössigen Verderben aller Menschen und bei seinem allgemeinen Gnadenwillen in den einen Buße und Glauben wirkt, in den anderen nicht (*cur alii, alii non?*), ist für dieses unser Leben auf Erden unlösbar, ein göttliches Geheimnis. Es hat bei dem Entweder=Oder zu bleiben: Wenn der Mensch verloren geht, so ist das allein seine Schuld, wenn er selig wird, allein Gottes Gnade (Hof. 13, 9; Konfordinformel, II. Teil, Art. XI, §§ 57-64).

### III. Von der Kirche und dem Predigamt

#### III A. Von der Kirche

1. Die Kirche im eigentlichen Sinne oder die eine heilige Kirche, der Christus alle Kirchengewalt ursprünglich gegeben hat, sind die Heiligen oder Gläubigen, die durch Wort und Sakrament aus dem verlorenen Menschengeschlecht herausgerufen und Christo einverleibt sind.

2 A. Im uneigentlichen Sinne wird auch die Gesamtheit der Berufenen Kirche genannt — sichtbare Kirche, christliche Ortsgemeinde = *ecclesia simplex*, dann auch größere Kirchenkörper = *ecclesiae compositae*, sofern Ortsgemeinden zusammenwirken, — worunter sich auch solche befinden, welche die Gnadenmittel nur äußerlich brauchen, ohne sich dadurch den Glauben schenken zu lassen.

2 B. Die der eigentlichen Kirche ursprünglich und unmittelbar mitgeteilte Gewalt der Schlüssel, nämlich das Evangelium und die Sakramente zu verwalten und seelsorgerliche Zucht zu üben, kann natürlich nur innerhalb dieser in Erscheinung tretenden gemischten Kirche ausgeübt werden und umgrenzt die Gesamtheit ihres Auftrages.

2 C. Da Christus das alleinige Haupt seiner Kirche ist, ist in der verfaßten Kirche darauf zu halten, daß alles, was in ihr besteht und geschieht, der Alleinherrschaft Christi im Wort untertan ist. Alle Lebensäußerungen der sichtbaren Kirche müssen aus dem Bekenntnis herauswachsen und sich als unmittelbare oder mittelbare Wirkungen von Wort und Sakrament erweisen.

3. Das Wort Gottes und die heiligen Sakramente — Same und Fundament und einziger Auftrag der Kirche — sind sowohl Kennzeichen der Kirche überhaupt als auch, in ihrer Reinheit und Lauterkeit, die Kennzeichen der wahren sichtbaren oder rechthgläubigen Kirche.

### III B. Vom öffentlichen Predigtamt

1. Das Predigtamt oder Pfarramt ist ein vom Herrn der Kirche gestiftetes Amt, und zwar ein Amt des Dienstes, dessen Aufrihtung der Kirche geboten und an das sie bis an das Ende der Tage gebunden ist.

2. Obwohl die Gewalt, Sünden zu vergeben oder zu behalten, Gesetz und Evangelium zu predigen, ursprünglich und unmittelbar vom Herrn der Kirche allen Christen gegeben ist, beruft die christliche Gemeinde, um diese Gewalt ordentlichweise öffentlich auszuüben, eine dazu geeignete Person. Diese verwaltet das Amt, die Gemeinde Gottes mit Wort und Sakrament zu weiden und zu regieren, nicht nur in menschlichem Auftrag, sondern zugleich — eben dadurch vermittelt — im Auftrage des Herrn. Die Ordination ist die Bestätigung der Berufung in das heilige Predigtamt.

3. Da die Kirche eine ist unter ihrem Haupt Christus, ist es Pflicht der Gemeinden, obwohl jede auch für sich Kirche ist, die Einigkeit im Geiste mit der ganzen rechthgläubigen Kirche zu pflegen und, wo immer möglich, mit den anderen Gemeinden zum Bau der ganzen Kirche Christi in Liebe zusammenzuarbeiten. Bei solcher Zusammenarbeit ergibt sich von selbst die Notwendigkeit gemeinschaftlicher Leitung, da der Herr befohlen hat, alles ehrlich und ordentlich zugehen zu lassen. Auch bei diesem kirchlichen Zusammenwirken kommt das Weiden und Regieren mit dem Worte Gottes dem öffentlichen Predigtamt als dem eigentlichen und höchsten Amt der Kirche zu. Die Ausgestaltung und Verteilung dieser aus kirchlicher Zusammenarbeit sich ergebenden Aufgaben kann dabei jeweils verschieden sein. Alle äußerliche Ordnung in Gemeinden und Kirchenkörpern, und alle Ueberordnung eines Dieners am Wort über den andern bleibt menschlichen Rechts — nach Augsb. Konf. XV und XXVIII, §§ 5-29; Schmalk. Art., Anhang, §§ 10. 11; 61-65.

### VI. Von den letzten Dingen

1. Mit der Augsburgerischen Konfession (XVII) bekennen wir, „daß unser Herr Jesus Christus am jüngsten Tage kommen wird, zu richten, und alle Toten auferwecken, den Gläubigen und Auserwählten ewiges Leben und ewige Freude geben, die gott-

losen Menschen aber und die Teufel in die Hölle und ewige Strafe verdammen wird.“

2. Die Erwartung, daß das Judentum als solches in der Endzeit nach Palästina zurückkehren und in die Rechte des auserwählten Volkes des Alten Testaments wieder eingesetzt werden solle, ist eine Abart des krassesten Chiliasmus. Diese Lehre ist abzulehnen, nicht aus rassistischem oder politischem Antisemitismus, sondern weil sie der Schrift und der rechten Lehre vom Reiche Christi widerspricht. — Auch der Hoffnung auf eine allgemeine Judenbefehrung der Endzeit, das ganze dann lebende Israel umfassend, liegen Mißdeutungen der Schrift, sonderlich des Alten Testaments, und fleischliche Vorstellungen sowohl von der Befehrung als auch vom Reiche Christi zu Grunde. Die von manchen gehegte Hoffnung einer zahlreichen Befehrung Israels in der letzten Zeit widerspricht dagegen an sich nicht der Schrift, läßt sich aber auch nicht aus eindeutigen Schriftstellen erhärten. — Immer ist festzuhalten, daß ein Volk niemals auf Grund seiner Abstammung oder natürlich-irdischen Art oder mittelst äußerlicher Masseneinwirkung von Gott angenommen wird, weil dies dem Evangelium, d. h. der Lehre von der Rechtfertigung allein aus Gnaden durch den Glauben, widerspricht und nach der gesetzlichen Art aller Jrrlehre das Reich Christi an das Wesen dieser Welt bindet.

3. Mit den Schmalkaldischen Artikeln (II. Teil, Art. IV § 10) bekennen wir, „daß der Papst der rechte Endechrist oder Widerchrist sei“, weil er im Tempel Gottes sitzt und sich gebärdet, als wäre er Gott (2. Theßal. 2), weil er das Herzstück des Evangeliums, nämlich die Lehre von der Vergebung der Sünden allein aus Gnaden um Christi willen durch den Glauben ohne jegliches eigenes Verdienst und Würdigkeit, verdammt (Concilium Tridentinum, Sessio VI), und weil er nur diejenigen als Diener der christlichen Kirche anerkennt, welche sich ihm unterwerfen.

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Besides these theses our edition contains *Vorbemerkungen* and *Nachbemerkungen* and numerous references in the footnotes to the Scriptures and to our Confessional Writings. They have been omitted here because of lack of space. The *Vorbemerkungen* and *Nachbemerkungen* will appear in the next number of our periodical. Professor J. Meyer has been requested by the Seminary Faculty to write a review of these theses for one of the following issues of the *Quartalschrift*.

P. PETERS.

**Professor Sasse Guest of our Seminary Faculty.** On July 7 and 8 Professor Hermann Sasse, member of the theological faculty of the University of Erlangen, who has come to the United States at the invitation of our Missouri brethren, was a guest of the Faculty of our Theological Seminary in Thiensville. Professor Sasse is known to those of our readers who have read his book, *Was heisst lutherisch*, which has been put into English under the title, *Here We Stand*, and has been reviewed in the January, 1947, issue of the *Quartalschrift*. He is also known to our readers as one of the signatories of the *Schwabach Declaration* directed against the unionistic practice of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD) and translated in the January, 1948, issue of the *Quartalschrift*.

In our first informal meeting with our esteemed visitor we were given a deep insight into the political and economical conditions of Europe, especially of Germany. On the forenoon of the following day Professor Sasse spoke to us at length on the status of the Lutheran Church in Germany. Beginning with 1817 our visitor drew a vivid and fascinating picture of the historical development of Protestantism in the Land of the Reformation culminating in the Barmen Bekenntnissynode of 1934 and in the Treysa Conference of 1947. The result of this development, Dr. Sasse pointed out, is that, with the exception of the Lutheran Free Churches, there are no Lutheran Churches in Germany anymore. There are Lutheran pastors and Lutheran laymen within the Evangelical Church of Germany, but the so-called Lutheran Churches do not anymore deserve the name Lutheran because of their failure to adhere to Lutheran doctrine and practice. This has, indeed, been borne out in the meantime by the fact that the VELKD together with the United and Reformed Churches signed the constitution of the EKID at the Eisenach Conference July 11 to 13, which provides for a "common Lord's Supper upon mutual agreement."

On the afternoon of July 8 we had occasion to discuss certain points of the forenoon-lecture, among others also points pertaining to the doctrine of the Church and of the Inspiration of the Scriptures, as also to the present status of our Lutheran Free Churches in Germany. Professor Sasse's oft repeated appeal to us to give our spiritual aid to all true Lutherans in Germany who are adhering to the heritage of the Reformation and who welcome the teaching and spread of pure Lutheran doctrine expresses more than anything else the tenor of our meetings and discussions. We owe Dr. Sasse, whose knowledge of the history of the Lutheran Church and of its teachings is outstanding, and whose seriousness in searching the Scriptures and in championing Lutheran doctrine and practice is apparent to all who learn to know him, a vote of thanks for having accepted our invitation to include Thiensville in his itinerary and to discuss those matters with us which are always near to Lutherans of all lands: The Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Doctrine.

P. PETERS.

Dr. Eugen Gerstenmaier, director of the *Hilfswerk* of the Evangelical Churches in Germany, did not come to the United States at the joint invitation of the Missouri Synod and the National Lutheran Council, as an item of the *Religious News Service* informed our readers in the April, 1948, number of the *Quartalschrift* under "News without Comment." Dr. Gerstenmaier came to the United States solely at the invitation of the Missouri Synod. Thus Dr. J. Behnken informs us in a letter of May 10 in which he states: "Our Synod invited Dr. Gerstenmaier. There was no joint invitation." We are grateful to President Behnken for this correction and piece of information and herewith bring it to the attention of our readers.

In the meantime we have received a very interesting publication on the *Hilfswerk* of which Dr. Gerstenmaier is the director. In the third chapter of this publication, which deals with the theological basis of the Evangelical *Hilfswerk*, we read: "We can say without exaggeration that the *Hilfswerk* is the most churchly of all endeavors of the church. *As to its construction, its make-up, and its classification it is nothing else but church, church in the act of giving aid, an auxiliary church.* It wants to be just what it calls itself: The *Hilfswerk* of the church. In no sense of the word does it want to stand next to the church and to be something by itself. For the future of the *Hilfswerk* it is of decisive importance that this fact is correctly understood. . . . *At all events the purpose of the Hilfswerk is to bring about a development of the church into a brotherhood and to further this brotherhood as much as possible.* . . . It is the diaconate of the church, it is the church in the sphere of the diaconate. . . . It regards itself, as already expressed in its title, as the diaconate of the Evangelical churches in Germany and not only as the diaconate of the EKD. . . . The plural "churches" does not designate the "Landeskirchen," but the free churches united ecumenically with the EKD: The Methodist and the Baptist church, the Lutheran free churches, the *Gemeinschaften*, the Mennonites a. o." In other words, the *Hilfswerk* as "church" does not only embody the *Landeskirchen* but also the free churches in Germany including the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany and the Breslau Free Church. In view of this definition of the *Hilfswerk* it does not take us by surprise that the author of our publication, Lic. Otto Fricke, finds the promise of an ecumenical Christianity in its development. Can our brethren of the Free Church of Germany still regard their alliance with the *Hilfswerk* as cooperation in externals? Does such a development at all leave room for a cooperation in externals, whether this cooperation is being practised by our brethren in Germany or in America? We cannot find this to be the case. It is certainly becoming more and more apparent that the only true confessional course to follow in our relief work for our brethren in Germany and for those who are not of the household of faith, is either to transmit our aid to them directly or, if this is impossible, to make use of such organizations that do not regard themselves as "churches."

P. PETERS.

**Statistics of a Synod's Losses.** — In the April number of our periodical (p. 144) we spoke of the war-losses in congregations and members suffered by the two Lutheran Free Churches in Germany, the former Saxon Free Church and the Breslau Free Church. *Der Lutheraner*, the church-paper of these two free churches, in its May issue gives us two lists of losses suffered by the Breslau Free Church as a direct result of the war and the aftermath of World War II. According to these two statistical lists the Breslau Synod suffered the loss of 34,300 members, 26,000 communicants, 210 preaching places, 120 congregations, 103 churches, 47 parishes, 41 parsonages, 22 church yards, and 4 pastors. These losses were suffered in the dioceses: Breslau, Lower Silesia, Northeast, *Warthegau*, and Pommerania. Most of them are losses which cannot be retrieved anymore, such as the loss of the church buildings and parsonages, of the libraries and archives containing documents and records not to be found anywhere else in Germany and valued at millions of *Goldmark*. The 34,300 members including 9,000 children represent, if we understand this report correctly, the refugees scattered throughout western Germany. Many of them have lost their lives on their forced migration from the East to the West. The others are being sought and gathered into old or newly-founded congregations of Western Germany. But of the 120 congregations and 210 preaching stations of Eastern Germany none remain. Indeed, these statistics speak a forceful language of great suffering on the part of one Lutheran church, which had to drink deeply from the cup of sorrow and walk the way of the Cross. We rejoice, however, that it can speak of this way of the Cross "as a holy way of faith, love, and hope . . . which God alone will terminate, before whom we bow in adoration."

P. PETERS.

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**Allgemeine Kirchliche Nachrichten.** — Die ersten drei Nummern der „Allgemeinen Kirchlichen Nachrichten“, des Blattes der Breslauer Synode, die mit der Ev.-Luth. Freikirche Deutschlands Kirchengemeinschaft aufgerichtet hat, sind uns freundlichst von Dr. W. Ziemer, Epe/Westfalen, im Austausch gegen unsere Theologische Quartalschrift zugesandt worden. Dr. Ziemer schreibt unter dem Datum vom 5. April: „Beiliegend übersende ich Ihnen die ersten drei Nummern der „Allgemeinen Kirchlichen Nachrichten“, des Blattes der Ev.-Luth. Kirche Altpreußens, der größten und ältesten staatsfreien lutherischen Kirche Deutschlands. Wenn es Ihnen recht ist, werde ich sie Ihnen weiter zusenden im Austausch gegen ein Exemplar Ihrer Theologischen Quartalschrift. Ich hoffe mit solchem Austausch der gegenseitigen Bekanntschaft unter den lutherischen Kirchen der Welt dienen zu können, ihrem wechselseitigen Verständnis und ihrer gegenseitigen Unter-

früher im Kampf um unverfälschtes Luthertum, wo solcher nötig sein sollte. Ich würde mich freuen, wenn Sie meiner Bitte entsprechen könnten."

Es ist selbstverständlich, daß wir dieser Bitte Dr. Ziemers gerne nachkommen, gewähren uns doch die „Allgemeinen Kirchlichen Nachrichten“ nicht nur einen Einblick in die Nachkriegslage der Gemeinden der Ev.-Luth. Kirche Altpreußens, sondern auch eine weitreichende Umschau der kirchlichen Ereignisse im In- und Auslande.

P. Peters.

**Washington and its Unchurched.** — The State of Washington has the highest percentage of unchurched persons in the Union according to the Rt. Rev. Stephen F. Bayne, Jr., Episcopalian bishop of the Olympian diocese, who was interviewed between sessions of the diocesan adult conference by a reporter of a Pacific Coast paper. No less than 78 per cent of the population of this state is non-churchgoing. The reason given by the bishop for this high percentage of non-churchgoing inhabitants was that the State of Washington has not had the persistent missionary work it needs. This is undoubtedly one of a number of reasons which has brought about this sad state of affairs in the flourishing and fast-growing State of Washington. Still another, more primary reason, is the fact, as this writer was informed by his brethren in the Pacific Northwest, that many of the church members who emigrate from the East and settle in the distant West fail to keep up their church connections. This reason more than any other should also be of special concern to us in the Middle West. It does not reflect favorably on the loyalty of those of our church members who do not seek a transfer to one of our sister congregations when moving to the Pacific Northwest. It is God Himself who has again forcefully reminded us and them of the transitoriness of all earthly and human existence when the raging waters in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana spread destruction and covered thousands of acres of land, washing many farms down to bedrock, leaving 50,000 persons homeless, demolishing more than 5,113 homes, damaging no less than 3,205 houses, and forcing 11,681 persons to seek refuge and food in Red Cross shelters. In view of such a national catastrophe we do well to ask ourselves whether we are like unto the "foolish man" in our Lord's parable, "which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof," or whether we are like unto that "wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock" (Matt. 7, 24ff.)?

P. PETERS.

**The Roman Catholic Position on Religious Freedom.** — The *Christian Century* of June 23 has a noteworthy quotation on this subject from the April issue of *La Civiltà Cattolica*, the official organ of the Society of Jesus in Rome. Here is what Father Cavalli, S. J., has to say in this excerpt from his article on "The Conditions of the Protestants in Spain":

"The Roman Catholic Church, convinced, through its divine prerogatives, of being the only true church, must demand the right to freedom for herself alone, because such a right can only be possessed by truth, never by error. As to other religions, the church will certainly never draw the sword, but she will require that by legitimate means they shall not be allowed to propagate false doctrine. Consequently, in a state where the majority of the people are Catholic, the church will require that legal existence be denied to error, and that if religious minorities actually exist, they shall have only a *de facto* existence without opportunity to spread their beliefs. If, however, actual circumstances, either due to government hostility or the strength of the dissenting groups, make the complete application of this principle impossible, then the [Catholic] church will require for herself all possible concessions, limiting herself to accept, as a minor evil, the *de jure* toleration of other forms of worship. In some countries, Catholics will be obliged to ask full religious freedom for all, resigned at being forced to cohabitate where they alone should rightfully be allowed to live. But in doing this the church does not renounce her thesis, which remains the most imperative of her laws, but merely adapts herself to *de facto* conditions, which must be taken into account in practical affairs. Hence arises the great scandal among Protestants, who tax the Catholics with refusing to others freedom and even *de jure* toleration, in all places where they are in the majority, while they lay claim to it as a right when they are in a minority. . . . We ask Protestants to understand that the Catholic Church would betray her trust if she were to proclaim, theoretically and practically, that error can have the same rights as truth, especially where the supreme duties and interests of man are at stake. The church cannot blush for her own want of tolerance, as she asserts it in principle and applies it in practice."

We have termed this statement of the Roman Catholic position on the issue of religious freedom as noteworthy, not because it is in any way new, but because it is of very recent date and clearly expressed. In our own country where the Catholic Church still "*adapts herself to de facto conditions*" she does not find it expedient, as a general rule, to speak with like candor.

C. J. L.



**Ancient Law Code Found.** — *The Yakima Daily Republic* of June 6 reports the uncovering of an unbaked, slightly damaged, late third millennium tablet which was recovered during excavations at Tell Harmal by Sayid Mohammed Ali Mustafa of the Iraqi government directorate general of antiques. Tell Harmal, which lies six miles east of Baghdad between the Tigris and the Dialah rivers, stands only about 650 yards from Tell Mohammed, another archaeological mound where Felix Jones in the course of a brief sounding in 1850 discovered an inscription of Hammurabi. Although only a preliminary analysis of the find has been made so far, still Professor Albrecht Goetze of Yale University, who was recently appointed by the *American Schools of Oriental Research* as annual professor to the *American School of Archaeology*, Baghdad, is already able to report that the text of the new find is almost complete and reveals the oldest code of laws ever discovered, older by about two generations than that of Lipit-Ishtar of Isin, which was discovered recently in the museum of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. According to Sayid Taha Baqir, curator of the Iraqi Museum, it is forty years older than the *Code of Hammurabi*, who ruled Babylonia about 2067-2025 B. C. The preliminary decipherment of the text clearly shows that the tablet deals with the law of the kingdom of Eshnunna as promulgated either by King Bilalama or by his son, who ruled earlier than Hammurabi, and that matters as family laws, theft and housebreaking, the hiring of a female slave, adoption (or bringing up a child), selling wine, selling a man's house, and non-delivery of property purchased go to make up the contents of this code of laws. The decipherment of the text is not only being facilitated by its connected text, but also by a duplicate tablet discovered at the same site. Besides these two important tablets the Iraqi excavators have collected more than 1,300 tablets from the site where one large temple, a smaller double-shrine temple, several minor shrines, and a large administrative building are found within the remains of a fortified enclosure in the form of an irregular square with buttressed walls about 16 feet thick and a single gateway flanked by numerous towers.

As soon as a full examination of these two tablets containing the newly discovered code of laws will be completed and presented to the world, we can compare them with the Babylonian, Assyrian, and Hittite codes of law already discovered, and last but not least with the Law of Moses itself.

P. PETERS

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“The Greatest Manuscript Find of Modern Time.” — In the *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* (April, 1948) W. F. Albright, first vice-president and acting president of the Schools, designates the discovery of the Hebrew rolls, already referred to in the

April number of our periodical (p. 150), "as the greatest manuscript find of modern times," as a "sensational" and "an almost incredible discovery." This discovery was not made by an archaeologist after a well-prepared and painstaking search, but by a "Bedouin in a cave near the north shore of the Dead Sea during the past winter." Since the eight and possibly more rolls "had been concealed in pottery jars, wrapped in linen, and covered with pitch for protection against the elements . . . some of the rolls are in a remarkable state of preservation, though at least one is very much the worse for wear." The most important of these rolls is, of course, the scroll of the Book of Isaiah, the script of which, according to Professor Albright, is "easily a thousand years older than that of the oldest Hebrew biblical roll hitherto known." Albright even regards the script as "materially older than the Nash Papyrus of the Decalogue, which is itself older than the most archaic square character of the Herodian Age yet known from contemporary graffiti" and "is similar to that of the Edfu papyri and ostraca from the third century B. C." Professor E. L. Sukenik of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem is quoted as saying "that some of the rolls are over 2000 years old and that none is later than the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A. D." The age of the Isaiah scroll is dated "back to about the second century B. C.," *i. e.*, to the early Maccabean period. This date gives *The Biblical Archaeologist* occasion to add: "The views of scholars regarding the date of composition of Isa. 56-66 are many and varied. Those, however, who have dated ch. 65, for example, as late as 200 B. C. are certainly shown to be mistaken." (*A Phenomenal Discovery*, May, 1948, p. 22.)

The discovery of this Isaiah scroll, of course, overshadows that of the other scrolls in this find. Still among those other seven or more finds there are some which create no little surprise. Among these rolls we have, according to the *Bulletin*, another text of Isaiah, so that we can speak of two pre-Christian Isaiah manuscripts; we have a book of hymns resembling the Psalter, and even the original Hebrew of several apocryphal books hitherto known only from Greek translations. A commentary on Habakkuk and a manual of ritual and discipline also awaken our interest. While it may be saying too much that "the new discovery will revolutionize intertestamental studies and that it will soon antiquate all present handbooks on the background of the New Testament and on the textual criticism and interpretation (!) of the Old Testament," nevertheless, this is certain that the material contained in these rolls will, because of their age and origin, be indispensable to all intertestamental studies and to all handbooks which deal with isagogical questions pertaining to both the Old and the New Testament.

P. PETERS.

## NEWS WITHOUT COMMENT

*From Religious News Service:*

**Nationalization of 4,474 Schools in Hungary** is the result of nationalization legislation adopted recently by Hungary's Communist-dominated government. The schools, classified as lower grade, elementary, day, grammar or so-called general schools, comprised 2,797 Roman Catholic, 1,097 Reformed, and 579 Jewish or Greek Orthodox institutions. In addition there was a lone confessional school maintained by the Unitarian Church. About 650,000 children attended the church schools, representing 61.5 per cent of all Hungarian school children. Staffs included 15,000 teachers. Head teachers in the denominational schools were automatically retained by the Ministry of Education when the nationalization law was adopted, and all teachers were scheduled to pass into state employment by July 1. Salaries of teachers will be raised 20 per cent on August 1. State authorities have also taken over 52 Roman Catholic, 24 Reformed, 11 Evangelical, and 3 Jewish high schools, with 1,718 teachers. However, 20 to 25 per cent of the confessional high schools, including a few girls' colleges, have been exempted from the nationalization program, and will remain controlled by the churches. Under planned agreement with the churches, the state will continue to pay subsidies to these schools.

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**World Council of Churches** has gained six new members bringing the total to 148 in 42 countries. Among the latest to accept membership are Churches in Ethiopia, Indonesia, and South Africa. All 148 churches will send delegates to the Council's first assembly scheduled to open at Amsterdam, Holland, on August 22. The list of speakers and other participants in the Assembly, as announced by the Council here, includes four archbishops, eight bishops, three other church executives, 11 officials or executives of world or national interdenominational agencies, 16 professors, two government officials, one college president, one seminary president, one international lawyer, one editor, one publisher, and one student.

Assembly delegates will be divided into four study sections and four committees, which will hold separate meetings for five days. Following this, each section and committee will report at plenary sessions for the entire Assembly's consideration and action. The study sections will deal with four aspects of the Assembly theme: (1) "The Universal Church in God's Design" (nature of the Church); (2) "God's Design and Man's Witness" (evangelism); (3) "The Church and the Disorder of Society"; and (4) "The Church and International Disorder." Assembly committees will consider the proposed constitution for the World Council, recommend future policy, and map out the administration of that policy. Another com-

mittee will study the four "corners" of the Churches. These are: the Christian attitude to the Jews, the place of women in the Church, lay training, and reconstruction and inter-church aid.

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**Two Crucial Church Meetings** scheduled at Wartburg Castle near Eisenach in the Russian Zone for July 6 to 8 and July 11 to 13 are expected to have a vital effect on the status of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID) formed at Treysa in 1945, when unity was established between German Lutheran, Reformed, and United Churches. At a three-day gathering opening on July 11, a joint Reformed and Lutheran assembly will vote upon a constitution for the EKID and decide the all-important question whether the EKID is a church federation or a church union. The EKID meeting will be preceded by the first general synod of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (VELKD), to be held July 6 to 8. The major question at this meeting will be VELKD's relation to the EKID — whether to join or not. The importance of this question to the future of EKID is indicated by the fact that three-fourths of all German Land, or provincial Churches are expected to join the United Evangelical Lutheran Church. Among the Lutheran Churches which have already joined VELKD are the Land Churches of Bavaria, Hanover, Mecklenberg, Thuringia, Lubeck, Sleswig, Holstein, and Schaumburg-Lippe. However, other Lutheran Land Churches regard the establishment of VELKD as an obstacle to the complete union of all Evangelical German churches. All the German Land Churches, whether they wish complete unity of all Evangelical Churches or not, are said to be looking forward with extreme interest to the Eisenach meetings, in the hope they will bring the solution of present problems. Leaders of foreign churches and representatives of the four occupation powers are among the 300 persons scheduled to attend the opening of the joint Lutheran and Reformed assembly on July 11.

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**Bamberg Broadcasting Station**, licensed by the American military government, will be the first Christian Radio Station in Germany, to be operated under joint Protestant and Roman Catholic auspices. Co-sponsors of the Station are Evangelical Bishop Hans Meiser of Munich and Roman Catholic Bishop Joseph Kolb of Bamberg. The bishops have founded a corporation to prepare radio programs "on a Christian basis." Broadcasting will start as soon as possible after the station is set up — possibly by the end of the year.

**Christians In East Asia** now number 35,000,000, Dr. Earl H. Cressy, Far East director of the Hartford Foundation, who has spent over 30 years in China, declared. Of this number, 11,000,000 are Protestants and 24,000,000 Catholics. "The fundamental fact" in the present situation in China is, Dr. Cressy said, that it is the only nation in the world actually fighting the Communists. Even if it becomes necessary to write off North China, he added, there still remains the "immense block of 200,000,000 people south of the Yangtze who will continue to fight to the finish." That, he said, is one of the greatest assets in the present international situation.

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**Legislation Licensing Private Schools in Wisconsin** is being considered by the Wisconsin Commission on Education in Madison. Such legislation would apply to church and parochial schools as well as private commercial institutions. According to M. G. Toepel, executive secretary of the Commission, "anyone can start a school in Wisconsin and there is nothing that state school officers can do about it." Toepel, who introduced the subject, also asked that the Commission require schools to maintain standards of academic quality. His proposals met with informal approval by most of the group, who are preparing educational bills for the 1949 legislature.

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**Detroit Lutheran High School** has received a gift of \$1,500.00 from Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Detroit. A letter accompanying the unsolicited check expressed the wish that "it may be used to good advantage in carrying on your work and also to the glory of our Lord." According to Dr. Albert J. Lindsay, minister of Immanuel Presbyterian Church, his parish has taken a particular interest in Christian education and hopes to further the efforts of the sole Protestant religious secondary school in Detroit by the contribution. Detroit Lutheran High School has just completed its second year of operation under the sponsorship of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod.

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**Bible Courses** will be given in the public schools of Durham, North Carolina, next year despite the recent Supreme Court decision in the Champaign, Illinois, case, according to the Committee on Teaching Bible in the Public Schools. The decision was based on a City Board of Education statement to the effect that "it did not object to the continuance" of the Bible-teaching program. Also responsible for the decision was a

petition signed by about 100 high school students who took the course last year. — Bible instruction is also held legal in Florida schools. The plans now in use in Florida schools are: 1. The schools make it possible for ministers or religious workers representing various denominations to come to the school for one period a week to give religious instruction on an elective basis. 2. Various religious groups in the community combine to employ an individual full time to give daily religious instruction on an elective basis. 3. Ministers or religious workers of the various denominations go to the schools at regular hours to give instruction for which the pupils may remain if they like.

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**A Union Resolution** unanimously adopted by the 52nd annual convention of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church authorized the denomination's church council to appoint a commission to approach the church councils or authorized officials of the constituent bodies of the American Lutheran Conference and invite them to initiate discussions collectively on the question of possible merger. The commission will consist of the president, vice-president, and secretary of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, together with two lay members. Steps, however, are not only being taken to bring about "a greater cooperation and an eventual merger" of the five bodies in the American Lutheran Conference, consisting of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, American Lutheran Church, Augustana Lutheran Church, and Lutheran Free Church, but also of "the other Lutheran churches in our land."

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**The Evangelical Free Church of America** during its 64th annual conference with 333 voting delegates took steps toward a complete merger with the Evangelical Free Church Association (Norwegian). Seminaries of the two groups already have merged, and a joint printing plant is operated in Minneapolis.

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## REVIEWERS' DESK

**Evening Bells at Bethany.** By Norman A. Madson, Dean, Bethany Lutheran Seminary. VIII plus 152 pages, 5½×8. Blue cloth. Black title on front and backbone. Price, \$2.00. — Lutheran Synod Book Concern, Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota.

These forty-two meditations were addressed to the students of Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, by Prof. Norman A. Madson, Dean of the theological department. As the title indicates, they formed a part of the dormitory evening devotions. That they found a ready response in the hearts of the students is apparent from the fact that the request for publication in book form came from them.

In these meditations Dean Madson thoroughly expounds the chosen text and applies its truths to the student's needs, to his special work, his special dangers, his special temptations. In a general way, the texts are chosen according to the seasons of the church year. Special events, such as the opening of the Seminary, the opening of a new school year, Armistice Day, Martin Niemoeller's visit in St. Louis, receive special attention. — The time covered by these devotions is from September 24, 1946 to December 7, 1947.

We agree with Pastor Justin A. Petersen: "Fortunate the youths who are privileged to listen to those . . . evening bells. . . . Secure ought the parents of these pupils feel to have their sons and daughters under the constant call of these tolling bells." M.

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**Christian Symbolism in the Evangelical Churches.** By Thomas Albert Stafford. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. Price, \$2.50.

According to the foreword this book was written to meet "a widespread need for an inexpensive and simple treatise on the principal elements of Christian symbolism, written with special regard for the evangelical point of view." As the author uses the term, "evangelical" is practically synonymous with "non-liturgical." One will, therefore, hardly expect the book to do justice to the Lutheran point of view. The Reformed background of the author (he is a Methodist clergyman) clearly appears in his pronouncements on the Sacraments, also in other matters. Communion is regarded as a symbolic, memorial service, at which Christ is present only in a spiritual sense. Baptism is held to be symbolic of cleansing from sin, but not actually regenerative in its effect (p. 162).

The author has, however, signally succeeded in the first part of his objective. In spite of its brevity and moderate price, the book is packed with a wealth of information on the many ancient symbols of the Church.

The explanations are simple and clear. But for a thorough study of the subject F. R. Webber's *Church Symbolism* will still be indispensable. It will also supply the Lutheran point of view.

E. REIM.

**Sabbath or Sunday?** By John Theodore Mueller, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri. Price: 10 cents.

The author of this little tract (No. 152) of 19 pages is certainly right in designating "legalistic fanaticism" as one of the "Three Snares of Satan" and "the zeal of the misguided Sabbatarians who desire to force upon Christians the Old Testament Sabbath" as "one of its manifestations." Therefore the question, "Sabbath or Sunday?" must always again be answered by the Church. Professor Mueller answers this question in first of all pointing to the witness of Christian Tradition, of the Bible, and of the Augsburg Confession. In emphasizing, however, that the Sabbath Law is a part of the ceremonial law (pp. 10ff.) the author argues that it was taken out of the Moral Law. The conclusion is therefore also drawn that "the commandment to observe the Sabbath is not connected with the law of love" (p. 13). The fact that the Third Commandment or any other commandment is a ceremonial law does not take it out of the law of love. It is Luther who has made it quite clear to us that all commandments of Moses issue from the Decalog and in the Ten Commandments all the others are included, that therefore the old and usual distinction drawn between the Decalog and the commandments of a ceremonial and judicial nature was done "with want of understanding," *mit Unverstand*. The author himself makes it quite clear on page 9 of his tract that the Third Commandment is connected with the love of God and with His commandment to love and serve one another. The words of Jesus, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice" (Matt. 12, 7) and "the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath" (Mk. 2, 27) testify once and for all to the fact that the Sabbath Law also belonged to the law of love (cf. p. 11).

Since this tract of necessity deals with commandments we ask ourselves whether the phraseology "duty to worship" and "the divine Word must be preached" is not open to misunderstanding in its context. We know that the author is here speaking of the *must* of the *anankē*, the necessity which is laid upon us (1 Cor. 9, 16). Since this, however, is not the "must" of the Law, we would have preferred to see the question, "But why, then, do we observe Sunday?" answered by the author as he had already answered it on page 5: "Because that was — and as we may add — is the Christian day of public worship," on which the Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are administered.



We hope that Professor Mueller will feel constrained to revise the wording of a few sentences as found on pages 10-13 and 16-17 when preparing the second edition of this timely tract for publication.

P. PETERS.

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**Communism and the Church.** By Alfred Martin Rehwinkel. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri. Paper Edition, \$1.50; Cloth, \$2.50.

There can be no question about the timeliness of the publication of a book dealing with communism as a political and social trend. Professor Rehwinkel has done that and more. Under the title "Communism and the Church" he endeavors to point out what stand the individual Christian ought to take over against the threat which communism is for the form of government under which he is living. However, as stated before, the author does more. He discusses what attitude the Church of Jesus Christ, all believers in Life Eternal through the atoning death of Christ are constrained to take because communism and Christianity are irreconcilable opposites.

The difficulty in such an exposition lies in the fact that communism is a threat to the existing order of society and to Christianity simultaneously. Here the Christian is sorely in need of Scriptural guidance, lest he become confused in distinguishing between his duty under God as a citizen of his country and what his position should be toward communism as a religious movement. On the one hand the Christian may have to take up arms and to use the sword against communistic forces in defence of the civil institutions of his country. On the other hand he must unwaveringly hold to the conviction that the only weapon for the defeat of irreligious, atheistic, idolatrous communism is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

For the benefit of the readers the reviewer would like to see a sharp line drawn between communism the foe to the social order under which we live, and communism the foe of religion, or, in other words, between its sociological and its theological aspects. And here is the reason for this desire: The ideological concepts of communism are materialistic. They are inherently destructive to all we hold dear in church and state. No dialectics of an idealistic philosophy is able to supplant it where it has taken firm root, and place in its stead a so-called Christian ideology. There is one remedy, and one only. Alone the simple preaching of the Gospel has the power to overcome, even to eradicate, all godlessness by renewing the hearts of men through faith.

A further desideratum. Although there is only one Church, the communion of saints, we cannot be too careful distinguishing between the or-

ganization which, in conformity with the Scriptures, we call church — local congregation and synod — and the "Una Sancta." The latter may flourish and prosper, win one victory after the other, while the former is being destroyed, and its cathedrals are burned to rubble and ashes. Jesus once stated before Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world." Of this fact we must ever be mindful, a fact which is proved on every page of the history of the Church. Else by deviating from this truth we shall do untold harm to both the existing social order and the Church. And surely when mention is made of the pope of Rome as being an implacable foe of atheistic communism the statement bears reiteration that, as dangerous as godless communism is from outside of Christendom, nevertheless the deadliest enemy for true Christianity still is and will remain that man of sin mentioned in II Thessalonians. The pope is indeed the very Antichrist for condemning all that cling for salvation to "sola scriptura, sola gratia, sola fide."

We are grateful to the author for the numerous quotations from the works of the founders of communism in past ages and of the representatives of communism in our own day, thus giving us easy accessibility to the source material for our study of communism.

M. LEHNINGER.

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**Evangeliſch-Lutheriſcher Volkskalender auf das Jahr 1948.** Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, G. m. b. H., Berlin. Druck von Johannes Herrmann, Zwickau (Sachsen).

Dieser Volkskalender, der uns vom Lizenzverleger Johannes Herrmann Verlag freundlichst überreicht worden ist, sollte von einem jeden unserer Pastoren und Professoren gelesen werden. Sind doch die Beziehungen, die wir zu den lutherischen Freikirchen Deutschlands haben, immer engere geworden. Und in Zukunft werden wir uns noch mehr mit den Zielen und Aufgaben dieser Freikirchen befassen müssen. Darum begrüßen wir es zunächst, daß dieser Kalender die Anschriften aller Pastoren und Professoren der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Freikirche, der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche im früheren Ostpreußen (Breslau Synode) und unserer Evangelisch-Lutherischen Flüchtlingsmissionskirche bringt. Außerdem enthält der Kalender wichtige kirchenhistorische Artikel, die den Leser nicht nur mit der kirchlichen Arbeit der Vergangenheit, sondern auch mit der der Gegenwart vertraut machen, besonders mit der Arbeit und den Arbeitern der lutherischen Freikirchen Deutschlands. Es fehlt aber auch nicht an Erbauungsartikeln, und auch darum können wir unsern Lesern nicht eindringlich genug die Anschaffung dieses populären Volkskalenders empfehlen.

W. Peters.

**Before Abraham.** Prehistoric Man in Biblical Light. By Byron C. Nelson, Th. M. Published by Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis. Price: \$1.50.

Byron Nelson, who received his theological training at Maywood, Illinois, and Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, and his Th. M. from Princeton Theological Seminary, where he studied in 1925-26, has written two other books in which he meets the evolutionists on their own ground: *After Its Kind* and *The Deluge Story In Stone*. The book, which has been sent us for review, "is," according to the author's own words, "directed against mistaken ideas in religion on the one hand and against false notions of science on the other. It is intended to show that the Bible, when properly interpreted, leaves men free to agree to any antiquity of the human race, however great that may be, which a genuine science makes it necessary to grant; and it is intended also to show from facts brought to light by science, *i. e.*, by archeological and anthropological researches, that the human race has apparently been from the earliest times mentally and physically what it is today, and that man should be regarded, therefore, as created rather than evolved" (p. 1).

The main portion of the book, therefore, deals with the glacial epoch during which "a succession of human cultures followed one another in Europe." With the help of many photographs the author succeeds in clearly setting forth, purely from archeological investigation, what knowledge we have of the glacial epoch, about which the historians, with the exception of the Biblical writers, have never written. According to the author it only began to end some twenty thousand years ago, but had a considerable duration before that, in which men were at the Tower of Babel and in the Flood. While the writer of our book accepts the Book of Genesis "as true in a literal sense," he does not agree with Ussher's interpretation of the genealogies in the Bible. In order to point out the reasons for not following Ussher in his findings, the author devotes Chapter One and a part of the Appendix to a critical review of Ussher's results and comes to the conclusion that "the genealogies of Scripture must be regarded as abridged" and that "so far as the Bible is concerned, the date of the Creation of Adam and Eve may be many times earlier than Ussher supposed" (p. 16). Time and space forbid us in this review to give an evaluation of the author's study of the chronology of the Bible. Still your reviewer is of the opinion that Nelson's arguments based on his interpretation of the chronological data of the Bible deserve further consideration and study, which we intend to present to our readers in a future article. We hope that they, in the meantime, will read and study the book itself, in order to be able to do justice to the arguments of the author and, where necessary and possible, to uncover his errors.

P. PETERS.

**Weihnachten in der Alten Kirche**, von Prof. Dr. Oscar Cullmann.  
Publisher: Heinrich Majer, Basel, Switzerland. Paper, 31 pages.  
Price, Fr. 1.50.

It has long been accepted that the celebration of December 25 as the Festival of the Nativity of our Lord originated in Rome about the middle of the Fourth Century, spreading from there to the other parts of the empire in a relatively short period of time. It is also known that the observance of the sixth of January as the Festival of the Epiphany is of Eastern origin and of an even earlier date. It served chiefly to commemorate the Baptism of Jesus at the hands of John in the river Jordan, although it is apparent that before long certain references to the Savior's birth were also incorporated. But the connection between the two, the manner in which the Incarnation came more and more into the foreground, and particularly the reason for this gradual change, have not always been so clear, at least not to your reviewer.

In the above mentioned monograph the author presents the most recent results of scholarly research in regard to this interesting question. He quotes from a fragment of an ancient liturgy which has been found among the Egyptian papyri, and which shows clearly that not only the story of the Magi, but explicit references to the Birth at Bethlehem were included in this Eastern observance of the Epiphany, thus antedating the developments at Rome by at least a quarter of a century. It remained for Rome to make a separate festival of the Nativity and to change the time of its celebration. But the growth of the idea was obviously of an earlier date.

Dr. Cullmann has rendered a valuable service in making these data available, together with much other material that has a bearing upon the history of this festival of the Church. One might also mention his analysis of the connection between the prevalent cult of the Sun which came to a climax on the day of the Winter Solstice (*Sol Invictus*) and the selection of that same day for the purpose of commemorating the Birth of Christ. He arrives at the conclusion that this was intended as a deliberate correction of the false pagan ideas that had become associated with that day. Christ was to be pictured as the true Sun of Righteousness.

We hope that many of our readers will avail themselves of the opportunity to study this essay at first hand.

E. REIM.

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# Quartalschrift

## Theological Quarterly

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Number 4

October, 1948

Volume 45

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### OPENING ADDRESS

SEMINARY CHAPEL, THIENSVILLE, WISCONSIN

September 8, 1948

*1 Cor. 2, 9: As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

*Dear Young Friends:*

Your aim is to prepare for the ministry of the Church. This ministry may be summed up in one word: Preach the Gospel. Your task as students in our school will be to familiarize yourselves thoroughly with the Gospel, not only to acquire as wide, as comprehensive, as deep an understanding as possible of the Gospel truths, but above all to imbibe the spirit of the Gospel, to become saturated with it, so that it will control all your thinking and all your actions.

A brief study of our text may serve as a directive. Paul is speaking about the Gospel which he brought to Corinth. In our text he sums up its characteristics in a free quotation from the Prophet Isaiah. The Gospel is a message of faith. You may learn from Paul to

### Preach the Gospel of Faith

#### I.

Note in the first place that *the Gospel does not depend on external things for its success.*

Paul says that "eye hath not seen nor ear heard." We are reminded of Jesus' word to Thomas: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." And of that to the Pharisees: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation" (Jh. 20, 29; Lc. 17, 20).

There always was the danger of trying to build the Church with external means, at least, of trying thus to reenforce the Gospel, instead of relying on the Gospel alone in its unadulterated purity and in its unabridged entirety, to work its way into the hearts of men and there to create faith.

Corinth, where Paul preached the Gospel, was an important business center with a rich commerce flowing through it. Business depends on many external things. Besides such as transportation, storing facilities, and the like, we mention only: sound financial foundation and efficient organization. A flourishing business cannot be built on a shaky financial basis. And though a business be backed by plenty of money, it still cannot thrive, but is headed for the rocks if it is mismanaged, if its conduct is not properly organized. Corinth was a successful business city. People were conscious of what it takes to make a business a success.

Paul came to preach the Gospel of Christ. What organization was backing him? How was his venture financed? Paul had been sent by God to preach in Corinth, and he had God's promise that He would support him. As to visible means of support in the form of a strong organization which guaranteed a regular pay check, there was none. Paul worked with his own hands, not only for his livelihood, but to defray the expenses of his mission work. From his epistles to the Corinthians we learn that he frequently had difficulty in making ends meet and that at times he even ran into the "red." He did not let these things disturb him nor hamper his work. He had God's call to preach the Gospel, and that was enough for him. He trusted in God.

In spite of the fact that things which eye sees or ear hears were completely lacking, Paul established a flourishing church in Corinth purely by preaching the Gospel, in the face of difficulty and opposition.

We might mention many things that threaten to distort our views in this matter today. Many outward things are recommended to make the preaching of the Gospel more attractive, such as: beautiful church buildings, an elaborate liturgy, winning personality of the preacher, social activities and entertainment, and the like. We limit our attention to one which Paul also faced

in Corinth: the stress which people put on the importance of organization for the work of the Gospel. For business, organization is a *sine qua non*; but for the Church? — Today the idea of unionism is strong in the minds of the people. They see what a handicap disunity is in the world, and what strength, political and economic, is gained by combining forces and attacking a problem with a united front. It seems advisable to overlook minor differences, to compromise on them, in order to be united on the main issue. Men apply these methods to church work. They speak of non-fundamental doctrines in which a difference of opinion need not be divisive of church fellowship, yes, in which a certain latitude is permissible and wholesome. They push co-operation of church bodies in spite of differences of doctrine, even federation and outward union, so that the world might be impressed by the numerical strength of the Church, presented to it in a united front.

Remember, and let it be one of the aims of your studies in our Seminary, that your heart be filled with the truth that the power of the Gospel does not rest on what eye sees or ear hears. The Gospel is the power of God. It has power inherent in itself. And our sole concern must be to preach it in its purity without alterations or abridgments.

## II.

Then note in the second place that *the Gospel does not agree with the thoughts and wishes of man.*

Paul's words in our text are: "neither have entered into the heart of man." The human mind is unable to discover, or even to comprehend, the things of the Gospel.

The human mind certainly is a wonderful thing, and by an application of its principles of logic it has discovered many truths, *e. g.*, in pure and applied mathematics, and in philosophy. All modern progress, *e. g.*, the many labor-saving conveniences that we enjoy, we owe to the efforts of the human mind. But the truths of the Gospel it is unable to find. Worse. Even when the truths of the Gospel are presented to man he cannot grasp them, because they conflict with the most elementary rules of his logic.

The Gospel proclaims God to us, and answers the question of how we may be in harmony, in communion and fellowship with

Him. There is one God, but He is a triune God. The Father is God. The Son is God. The Holy Spirit is God. And yet these three persons are not three Gods, but one God. Human reason could not only never hope to discover this truth, but when it is offered to us in the Gospel, our reason finds it offensive because it violates the simplest rules of arithmetic.

On the proper way to union with God the Gospel proclaims: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Again reason could never have discovered this truth, and finds it altogether incredible and offensive. A God whose fiery wrath is kindled against us because of our sins is presented as so filled with love and compassion that He offers His only Son as an atonement for our sins! Impossible! And in doing this He charges our guilt against His holy and innocent Son and lays the terrible punishment on Him! That is most unfair! And then He credits the righteousness of His Son to us! Who can grasp it?

But even worse than this. If it is so simple to get rid of our guilt, if it is so easy to have the favor of God: who will then make any effort to lead a decent life? If we have sinned, we merely wash in the blood of Jesus, and all guilt is instantly removed. That will take every stimulant away for leading a moral life. The world will be turned upside down if people accept this Gospel, it will become a terrible place to live in. The Gospel must be rejected in the interest of law and order.

But mark Paul's words well. He does not say that the truths of the Gospel have not entered into the mind or reason of man, he says, the heart. The heart is not only the seat of our thoughts and ideas, it is the seat of our feelings and our wishes, of our likes and dislikes. Our heart not only does not understand, it does not appreciate the truths of the Gospel.

Our heart clings to the things of the earth. It wants to enjoy this life. It therefore expects the Church to remedy the conditions on earth, particularly the economic conditions, so that we have peace between capital and labor, and peace among the nations, that each one may make as much money as possible with as little effort as possible, and have plenty of leisure time for



enjoyment. Since the Gospel directs us to the life to come, our natural heart considers it as hostile to the betterment of this life, and rejects it.

In your preparation for the ministry of the Church may the truths of the Gospel ever more overcome the resistance of your heart, and become the source of your joy and your hope.

### III.

In the third place note that *the Gospel proclaims the work of God*.

"The things which God hath prepared" St. Paul says in our text. On the first Pentecost Day those that were assembled heard the apostles in various tongues "speak the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2, 11).

The Gospel speaks of the works of God only. God is the sole author and finisher of all works. God may perform them personally, He may use, *e. g.*, angels as His messengers; they work only by the strength which He supplies, so that in reality it is He alone who does all things.

Man is so inclined by his sinful nature that he wants to speak about his own works, and considers it necessary to speak about his own works. He thinks it also foolish and dangerous not to insist on man's operation, at least his cooperation, in spiritual matters. "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" said the young ruler to Jesus (Mt. 19. 16). And old Nicodemus was shocked, astonished beyond measure, when Jesus told him: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jh. 3, 3). A new birth? Impossible! Why, that is something which no man can achieve, that eliminates man from the picture. Today men of the world teach their youth to do their duty "on their own honor," and they even offer their program freely to the Church as very helpful in its Gospel work!

The Gospel speaks of God's work only.

We limit our consideration to the religious question of harmony and communion of man with God. We thus omit God's work of creation and His work of preservation and world government.

How, according to the Gospel, is a man to enjoy harmony and communion with God? This is God's work alone. The Gospel proceeds on the assumption that man is a sinner, whom his sins separate from God. It is a complete separation. Man is totally corrupt and under the irrevocable curse of the holy God. Man can do nothing to appease the wrath of God, nor can he do anything to change his own nature. He is simply dead in sins.

The Gospel does not denounce the sinner for this state of affairs; that is the function of the Law; but the Gospel fully acknowledges it without excusing it or toning down the terrible truth. What the Gospel speaks about is God's work, what God has done to remedy the evil.

The first thing that God did was to send His own Son to substitute for sin-lost man. The Son of God was made flesh, and as the Lamb of God He took away the sins of the world. He became our Highpriest who sacrificed Himself to make atonement for our sins. His blood washed away all our sins. He merited for us a righteousness on account of which God in Christ justified the whole world. God reconciled the accursed world unto Himself. Man on his part contributed nothing. It was from beginning to end God's work.

The second thing that God does is to send His Spirit into our hearts to create in us the faith necessary for accepting the free gift of salvation. Again this is from beginning to end the work of God. We cannot by our own reason or strength come to Jesus or believe in Him. We cannot cooperate in our own conversion. We cannot prepare ourselves for it. We cannot even decide that we are not going to interfere, but will give God an opportunity to see what He can do with us. Our conversion is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit, who calls, enlightens, sanctifies, and keeps us in the faith through the Gospel.

This is not to the liking of natural man, who desires some credit for his own conversion. He maintains that he, though unable to do the whole work, can at least achieve some good on his own honor, if he so determines. But the Gospel of faith does not admit man's works; it speaks of the things which God has prepared, God alone, without the cooperation of man.

Again, in preparing yourselves for work in the Church let this be your aim that only God's work looms big in your hearts, and that any concession made to the honor of man irritates you and arouses your holy indignation as a blasphemous adulteration of the Gospel of faith.

#### IV.

In the fourth place note that *the Gospel demands a complete surrender of the heart.*

"For them that love him" says our text.

Note that Paul does not say that God prepared salvation for them that merited it, or for them that He found worthy of it. There are no such people. He does not even say that God did it for such as were not quite as bad as the rest, or did not offer Him as stiff a resistance as most people. There are none such either. For there is no difference. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Paul simply says, "them that love God."

Love, or charity, so Paul assures us in Col. 3, 14, is the "bond of perfectness." Where love is found, there is complete unity. Here Paul speaks of our love toward God. We love Him because He first loved us. Love may assume different forms according to the nature and condition of the object toward which it is directed. When it is said that God loved the sin-lost world, this does not mean that He delights in the world and its ways, but He has compassion and will do all within His power to help. When, however, it is said that God loves His people that believe on Him, then the sense is that He takes pleasure in them, so much that He comes to them and takes up His abode in their heart. When we are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves, this means that we should look at his condition and befriend him accordingly, in whatever he needs. When father and mother love their children they find pleasure in providing for them whatever is good for them. And when children love their parents they gratefully rejoice in them as their benefactors.

When we love God, that does not mean that we try to work for Him in order to pay Him for his services. It means that we acknowledge Him as the Giver of all blessings which we have re-

ceived, particularly of our salvation. It means that we acknowledge how without God we would be nothing. It means that we confidently submit ourselves entirely to Him. He is all, and we are nothing. We are not afraid of Him. People who are afraid of God cannot love Him. We gratefully rejoice in His blessing. The love which Paul here mentions expresses an attitude of the heart which includes faith as its root and our life of praise and thanksgiving as its blessed fruit.

That is what God wants. "Come unto me," the Savior says, "all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." When the jailer at Philippi asked Paul and Silas: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" they answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Through Solomon God invites us: "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways" (Prov. 23, 26). All this our text sums up in the one word "them that love him."

That is the purpose of the Gospel to create this love in the hearts of sinners, who by their sins are separated from God, that in such love they may be united with Him, trusting in His forgiving grace and rejoicing in His unearned blessings.

Let this then be the chief aim of your work in preparing for the ministry that your personal union with God be strengthened, so that as men who have tasted God's goodness you may testify to others and invite them to accept the same blessing. Amen.

M.

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## Das Ende der lutherischen Landeskirchen Deutschlands \*

Die Annahme der „Grundordnung der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland“ bedeutet das unwiderrufliche Ende der lutherischen Landeskirchen Deutschlands. Der Weg, den unsere Kirchen am 11. Juli 1933 betreten haben, verführt durch die Sirenentöne eines angeblichen nationalen Erwachens, taub gegen alle warnenden Stimmen, hat nun sein Ende gefunden. Ein bitteres Ende. Denn mit der lutherischen Kirche Deutschlands, die jetzt nur noch in den Freikirchen fortlebt, ist das beste und edelste Stück unseres nationalen Lebens dahingefunken. Aber mehr als das. Mit der Kirche der Ungeänderten Augsburgischen Konfession hat unser Volk das Höchste vermorfen, was Gott ihm anvertraut hatte, die reine Lehre seines heiligen Evangeliums. Es wird auch in Zukunft in Deutschland noch Evangelium geben. Menschen werden daran glauben und in diesem Glauben leben und Seligkeit finden. Christus wird sein heiliges Volk auch in Deutschland noch haben, aber nur so, wie er es auch in Mexiko oder in Rom hat. Die „Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland“ ist weder Kirche noch evangelisch. Sie ist eine Sekte wie der Methodismus oder Baptismus, oder richtiger ein Haufe von Sekten. Ihr Kirchenregiment und das Kirchenregiment ihrer Gliedkirchen ist häretisch geworden und hat keinen Anspruch mehr auf Ehrerbietung, Gehorsam und Fürbitte. Die Landesbischöfe Wurm, Meiser, Bilje, Dibelius und wie sie alle heißen, sind — wir jagen das mit allerherbstem Schmerz — heute das, was Ludwig Müller, Joachim Hoffenfelder und ihre Genossen 1933 waren. Und die bekennende lutherische Kirche kann heute nichts anderes tun, als den Kirchenregierungen, welche die Beschlüsse von Eisenach veranlaßt, geduldet oder gebilligt haben, jede Gefolgschaft und jeden Gehorsam mit demselben Ernst verweigern, mit dem Martin Niemöller und sein Notbund einst dasselbe der preußischen Kirchenregierung und dem Reichskirchenregiment gegenüber taten.

Denn es kann kein Zweifel daran bestehen, daß die sogenannte „Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland“ häretisch und die Zugehörigkeit zu ihr mit dem lutherischen Bekenntnis unvereinbar ist. Sie ruht auf einer großen Unwahrhaftigkeit, um nicht zu sagen auf einer

\*) Dieser Beitrag ist dem Herausgeber zur Information zugegangen. Wir hielten ihn für so wichtig, daß wir ihn auf unsere Verantwortung veröffentlichten. Die Redaktion.

Lüge. „Die EKD ist ein Bund lutherischer, reformierter und unierter Kirchen.“ Warum nennt sie sich dann nicht Bund? Weil sie nach der Meinung vieler ihrer Gründer Kirche sein oder werden soll und weil sie nach dem Wortlaut ihrer Verfassung in der Tat mehr ist als Bund. In demselben Artikel, in dem sie sich als Bund definiert, erklärt sie, sie wisse sich „verpflichtet, als bekennende Kirche die Erkenntnisse des Kirchenkampfes über Wesen, Auftrag und Ordnung der Kirche zur Auswirkung zu bringen. Sie ruft die Gliedkirchen zum Hören auf das Zeugnis der Brüder. Sie hilft ihnen, wo es gefordert wird, zur gemeinsamen Abwehr kirchenzerstörender Irrlehre“. Ueber Wesen, Auftrag und Ordnung der Kirche kann nur die Kirche, die rechtgläubige Kirche, befehlen. Vor kirchenzerstörender Irrlehre kann nur die rechtgläubige Kirche warnen. Das alles maßt sich die EKD an, weil sie Kirche sein will. Und was für eine Kirche? Eine Kirche, für welche die reformierte Abendmahls- und Tauflehre keine kirchenzerstörende Irrlehre mehr ist, in der man nicht mehr die höchste Kunst des Theologen zu üben braucht, Gesetz und Evangelium zu unterscheiden, eine Kirche, in der man lutherisch, reformiert, methodistisch (wie in Württemberg), baptistisch (wie in der Schule Barth's), modernistisch (unter Leugnung nicht nur der Wunder, sondern auch der Gottmenschheit Jesu Christi wie in der Schule Bultmann's, eines Führers der „Bekennenden Kirche“) lehren kann. Eine Kirche, in der solche seelenverderbenden Produkte wie der Badener oder der Pfälzer Katechismus oder die absolute Bekenntnislosigkeit der Kirche von Bremen als vollkommen gleichberechtigt mit den großen Bekenntnissen der Reformation gelten. „In der EKD wird die bestehende Gemeinschaft der deutschen evangelischen Christenheit sichtbar“, heißt es in demselben grundlegenden Artikel 1, aus dem die bisherigen Zitate genommen sind. Rein deutscher Lutheraner wird bestreiten, daß es eine Gemeinschaft aller evangelischen Deutschen gibt. Eine Gemeinschaft des großen historischen Erbes, der Geschichte, des Schicksals, der Schuld. Wir Lutheraner sind die letzten, die sich weigern, dieser Gemeinschaft Ausdruck zu geben. Wir wollen auch das bekennen, was wir gemeinsam haben, auch wenn wir es leider verschieden verstehen: das Sola scriptura, das Ja zu dem großen Erbe der altkirchlichen Bekenntnisse. Um der Wahrhaftigkeit willen müssen wir indessen auch sagen, worin wir nicht einig sind. Aber daß uns zugemutet wird, auf die Irrlehren des Calvinismus und

seiner unierten Tochterkirchen als auf „das Zeugnis der Brüder“ zu hören, das überschreitet das Maß des Erträglichen. Die „Kirche“, die hier redet, die EKD, ist nichts als eine neue Unionskirche, die sich von den früheren Unionskirchen nur dadurch unterscheidet, daß sie gefährlicher ist als diese. Sie umfaßt ganz Deutschland und zeigt in ihrem Aufbau und ihrem Programm eine so verblüffende Ähnlichkeit mit den reformierten Plänen des Oekumenischen Rates der Kirchen, daß jedem klar Sehenden deutlich ist: Hier, am Punkte des schwächsten Widerstandes, sollte einmal gezeigt werden, was man mit dem Luthertum machen kann. Das alte Ideal Calvins und der Genfer Kirchenpolitik ist hier verwirklicht. Was im 16. Jahrhundert am Widerstand des Luthertums scheiterte und auch im Zeitalter des Dreißigjährigen Krieges trotz alles Synkretismus noch nicht möglich war, was im Pietismus angebahnt und in den Unionen des 19. Jahrhunderts wenigstens teilweise verwirklicht wurde, das wird nun unter der genialen Führung von Karl Barth und seinen Freunden und Schülern zustande gebracht: die e i n e evangelische Kirche, in der die altprotestantischen Konfessionsunterschiede zu mehr oder minder gleichberechtigten theologischen Schulen nivelliert werden. Das aber ist das Ende der evangelisch-lutherischen K i r c h e. In Deutschland erleben wir dies Ende. Soll unser Schicksal das Schicksal des gesamten Luthertums werden?

Aber vielleicht ist es gar nicht so schlimm, wird man sagen. Es gibt doch noch Lutheraner und lutherische Theologie in Deutschland, und heute vielleicht mehr als vor einem Menschenalter. S a m w o h l, das gibt es. Es gibt sogar Bischöfe, die die lutherische Kirche erhalten möchten und in ihrer Art dafür kämpfen. Es gibt sogar den Plan einer „Vereinigten Evang.-Lutherischen Kirche in Deutschland“. Vor der verhängnisvollen Versammlung der EKD hat sogar in derselben Lutherstadt Eisenach die Generalsynode der VELKD getagt und die Gründung dieser Kirche beschlossen. Aber leider wird diese Kirche, wenn sie überhaupt zustandekommt, nicht das sein, was ihr Name sagt. Erstens gehört ihr eine Anzahl von Kirchen, die sich lutherisch nennen, nicht an wie Württemberg und Oldenburg, die für einen derartigen Konfessionalismus nicht zu haben sind. Und zweitens soll die VELKD nur innerhalb der EKD bestehen. Das heißt, die VELKD erkennt mit der Existenz der EKD auch deren Grundordnung und das heißt auch deren dogmatische und rechtliche Grundlagen an, zum Bei-

spiel auch die Verbindlichkeit der „von der ersten Bekenntnissynode in Barmen getroffenen Entscheidungen“. Die Erfinder dieser Formulierung sind stolz darauf, daß nicht die inzwischen zum Rang eines verbindlichen reformierten Bekenntnisses erhobene „Theologische Erklärung“ von Barmen genannt worden ist — als ob die Entscheidungen von Barmen irgendwo anders zu finden seien als in den Beschlüssen jener gemischten Synode, die sich zum ersten Male in der deutschen Kirchengeschichte die Lehrgewalt über alle evangelischen Konfessionskirchen angemahnt hat. Drittens denkt die EKD gar nicht daran, die etwa entstehende VELKD als Kirche anzuerkennen. „Gliedkirchen der EKD sind die bestehenden Landes- und Provinzialkirchen“, heißt es in Art. 2, Absatz 1, und Absatz 3 erklärt: „Jede Gliedkirche steht, unbeschadet ihrer Zugehörigkeit zu einer konfessionell oder territorial bestimmten Vereinigung von Gliedkirchen im unmittelbaren Verhältnis zur Leitung der EKD“. Das heißt mit dürren Worten: Die VELKD ist ein Privatverein, mit dem die EKD nicht zu verhandeln braucht. Ihre leitenden Organe sind kein Kirchenregiment. Kirchenregiment im Sinne des durch die „Grundordnung“ gesetzten Kirchenrechts sind allein die Regierungen der EKD und der einzelnen Gliedkirchen. Eine VELKD im Sinne der Theologie und des Kirchenrechts könnte nur entstehen durch Verfassungsänderung oder durch revolutionären Bruch des in Eisenach gesetzten Rechts. Eine Verfassungsänderung ist praktisch unmöglich, da die konfessionellen Lutheraner niemals eine Zweidrittelmehrheit in der aus 120 Mitgliedern (von denen der „Rat der EKD“ allein 20 beruft) erlangen können, zumal die Unierten sich das Recht vorbehalten haben, als Lutheraner zu votieren. Wenn aber die Lutheraner etwa darauf spekulieren, daß die EKD an ihrer inneren Unwahrhaftigkeit zerbrechen wird wie ihre Vorgängerin, die „Deutsche Evang. Kirche“ von 1933, und daß dann die VELKD die Kirche der Zukunft sein wird, warum haben sie sie dann gebaut? Warum versichern sie ständig ihre Treue zum Grundgedanken der EKD? Wenn sie diese Hintergedanken haben, dann setzen sie sich mit Recht dem Vorwurf des Treubruchs aus. Sie haben 15 Jahre hindurch studieren können, wohin man mit dieser verlogenen Union kommt. Sie haben 14 Jahre lang gesehen, daß man „Barmen“ nicht lutherisch auslegen kann. Sie wissen aus schmerzlicher Erfahrung, daß Wörter wie Kirche, Herrschaft Christi, Gegenwart Christi, Ordnung der Kirche, kirchliches Bekenntnis bei den Refor-



mierten einen völlig anderen Sinn haben als bei den Lutheranern. Ist es denn nicht christlicher, ehrlicher, zu sagen: „Ihr habt einen anderen Geist“ und getrennt zu marschieren, als sich selbst und der christlichen Gemeinde eine Einheit vorzuspiegeln, die nicht besteht? Was für ein Segen kann auf solcher Vorspiegelung liegen? Ist es nicht auch viel ökumenischer gedacht und gehandelt, wenn man die Unterschiede und Gegensätze nicht vertuscht? Denn es handelt sich ja nicht um Verschiedenheiten, die in derselben Kirche tragbar sind, die sich gegenseitig zu einer höheren Einheit ergänzen, sondern es handelt sich um Standpunkte, die sich gegenseitig ausschließen. In diesen Unterschieden geht es doch wohl auch um Wahrheit und Irrtum, reine Lehre und Häresie, Kirche und Sekte.

Das alles ist nun fünfzehn Jahre gesagt worden. Es war alles umsonst. Warum? Auch wenn man in Betracht zieht, daß moderne protestantische Bischöfe kaum noch Zeit haben, sich um Theologie zu kümmern, so bleibt doch ein Rest des mit menschlichen Mitteln nicht mehr Erklärbaren. Sie alle wissen, ausnahmslos, daß die EKD sowohl mit der Lehre Luthers als mit der der Ungeänderten Augsburgischen Konfession und der Konkordienformel unvereinbar ist. Sie wissen, was die Verwerfungsformeln unseres Bekenntnisses bedeuten. Sie wissen alle, daß die EKD mehr ist als ein Bund, schon dadurch, daß man aus ihr nicht wie aus einem Bunde austreten kann. Und was sie nicht wissen, das wissen ihre Theologen. Sommerlath, Schlink und Merz, um nur diese zu nennen, wissen, daß man zu wählen hat zwischen der Grundordnung der EKD und der Konkordienformel. Jeder ernsthafte Theologe in Bayern — es gibt allerdings nicht viele — weiß, daß der Eintritt der bayerischen Landeskirche in die EKD nicht nur den Bruch des Bekenntnisses, sondern auch die revolutionäre Außerkräftsetzung der Verfassung und damit einen krassen Rechtsbruch bedeutet. Warum folgt man dann nicht der Stimme des Gewissens?

Indem wir diese Frage stellen, rühren wir an die tiefste Wunde des deutschen Luthertums. Man hat keine Gründe für den Beitritt zur EKD. Man hat nur noch Entschuldigungen für das, was man das kleinere Übel nennt. Eine der Entschuldigungen für das angeblich kleinere Übel sind die kirchlichen Notstände, wie das Flüchtlingselend. Diese Not wird propagandistisch ebenso ausgebeutet wie in der Ökumenischen Bewegung die Not der Zersplitterung auf den Mis-

fionsfeldern. Die ewige Wahrheit Gottes gilt unabhängig von allen praktischen Lehren, und die Wahrheit kann niemals durch die Not, sondern nur die Not durch die Wahrheit überwunden werden. Wir können keinem Jnder und keinem Chinesen das Vergernis und den Trost der rechten Lehre vom Sakrament nehmen, das steht nicht in unserer Macht. Und in welchem Katechismus sind denn 98% der Flüchtlinge aus dem Osten erzogen worden? In Luthers Katechismus und in keinem anderen. Das Problem besteht also nur darin, daß wir sie an ihr Konfirmationsgelübde erinnern und auf Grund dieses Gelübdes Abendmahlszucht üben. — Eine andere Entschuldigung ist die politische Not unseres zerrissenen Volkes. Aber das ist nur ein Vorwand. Sonst müßten wir ja schleunigst eine Union mit dem Katholizismus suchen und Luther verurteilen, für den die Einheit der Kirche höher stand als die Einheit der Nation. Es ist außerdem noch sehr fraglich, ob nicht ein echter Bund zwischen zwei oder drei selbständigen über ganz Deutschland sich erstreckenden Bekenntniskirchen, wie er 1945 vorgeschlagen und von vielen gebilligt wurde, auch der deutschen Nation nützlicher gewesen wäre als das Genfer Gewächs, in das man uns nun hineingezwungen hat. So steht es nicht, daß diese Lösung der deutschen Kirchenfrage die einzig mögliche gewesen wäre. Es sind in den letzten 15 Jahren genug diskutabile Vorschläge von Sachkennern gemacht worden. Aber sie sind alle in den Papierkorb gewandert. Warum wohl? Es gibt nur eine wirkliche Antwort darauf. Es hat am Glauben gefehlt. Es hat am Glauben an die Wahrheit des lutherischen Bekenntnisses gefehlt. Wir wollen doch ehrlich sein. Man hat den Egegeten Bultmann ernster genommen als den Egegeten Luther — trotz aller Lutherrenaissance. Luthers großes, schlichtes Schriftverständnis war den modernen Theologen Deutschlands viel zu einfältig. Das mag damit zusammenhängen, daß die moderne lutherische Kirche kein Verhältnis mehr zur ganzen Heiligen Schrift als dem Worte Gottes hat. Aber es kommt noch etwas anderes hinzu. Die lutherische Kirche Deutschlands — wir enthalten uns hier des Urteils über andere lutherische Kirchen — hat nicht mehr die Kraft zum Bekennen gehabt. Sie hat es darin nicht einmal so weit gebracht wie die Männer um Niemöller, die zwar nicht wußten, was ein kirchliches Bekenntnis ist und was in den Bekenntnissen ihrer Kirche steht, die aber wenigstens ihren persönlichen Glauben vor den Großen und Mächtigen dieser Welt be-

kannt haben. So gewiß es in Deutschland auch eine bekennende lutherische Kirche gab, unsere Kirche als ganze hat nicht mehr die Kraft derer gehabt, die einst mit Zittern und Zagen vor der ungeheuren Verantwortung über die Augustana schrieben: Ich rede von deinen Zeugnissen vor Königen und schäme mich nicht. Die Kirche der Apostel war eine tapfere Kirche. Die Kirche der Konfessoren und Märtyrer hat eine Welt überwunden. Die Konsistorialräte und Landesbischöfe kommen in keinem Tedeum vor, und die Theologieprofessoren mit ihrer Professorentheologie auch nicht.

Was soll nun werden? Die Zeit der lutherischen Landeskirchen in Deutschland ist zu Ende. Es gibt noch treue Lutheraner. Man wird sie behandeln, wie die Konsistorialbürokratie aller Zeiten Männer behandelt hat nach dem bewährten Grundsatz der römischen Cäsaren: Möglichst wenig Märtyrer und möglichst viele Abtrünnige. Eine ganze Literatur wird mit Hilfe der EKD zusammengeschrieben werden — zum Teil ist sie schon erschienen — darüber, daß Calvin der eigentliche Schüler und Testamentsvollstrecker Luthers ist, daß die Verleugner der Augustana Invariata die eigentlichen Lutheraner sind und diejenigen, die heute noch die Konkordienformel ernst nehmen, Talmudisten und Rabbinisten, wie man sie in dem aufgeklärten Teil der bayerischen Pfarrerschaft nennt. Die theologische Forschung und Lehre, die Erziehung des kirchlichen Nachwuchses vor allem in den von Genf und Tübingen aus zentral geleiteten Studentengemeinden, alles dies, was die EKD schon so erfolgreich getan hat und was nun zu ihren verfassungsmäßigen Aufgaben gehört (Artikel 7 bis 9 und 14), wird dazu helfen, das bekennnistreue Luthertum in Deutschland stillzulegen und aussterben zu lassen. Mühsam wird es sein Dasein weiter fristen. Es wird fortleben in den Freikirchen, die einst aus sterbenden lutherischen Kirchen hervorgegangen sind und die ganze Last und Not solcher Kämpfe um das Bekenntnis der Reformation getragen haben und fröhlich tragen. Es wird fortleben in den einsamen Pfarrern in den Landeskirchen, die es nicht über das Herz bringen, ihre Herde zu verlassen, bis man ihnen die Wirksamkeit unmöglich macht. Andere, die keine Gemeinde und keinen Wirkungskreis mehr haben, werden sich ein neues Arbeitsfeld suchen müssen. Man wird diese Männer Separatisten und Sektierer nennen und sie sonst beschimpfen. Man wird ihnen vorwerfen, sie gingen in ein Ghetto und gäben die Sendung der Kirche an das Volk und die

Welt auf. Aber Athanasius hat in Trier und in der Wüste nicht im Ghetto gelebt, und die lutherischen Freikirchen Deutschlands auch nicht. Denn wo die rechte Kirche ist, da ist stets auch die ganze Kirche gegenwärtig, die Kirche aller Zeiten, die *Una sancta catholica perpetuo mansura*. Vielleicht muß die unsagbare Tragödie der lutherischen Kirche Deutschlands dazu helfen, uns frei zu machen von dem Wahn der großen Zahlen und von dem heimlichen Unglauben, der wie ein Fluch auf der Christenheit unserer Zeit liegt, als ob der Herr Christus immer der Millionen bedürfte, um seine gewaltigen Taten auch heute zu tun und als ob Er nicht mehr da wäre, wo zwei oder drei versammelt sind in Seinem Namen.

Ein Wort ist noch zu sagen über das Verhältnis des deutschen Luthertums zu den lutherischen Kirchen der Welt. Was haben unsere Glaubensgenossen an uns getan, an unserem ganzen Volk, an den Notleidenden aller Bekenntnisse, aber doch auch in einer ganz besonderen Weise an uns, ihres Glaubens Genossen? Und was haben wir getan? Wir haben alles angenommen, zum Teil als etwas Selbstverständliches. Wir haben ihnen versichert, es gebe bei uns lutherische Kirche, selbständige, sich selbst regierende Kirchen lutherischen Bekenntnisses. Wir haben die kühne und unbeweisbare Behauptung aufgestellt, es gebe bei uns sogar so etwas wie eine lutherische Erweckung. Wir haben ihnen große Dinge von der kommenden Vereinigten Evang.-lutherischen Kirche erzählt. Sie haben daraufhin die ökumenischen Beziehungen mit uns aufgenommen. Und nun stellt es sich heraus, daß die EKD die Trägerin der ökumenischen Arbeit ist und daß die „selbständige Vertretung von Gliedkirchen in bekenntnismäßig gebundenen ökumenischen Vereinigungen“ — also etwa in der lutherischen Weltföderation — „in Fühlung mit den zuständigen Organen der EKD“ geschehen soll. Wie will man das mit den Satzungen des Ökumenischen Rates vereinbaren, dem die EKD nicht angehören könnte, wenn sie nur ein Bund wäre, und mit dem Statut des lutherischen Weltbundes, dem nur selbständige lutherische Kirchen beitreten können? Wollen wir das Luthertum der Welt in die Katastrophe hineinziehen, die über die deutschen lutherischen Kirchen durch ihre eigene Schuld gekommen ist? Wer möchte die Verantwortung dafür übernehmen? Man muß sich darüber klar sein, daß die großen kirchlichen Entscheidungen, die bei uns gefallen sind, nicht nur uns angehen. Was in Deutschland dogmatisch richtig oder falsch ist,

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das ist auch in den nordischen Ländern, das ist auch in Amerika und in Australien richtig oder falsch. Die KonzeSSIONen, die wir dem modernen Calvinismus gemacht haben, wird er morgen von den Lutheranern der anderen Erdteile fordern. So wird das Schicksal des deutschen Luthertums zur Schicksalsfrage für die Lutherischen Kirchen der Welt. Wir können Gott nur bitten, daß Er ihnen die Kraft schenke, ihren Glauben zu bekennen, so wie unsere Väter in der Zeit der Reformation „vor dem Angesicht Gottes und der ganzen Christenheit, bei den Sektlebenden und so nach uns kommen werden“ mit unerschrockenem Herzen ihren Glauben bekannt haben, weil er nichts anderes war als der Glaube an das seligmachende Evangelium des Neuen Testaments.

### Nachwort

Während diese Zeilen geschrieben wurden, hat die Landesynode der Ev.-Luth. Kirche in Bayern einstimmig bei drei Stimmenenthaltungen den Beitritt zur EKD beschlossen und damit die „Grundordnung“ anerkannt. Eine Resolution, welche die Durchführung dieser Verfassung unter Wahrung des Bekenntnisses der bayerischen Landeskirche fordert, hat keine rechtliche oder theologische Bedeutung. Denn die Anerkennung der „Grundordnung“ und damit der EKD als innerhalb des lutherischen Bekenntnisses möglich bedeutet ja bereits die Außerkraftsetzung des Bekenntnisses. Es ist dasselbe, wie wenn Landesbischof Meiser seit 15 Jahren die lutherische Auslegung der Barmer Beschlüsse fordert, obwohl er weiß — jeder Kandidat der Theologie weiß das —, daß die im Grunde reformierte Barmer Theologische Erklärung keine lutherische Auslegung zuläßt. Keine nachträgliche Erklärung vermag die Tatsache aus der Welt zu schaffen, daß die bayerische Kirche mit dem Beitritt zur EKD eine Kirchenprovinz der unierten Reichskirche geworden ist. Daran ändert auch kein Zusammenschluß der Lutheraner in der EKD etwas. Auch in Preußen waren die Lutheraner in Vereinigungen zusammengeschlossen, die immer wieder ihre Forderungen erhoben. Am Unionscharakter der Kirche wurde damit nichts geändert, und die unierte Kirche erkannte zwar erst eine lutherische Haltung an, aber keine lutherische Kirche mehr. So ist denn nun das Wirkliche geworden, was man von Friedrich Wilhelm III. bis zum „Reichsbischof“ Ludwig Mueller immer gefordert hat: die Ausdehnung der Union auf ganz Deutschland.

Sermann Sasse.

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## THE FIRST SESSION OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AT AMSTERDAM

AUGUST 22 TO SEPTEMBER 4, 1948

When on Monday, August 23, the World Council of Churches was formally established through unanimous approval by the assembled delegates of a constitution drafted at Utrecht ten years ago, this event was hailed throughout the world in the so-called Protestant churches — to use the words of the "Christian Century" — "as an epochal gathering," as the fulfillment of the fervent hope of uniting all the Christian churches in one body or at least the first decisive step toward this final goal. Since the Reformation men have striven to heal the breach in vain; now, at last, with Amsterdam the new day of one church seems to be dawning.

**The Opening Service.** — It was held on Sunday, August 22, in the Nieuwe Kerk (New Church). Its seating capacity had just been increased from 2,000 to 3,000 for the impending service at the occasion of the proclamation of Princess Juliana as queen of Holland. The church was filled to overflowing; thousands who were unable to find admittance had to be satisfied with whatever they could see and hear outside of it. The delegates representing many Protestant denominations, and men of the Anglican, the Greek Orthodox, and the Old Catholic Churches in the rich robes of their ecclesiastical office made a colorful picture when they walked in procession around the church at the beginning of the service. The officiating clergymen were Dr. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury; Archbishop Germanos of the Greek Orthodox Church; Lutheran Archbishop Erling Eidem of Sweden; Dr. Marc Boegner, head of the Protestant Federation of France; and Dr. John R. Mott of the United States. The chief sermon was preached by the last named. He reviewed the many and arduous endeavors that had been made in the interest of the ecumenical movement "from Edinburgh to Amsterdam," and expressed his conviction and faith in the future of this movement.

**Composition of the Assembly.** — Despite the uncertainty of the time in which we live, the difficulty in obtaining passports and arranging for transportation, 352 delegates from 44 countries and their alternates were present. With the inclusion of official and unofficial visitors about 1,500 persons were in attendance. Friend and foe, men from the victorious and from the defeated nations, were meeting here on a common basis and with a common desire to weld together into one organization all the Christian churches of the world "which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior." Groups differing in organization and doctrinal views as widely as the Greek Orthodox on the one hand and the Quakers on the other, as old as the Coptic Church of Egypt and the Thomas Christians of India, and as young as the United Church of South India were brought here and sat together in solemn conclave. A world assembly! For churches from all over the world were represented.

But the largest segment of organized Christendom, the Roman Catholic Church, was conspicuous in Amsterdam only by its non-participation. In compliance with the explicit wishes of the pope neither the clergy nor the laity of that church was represented. Rome reaffirmed once more its traditional stand that it alone is the Church of Christ, and hence can only hold out its arms and call for a return of all Christians to its bosom. It refused to take part in a conference where recognition of the equality of the churches was assumed. The Orthodox Church of Russia (and satellite countries) also held itself aloof denouncing the World Council as non-ecclesiastical, anti-democratic, and political, though it expressed its continued interest in the ecumenical movement at the same time. The Southern Baptist Church of our country, likewise, had declared its unwillingness to join the Council. Among the Lutherans the Free Churches of Germany, the Evangelical Lutheran (Norwegian) Church and the synods of the Synodical Conference of North America had no representation at Amsterdam. However men from some of these churches were visiting the sessions open to the public, as part-time observers.

**The Origin of the World Council.** — Dr. John R. Mott in his sermon at the opening service traced the beginning of the trend brought to its consummation at this gathering back to the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910. This first global meeting was called by President John A. Mackay of Princeton Seminary, "the great foster mother of the ecumenical movement." He made the observation that it is on the missionary frontier where churches feel the urgency of cooperation more keenly than anywhere else. Bishop Yngve Brilioth of Sweden stressed as a second factor contributing largely to the final forming of the World Council the Faith and Order Movement which held its first conference in 1927 at Lausanne and sought common theological background for Christian unity. Here the formula was coined which limited the cooperating churches to those "which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior." Bishop G. K. A. Bell of England brought out as the third factor in attaining the goal now arrived at the **Life and Work Movement** which convened for the first time at Stockholm in 1925 and aimed to unite the different churches in practical work. It had its start after the First World War in the necessities arising from questions dealing with the reconstruction of a shattered society within the devastated countries and of the family of nations in general. Three movements were thus named by speakers from three different churches, a Presbyterian, a Lutheran, and an Episcopalian, as leading up to the launching of the World Council of Churches in 1948 at Amsterdam. In 1937 Faith and Life, and Life and Work each appointed seven men to a committee which met at Utrecht in 1938 and drew up a constitution for the proposed World Council of Churches. The first convention of the Council planned for 1941 was made impossible through the outbreak of the war. The committee, however, carried on its work during the ensuing ten years as best it could, and was now in a position to submit the constitution to the assembled delegates.

When the Council came into being at Amsterdam it found itself the possessor of spacious headquarters in Geneva with all bills paid, chiefly due to the largess of American friends.



Americans, churches and individuals, also paid five-sixths of the expenses incident to the Amsterdam convention. It is understood that Americans must underwrite three-fourths of the budget of the Council during the first years of its existence.

**The Aim of the World Council of Churches.** — It is to be more than just another ecumenical conference, rather a continuous association of churches to undertake within the spheres outlined in the constitution whatever tasks they want to do together. A number of floor committees were appointed to deal with amendments to the constitution, policy decisions, and the program, administration, and budget of the Council. Provision was likewise made for the election of a Central Committee to carry on the work in the five year interval between sessions.

Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, the general secretary, brought in a report from the provisional committee setting forth the work to be undertaken by the Council. In it he spoke of "abysses of ignorance" to be bridged, "mountains of misunderstanding" to be removed. He defined the Council as "a fellowship . . . in which the churches enter into serious and dynamic conversation with each other about their differences in faith, in message, in order . . . in which Christian solidarity is practiced . . . and which seeks to express that unity in Christ already given us and to prepare the way for a much fuller and much deeper expression of that unity." Comments Harold E. Fey, managing editor of the "Christian Century," who was attending the Assembly and published a full report on its sessions: "This note that the World Council exists principally to further organic union of the churches was sounded repeatedly during the Assembly, to its great benefit."

**A Brief Appraisal.** — The character of the convention was, tersely stated, unionistic. From all the press reports at hand we can but arrive at this conclusion. It is, of course, true that voices were raised in the convention which bore witness to the Biblical, saving Gospel truth. Our hearts go out to these men who had the fortitude to witness the eternal truth of God in an environment which by and large showed little or

no understanding for the verities of the Christian religion. Consequently the assembly, although readily acknowledging many differences in doctrine between the participating churches, could brush them blithely aside and establish a permanent association of these same churches. An assembly expressly pledged to bring the light into a sin-darkened world and to prevail upon the nations of the earth to rally to the banner of Christ before atheistic capitalism or totalitarian communism has engulfed them. That was done, although the member-churches were not agreed, and consciously so — or only were agreed in the broadest of terms — either on what exactly that light is, or on what precisely constitutes sin. The delegates expressed regret because the Roman Catholic Church had not seen fit to send representatives to the convention. That is only comprehensible when one bears in mind that unionism springs fundamentally from a lack of conviction, from a gnawing uncertainty in questions of doctrine, has its root in the desperate doubt whether man shall ever be able to find the answer to the Pilate question, What is truth?

Finally a word on the delegates commissioned by the Lutheran member-churches of the World Council. If it were not for Lutheran periodicals little could be said of them. We would not find much in the reports on the witness which the Lutheran representatives in Amsterdam bore to the truth. We readily and gladly acknowledge it whenever it was brought. But we cannot but pity them for their shortsightedness. They themselves vitiated the effect of their testimony to the truth when they flagrantly set aside the plain injunctions of the Word of God, forbidding fellowship with errorists and false prophets. And fellowship was practiced at Amsterdam by the delegates through joint services and prayers, even though there was no celebration of holy communion. We can only plead with those who, like us, bear the Lutheran name and were officially represented at the Amsterdam meeting to come out from among them before the doctrinal indifference bred and nurtured there brings about the total loss of whatever they still possess of their Lutheran heritage.

M. LEHNINGER.

## EXCURSUS ON THE "LUNDENSIAN SCHOOL" OF THEOLOGY

(The following "Excursus" is taken from an essay on "Cooperation in Externals" which was delivered by Dr. Lillegard at last summer's convention of the Norwegian Synod of the American Ev. Lutheran Church. It is printed here at the request of the Editors.)

As so many leading theologians in our own circles seem to think that the famous "Lund theologians," Bishop Gustaf Aulén and Dr. Anders Nygren, are conservative Lutherans who are "reviving Luther" and making a new orthodoxy popular in European circles, we think it worth while to examine this "Lundensian theology" somewhat more in detail and point to its chief characteristics. The older theologian, Bishop Aulén, has published a number of works, including a dogmatics, "Den Allmänneliga Kristna Tron", (Stockholm, 1924), and a sort of History of Doctrine under the title "Den Kristna Guds bilden" (1927), which was translated into German and published in 1930 under the title "Das Christliche Gottesbild". Dr. Nygren's title to fame rests in the main on his work, "Agape und Eros", which has been translated into several languages and seems to be popular in all theological circles, from St. Louis to Harvard.

Bishop Aulén goes into considerable detail in his "The Universal (Ecumenical) Christian Faith" to show that the Bible is not the one source and authority for the Christian. God reveals Himself to men continuously. He says:

"The specific Christian revelation — was not finished at any definite point of time in history, but continues steadily. — In this connection revelation must be understood, not as a whole which stands between God and the soul, but as the form for God's direct intercourse with the soul. — When the Christian faith speaks of Christ as the Lord over the living revelation-complex, it does not mean thereby to deny the occurrence of divine revelation outside of Christ, — it has no desire to limit the extent of the divine revelation. Nor is Christ, consequently, considered to be the ground of faith in *this* sense that all faith

in God must have its origin in a direct connection with him, but he is considered to be the one who 'fulfills' faith, i. e., as the one who makes the faith in God into what it can become under mundane conditions. (P. 16f. Tr. from the Swedish.)

Thus to him the heathen religions of the world are also a "revelation of God"; and he points to the researches of Comparative Religionists such as Soederblom and the syncretistic efforts of such missionaries as Reichelt in Buddhist China in evidence thereof. (P. 24ff.)

By the "universal Christian faith" which he seeks to analyze and describe, he does not mean the faith expressed by any of the Confessions of the churches, — no "fenced-in, locked-in confessionalism" (p. 6) could define it. He says with regard to this:

"The 'study of faith' intends to make clear the meaning and content of the *Christian* faith. This task would be distorted and limited in so far as the 'study of faith' tried to shut itself up within any certain Christian creed's boundaries or look upon itself as locked up once for all within its boundaries. 'The study of faith' cannot give up the right to regard the testimony to the faith of all Christians as the background for its investigation of the meaning of the Christian faith. It cannot assume that one's own Confession represents in all respects self-evidently the completed Christianity, and that 'the study of faith' consequently needs only to reproduce, systematize and give precision to the system of doctrine which is presented in certain given Confessional writings." (P. 90-1.) (Tr. from the Swedish.)

It follows from this that one cannot speak of "pure doctrine" either as anything given us "once for all" (p. 107). It is something that each age must strive toward in its own way. The question as to by what authority we are to arrive at the "pure doctrine," or how we may determine the legitimacy of our thoughts concerning the Christian faith, he answers in this way:

"This legitimation cannot be biblicistic: it can neither build upon verbal inspiration nor upon any more limited biblicism. The theory of verbal inspiration presupposes a uniformity which Scripture does not possess, and would, if followed out consistently, lead to a dissolution of the Christian character of the 'study of faith'. A reduction of the doctrinal authority (of Scripture) to any certain fixed portion of Scripture cannot be carried through either. In both cases the doctrinal authority becomes legalistic, and in both cases the fact is ignored that the nature of Christian revelation is a steadily continuing one" (p. 95). (Tr. from the Swedish.)

Among the reasons given for rejecting the authority of the Bible, whether taken as a whole or only in selected parts, we find these: Any consistent adherence to the inspiration theory would make it necessary to put the "imprecatory Psalms" and other such hate-filled passages on a par with the deepest passages in the New Testament as of equal divine authority (p. 97). To try to select the portions that are supposed to be of divine authority would lead to arbitrariness and absurdities. With regard to this he says:

"A horrifying example of this kind of biblicism we meet in O. Hallesby's "The Christian Doctrine." A criterion which H. finds easy to use and apply is this: If anything is expressly named as the commandment of the Lord or as spoken with divine authority, then that must be considered as belonging to the eternal and unchangeable gospel (p. 196). From this it follows, e. g., that the statements concerning woman in I Cor. 11 and 14, and in I Tim. 2 should be regarded as belonging to God's eternal Gospel!" (P. 98.) (Tr. from the Swedish.)

In discussing the Word of God as a means of grace, he distinguishes again between the written word and "the inner witness of the Holy Spirit in the heart of man," which is being brought continually in the Christian Church. He gives, indeed, a "dominant position" to the New Testament in this witness

of the Holy Spirit, but only a secondary place to the Old Testament, "in so far as it stands or can be placed in inner spiritual connection with the eternal content of the New Testament" (p. 301).

With such an attitude towards the written Word of God, it is not strange that many of the doctrines of the Bible are found in a peculiar perverted form, even where the author seems to approach the orthodox Lutheran position. The Lord's supper, e. g., is "spiritualized" so that there is little to choose between his statement of it and that found in conservative Calvinist writings. The central teaching concerning this Sacrament, that it is a means of grace by which the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation are brought to the Christian, is ignored (p. 321ff.).

Bishop Aulén's latest publication is entitled "Church, Law and Society," being the Hewett lectures of 1947, delivered in this country. The book is provided with a foreword by Dr. Nels F. S. Ferré of the Congregationalist Seminary in Newton, Mass. Dr. Ferré says of the book:

"A church historian, after hearing one of these chapters, said to me that Bishop Aulén 'has thrown historic Lutheranism clear out the window.' . . . Many will say that Bishop Aulén has grafted distinctly Calvinistic features onto his historic Lutheran position" (p. xiv).

Bishop Aulén presents his lectures as a contribution toward a more "realistic and radical interpretation of Christianity," rejecting both the older pietism (fundamentalism) and the more extreme Modernism. He says:

"One of the most striking features of the present theological situation is indubitably the revolution that has taken place in exegetic research. This revolution did not at all mean a return to a tradition-tied legalistic and doctrinal fundamentalism, and abandonment of the critical investigation of the Bible, but it meant a new interest in and a new concentration upon the characteristic and central message of the Bible (p. 9). . . . In all humbleness I think that the Swedish

theology has made a contribution to a realistic and radical interpretation of Christianity. The starting-point of the new orientation in my country came at the beginning of this century, when Nathan Söderblom with his comprehensive perspectives liberated the Swedish theology from isolation or from one-sided dependence upon German theology, and when Einar Billing found new impulses through fresh studies of Luther" (p. 10).

He finds in this "new theology" a basis for the "ecumenical" endeavors of our day, as well as for a more active and aggressive participation in the affairs of the world than has been customary in the conservative Lutheran Church.

"The new and intense approach to the witness of the Bible means not only an endeavor towards a deeper and more realistic interpretation of the Christian message, but also new possibilities of an increasing communion in the world of theology and of the Churches. The tendencies, for instance, of a Lutheran theology to stop at Luther or of a Reformed theology to stop at Calvin, that in old times have been so outstanding, cannot but be eliminated" (p. 16).

In the light of the above, we can understand better what Dr. Conrad Bergendoff means when he says about the "Lundensian school of theology," in the *National Lutheran*, Fall, 1947:

"The source of the new emphasis in Swedish theology is a close study of Luther, and the term 'Luther renaissance' is used sometimes in the description of what has happened in Sweden since the days of Einar Billing and Nathan Söderblom. . . . They have delivered Lutheran theology from the stale intellectualism which resulted from an orthodoxy which believed itself capable of preserving the Spirit of God in the bottles of 'pure' doctrine. The result is a theology which more than ever throws the church back on the gospel and gives added meaning to the term 'Word of God', but will not allow itself to be

mechanized and materialized by formulae of inspiration so dear to rationalists of both the orthodox and pietist types" (p. 8).

Dr. Nygren's statement entitled "Confessing the Truth in a Confused World," presented to the Lutheran World Federation at Lund last year, shows that he holds the same views with regard to "the Word of God" as Bishop Aulén does. Their story is essentially that of the Quakers. God works today by the words that testify of His "agape," His love for sinners, and continues to reveal Himself in His church. The "Word of God" of which they speak never means what it means to us, the "inspired Word of God in the Bible," — it has acquired "added meaning," and hence we can never know that we have all of "God's Word." "The Gospel is so exceedingly rich," says Dr. Nygren, "that no one section of the church can claim to have fully and exhaustively comprehended all its wealth."

Dr. Nygren's chief work, "Agape and Eros," is a sort of History of Dogma, with the divine Agape contrasted with the human Eros as the key by which he opens the door to an understanding of Christian teachings down through the centuries, or the framework within which he sets his whole presentation. It is a stimulating discussion, and he arrives at remarkably orthodox conclusions on many points. But his method is that of philosophy and dialectics, never of Biblical theology which knows no other authority for faith and life than the written Word of God. And the philosophical method is always wrong, no matter how orthodox the conclusions that a certain thinker arrives at may be, through the influence of the Word upon his mind and heart. There is no safety, no strength or power, in a teaching that does not base itself, openly and boldly, on the inspired Word of God as the only true source of Christian faith and teaching, and confess faith in that word as without error or lack. These theologians speak of "returning to Luther," and they have to a large extent grasped correctly the central importance of Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone. But they reject outright the second great principle of the Reformation, the Word



of God in the Bible as the only source and authority for Christian doctrine, and in so far, they are as far removed from Luther as the next Quaker. Dr. Nygren's commentary on Romans is, thus, in many respects an excellent work, since he does present the doctrine of justification clearly. But even when he is dealing with Scripture, we miss the note of faith in that Scripture as the Word of God. He analyzes Paul's statements correctly, even as he might analyze St. Augustine's writings or Luther's, — but that is as far as it goes.

We conclude, therefore, that the Lundensian theology is not true Lutheran theology. It is, undoubtedly, a tremendous improvement upon the negative theology of Modernism and upon the "dialectical theology" called "Barthianism." But those who have been misled into calling it a revival of true Lutheranism either do not know Lutheran theology or have neglected to examine properly the meaning of the language the "Lund theologians" use. Just as the Modernist repeats the Apostles' Creed, but understands by its words something quite different from what the orthodox Christian understands by them, so these "Lutherans" speak about the "Word of God" and about "Lutheranism" and mean something else than we mean by them. The influence of these theologians is going to be only the more dangerous to sound doctrine because there is so much in their writings that is good. We need to beware not least of all of those who tear down with one hand what they build up with the other — who undermine the "formal principle" of the Reformation, the Word Alone, even while they build on the "Material Principle," "Faith Alone." Let learned theologians philosophize and weave their cunning webs of doctrine to improve upon the inspired Scriptures! It still remains true that it is the holy Scriptures alone that are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. "Lund" may say "no," but God says: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (II Tim. 3, 16-17.)

GEO. O. LILLEGARD.

## DEALING WITH DELINQUENT MEMBERS

This essay was read in Lansing before the Missionaries' Conference of the Michigan District in two readings: Part I on May 28, 1947, Part II and III on November 5, 1947.

At our last conference of missionaries the body decided on an essay with the general theme, Delinquent Members.

After the close of the sessions, when a number of pastors were standing around or putting on their overcoats, someone suggested that it be a paper on Delinquent Pastors. It was meant as humor, of course, and all laughed accordingly.

However, on second thought, the subject, Delinquent Pastors, is by no means a ridiculous theme nor a laughing matter. The two subjects may be very closely related. Where there is a delinquent member, there may be a delinquent pastor. And where there is a delinquent pastor, there may be a host of delinquent members. As a result, as we proceed in the reading of this essay and in the subsequent discussion, the two will be so closely entwined that we'll have some difficulty answering the question: Are we speaking about delinquent members or are we speaking about delinquent pastors?

A pastor is a shepherd. And his members are entrusted to his care. Surely there is a tie between the shepherd and his sheep. And when either shepherd or sheep go astray the other will be affected. Anyway, it is a purpose of this assignment to give heed not only to the flock over which the Holy Ghost has placed us as overseers, but first of all, to give heed to ourselves, lest, while we bemoan and condemn the wayward sheep, we ourselves be found unfaithful shepherds and be found castaways.

When I speak of Delinquent Members, I'm thinking of members that have drifted away from church and are sinning against the Third Commandment. I understand the assignment that way. What is said here, may apply to other sins as well.

Dealing with delinquent members is not always a pleasant task. To any pastor who has any hunger for souls it is a pleasant work to follow up leads, call on prospective new members, find that there has been created an interest for the Kingdom, and seek to encourage that interest with the saving truths of the Scriptures. One feels welcome to enter such a home and one rejoices

inwardly over the prospect of a new soul for salvation. One is happy over the opportunity to speak the Gospel there.

But when it comes to calling on a delinquent member, one who has heard the Gospel for years and has become satiated with it and has become a backslider and manifests no interest for the Word and no love for the preacher, to whom churchgoing seems the greatest bore and misery in his life and the preacher the last person he seems to love and care to hear, there our flesh winces and hesitates and thinks twice and will postpone and postpone. It seems a pleasure to enter a home where you feel welcome. It seems a job to enter a home where you feel certain you're not wanted.

Yet Luther in his Large Catechism refers to this particular labor among the delinquent members as the Scripture lines it up for us as "a grand, exquisite task."

And, above all, when we consider what God's purpose is when He asks us to deal with delinquents in His way, that is the way He prescribes in His Word, perhaps this task will become less difficult for us and we'll find more joy in dealing with delinquent members. Our task is nothing less than a part of that assignment which we have made our life's work, namely, to seek and to save that which was lost. For that reason the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls Himself came into the world as He declares in the eleventh verse of Matthew 18. There is the purpose for which He sent us into the world — to seek and to save that which was lost.

There is much advice in the Word on dealing with delinquents. In this discourse I have restricted myself more or less to that passage which is so well-known to all of us, the words of Jesus Himself in Matthew 18, verses 15 to 18. In this passage we find the three different steps. This essay then is merely an application of Matthew 18:15-18, in dealing with the delinquent members of our churches.

## I

Jesus said to His disciples: "When thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." My Greek Testament omits the words "against thee," for the obvious reason that the words are not in all of the old manuscripts.

My Greek Testament simply states: "But if thy brother should sin." Now, the deliberate despising of the Word of God, finding pleasure in earthly pleasures or business to the extent that preaching and His Word are the forgotten man in that man's life is a sin against God and a sin that grieves and affects the whole congregation as it continues.

This is a very grievous sin. Just because the government doesn't incarcerate anyone who persistently despises the Word, but it does put him behind bars who steals, does not imply by any means, that a sin against the Seventh Commandment is great wickedness, but that a sin against the Third Commandment is merely a minor evil. He who sins against the Third Commandment sins against his soul as he who refuses to eat daily food sins against his body. By refusing to eat one cuts himself off from all vitamins, nourishment and from that which sustains life. He who refuses to *receive* the Word of Life which brings us Jesus the Manna from heaven and with Him life for our immortal soul, severs his immortal soul from all source of spiritual life. And that soul must inevitably die. There are those who are in jail and still have this life. There are many more who are not in jail and have separated themselves from Jesus and His Word and are dead.

When one of our members persistently despises preaching and His Word, his pastor cannot brush off the matter by simply saying: "That's his business, not mine." We have said there is a close relation between the pastor and his flock. When a sheep goes astray, it will be of concern to the pastor. A pastor is a shepherd. We are shepherds to the flock that is ours. And we, by God's grace, want to be found good shepherds and not hirelings, "whose own the sheep are not, who seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep."

Now, if thy brother should trespass, or fail, or fall, or stumble, or go astray, or wander away into this soul-destroying sin, Jesus adds: "Tell him his fault between thee and him alone."

"Between thee and him alone," brother to brother! That's how Nathan proceeded with David too. We are not told that he

brought others, such as members high up in the Church of Israel. God sent Nathan to David. In that particular case the pastor God sent Nathan to David. Neither did the pastor in that particular case pounce upon his wayward sheep the same day the crime was committed. Nor did the Lord Himself come to Adam in the Garden without delay, but He came, and Adam heard His voice, "in the cool of the day."

And how approach the delinquent? It has been suggested: "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." It seems that some of us are blessed less with this gift of subtlety and wisdom of serpents than are others and shall need instruction on this point. But there is something about a dove that might be clearer to us. The dove stands for innocence and peace and is not known for its raucous cry or devouring nature as are the birds of prey. Jesus did not say: "Be ye as crows or vultures that gloat over the death of their victim so that they may devour it." Untold harm has been done with harsh, loveless words and an overbearing nature. Undoubtedly much harm has been done also because of a false conception of the German, "Strafe ihn zwischen dir und ihm alleine." And on the basis of that translation some might have felt justified in approaching the sinner with determination to "tell him off," to "let him have it," to punish him.

Nothing can be farther from the Savior's intentions than such a procedure. Galatians 6 gives us very appropriate advice on the proper spirit in approaching the wayward member: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. . . . If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." We might add the words of 1 Corinthians 10:12: "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." If all circumstances in our life would have been the same, our fall would perhaps be even lower. And the great Paul does not hesitate to say: "By the grace of God I am what I am."

It was not by accident either that our Savior preceded Matthew 18:15-18 with the parable which He begins with these words: "The Son of man is come to save that which was lost." And He goes on thus: "How think ye? If a man have a hundred

sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily, I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray."

Our Savior went after the lost to *save* them. There is the purpose why He wants every shepherd in His Church to pursue him who errs. And the erring brother must know that his pastor is seeking not his punishment but his salvation.

In the verses before us Jesus expresses the same purpose when He refers to a successful call as one where "thou hast *gained* thy brother." And, therefore, we are not to approach the erring brother with the avowed purpose of "kicking him out" or getting rid of him, but to gain him, to save him forever. What work on earth is more noble than this work? What greater favor can we do for any brother than to regain him for Jesus and everlasting salvation?

Then, when we remember how Jesus *prayed* for His own, how, for instance, Satan desired Peter that he might sift him as wheat, but Christ prayed for him that his faith fail him not, it will not be amiss to add here that we have lost out on much success among those whom Satan desired, just because we do not ask for that success. "Ye have not because ye ask not." We keep praying otherwise: "Thy Kingdom come!" We pray before we preach otherwise: "Lord, open Thou my lips!" The salvation of our hearers is our concern and we know: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." Why suddenly depend upon ourselves or upon our own eloquence or gift of persuasion when we are sent after the wayward? "The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" Our human powers cannot know it, let alone change it. Therefore, as we set out on calls like these, with such an order ahead of us, or when we walk up that sidewalk or ring that doorbell, why not take the matter to the Lord in prayer and ask Him for words and wisdom and for His Holy Spirit in great abundance and for power from above in that house and in our labor with an erring human heart, to bring it back, to save it forever? We sing these thoughts and could pray them as well:

"Oh, gently call those gone astray  
That they may find the saving way!  
Let every conscience sore oppress  
In Thee find peace and heavenly rest.

"Shine on the darkened and the cold,  
Restore the wanderers to Thy fold,  
Unite all those who walk apart,  
Confirm the weak and doubting heart,

"So they with us may evermore  
Such grace with wondering thanks adore  
And endless praise to Thee be given  
By all Thy Church in earth and heaven."

But our assignment toward an erring brother that we cannot brush aside remains: "Tell him his fault!" Jesus also said: "Go and tell him!" Literally that word says, "Go up!" Go up to his house, or where you'll find him. Often that word has the meaning of the German "*Auf!*" Here is no sitting still and doing nothing about it. Up and tell him his fault! "Tell him" means convince him, convict him, ueberfuehre ihn, persuade him of his error and the folly and suicide of his ways, correct him, refute, confute him. Restore him from his erring way and gain him for Christ.

But tell him we must. Ezekiel 3 and Ezekiel 33 both say as much. Here are a number of verses from Ezekiel 3: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore, hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." Again, "When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand."

The Lord's concern for the erring becomes even more apparent in Ezekiel 33, from which are taken the following verses: "So thou, O Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel. Therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul. Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel. Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live? Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

A far cry from Matthew 18 as well as the other quoted passages is the suggestion of our own flesh: When a brother in the congregation is falling away, we'd like to give vent to our disappointment and inward anguish by complaining to others that he is falling, that he is turning backslider, that he is another addition to our supply of dead timber.

A far cry from these instructions also is the easy way that we are tempted to follow: In this easy way we simply strike the name of the backslider from our membership list when he hasn't attended church services or communion for a definite period of time, be it a year, two years, five years, without more trouble than just that — a stroke of the pen across his name, and he is considered a good riddance. Where is there any seeking or saving of a soul in such a procedure?

We here repeat this section of Matthew 18:15 and then we'll go on. Christ's words are: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone."

The other section of this verse reads thus: "If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." If our meeting with an erring brother would come to a close with such results, what a glorious conclusion: "Thou hast gained thy brother!" James chimes in



(James 5:20): "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." When Jesus speaks of gain, he isn't referring to trifles. He wants to tell us, Here is a momentous gain. One that we can't begin to measure. Bringing a fallen brother back into the Kingdom is a gain that all the money in the world cannot buy. Jesus sums up the grand success in these simple words: "Thou hast gained thy brother!"

And when our Savior rejoices, those hardly are *trifles* that He rejoices over. And He does rejoice over every brother that is gained: "There shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance."

Such statements of our Lord are to stimulate the zeal of every Christian and especially of every shepherd of a flock in seeking and saving the renegade. There is no task more noble on earth. It is a "grand, exquisite work."

## II

But Christ's exhortation doesn't end with the one verse. And from experience we have learned that our dealings with the delinquent members usually do not end with the one step referred to in this verse. Our Savior, therefore, is compelled to continue: "But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more."

He does not say: "If he hear thee not, then drop the matter, or then excommunicate him." The fact that our Savior continues to seek the lost in spite of their indifference and obstinacy again reveals His great patience toward the sinner, in our case the one who has turned cool toward the Word.

It is that same patience pictured for us in the parable in Luke 13:6-9: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he (the dresser) answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also." There's a fine presentation of our Savior's patience and, by the way, this parable is a very suitable text for a New Year's Day sermon,

when God's great mercy and patience has let us see the dawn of another year of grace.

In view of this patience of the Good Shepherd, we might say there is no law written against calling on an erring member twice or oftener, alone, in case he will not be convinced the first time. We are apt to use Matthew 18 in a literal way, salve our conscience that we have contacted the erring brother alone, when we perhaps might have had patience and tried again to gain him by seeing him alone. As children know that their parents are not always in the same mood and they watch their chance to ask them a particular favor just when the parents are in the right mood or frame of mind, so an erring brother may be more likely to hear on one day than on another.

But Jesus goes on: "If he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." "If he will not hear," it says, if he will not listen, if he will pay no attention to you, if your personal dealings have all been fruitless as far as you can see, then take with thee one or two more.

There obviously is a reference to the passage in Deuteronomy where God in His Law says: "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established" (Deut. 19:15). There he wanted to give the citizen of Israel a chance against any one person who might wish to destroy him for possibly personal reasons, a grudge, revenge. And here the Savior seeks the same chance and protection for the brother who has erred. One person shall not settle it. "Take with thee one or two more."

Why one or two more? Is the presence of one or two more to give a semblance of more authority? Is their presence to instill fear and awe and intimidation in the heart of the sinner? That's a likely effect when the pastor comes to the place with his elders, or deacons. The officers of the church have now come. This is an official call. Souls will not be brought into the Kingdom by force in the first place, and it is just as unlikely that they'll be regained by force when they have fallen.

Now, though our elders and officials serve as aids and assistants to the pastor and they are to be men filled with the Holy Spirit and zeal for the Kingdom, and they are men that we consult as to church matters, there is no law which states that the one or two witnesses *must* be Board members. As has been stated, the choice of these men here may be a detriment and such a choice may spoil matters. Perhaps some of the church officers have had dealings with the erring brother before and he is biased against them and is not apt to give heed to them with open ears.

Why not try taking along a witness or two whom the erring brother will consider unbiased? Why not take along a good friend of his, one who loves his Savior and his Church and one of whom the erring brother must say: "He loves me. He's after my welfare, my salvation. I cannot but have every confidence in him."

For surely the purpose of the witnesses is not merely to stand by and look and listen while the pastor does the speaking. They are to use the gifts which God has given to them to help along, not to condemn the erring, but to speak up and do all in their power to lead him aright. It probably has been the experience of every pastor that a person on whom he called the very first time manifested very little interest in the pastor's message. He gave no heed to the pastor's invitation to enter an adult class or to come to divine services. Perhaps the pastor seemed just another salesman out after personal advantages. But when a layman of the congregation called on the same party, perhaps it was a good friend with whom the prospect worked or bowled or golfed or chummed, he was constrained to listen. The good friend spoke about the wonderful church services that he attended and the glorious truths that he feasted on and the joy of our salvation which was his. Such a testimony had weight. To a good and respected friend a man will listen with confidence.

Why should things be different in the matter of regaining the fallen brother? If the renegade is apt to listen to anyone, it will be to his best and most trustworthy friend. For the purpose of the two or three, as it was in the case of the one, is to gain the brother and save him.

Very bad choices of witnesses are often made. Perhaps you've heard it said: "I wish the pastor would take me along when he calls on that man. I'd let him know a few things. I wouldn't mince any words, I'll tell you that!" What assistance a man with that attitude will give in gaining and saving anyone and convincing him of any error is obvious. For the purpose of the two or three like the purpose of the one in the first place is not to kick him who is down or to "kick him out." We repeat again: Their purpose is that for which Christ Himself sought us; they are to seek and to save that which was lost.

Were your humble efforts together with those of the witnesses instrumental in gaining the wayward brother? We might pause for a moment again to consider the greatness of that achievement, the gaining of the brother. In the parable the Prodigal Son had fallen very low. He had parted company with a good and loving father. He wasted his substance with riotous living. Or as the angry brother put it, he devoured the father's living with harlots. But he was blessed with that remarkable change of heart and he came back home. The description of the satisfaction and the joy in that home over the return of the wayward son, as it all is described in Luke 15, is a description of joy and festivity as perhaps is found nowhere else. The father in that parable is He who would that all come to repentance, the God of our Salvation, He who "has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Listen to that happiness depicted in Luke 15: "And he (the Prodigal) arose, and came to his father. And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants (Note how one statement of joy is rapidly heaped on the other to bring out the intensity of that joy and jubilation in that home), Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. It was meet that we should make

merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

### III

We all wish that such would be the glorious ending of our overtures to gain the brother who has trespassed. But they do not always end that way. Our omniscient Savior, who is Patience personified, knows that things do not always turn out that way. Perhaps it has been the experience of all of us that with all patience and a lot of calling and loss of sleep with an erring brother on our mind, it was the exception when things turned out this way.

Accordingly, our Savior doesn't stop here either. He is compelled to continue. And He continues in this manner: "But if he shall neglect to hear them (the witnesses), tell it to the church."

The word which is translated "neglect to hear" literally means to hear beside you, to hear aside, to hear casually or amiss, the ears are elsewhere. He who neglects to hear you hears other things besides what you say, he pays no heed to you, he is unwilling to hear, he disregards everything you've tried to do for him. Your words didn't register with him.

When such a person ignores also the witnesses and will not hear them, we may feel like giving up such a one as a hopeless case. For our flesh's comfort that might be a good riddance. And it isn't always a case of refusal to hear. What's often more painful is refusal to keep silent. You have come to gain him, you've tried to show your love and concern and patience in bringing him salvation, the highest blessing of all. And you find yourself confronted with all manner of accusations that are as uncharitable as they are loud. You meet with a temper that is uncontrolled and with language that you do not consider flattering. What a comfort the elimination of such a person from our mind and consideration would be!

We learn again that Jesus has much more patience and concern for the sinner than has our flesh. He shall have another chance among all his fellow-members. "If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church."

The Church is the group of called, called by the Gospel, called to faith in Christ Jesus, it's the communion of saints. The Church is found all over the earth, where the Gospel resounds. The Church is there where two or three are gathered in Jesus' name and He is in the midst of them. There was the church of God at Corinth, the churches of Galatia, the saints at Ephesus, the brethren at Colosse, and others. And there is the church which has brought the Gospel to the erring brother and with which church he was banded together as a brother.

We have a saying: The Congregation maintains the highest right in all matters. It is certain that this congregation is to make the final decision in dealing with the fallen brother. The Christians with whom he shared the means of Grace here have the task to seek him who went away, pursue him with every power of conviction the Scripture has allotted to them. They are to see that He may live as the Good Shepherd would seek him:

"Sheep that from the fold did stray  
No true shepherd e'er forsaketh;  
Weary souls that lost their way  
Christ, the Shepherd, gently taketh  
In His arms that they may live —  
Jesus sinners doth receive."

"That they may live," that is the hope and purpose of the work of the Church toward its members, also those that are drifting away and despising the means of Grace. Christ's Congregation has Christ, the author of all charity, in its midst. This charity hopeth all things, including the repentance of the wayward brother.

It may be discouraging to our human nature to go through all this labor in vain, but we need not feel too surprised, for Jesus Himself presupposes the possibility in our dealings too when He adds: "But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."

Thayer's lexicon describes the heathen man as "a foreigner, savoring of the nature of pagans, a pagan, a gentile." We know what attitude the Jews had toward foreigners or gentiles. They themselves were the seed of Abraham. Gentiles were considered an inferior race and in the Bible story of the Syrophenician

woman, the pleading woman resigns herself to the status of a dog over against the Israelites. To touch a gentile or enter his house was a pollution to the Jew.

The publicans were renters or farmers of taxes. They did not gather the taxes personally but had taxgatherers working under them who contacted the people and exacted taxes. According to Thayer these taxgatherers in the New Testament are also called publicans. "These taxcollectors were as a class disdained not only by the Jews but by other nations also on account of their employment and on account of their harshness, greed and deception with which they prosecuted their duties" (Thayer). Among the Jews, to be called a publican was synonymous with being called a sinner, the scum of the earth. When Jesus associated with that group of publicans and ate with them they scornfully said: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." It must have been inconceivable to the Jew that a publican could leave the temple justified before a Pharisee, the very worst before the very best. The Jews did not fraternize with publicans and gentiles. They were not of a class with the heathen men and the publicans.

So our Savior wishes to tell us, there is a difference between the Christian and the erring brother who, in spite of all steps that the patience of Jesus Himself could devise, will not repent. When you consider someone as a heathen man and a publican, you do not consider him your brother in the church anymore.

To exclude someone from its midst may appear a dreadful step for that congregation to take, as it will seem a hard decision to make. But it is a step devised just that way by our patient Lord Jesus Himself. Therefore, it can not be a cruel or uncharitable act. His ways are good ways. And His thoughts are thoughts of salvation. In another place the Bible states (1 Corinthians 6:13): "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

We all dread a surgical operation. The surgeon's knife often inflicts more wounds and causes more pain and suffering than was endured at one time before. But it is through such operations that the health of many has been restored and the lives of countless human beings have been rescued from the jaws of death.

And so this step of the Congregation was devised by Jesus as an act of love.

Many an erring brother has been *won* in this way. Such is the experience of so many a congregation. Time and time again an erring brother will neglect to heed any admonition. But the moment he was excommunicated from a congregation, then he commenced to think. When in all his lukewarmness and disregard for the pastor and his message of salvation, his conscience bothered him little, yet, when he found himself without the fold, then he commenced to feel under pressure, then he commenced to worry, then he commenced to ask: "How can I get back in?"

And Christ Jesus has not only the erring brother in view but the whole flock as well. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Persistent sinning in a congregation and persistent despising of the Means of Grace on the part of some of its members is just that kind of leaven that can only harm a congregation and help destroy it. There is blessing when we follow Jesus' words. There is a curse when we ignore them. And His words in this case are: "If he neglect to hear thee, — if he neglect to hear them (the two or three), — if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." "Put away from among you that wicked person."

The instruction of our Lord in Matthew 18 seems a very large order. It would be so much easier simply to remove the names of our lax members from our rolls, as we said before, with the stroke of the pen. But we cannot circumvent this commission and yet be found faithful servants. We'll have to tell the delinquents, and we'll have to tell them plenty and tell them patiently. And we cannot do all that by lying supinely on our backs. "Go" is the word, up, go up! That denotes action and much labor and care together with disagreeable experiences.

Perhaps we all wish we could restrict our activities to the gaining of new members instead of devoting so much care to dead timber. Many of us feel the same way about our flower gardens. It's a pleasure to watch a young plant grow and behold its first flowers. We'll gladly give much care and attention to such a plant. But when the plant grows old, perhaps goes to seed and tends to dry up, we'd rather pull it up and cast it into the



fire. By that time usually the weather is hot and we have less zeal in the garden than we had in spring. But many a plant will continue to produce beautiful flowers if it receives the same care it received as a young plant, if the gardener continues to hoe about it and mulch the soil, if he picks off the flowers so that they'll not go to seed, if he waters his garden in the dry season. Plants react to care. And many an older plant will reward the gardener with many more beautiful flowers than it could possibly yield as a young plant — if the gardener gives it the same care it received when it was growing up.

We are privileged to work in God's garden. Repeatedly the Church is called a garden of God in the Bible. In Isaiah the Church is described thus: "Here her wilderness has become like Eden and her desert like a garden of the Lord." Balaam beheld this garden from the mountain tops as he gazed down upon Israel, and he said: "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side."

In this garden we labor and we want to see this garden increase in beauty. Thus, we'll need to work with new plants and with the old ones, with prospective members, with faithful members, but also with the lax ones. It was the purpose of this essay to encourage one another to give heed to the lax member. Our labor in accordance with Jesus' instruction cannot but have its blessings. Our membership will be cleaner, we'll have less dead timber. And we never know what unexpected fruit that following the instructions in Matthew 18 will produce. There will be those in eternity who will thank the faithful shepherd for pursuing them, arousing them, bringing them back to Christ, seeking them, saving them, *gaining* them.

V. H. WINTER.

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## NEWS AND COMMENTS

**Lutheran Editors' Group Urges Lutheran Federation.** — Under the above heading the *Lutheran Standard* (A. L. C.) gives a report of a meeting of the National Lutheran Editors' Association which took place at Rock Island, Illinois, on September 22 and 23. It quotes this Association as recommending that "the formation of one Lutheran federation . . . should continue to be the goal of our endeavors and the burden of our prayers." The article also states that the editors expressed it as their conviction that the whole Lutheran Church in America should face the problem of Lutheran unity "without delay and without excuse." It makes a particular point of quoting a statement which the editors adopted "as means toward the consummation of one Lutheran federation in America" and which had been prepared by a committee consisting of Editors E. E. Ryden of the *Lutheran Companion*, W. G. Polack of the *Lutheran Witness*, and E. W. Schramm of the *Lutheran Standard*. The statement recommends:

"The strengthening and widening of the National Lutheran Council so that it becomes the powerful service arm of all the Lutheran churches in America.

"The holding of free, fraternal conferences. . . . The objective of these conferences would be to endeavor to determine, in the light of the Word of God, whether the things that now separate us are actually divisive of church fellowship and what steps are necessary to bring about a complete understanding.

"The prompt and aggressive development of existing cooperation of Lutherans on parish and wider levels. We commend the formation of city, regional, and state councils of Lutherans as helpful toward this end."

It should be remembered that these are matters on which the Missouri Synod has declared itself. At its last convention it declined to join the National Lutheran Council. It referred the question to a committee for further study, and reserved a decision on the matter for its convention. It has declared that there are things which now separate the various Lutheran church bodies from each other, and at least with regard to many of them it has stated that they are indeed divisive of church fellowship. Through its delegates at the recent convention of the Synodical Conference it declared itself in agreement with the call for extreme caution in the matter of intersynodical cooperation in things which are not truly external. All of these things were known, if not to each of these editors, then at least to those from the staff of the *Lutheran Witness*.

It is disturbing to find particularly the latter participating in resolutions which go so much farther than the considered position of their synod. In these matters which are so vital to the future of their church body it seems strange to find them counseling with others rather than with their

brethren. Writing for the huge circulation of the *Witness*, these editors wield a tremendous power. Are they determined to use this at their arbitrary discretion, ignoring the stand of their synodical brethren, — or are they ensnared by the wider fellowship into which they have entered as members of the National Lutheran Editors' Association? In either case it is clear that the church is not served well by such self-constituted steering committees.

E. REIM.

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**The Social Gospel Again.** — In the same issue of the *Lutheran Standard* appears a report of a paper read by Dr. A. D. Mattson of Augustana Theological Seminary before this same Editors' Convention on "The Problem of the Rural Churches." According to the *Standard* Dr. Mattson's plea was "that Lutherans think in terms of a total rural life program, including consideration of such practical matters as soil conservation and economic conditions in rural areas." It quotes him directly as saying, "One of the reasons why the voice of the church is so weak today is the fact that we are afraid to tackle such economic problems as that of farm tenancy."

It has been evident for some time that the tenets of the Social Gospel are becoming ever more attractive to the more liberal type of Lutheran leaders. It comes with poor grace, however, when the fact that many Lutherans are not ready to include such problems in their program of work is attributed to fear. As a theologian Dr. Mattson must know that the real question about which conservative Lutherans are concerned is whether these activities do not lie beyond the field of work to which our Lord has appointed His servants.

If there was any opposition voiced to the position of the essayist, the *Standard* does not report it.

E. REIM.

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**National Educational Conference.** — The Centennial Celebration of the University of Wisconsin at Madison was formally opened by an educational conference of national import, held at the Memorial Union on the university campus October 8 and 9. The printed program also included the following Sunday, October 10, with the announcement that "the ministers of Madison will deliver sermons on the general theme, 'The Spiritual Significance of Higher Education'." Invitations had been extended to representatives of colleges and universities, educational organizations, and the educational press from all over the United States. Approximately 300 delegates were present from 175 colleges, universities, and educational organizations, including some 40 presidents and 75 deans and directors. Dr. Paul Peters and the undersigned were privileged to attend as the two representatives from our Seminary at Thiensville.

The two forenoons and the evening of the first day were devoted to general sessions, in which the following topics under the general title, "Higher Education for American Society," were discussed by outstanding

educational leaders: "The First Hundred Years of Higher Education in Wisconsin," "The Plus and Minus of Higher Education Today," "The Future of Higher Education," "Higher Education and Research," "Higher Education and Public Service," "Some Spiritual and Moral Aspects of Higher Education," and "The Educated Man Faces the Unforseen." During the afternoon of both days the delegates were offered a wide selection of round table discussions covering various aspects of the two topics: "Problems in Higher Education" and "Improving the Effectiveness of Higher Education."

Such a program carried out under the direction of outstanding public educators would already suggest that both the general sessions as well as the individual round table discussions offered the delegates much valuable information concerning higher education, its history and development not only in Wisconsin but throughout the country, its envisioned expansion, its methods, programs, objectives, aspirations, and difficulties. We were given a fine delineation of scholarship and research, both pure and applied; we heard a valuable analysis of the recent report on higher education implemented by our government; we were acquainted with the merits of the newer audio-visual aids in supplementing traditional means for discovering and communicating facts and knowledge. Our space in these columns forbids reporting on these various points of interest, however. Our own and our readers' interest in Christian education would rather suggest that we restrict our comments to pointing out a number of opinions and viewpoints, which we heard expressed, that stand in contrast and opposition to the convictions to which we hold in Christian education. We feel that this will serve in calling attention again to the dangerous leaven to which our young people are exposed when they pursue higher education at state-supported, privately-endowed, or secularized church-controlled institutions.

While Christianity was set forth as basic in our culture and civilization, it was placed on a level with Greek philosophy and the Jewish religion; its real contribution was limited to the Golden Rule and to the idea of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and it was asserted that science has made it difficult to accept that part of Christianity and Christian dogma which deals with divine revelation, a personal God, and the supernatural. In maintaining that a worthy standard of conduct and code of values, a workable philosophy of life must be developed to displace the crass materialism and the lush, easy, and luxurious living which is held before our juvenile audiences through movie and radio, religion was pointed out as essential in making such principles of conduct effective. It was asserted, however, that to this end religion must be made scientifically acceptable, brought up to date, cleared of sectarian bias, and the church was encouraged to lend its hand in this solution.

The conception of life as a preparation for a life beyond was set forth as something not so universally held in academic circles anymore. Another

speaker stated that the salvation concept, though to be retained, needed to be defrosted of its otherworldly implications in institutionalized religion and to be filled with a mundane interpretation. On the premise that theologies have in general lost their appeal he advocated the personal acceptance of human enterprise and responsibility in working out man's destiny. He held that with the scientific body of knowledge about human nature which is at our disposal at present the conviction is tenable that mankind can rise up to the demands of its destiny even at this crucial time when the future and the unforeseen involves an unlimited element of unexpectedness. He added, however, that such reliance on human enterprise and responsibility can only be maintained on the assumption that man is living in a cosmos of order, and expressed the personal conviction that it is intellectually reputable to accept a rationalistic, naturalistic code of ethics and at the same time to admit a mysterious otherness and to hold fast to the fact that man is not left alone with man, that the roots of reality are other than mundane. While there is in all this an echo of man's natural knowledge of God, it is nevertheless an expression of an unbounded and unwarranted confidence in man's inherent powers, of blindness to the depraved condition of natural man.

CARL LAWRENZ.

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**Bad Boll.** — Since 1860, when Dr. Walther visited Germany for the last time, the visits between the representatives of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod and of the Lutheran Church in Germany virtually ceased. Already in 1852, after Walther's first visit to Germany, the final break with Loehe took place, and the personal ties that bound Missouri closest to the Lutheran Church in Germany were severed. It was only after World War I that a certain change took place and that one again could speak of visits being made to and fro. Thus the Lutheran bishops Marahrens and Meiser together with the present bishop of Hanover, Dr. Lilje, paid the Concordia Seminary a visit in 1936, while already in 1921 Dr. Dau of the Missouri Synod and Professor A. Pieper of the Wisconsin Synod visited Germany. Professor Koehler was in Germany in 1924 and Dr. Dau paid Germany a second visit some years later. The purpose of their itinerary through Germany was not only to visit the pastors of the Lutheran Free Church, but also to contact pastors and professors of the Lutheran Land churches. It was, however, not till after World War II that theologians of both countries began to visit and meet one another oftener. Not only that German theologians of both the United and the Lutheran churches of Germany, as for instance Dibelius and Niemöller, Asmussen and Lilje, included Concordia Seminary in their itinerary through the United States, but German theologians have come to our shores at the invitation of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod with the express purpose of lecturing and of discussing theological questions both as to doctrine and to church polity with the Seminary faculty. Such invitations were extended to Dr. Eugen Gerstenmaier and Professor Hermann Sasse.

In turn, officials and professors of our sister synod have visited Germany after World War II time and again and have sought close and repeated contacts with representatives of the Evangelical Church of Germany. A certain climax in these visits has been reached at Bad Boll, where leading theologians of both churches met for conferences in June and July of this year. As Walther on his first visit to Germany in 1851/52 conferred with the most distinguished professors of Germany, with Guericke, Kahnis, Harless, Loehe, Delitzsch, Hofmann, Thomasius, and others, thus the theologians of Missouri conferred at Bad Boll with German theologians who in our day have gained no less a name for themselves than the galaxy of German churchmen of the 19th century. It may suffice to mention the names of Thilich, Elert, Koeberle, and Asmussen. These and others were at Bad Boll to study the main articles of the Augsburg Confession with theologians of our sister synod. "Under God's blessings the meetings were a decided success" we read in one of Dr. Behnken's letters in the *Lutheran Witness* of August 24. We rejoice with our Missouri brethren over every blessing that the Lord of the Church has laid on their meetings with the German theologians. We do not doubt that these conferences and discussions were of benefit to both parties and that especially the German pastors who attended were greatly benefited by becoming acquainted with the teaching and the confessional church work of orthodox Lutheranism in America. Still we must be on our guard not to draw unwarranted conclusions from the fact that these meetings were "successful." The meetings which Walther and Wyneken had with the Lutheran theologians of their day were no less successful. They were so successful that each succeeding meeting brought the American and German theologians nearer to one another. Consequently Dr. Harless, at the time, expressed the earnest desire for a more expeditious rapprochement of the two churches in the future. Why was this never realized? Two reasons must be mentioned in answering this question. The one is that the theologians with whom Walther and Wyneken conferred did not have that influence on the shaping of the future policy of the Lutheran Church in Germany that was taken for granted by both sides. The other is that the Lutheran Confessions did not have that binding force for the German theologians that they had for Walther and his co-workers. Loehe said as much at the close of his meeting with Walther. In view of Eisenach we must ask ourselves whether in our day the professors and pastors that participated in the discussions at Bad Boll have any influence at all in the framing of the future policy of the Lutheran churches in Germany. We must even ask whether they know themselves thus bound to the Lutheran Confessions that "when their bishops teach and ordain anything against the Gospel" they actually "realize that they have a commandment of God prohibiting obedience" (Triglotta, p. 87). The *Lutheraner* of the Free Church of Germany apparently does not hold out the hope that such is the case. It states in its August number

that there is not only a difference between German and American theologians in their respective methods, but that the true Lutheran Church in America, conscious of its heritage, and the Lutheran free churches in Germany must choose, in obedience to the Word of God, another course than the Lutheranism in the German Land churches, which at Eisenach to all appearances has finally suffered itself to be harnessed to a different wagon. Dr. Walther and Missouri in obedience to the Word of God chose the other course. The Lutheran Free Church in Germany, no less conscience-bound, has also chosen it in the past and is doing it in the present. And only when the brethren of our sister synod can prevail upon German pastors and professors to choose this course also, prevail upon them because it is also their practice and the practice of the Lutheranism in America which they represent, only then will we be able to speak of such meetings as "successful" meetings in the full sense of the word. Such a success would indeed be the greatest blessing for the Lutheran Church in the Land of the Reformation. P. PETERS.

**The Common Service Revised.** — According to the July 28 issue of *The Lutheran* (U. L. C. A.) it is to be expected that a revised version of the Common Service will soon be adopted as the official Liturgy of the United Lutheran Church and also the American Lutheran Conference. Of the six conventions which must vote on the question four have already declared themselves favorably, and the other two will take action in October. In the judgment of *The Lutheran* "the way seems clear for agreement."

It is stated that in most respects this new service will resemble the Common Service of the United Lutheran Church. It seems, however, that the changes which have been agreed upon by the Committee are not entirely without significance. Among them are the following, as they are described in *The Lutheran*.

"THE CONFESSION OF SINS. *Unchanged*, except that instead of the Declaration of Grace beginning 'Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, hath had mercy . . .' the minister may say: 'The Almighty and Merciful God grant unto you, being penitent, pardon and remission of all your sins, time for amendment of life, and the grace and comfort of His Holy Spirit.'"

At the risk of seeming overly critical we are going to point out that this is neither a Declaration of Grace nor an Absolution, but a pious wish, a prayer which still leaves a lingering doubt. For even a judge may say to a hardened criminal whom he has just sentenced to be hanged by the neck until he is dead: "And may God Almighty have mercy upon your soul!" But in the Liturgy the pastor is facing a congregation which has just made a solemn confession of its sins, seeking mercy in the grace of its God. Why should he hesitate to make a full and unrestricted Declaration of Grace: "Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, hath *had mercy* . . .,

hath *given* His only Son . . . , and for His sake *forgiveth* us *all* our sins." That is proclaiming the grace of God as it should be proclaimed, as a royal amnesty. That leaves no lingering doubts.

"THE KYRIE. *New text proposed:*

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

℣ Lord, have mercy.

For the peace that is from above, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

℣ Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the churches of God, and the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

℣ Lord, have mercy.

For this holy place, and for them that in faith, piety, and fear of God offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

℣ Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, pity, and defend us, O God, by Thy grace.

℣ Amen."

In an explanatory note it is stated that the character and significance of the Kyrie at the beginning of the Service are generally not understood, but that it frequently is regarded only as a cry of penitence. In this sense it is, of course, out of place, since there just has been a Confession and an Absolution. Therefore the Revisers have restored the original state of affairs by writing a Litany type of prayer, to which the congregation then responds with the Kyrie, a call to the Lord to help His children in their many needs.

Historically this is correct. And we are glad for the frank admission that the position and meaning of the Kyrie in the present Service are hard to explain, and seldom understood. But we do not like the remedy, since it duplicates a function which at present is being fulfilled by the General Prayer of the Church. Since the Revisers are not only retaining but even amplifying the General Prayer, this will add to the multiplicity of prayers against which Luther so vigorously protested. If something should be done about the Kyrie, and we agree that some revision is called for, why not let it keep the meaning which it has acquired in the minds of the people and use it as a part of the CONFITEOR, as the response of the congregation to the Confession which the pastor has just spoken in their name. This would, of course, disturb the traditional sequence. But is tradition so sacred that it may not be broken?

"THE CREED. A footnote indicates that the words 'one holy catholic and Apostolic Church' may be used instead of 'one holy Christian and Apostolic Church'."

In the explanatory remarks the latter is called an inaccurate form, a provincial peculiarity fastened upon the German Lutheran Church. It is further claimed: "In following the German use, the Common Service has lost the idea of universality in its definition of the Church, has broken



with primitive use and with the use of all other Christian communions and has perpetuated a variant form in one of the historic creeds which its confessions profess to accept without change. — This threefold error (*sic!*) would be corrected by using again the historic word *catholic* instead of *Christian*.”

Rome will read this with glee. And we believe that the Revisers will eventually regret this concession, since it was such an unnecessary one. The Committee seems to have been overpowered by a sense of the ideal meaning of the word *catholic*, and has forgotten what McGiffert pointed out a generation ago, namely that the word as it was originally used in the Creeds already referred to a particular church organization, the Church of the Roman Empire as it emerged in the days of Constantine. \*) What kind of a liturgical inferiority complex is it that makes these committees so fearful of being different from other churches, and particularly in some matter that is sanctioned by ancient tradition? It should not be forgotten that the expression which is under fire has the *una*, “one holy, Christian and Apostolic Church. Certainly, that should be sufficient guarantee to satisfy any one that neither Luther nor Lutherans have tampered with the idea of the universality of the *Una Sancta*.

One major change in the Communion Service incorporates the Words of Institution in a Eucharistic Prayer which we quote in full:

“THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER.

“Holy art Thou, O God, Master and Lover of Men, Thou and Thine Only-begotten Son, and Thy Holy Spirit, Holy art Thou and great is the Majesty of Thy Glory, Who didst so love the world as to give Thine Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life;

“Who, having come into the world and having fulfilled for us Thy Holy Will, and being obedient unto the end, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat; this is My Body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me.

“After the same manner also, He took the cup, when He had supped, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; this cup is the New Testament in My Blood,

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\*) The adjective “catholic” in the article on the church appears in the creed as early as the fourth century and was very common from the fifth century on . . . At the time when it was inserted in the creed it had already acquired an exclusive meaning and it was that meaning therefore which attached to it in the creed; belief being expressed not in the holy church universal, but in the particular institution which was known as the Catholic Church and was distinguished from all schismatic and heretical bodies, the orthodox catholic church which was in communion with the church of Rome. The common Protestant interpretation of the article in the creed, which makes it refer to the holy church universal, is therefore historically incorrect. (McGiffert, *The Apostles’ Creed*, p. 32.)

which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins; this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.

"Remembering, therefore, His salutary precept and all that He endured for us: His Passion and Death, His Resurrection and Ascension, His Intercession and Rule at Thy Right Hand, and the Promise of His glorious Coming again, we give thanks to Thee, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought, but as we are able; and we make here before Thee the Memorial which Thy dear Son hath willed us to make.

"And we beseech Thee mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and to bless and sanctify with Thy Word and Holy Spirit these Thine own gifts of bread and wine, so that in very truth the bread which we break may be the communion of the Body of Christ, and the cup of blessing which we bless may be the communion of the Blood of Christ; so that we and all who partake thereof may be filled with all heavenly benediction and grace, and, receiving the remission of our sins, be sanctified in soul and body and have our portion with all Thy saints who have been well-pleasing unto Thee; through the Same, Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray and through Whom we make bold to say:

"Our Father, Who art in heaven . . ."

If this Eucharistic Prayer is accepted and becomes part of the official Service of the above named churches, this will indeed be a major innovation. Various Liturgical Societies have entertained the idea for some time, and have also used it in their "Demonstration Services" (*Quartalschrift*, 1947, p. 284), but this will be the first time that it will be given such widespread recognition.

We will grant that it is what the commentator in the *Lutheran* calls "a carefully framed prayer." We like it better than the other attempts which we have read. The word "sacrifice" is used only once, and then in a sense ("our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving") which is completely Scriptural and has nothing in common with the Roman perversion of the term. The reference to the saints who have been well pleasing to God is indeed reminiscent of the Roman custom of venerating the memory of its martyrs and saints, but on closer examination it becomes clear that there is no connection with Roman hagiolatry.

We are, however, far from convinced by the arguments which the *Lutheran* offers in support of this new proposal. We are told that it "would eliminate the possibility of a mechanistic idea of consecration inherent in the present use of the Verba alone." We fail to get the point. Rome incorporated the Words of Institution in a Eucharistic Prayer, and still has them there. Should anyone be looking for an example of a mechanistic idea of consecration, that is where he will find it. Another reason which is mentioned for introducing this into a Lutheran Service

is that "Practically all Christian communions — Eastern, Roman, Anglican, Protestant — provide some prayer of consecration or thanksgiving at this point in the service." On the value of this argument we have expressed ourselves above.

But to return once more to the question of whether it is better to frame the Words of Institution in a Eucharistic Prayer or to make them stand alone, as did Luther. Dr. Luther Reed (in his "Lutheran Liturgy," reviewed in our April issue) favors the former procedure. In fact, we are sure that we see his influence in the work of the committee which proposes these changes. Yet no one has stated the case for Luther's method of letting the Verba stand by themselves better than Dr. Reed. "This reverent, unadorned use of the Words of Institution accomplishes two things. It focuses all thought upon the action and the Words of Christ. . . . In doing this it demonstrates the Lutheran conception of the Sacrament as a particular form of the Word, the *Verbum visibile* of Augustine, which proclaims to the world and seals to believers the assurances of the Gospel concerning God's gracious will, the forgiveness of sins, and the ultimate satisfaction which the soul of man finds in the redemptive work of Christ. The strongly objective character of the Lutheran Liturgy is well expressed by this simple narration of the historic Institution. This commemorates the experiences of the disciples in the Upper Room and on Calvary, and at the same time provides a means whereby the grace of Christ is communicated to us here and now. For every Holy Communion is at once a celebration of the facts and the mystery of our redemption and an administration of the heavenly grace by which believers are nourished in this mortal life. — In the second place, this reverent, unadorned use of the Words of Institution, if rightly understood, well expresses the Lutheran view of the consecration." By this last Dr. Reed means that the effective consecration is the original Institution. He continues: "This elimination of everything except the original Words of Institution simplifies the entire proceeding. There is no room for speculation concerning the fitness of the ministrant, his intention, or the precise accuracy of his conduct. The supreme purpose is to focus thought upon the original Institution and the eternal power of Christ. The Lutheran Liturgy at this point is a monolith, not a mosaic. Here is simplicity, strength, and impressive objectivity — whatever else is lacking." We only regret that Dr. Reed has permitted his desire for the things that are lacking to outweigh the other considerations which he has so masterfully set forth.

We have one more reason for questioning the judgment of those who would introduce this new feature into the Lutheran Service. The Eucharistic Prayer is a horizontal prayer. In its form it is directed to God. In fact, however, much of it is really meant for the communicant. It is to recreate for him the events that occurred in the night in which He was betrayed. It is to bring these things to his remembrance. To do this by means of words that are addressed to God is to introduce a note of

unreality into this prayer which must finally have an unwholesome effect.

A final change in this new Liturgy occurs in the Words of Administration. "*When the Minister giveth the Bread he shall say: The Body of Christ, given for thee. — When he giveth the Cup he shall say: The Blood of Christ, shed for thee.*" In a land where most Protestants deny the Real Presence, and in an age which is ever becoming more susceptible to the "reasonableness" of this denial, it comes with poor grace when Lutherans abandon their clear and specific confession, "Take and eat (drink), *this is the Body (Blood) of Christ,*" and substitute for it the vague form given above, which will lend itself to so many different interpretations. This is definitely not an improvement.

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This is Liturgy, form, ceremony. But does not all this indicate a trend, a disquieting trend? E. REIM.

Introductory and Explanatory Additions to the "Theses of Agreement." — True to our promise (cf. page 207 of *Quartalschrift*) we are presenting to our readers the *Vorbemerkungen, Erläuterungen, and Nachbemerkungen* of the "Theses of Agreement" as adopted by the two Lutheran Free Churches of Germany, the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church and the Breslau Free Church. The theses have since been republished in a *Vollausgabe* entitled: *Einigungssätze zwischen der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche Altpreussens und der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Freikirche (i. Sa. u. a. St.)*. This *Vollausgabe* has been edited by the Rev. Gerhard Heinzelmann of the Breslau Free Church and by the Rev. William Oesch of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church, authorized by their respective church bodies. It contains the *Vorbemerkungen, Thesen, Erläuterungen, Nachbemerkungen, and Belegstellen* of the Scriptures and our Lutheran Confessions comprising 113 pages. A chapter on the *Entstehungsgeschichte* of the *Einigungssätze* together with a brief biography of the two editors is added. We can only reprint the *Vorbemerkungen, Erläuterungen, and Nachbemerkungen*, but must omit the many quotations which are added to each thesis in their full wording. Since the theses in the *Vollausgabe* have the same wording as published in the July issue of the *Quartalschrift*, they will not, with the exception of their general titles, appear again in this issue. They will, however, be numbered both as to their series numbers and as to the pages on which they are to be found in the July issue of the *Quartalschrift*.

### I. Von der Heiligen Schrift

#### Vorbemerkung:

Die beiden Hauptgrundlagen der Reformation und überhaupt der wahren Kirche Christi, daß wir verlorenen und verdammten Menschen allein aus Gnaden um Christi willen durch den Glauben gerecht und selig werden (*sola gratia, sola fide*), und daß allein nach der Heiligen Schrift gelehrt werden darf (*sola Scriptura*), stehen und fallen miteinander. Alle Christ-

liche Verkündigung vollzieht sich in der Unterscheidung von Gesetz und Evangelium. Sie ist nur möglich, wenn die christliche Lehre in keiner Weise von der Vernunft und von allem, was im Menschen ist, bestimmt oder mitbestimmt wird, sondern wenn lediglich aus und nach der Heiligen Schrift gelehrt wird. Sowohl das Gesetz wie auch das Evangelium müssen als Gottes Wort vorgetragen werden.

Jede Zulassung eines Menschenurteils über das, was in der Schrift Gottes Wort sei, und jedes Schöpfen der Lehre aus einer anderen Quelle als der Heiligen Schrift zerstört die Vollmacht der Verkündigung, führt auch zur Leugnung oder Abschwächung des göttlichen erbündlichen Verderbens, in dem alle Menschen seit Adams Fall von Natur liegen, ferner zur Beseitigung oder Beeinträchtigung der vollgültigen stellvertretenden Genugtuung des menschgewordenen ewigen Gottessohnes Jesu Christi für die ganze verlorene Menschheit — kurz zur Preisgabe der Gnade. Man gerät wieder auf Werke.

Wenn wir bei uneingeschränkter Geltung beider Grundsätze, der Gnade und der Schrift, mit letzterer beginnen, so ist das doch keineswegs die Weise, um Seelen zu retten, geistlich Tote zu bekehren oder Zweifler zu heilen. Dazu muß man einfach Gesetz und Evangelium als Gottes Wort sich selbst bezeugen lassen. Dann kommt es durch den Heiligen Geist im Schriftwort, in schriftgemäßer Predigt zur Anerkennung der Schrift. Bei der göttlichen Autoritätsstellung der Schrift und der Lehre von ihrer Vollendung handelt es sich überhaupt nicht um Theorie, sondern um die Aussage des Heiligen Geistes über die Schrift.

1. (Cf. page 203 of the July issue of the *Quartalschrift*.)

Die These schließt in sich, daß die Schreiber der Schrift nicht calami (Schreibfedern) gewesen sind in dem Sinne, daß ihr eigenes seelisches Leben ausgelöscht war. Das Geheimnis der Herablassung (Wondesjendenz) Gottes in der Schrift, der nicht in himmlischer Sprache, sondern durch Menschen in menschlicher Weise geredet hat, läßt sich dabei nicht ergründen.

2. (Cf. page 203.)

Da es Gott ist, der durch die Propheten und Apostel geredet hat, die Schrift also allerorts Gottes Wort ist, so dürfen Inhalt und Form der Schrift, Geist und Buchstabe nirgends auseinandergerissen werden.

Als Gottes Wort ist die Schrift der Grund der Kirche und das Licht, das da scheint an einem dunklen Ort.

Die Glaubensregel, nach der die Heilige Schrift zu verstehen ist, sind die klaren Stellen der Schrift, die von den einzelnen Lehren handeln (sedes doctrinae), und nicht ein von den Menschen gemachtes „Ganzes der Schrift“. Nichts kann in der Kirche offene Frage sein, was durch klare Stellen der Schrift entschieden ist. Alles aber, was dadurch nicht entschieden ist, bleibt offene Frage, da die Kirche erbaut ist auf den Grund der Apostel und Propheten, also kein Hinausgehen über die in der Schrift geoffenbarte göttliche Lehre möglich ist; — wobei freilich allen Christen zu allen Zeiten

geboten ist, durch Forschen in Gottes Wort unter Anrufung des Heiligen Geistes in der Erkenntnis zu wachsen. Meinungsverschiedenheiten in Fragen, die die Lehre nicht betreffen, — seien es exegetische oder historische oder andere —, sind nicht als kirchentrennend anzusehen, wenn die Irrtumslosigkeit der Schrift im Glauben grundsätzlich festgehalten wird.

Frucht und Wirkung des Glaubens, daß die Schrift inspiriert ist, ist nicht Buchstabenknechtschaft, sondern ein kindlich demütiges, fröhlich vertrauendes:

„Rede, Herr, denn dein Knecht höret“.

Vergleiche den 119. Psalm und Psalm 19.

#### Anmerkung zum Sprachgebrauch:

Was den für die vorstehend aufgeführte Lehre von der Eingebung der Heiligen Schrift üblichen Ausdruck „Verbalinspiration“ betrifft, so ist das weitverbreitete Mißverständnis, als ob es sich hier um eine mechanische Diktatinspiration handele, deutlich in These I abgewiesen. Das Wort „Verbalinspiration“ will nicht das Geheimnis der göttlichen Eingebung begreiflich machen, sondern das Ergebnis derselben nach Schrift und Bekenntnis festhalten: Schriftwort ist gleich Gotteswort (*πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος* 2. Tim 3, 16, *τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ* Röm. 3, 2). Die so verstandene Inspiration, wonach Gott nicht nur die Personen erleuchtet, die Sachen kundgetan, sondern auch die Worte eingegeben hat, kann auch mit dem umfassenden Begriff „Vollingebung“ oder „Plenarinspiration“ bezeichnet werden.

## II. Von der Befehung und Gnadenwahl

### II A Von der Befehung

#### Vorbemerkung:

Bei der Lehre von der Befehung ist der biblische Begriff von der rettenden Gnade Gottes unverkürzt festzuhalten und zur vollen Geltung zu bringen. Diese Gnade Gottes ruht auf der allgemeinen Rechtfertigung der ganzen Sündertreue in Christo und ist die gnädige Gefinnung Gottes, die er um Christi willen gegen alle Sünder hegt. Die Schrift schließt jeden Zweifel am Ernste des göttlichen Gnadenwillens nachdrücklich aus: „Gott will, daß allen Menschen geholfen werde und sie zur Erkenntnis der Wahrheit kommen“ (1. Tim. 2, 4). Die Botschaft von der Gnade aus dem Heilswillen Gottes ist das Evangelium, das nach Christi Befehl allen Völkern verkündet werden soll und so lebendig und kräftig ist, daß es durch den darin wirksamen Heiligen Geist den Glauben nicht nur fordert, sondern auch wirkt. Und so ernstlich ist die darin an alle Menschen gerichtete Einladung Gottes zum Heile gemeint, daß sein Zorn entbrennt wider alle, die ihr nicht folgen.

1. (Cf. page 204.)

Demgemäß verwerfen wir außer dem groben Synergismus (d. h. der Lehre von der Mittätigkeit), wonach der Mensch nur teilweise verberbt ist und den Anfang der Befehung aus eigenen Kräften machen kann, auch alle

feineren Arten des Synergismus, die dem Menschen eine Fähigkeit zuschreiben wollen, „sich für die Gnade zu schicken“, oder ihm doch die Fähigkeit beilegen, durch weniger übles Verhalten, etwa Unterlassen des mutwilligen Widerstrebens, selbst den Ausschlag zu seiner Befehrung zu geben, oder mit „geschenkten Kräften“ das von der Gnade angefangene Werk selbst irgendwie zur Vollendung zu bringen. Von solchen Fähigkeiten wissen weder die Schrift noch die Bekenntnisse unserer Kirche. Sie bezeugen vielmehr, daß Gott allein alle Ehre gebührt, wenn ein Sünder befehrt wird, und daß der Mensch vor der Befehrung keine guten Kräfte hat, vermöge deren er auch mitgeteilte Kräfte recht gebrauchen und sich selbst so für die Gnade entscheiden kann. Wir verwerfen demgemäß auch die Lehre von einem Zwischenzustand zwischen geistlichem Tod und geistlichem Leben, auch die Unterscheidung zwischen „Erweckung“ als einer geschenkten Fähigkeit, nunmehr wenigstens glauben zu können, und der „Befehrung“ als der Selbstentscheidung, in der der Mensch zum Glauben selbst durchbringt. Befehrtwerden und Sichbefehren sind überhaupt nicht zwei sachlich und zeitlich voneinander geschiedene Vorgänge, sondern ein und derselbe Vorgang, das eine Werk des Heiligen Geistes, das den Ungläubigen gläubig macht.

**Hinweis:** Von der erstmaligen Befehrung ist die tägliche Befehrung oder die tägliche Reue und Buße der Christen zu unterscheiden, in der in des Geistes Kraft der alte Adam täglich ersäuft wird mit allen Sünden und bösen Lüsten und wiederum täglich herauskommt und aufersteht ein neuer Mensch, der in Gerechtigkeit und Reinigkeit vor Gott ewiglich lebe. Hierbei findet allerdings eine Mitwirkung des bereits wiedergeborenen Menschen statt, aber so, daß auch hierfür Gott als dem alleinigen Anfänger und Vollender unseres Glaubens alle Ehre gebührt.

2. (Cf. page 204.)

## II B Von der Gnadenwahl

### Vorbemerkung:

Die Lehre von der Gnadenwahl steht in engster Verbindung mit der Lehre von der Befehrung und hat wie diese die Allgemeinheit und Allwirksamkeit der Gnade zur Voraussetzung. Es handelt sich bei der Gnadenwahl, obwohl ihr im Gange der christlichen Lehre nur eine dienende Stellung zukommt, nicht um eine abseits liegende Frage, sondern um den vollen **Trost** des Evangeliums.

1. (Cf. page 204.)

Die These schließt in sich, daß Gottes Gnadenwille ein allgemeiner und ernstester ist und daß es eine Lästerung Gottes ist, wenn gelehrt wird, daß Christus nicht für alle Menschen gestorben sei und daß Gott mit seiner Gnade an einem großen Teil der Menschheit vorübergegangen sei, ja ihn zur Verdammnis vorbestimmt habe, und daß sein Gnadenwille oder Ruf nur den Auserwählten ernstlich gelte (Calvin). Der Grund dafür, daß so viele Menschen verloren gehen, liegt nicht in Gott, sondern in den Menschen selbst: „Ihr habt nicht gewollt!“ (Matth. 23, 37.)

## 2. (Cf. page 204f.)

Von denen, die die ewige Seligkeit erlangen, sagt die Schrift, daß sie das in keiner Weise sich selbst verdanken, sondern allein Gottes ewigem Erbarmen in Christo, und zwar „seinem Vorfaß und Gnade, die uns gegeben ist in Christo Jesu vor der Zeit der Welt“. Mit Paulus führen sie den mancherlei geistlichen Segen in himmlischen Gütern, den sie als Christen jetzt im Glauben haben und genießen, darauf zurück, daß Gott sie durch Christum erwählt hat, „ehe der Welt Grund gelegt war“. Aus der Gnadenwahl fließt der gewisse Trost, daß mein Seligwerden nicht in meinen schwachen Händen ruht, sondern in der starken und treuen Hand Gottes.

Die These schließt auch in sich: Die Gnadenwahl geschieht nicht außer Christus (extra Christum), nicht so, daß ein zweiter Heilswille Gottes neben dem allgemeinen Gnadenwillen zu Grund läge, sondern sie geschieht aus göttlicher grund- und grenzenloser Barmherzigkeit unter Einbeziehung von Christi Werk und Verdienst und der Annahme desselben auf seiten des Menschen auf dem Wege der Heilsordnung. Diese Zueignung des Heils wirkt der Heilige Geist durch die Gnadenmittel, Wort, Taufe und Abendmahl, an die alle Menschen gewiesen sind. Während der Ausdruck, die Gnadenwahl geschehe „in“ oder „durch“ den Glauben“, schriftgemäß ist, ist die Ausdrucksweise, sie sei „in Ansehung des beharrlichen Glaubens“ geschehen (intuitu fidei finalis), zu vermeiden, da sie den Anschein erweckt, als ob unser Glaube als menschliches Verhalten hier in Frage komme und in uns eine Ursache der Erwählung Gottes sei, was in keiner Hinsicht der Fall ist.

## 3. (Cf. page 205.)

Die These schließt in sich, daß unsere Vernunft sich hier bewußt bescheiden muß. Die Frage bleibt: Wenn die Seligkeit allein Gottes Werk ist, warum bricht der allmächtige und barmherzige Gott bei dem einen das natürliche Widerstreben des menschlichen Herzens gegen das Evangelium und beim andern nicht? Wer diese Frage zu lösen sucht, macht entweder mit den Calvinisten Gott zum Urheber der Verdammnis der Verlorenen, unterstellt ihm einen ewigen Verwerfungsratschluß, von dem die Schrift nichts weiß, und leugnet damit die allgemeine Gnade. Oder er verlegt mit den Synergisten die Ursache des Seligwerdens wenigstens zum Teil in des Menschen Verhalten und leugnet so das „allein aus Gnaden“. Wir haben uns zu bescheiden mit dem, was Gott uns in bezug auf die Schuld im Gesetz, in bezug auf das Seligwerden im heiligen Evangelium offenbart.

## III. Von der Kirche und dem Predigamt.

## III A Von der Kirche

## Vorbemerkung:

Es geht hier darum, daß die geistliche und evangelische Wesensart der Kirche gewahrt bleibt, wodurch sie sich als das Reich Christi von allen Reichen der Welt unterscheidet, daß also nicht aus dem, was Gottes Geist ins Leben gerufen hat und erfüllt, aus dem geistlichen Leibe, dessen einiges Haupt Christus ist, ein menschliches Gebilde mit menschlichen Sätzen,



daß nicht aus der Gemeinde Gottes ein von Menschen gegründeter oder durch sie verfaßter oder regierter „Verein“ bzw. eine „Gesellschaft“, daß nicht aus dem **Volk des Evangeliums**, das seinem Herrn willig opfert in heiligem Schmuck der Glaubensgerechtigkeit, ein **Volk des Gesetzes** werde, das sich vergeblich abmüht mit toten Werken.

1. (Cf. page 205.)

Die These schließt in sich, daß, wiewohl die wahrhaft Gläubigen nur Gott bekannt sind und die Kirche insofern in ihrem innersten Wesen verborgen oder unsichtbar ist, sie doch in ihrem Vorhandensein auf Erden an ihren **Merkmalen oder Kennzeichen** (notae) erkennbar ist, nämlich am Wort und Sakrament, durch welche allein sie ja gebaut wird. „Solchen Glauben zu erlangen, hat Gott das Predigtamt eingesetzt, Evangelium und Sakramente gegeben“ (Augsb. Konfession V). Er will auch ordentlicherweise niemandem den Glauben geben noch mit uns handeln „ohne durch sein äußerlich Wort und Sakrament“ (Schmalk. Art. Teil III Art. VIII §§ 3. 10). Obwohl auch da noch überall Kirche ist, wo das Evangelium überhaupt noch wesentlich vorhanden ist und in Brauch steht, sollen wir die Kirche doch nur bei denen suchen, bei welchen das von Gott gestiftete Amt des Wortes besteht, das Evangelium rein gepredigt und die Sakramente dem göttlichen Wort gemäß gereicht werden. Wo dies geschieht, da ist gewißlich die Kirche, weil Gottes Wort nicht ohne Frucht sein kann. Die Wirkung des Evangeliums und der Sakramente hängt nicht ab vom persönlichen Glauben oder der Frömmigkeit derer, die sie verwalten, sondern der erhöhte Christus selbst ist es, der durch sein Wort seine Gemeinde baut und erhält.

2 A (Cf. page 205.)

Die These schließt in sich, daß die Heuchler und Namenschristen durch ihre bloße Zugehörigkeit keineswegs zu Gliedern der wahren Kirche werden. Wenn die Schrift auch sie oftmals unter dem Namen Kirche mitbegreift, so geschieht das in uneigentlichem Sinn, indem das Ganze den Namen des vornehmsten Teils mitträgt (synekdochisch), weil eine reinliche Scheidung zwischen Gläubigen und Heuchlern hier auf Erden nicht möglich ist.

2 B (Cf. page 205.)

Die These schließt in sich: Die Gemeinde der Berufenen hat als handelnde Kirche **keine anderen Aufgaben** als die erwähnten wahrhaft kirchlichen: Gesetz und Evangelium zur Rettung unsterblicher Seelen zu predigen und rechte christliche Gemeinden zu bauen.

2 C (Cf. page 205.)

Die rechte Gestalt der geschichtlichen Kirche ist daher die der Bekenntnis-Kirche, die in Einmütigkeit und ausharrender Treue die seligmachende Wahrheit in des Heiligen Geistes Kraft bewahrt und fortpflanzt. Darum halten sich rechte christliche Gemeinden an die **lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften** oder Symbole, wie sie im Christlichen Konkordienbuch von 1580 enthalten sind, als zu der unverfälschten Erklärung und Darlegung des göttlichen Wortes. Sie sind keine Glaubensregel neben und außer der Heiligen Schrift, sondern

ein Bekenntnis zur Lehre der Heiligen Schrift den aufgetretenen Irrtümern gegenüber. Ihre Lehrentscheidungen sind gewissenverbindlich, weil sie Lehrentscheidungen der Heiligen Schrift selbst sind. Sie sind von denjenigen, die ein öffentliches Lehramt in der rechtgläubigen Kirche begehren, nicht mit „quatenus“ (insofern sie mit der Schrift übereinstimmen), sondern mit „quia“ (weil sie mit der Schrift übereinstimmen) zu unterzeichnen. Die Verpflichtung erstreckt sich auf alle Lehren in den Symbolen, die alle der Schrift entnommen sind und demgemäß auch zusammenhängen, dagegen nicht auf geschichtliche Aussagen, rein exegetische (auslegungswissenschaftliche) Fragen und andere nicht zum Lehrinhalt gehörende Dinge.

Zum rechten Bekennen der Gemeinde Christi gehört, daß sie die Schlüssel Christi und ihre Freiheit als Christi königliche Braut keinem weltlichen Zugriff ausliefert. Nicht minder ist zu verwerfen jede bürgerliche oder politische Aufgabe der Kirche. So gewiß nämlich nach Gottes Willen die Kirche auf die Umwelt und die bürgerliche Gesellschaft einen heilsamen sittlichen Einfluß ausübt — nicht zum wenigsten durch die Predigt des geoffenbarten Gesetzes, die allen Ständen gilt —, so wenig darf daraus gefolgert werden: sie ist ein Ausschnitt aus der Welt und hat auch als Kirche bürgerliche Aufgaben, Rechte und Pflichten. Damit wird Wesen und Aufgabe der Kirche Christi auf Erden gefälscht nach Art der römischen und calvinischen Irrlehre.

### 3. (Cf. page 206.)

Die These schließt in sich, daß die Kirche überall da ist, wo Wort und Sakrament noch wesentlich im Schwange gehen, daß ich mich aber nur da mit gutem Gewissen zu ihr halten kann, wo Wort und Sakrament rein und lauter in Übung stehen, daß ich mit Wort und Tat in rechtgläubiger Kirchengemeinschaft mitwirken, falschglaubige Kirchengemeinschaft aber meiden muß. Ueber die Rechtgläubigkeit einer Kirche entscheidet nicht der bloße Name, auch nicht die bloße äußere Verpflichtung auf ein rechtgläubiges Bekenntnis, sondern die Lehre, die **tatsächlich** von der Kanzel, in theologischen Schulen und in Schriften verkündigt wird. Dagegen verliert eine Kirche nicht ihre rechtgläubige Beschaffenheit durch Irrlehre, die gelegentlich in ihr auftritt, aber bekämpft und durch Lehrzucht beseitigt wird. — Jeder Unionismus, das heißt, jede kirchliche Gemeinschaft mit Irrlehrern, auch der zwischenkirchliche Unionismus, das heißt die kirchliche Gemeinschaft zwischen recht- lehrender und falschlehrender Kirche, ist schrift- und bekenntniswidrig, zerreißt die Kirche Christi und bedeutet die stete Gefahr, Gottes Wort gänzlich zu verlieren. Durch Festhalten an dem Wort ist die Einheit der Kirche hier zu pflegen, bis wir sie droben schauen.

## III B Vom öffentlichen Predigtamt

### 1. (Cf. page 206.)

Die These schließt in sich, daß das Predigtamt einerseits kein besonderer, dem gemeinen Christenstand gegenüberstehender heiligerer Stand ist, der sich

selbst fortpflanzt, — andererseits keine bloße menschliche Ordnung, die der menschlichen Willkür unterworfen ist.

## VI. Von den letzten Dingen

### Vorbemerkung:

Im 17. Artikel der Augsburgerischen Konfession, der von der Wiederkunft Christi zum Gericht handelt, heißt es: „Sie werden verworfen etliche jüdische Lehren, die sich auch jetzt eräugen [vor Augen treten]“.

Hier wird ganz deutlich, worum es geht und mit welcher Art von Lehre über die letzten Dinge oder mit welcher Eschatologie unsere Kirche unverworren bleiben will.

Es handelt sich darum, daß unsere Christen Hoffnung nicht verfälscht und unser Ziel nicht verrückt werde durch falsche fleischliche Vorstellungen von dem ewigen Reich unseres Herrn Jesu Christi, wie sie sich in die Messiaserwartung der Juden eingeschlichen und darin festgesetzt haben. Es geht also auch hier zuletzt um die geistliche Beschaffenheit des Reiches Christi im Unterschied zu allen weltlichen Reichen und um das Evangelium, das uns nicht irdisches Glück und Wohlergehen und Ansehen vor der Welt zusagt und bringt, sondern geistliche, himmlische und ewige Güter.

#### 1. (Cf. page 206.)

Die These schließt in sich die Verwerfung des **Chiliasmus**, nämlich die Verwerfung der Lehren von einer zweifachen Wiederkunft Christi und einer doppelten leiblichen Auferstehung sowie der Annahme, daß „vor der Auferstehung der Toten eitel Heilige und Fromme ein weltlich Reich haben und alle Gottlosen vertilgen werden“ (Augsb. Konf. XVII § 5).

Die bezeichneten Lehren widersprechen den klaren Stellen der Heiligen Schrift (Matth. 24, 29, 30; Hebr. 9, 26-28; — Phil. 3, 20, 21; Joh. 5, 28, 29; — Joh. 18, 36; 1. Joh. 3, 2).

Das Reich Christi wird bis an das Ende der Tage ein Reich unter dem Kreuze sein (Apg. 14, 22; Luf. 18, 8; Matth. 24, 11-13).

Die Stelle **Offenb. 20**, auf welche sich die Chilias ten hauptsächlich beziehen, ist schon darum, weil sie im Bilde redet, keine selbständige Beweisstelle für die christliche Lehre und darf nicht dazu mißbraucht werden, andere, eigentlich redende Schriftstellen, welche von den letzten Dingen und von dem Reiche Christi handeln, zu verdunkeln, sondern muß nach diesen Stellen unter sorgfältiger Berücksichtigung des Textes und des Zusammenhanges in der Offenbarung selbst erklärt und ausgelegt werden.

#### 2. (Cf. page 207.)

Auf Grund von Schriftstellen wie Apg. 15, 15-18, verglichen mit Amos 9, 11, sind wir mit Luther der Meinung, daß es zur Erfüllung von Röm. 11, 25-28 und ähnlichen Stellen der Schrift genug ist, wenn „jeweils etliche Juden bekehrt werden“. Die Zahl dieser durch das Evangelium zum wahren Glauben gebrachten und für Christo gewonnenen Juden wird trotz des auf der Masse Israels ruhenden Gerichtes der Verstockung „voll“ werden, ebenso wie „die Fülle der Heiden“ eingehen wird. „Ganz Israel“ kann die

Vollzahl aus Israel im eben dargelegten Sinne oder überhaupt die Vollzahl der Auserwählten, den „Israel Gottes“ bedeuten, nicht aber das gesamte Israel nach dem Fleisch.

### 3. (Cf. page 207.)

Mit der These ist weder geleugnet, daß es, wie allezeit, so auch heute außerhalb des Papsttums viel Antichristentum gibt, noch daß unter denen, die der Kirche des Papsttums angehören, sich wahre Christen befinden. Die These richtet sich auch nicht gegen den Papst als Einzelperson, sondern gegen das Papsttum als Institution und insofern gegen ihren Repräsentanten. Die Schrift lehrt, daß der große Antichrist bis zum Jüngsten Tage bleibt, weshalb alle Christen gegen seine Verführung auf der Hut bleiben müssen. In welcher Weise das Papsttum als Urbild und Vormacht des Antichristentums sich mit anderem Antichristentum in der letzten Zeit vor dem Jüngsten Tag verbinden mag, ist in klaren Lehrstellen der Heiligen Schrift (sedes doctrinae) nicht enthüllt, so daß Vermutungen darüber die rechte Einseitigkeit in der christlichen Lehre nicht angehen. Die Lehre vom Antichristentum des Papstes zählt nicht zu den Fundamentalartikeln, deren Erkenntnis zur Seligkeit notwendig ist.

### Nachbemerkungen zu den letzten Dingen:

Die christliche Lehre von den letzten Dingen gehört in den großen Zusammenhang von Gesetz und Evangelium und ist für das Leben der Christen auf Erden von tiefgreifender Bedeutung, wie schon aus Matth. 25 und 1. Kor. 15 ersichtlich. Es gilt deshalb sonderlich bei diesen zukünftigen Dingen gegen alle phantastische Ausdeutung prophetischer Stellen, zumal alttestamentlicher Verheißungen und der Offenbarung Johannis, hart am Wortlaut der Schrift zu halten, die klaren Lehrstellen (sedes doctrinae) zu Grunde zu legen, Schrift mit Schrift auszulegen, im hellen Licht des Neuen Testaments das Alte Testament zu lesen sowie klar ausgesprochene Warnungen und Trost zu Herzen zu nehmen. Dabei ist die Grenze zu beachten, daß uns vieles noch verborgen ist hinsichtlich der Einzelausdeutung und =anwendung von Weissagungen, die Erscheinungen und Ereignisse betreffen, welche noch in der Entwicklung begriffen sind oder noch in der Zukunft liegen, wie z. B. noch keine verbindliche Auslegung aller Teile des bildlichen Weissagungsbuches der Offenbarung geltend gemacht werden kann. Deshalb ist bei solcher Auslegung besondere Vorsicht und besondere Geduld des einen mit dem anderen zu üben, ja, sind offenkundige Schwache zu tragen, vorausgesetzt, daß sie das unverletzte Ansehen der Heiligen Schrift und der in ihr mit klaren Worten geoffenbarten Lehren gelten lassen und die zentrale Bedeutung des Artikels von der Rechtfertigung anerkennen, auch bereit sind, für die beiden Grundsätze der Reformation mit den Waffen des Geistes gegen alle Verfälschung und Abschwächung derselben zu kämpfen und so dem wahren Frieden der Kirche zu dienen.

Schwärmerei ist stets gefehlich, zielt zuletzt auf Diesseitsanbetung und ist dem reinen Evangelium feind, das entsprechend der Lehre vom völligen erbündlichen Verderben auf keinen diesseitigen Grund das Heil baut, die

Herzen in die Höhe richtet, die armen Sünder durch gewisse freie Gnade in der Ewigkeit beheimatet und so im Diesseits zum Dienst fröhlich macht.

Schrift- und bekennnismäßige Lehre von den letzten Dingen rüstet zu echtem kirchlichem Handeln, indem echtes kirchliches Handeln keine Minderung des Kampfes zwischen wahrer Kirche und gottloser Welt erwartet, mit den furchtbarsten Versuchungen und Verfolgungen in der Endzeit rechnet und in Geduld und Freude ausschaut nach dem „lieben Jüngsten Tag“, dem wiederkehrenden Heiland, der Auferstehung des Fleisches und dem vollkommenen Leben in ewiger Gemeinschaft droben mit Gott und seinem Volk und in der Predigt des lautereren Evangeliums das Ziel hat, in Gottes Kraft zu dieser ewigen Welt zu bereiten.

These are the Theses of Agreement whose origin goes back, as we are informed in the last chapter of the *Volksausgabe*, to the *Berliner Thesen* of the year 1946. The *Berliner Thesen* were the outcome of a preliminary discussion carried on by Kirchenrat Lic. Matthias Schulz of Berlin and by the sainted Dr. Martin Willkomm of Zehlendorf. The latter dictated *Erläuterungen* which have been embodied into the present document as published in the *Vollausgabe*. Thereafter doctrinal discussions were conducted by the pastors of both churches in the western zones of Germany under the delegated leadership of the pastors Gerhard Heinzelmann and Wilhelm Oesch resulting in the so-called *Westliche Dokumente*. In February of 1947 a committee of pastors of both churches met in Wiesbaden to find a final formulation for the *Einigungssätze*. The Wiesbaden Formulation was revised and improved upon in Berlin. In the summer of 1947 an edition of the theses was published which was to serve as a basis for the final study by the congregations of both free churches of all the doctrines involved. In September of 1947 the General Synod of East and West of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in former Old Prussia and not, as we misinformed our readers in the July issue, of both Free Churches, gave its approval to the *Einigungssätze*. At the end of 1947 all the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church had expressed their agreement.

These Theses of Agreement appear at a time, we read in the concluding paragraph of the chapter on the *Entstehungsgeschichte* of the Theses of Agreement, which is not wanting in church unions. These, however, are almost all consummated in such a manner as more or less to set aside the truth revealed by the holy Scriptures and entrusted by the holy Lord to the Church as something absolute, thereby making it relative. Over against such a procedure the Theses of Agreement want to testify to the manner in which two churches have entered into fellowship with one another by giving full recognition to this truth, *i. e.*, by strict obedience to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions. P. PETERS.

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What Happened at Eisenach? — This question is answered in a communication which has been forwarded to us by Dr. Hermann Sasse

from St. Louis and penned by the Rev. Friedrich Wilhelm Hopf, a member of the *Schwabacher Bund*, which is opposed to the unionistic practices of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (cf. *Quartalschrift*, pp. 63ff.). We do not intend to give a word for word translation of Rev. Hopf's answer, but are only endeavoring to set forth his line of argument.

In the first part of his answer our informant declares that we would have every reason to rejoice at the union realized by the various Lutheran churches at Eisenach from the 6th to the 8th of July, had these churches not at the same time entered in upon a union with the Reformed and the United churches of Germany. While the latter union is only called a *Bund*, a federation, still it is nothing less than a "church," since it has made the Barmen Confession of 1934 its own. The Barmen Confession again is based on the *Reichskirchenverfassung* of 1933, which, however, cannot lay claim to being a Lutheran church-constitution, although subscribed to by the Lutheran bishops. Consequently, the union of the Lutheran Land churches in Germany as consummated at Eisenach does not represent a new beginning, although it has adopted the Unaltered Augsburg Confession of 1530. Men like Hermann Sasse, Christian Stoll a. o. have pointed out that this beginning is contrary to the Lutheran Confession and is erected on the premise that there are important differences between the Lutheran and the Reformed Church, that these differences do not contradict one another, and that they can be tolerated within the "Evangelical Church." Our Lutheran Confessions, however, as emphasized by our author in the conclusion of this first part of his answer, point out the differences obtaining between the Lutheran and the Reformed churches as church-divisive. Still these differences are either being silently bypassed or unscrupulously denied.

In the second part of his answer the author speaks of the *Grundordnung der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland* adopted by this body at Eisenach on the 12th and 13th of July. This *Grundordnung* or basic regulation will be submitted to the synods of the Land churches and can either be accepted or rejected by them. A third course cannot be chosen, namely that of suggesting alterations. Even if it were possible to suggest alterations, it would hardly be done, since the bishops and the delegates have already decided in favor of the *Grundordnung*. According to this basic regulation the Evangelical Church in Germany has three characteristics: 1) It is a "church" which has a unified church-government, on the strength of which each constituent church is dependent in every respect on the joint church; 2) the new church is bound to the decisions passed by the *Barmer Bekenntnissynode* of 1934, which implies that also in the future all heresy is to be met in common defense, which again presupposes a far-reaching union as to one and the same confession; 3) there is to be pulpit and altar fellowship.

Rev. Hopf argues that there are two lines of thought running through this basic regulation. The one is that of unity and the other that of an at-

tempt to characterize this unity as a federation (Bund) of Lutheran, Reformed, and United churches. The latter presupposes the first. The idea of a federation serves to calm alarmed minds and to disperse confessional scruples. Let us not overlook that the *Grundordnung* knows nothing of a complete independence of the church-governments of the constituent bodies, which as such are naturally based on their respective confessions. In this connection it must become evident whether the name "federation of Lutheran, Reformed, and United churches" is a meaningless phrase or whether it is backed by a decision made in deed and in truth. The latter, evidently, is not the case, the whole *Grundordnung*, apart from all individual statements, being enveloped in the fog of untruthfulness which served all those who attended the Eisenach Convention as delegates to deceive themselves in regard to the unionistic character of the Evangelical Church in Germany.

It is in this connection that our informant reminds all Lutherans that article 4 of the *Grundordnung* on pulpit and altar fellowship deserves special consideration. The first sentence of this article reads: "Agreement pertaining to pulpit and altar fellowship is to be reached by the constituent church-bodies." Were the EKD a federation in the true sense of the word, no further stipulation would be necessary. Since this is not the case, the sentence has to be added: "Called servants of the Word are also not to be prevented from preaching the Word in those congregations that have a different confession, which, however, is still within the framework of all the regulations pertaining to the constituent church-bodies." In other words, the ministry of the Word in a Lutheran congregation can at times be practiced by those who are not bound to a Scriptural confession and who contradict fundamental articles of the true doctrine.

The same holds true in regard to altar fellowship. At Eisenach the unionists wanted Communion to be administered indiscriminately at all altars to all the members of the EKD. They had a certain right to demand this, since the responsible Lutheran representatives at Treysa (1947) were in accord with such a practice, at least did not oppose it. Even thereafter these representatives had avoided to voice a protest against the adopted articles of Treysa. At Eisenach, however, they withstood the radical program of the unionists and succeeded after a long and very arduous struggle, to enforce Article 4, paragraph 4, which commences: "Full agreement as to admission to Communion does not obtain within the EKD." So far all is well. But then three sentences follow which an unbiased judge will label as a repetition of the Treysa agreement of 1947. To begin with, an allowance is made for the practice of all United and Reformed as well as for most of the Lutheran Land churches with the words: "In many constituent church-bodies members of a different confession, which, however, is recognized by the EKD, are accepted without restriction for Holy Communion." Passing over the fact in silence that there are constituent church-bodies which still have a truly Lutheran practice in accepting members for Communion, the third sentence of paragraph 4 simply reads:

"In no constituent church-body is a member of any other recognized confession within the EKD prevented from communing, wherever pastoral responsibility and congregational circumstances demand admission to Communion." One has to read this sentence repeatedly, Rev. Hopf remarks, in order to realize with what ingenuity it has been formulated and what its real implication is. It implies that even in those Lutheran Land churches who refused to have altar fellowship with those of a different faith admission to Communion is demanded, either because of "pastoral responsibility" or because of "congregational circumstances." Those pastors who in their Communion practice have always been unionists can now constantly make use of some "pastoral exigency" and then fall back on the *Grundordnung*. The few pastors, however, who desire to retain a sound Lutheran practice, can be forced at all times to carry on a different practice because "congregational circumstances" allegedly demand an admission to Communion. In order that such an admission to Communion at Lutheran altars might not be construed as an admission into membership of a Lutheran church — something which heretofore was regarded as a self-evident principle of ecclesiastical law — the closing sentence of Article 4, 4 reads: "The regulations pertaining to lawful membership and to church-discipline are in no wise affected thereby." We must add, our informant says at the close of the third part of his answer, that the smaller constituent church-bodies are not any longer able to overcome the widespread disorder of this Communion practice by reestablishing a truly confessional practice. For the basic regulations in Article 12 determine that "the ecclesiastical laws and the legal regulations" must first be submitted to the church-government of the EKD. If the latter brands them as contrary to the regulations of the church at large, they will have to be altered.

In the fourth part of his answer the author sums up the happenings in Eisenach: 1) The responsible representatives of the Lutheran churches were warned by many and from many sides, and were even earnestly entreated, under no circumstances to assign to the federation entered in upon with other confessions the name "church" and not to permit the government of such a federation to have the character of an ecclesiastical court. They, nevertheless, did both. 2) The responsible representatives of the Lutheran Land churches were frequently entreated in no wise to bind themselves to the decisions of Barmen and to observe the line of demarcation drawn up by the Formula of Concord between the Lutheran and the Reformed churches. Nevertheless, by binding themselves to the Barmen Confession, they also acknowledged the oneness of Lutheran, Reformed, and United churches in deciding what is pure doctrine and what has to be warded off as church-divisive heresy. The upshot of it all is that despite certain differences the three church-bodies are not any longer separate churches. 3) The responsible representatives of the Lutheran Land churches were earnestly importuned from all sides to finally forsake the wrong course entered in upon at Treysa in 1947 and to with-



stand all temptations to again submit to resolutions contrary to the Confessions. Notwithstanding, they agreed to a *Grundordnung* which pointedly determines that altar fellowship is possible without a united faith and a common confession of the Sacrament of the Altar. 4) The responsible representatives of the Lutheran Land churches were constantly and emphatically reminded that the EKD, which has been in existence since 1945, had to be most forcefully opposed and fought not only by the Lutheran free churches, but also by the Lutherans within the Land churches who are conscious of their adherence to the Formula of Concord. Ignoring all the pleas and warnings of distressed Lutheran consciences these representatives have challenged the resistance of those who have to say "no" to the Eisenach resolutions and who must abide by their "no." What our Augsburg Confession has to tell us in Article XXVIII: "Of Ecclesiastical Power" is still valid: "But when they teach and ordain anything against the Gospel, then the congregations have a commandment of God prohibiting obedience" (par. 23).

P. PETERS

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**Wichern and the Innere Mission.** — It was in September of 1848 at the first German Evangelical church diet in Wittenberg that the work of the *Innere Mission* was born, most forcefully sponsored by Johann Heinrich Wichern, the founder of the *Rauhe Haus* in Horn, a suburb of Hamburg (1833). This ardent champion of the poor and of the abandoned children was conscious of the deep gulf separating the Church from the masses, which also resulted in a falling-away of many people from the Church, from the Bible, and from the Lord Jesus. Therefore he demanded of that large church gathering at Wittenberg, as *Der Lutheraner in Deutschland*, September, 1948, informs us: "One thing is necessary and that is that the Evangelical Church confess: The work of the inner mission is mine. Love belongs to me as much as faith." This his strong appeal resulted in the organization of the "Central Committee of the Inner Mission of the German Evangelical Church," which gave suggestions and impulses for organized effort in different parts of Evangelical Germany as well as among the Germans in foreign countries instituting and superintending congresses for the inner mission, which became the centers and starting points for all efforts relating to this sphere of work. The *Innere Mission* soon enveloped "such spheres of activity as city missions (1848); the Herbergen zur Heimat (1854); the service of overseers in Prussian prisons (1856); the care of the sick, mentally defective, and epileptics (1860); and the service of field deacons in the Danish and later wars. . . . Other agencies which received attention were young men's societies (1838), the church care of the poor, and Sunday schools (at Hamburg as early as 1825, further expansion especially since 1862). Of special efforts of the Central Committee before the death of Wichern (1872) may be mentioned: the provision of pastoral care for the laborers who built the great rail-

roads in the fifties; care of emigrants and Evangelical Germans in foreign countries; efforts to promote Sunday observance; the organization of prison associations and asylums for dismissed prisoners; the attack on gambling houses (1854-67); the sifting of Christian literature and the attack on secular literature hostile to Christianity in the beginning of the sixties; and the organization of numerous provincial and state societies for the inner mission." These and other institutions, which are so effectively enumerated for us in the New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, were a great blessing to the German people at large. It is well for us in these post-war years to remind ourselves of the works of charity performed in Germany and by the German charitable institutions of the past century. Anyone who has benefited by these agencies will know how to evaluate them. Still this inner mission work from the very beginning, as *Der Lutheraner* reminds us, suffered from two imperfections: Its work was not so much a part of the work of the church, but more and more a concern of free organizations. Therefore it was hardly instrumental in furthering the growth of living congregations, but often hampered their growth. Still more detrimental was the fact that the leaders of the *Innere Mission* had so little understanding of the meaning of pure doctrine for the Church and all its undertakings. Wichern himself, although very pious, was without a clear confessional stand. He once called himself a Reformed Lutheran. He was carried away by the unionistic tendencies of his time and could grow enthusiastic in favor of a united German national church, to which all Land churches were to belong. This goal has been reached but a few months ago at Eisenach. And the *Innere Mission*, Professor Kiunke tells us in his article from which we have been quoting, has done much by its own working methods to bring about such a union.

P. PETERS.

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**Germany and the Peace of Westphalia.** — Dr. Hans Preuss in his church history, *Von den Katakomben bis zu den Zeichen der Zeit*, 1936, has this to say about Germany of 1648 after a few preliminary remarks on the settlement brought about by the signatories of the Peace of Westphalia: "Dreadful was the appearance of Germany as it reeled out of the war. Of course, the war scourge raged in different ways at different places. but everywhere in Germany there was destruction, misery, and grief. At that time many villages disappeared for all times from the face of the earth. In our day they appear on maps as a waste territory. In the cities there were open places on which grass and shrubbery spread out in rank growth. In every forest the howling of wolves was heard again. The population was diminished by the three apocalyptic horsemen, war, famine, and pestilence, to a half or a third of its original number. The Palatinate numbered only 2% of its prewar population. In addition to this an incredibly brutelike spirit stormed like a wild boar through Germany.

In this hopeless state of affairs help was near. The Evangelical clergy came to the rescue. The service which it rendered at this time belongs to the greatest that history has to record. It proved how stupid and unjust it is to talk of a "dead orthodoxy." For all these men were, without exception, strictly "orthodox," but at the same time faithful servants of the congregations entrusted to them. They congregated the scattered and frightened sheep, comforted those who were down and out, implanted into the unruly souls unwavering trust in God and the fear of God, buried the dead, and then, themselves victims of their contagious diseases, laid themselves down to die. In a church-record of that period one can read the significant remark: 'As a mother first puts her children to sleep before she herself finds rest.' In the soil of such need and devotion the precious church-hymn took root, the folio volumes of consolatory discourses grew in size. Added to this the Bible was read and read to others, flowing like living water through the midst of our people, preserving the purity of the Gospel and, in like manner, the purity of the German language.

"We cannot leave the scene of this frightful tragedy without having given it for but a moment one more thought. Whenever a great sacrifice is made one involuntarily asks: Was it worth while or was it to no purpose, was it useless? Therefore we now ask: Was there anything gained by this war? Our answer must be: No! The confessional status of the nations hardly experienced any change (with the exception of Austria, but that would have happened independently of the great war). The fact that the Calvinists were included in the Peace of Westphalia had been in preparation long before by the recognition of the *Augustana variata*. The religious wars also did not cease altogether. A stop was first put to the agitation of the Jesuits by Rationalism. Therefore, the Thirty Years' War seems to have been but the outgrowth of a blind destiny. But if the wherefore? cannot be answered, then at least the why? Had Germany placed itself solidly behind the Rose of Luther, had it gratefully accepted the Gospel, with which it had been blessed more than other nations, then there never would have been a Thirty Years' War. In the framework of World History God's thoughts envelop nations. The German people, however, as a people were ungrateful. God's judgment had to follow. The great German prophet, Martin Luther, foresaw that, warning and threatening again and again. He spoke the terrible word that whenever he prays for his fatherland, the prayer 'rebounds' from heaven. 'A great vengeance will come upon Germany, so great, that the mind of no man can grasp it.' 'In Germany there will be nothing but famine, dissension, pestilence, and bloodshed.' 'The destruction will be horrible. It will be said: In this territory Germany once was situated'" (pp. 205-207).

The Germany of 1948 is the Germany of 1648. A great vengeance has come over the present-day Germany. In it there is nothing but famine, dissension, pestilence, and bloodshed. The destruction is horrible. Misery and grief is everywhere. People visiting the Reich must indeed say:

Where is all of Germany's old glory? The Germany of 1948 is even without a peace treaty four years after the cessation of hostilities. Again, we cannot give an answer to the wherefore? of World War II, but the why? can be answered. If the Germany of World War I had gratefully accepted the Gospel which Luther preached, if it had forcefully preached the Gospel which the orthodox clergy of the Thirty Years' War proclaimed, then there would not have been a World War II for Germany. Indeed, the Germany of 1948 is the Germany of 1648 — with one exception. There is in the present-day Germany no large force of orthodox clergy to step into the breach. Wherever they are to be found in Germany, they are in small groups within the Land churches (Schwabacher Bund a. o.) or in the Lutheran free churches. But however few and small these groups may be, we look to them to congregate the scattered sheep, to minister to the dying, and to face death hopefully in the service of their Lord and Master, having written on their standard: *Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehr vergehet nun und nimmermehr.*

P. PETERS.

**The Barmen Declaration.** — This number of the *Quartalschrift* as well as previous numbers of the 1948 issue contain numerous references to the Theological Declaration of Barmen. It is not our purpose at present to evaluate this Protestant confession, which was set up by the Confessional Synod of the Evangelical Church of Germany in Barmen in 1934 (May 29 to 31). We simply want to present in translation six theses of this Declaration, in order to provide for a better understanding of the references in our periodical and to acquaint our readers with the wording of that confession, which since Treysa of 1947 the EKD called its own and which again it has made its own at Eisenach in July of this year. The Theological Declaration of the Synod of Barmen was directed principally against the claims of a totalitarian state and against the false teachings of the German Christians in those trying years in Germany preceding World War II. As such it was to prepare the way for a federation of all the Evangelical Land Churches of Germany. This it has done, as the Eisenach Conference has demonstrated without the shadow of a doubt. We, however, cannot judge the union consummated at Eisenach without having a knowledge of the articles of this Theological Declaration. They have been published again in 1946 by Christian Stoll, Oberkirchenrat in München, in number 2 of the *Kirchlich-Theologische Hefte* edited by order of the council of the Ev.-Luth. Church of Germany and read as follows:

#### Article I

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14, 6).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief

and a robber. I am the door: by me if any man enter, he shall be saved" (John 10, 1. 9).

Jesus Christ, as He has been declared unto us in the Holy Scriptures, is the one Word of God which we are to hear, which we are to trust and to obey in life and in death.

We reject the false doctrine that the Church can and must acknowledge still other events and powers, forces (Gestalten) and truths as God's revelation besides and beyond this one Word of God.

#### Article II

"Christ Jesus is made unto us of God wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1, 30). As Jesus Christ is God's promise of the forgiveness of all our sins, thus and with the same earnestness He is also God's powerful claim on our whole life. Through Him we have a joyous liberation from the ungodly ties of this world into a free and grateful service rendered unto His creatures.

We reject the false doctrine that there are realms in our lives, in which we do not belong to Jesus Christ but to other lords; realms, in which we are not in need of justification and sanctification obtained through Him.

#### Article III

"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body is fitly joined together" (Eph. 4, 15. 16).

The Christian Church is the communion of brethren in which Jesus Christ is present and active as Lord by means of Word and Sacrament through the Holy Spirit. In the world of sin she as the Church of pardoned sinners has to testify with her faith as also with her obedience, with her message as also with her divine order that she alone is His peculiar people and only wants to live in the expectation of His appearing on the strength of His comfort and of His instruction.

We reject the false doctrine that the Church may relinquish the nature (Gestalt) of her message and her divine order at will or in conformity with the change of the momentarily ruling philosophical and political convictions.

#### Article IV

"Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister" (Matt. 26, 25. 26).

The various offices of the Church do not establish a dominion of the one over the other, but put into practice the stewardship which has been entrusted and committed to the care of the whole congregation.

We reject the false doctrine that the Church apart from this stewardship is able and is permitted to have or to be presented with special leaders who are endowed with sovereign authority.

#### Article V

"Fear God. Honor the king" (1 Pet. 2, 17).

The Scripture tells us that the State by divine ordinance has the duty according to the measure of human judgment and ability to provide for justice and peace by threatening and exercising power in a world not yet redeemed, in which the Church also finds itself. The Church recognizes with gratitude and in the fear of God the beneficence of this His ordinance. She calls to mind the kingdom of God, the commandment and righteousness of God, and therewith the responsibility of sovereigns and subjects. She trusts and obeys the power of His Word by which He upholds all things.

We reject the false doctrine that the State beyond its special commission is duty-bound and able to become the only and total order of human life and therefore also the one who is to fulfill the destiny of the Church.

We reject the false doctrine that the Church beyond her call is in duty bound and able to appropriate to herself the nature, duties, and dignities of the State and thereby even become an organ of the State.

#### Article VI

"And so, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28, 20). "But the word of God is not bound" (2<sup>d</sup> Tim. 2, 9).

The call of the Church, the source of her liberty, consists in proclaiming in Christ's stead and also in the service of His own Word and Work through Sermon and Sacrament the message of the free grace of God to all the people.

We reject the false doctrine that the Church in human self-glorification can place the Word and the Work of the Lord in the service of any arbitrary and self-styled wishes, purposes, and plans.

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The Editor, Christian Stoll, has also rendered us a service by evaluating these theses. The next number of the *Quartalschrift* may afford us an opportunity to present his evaluation to our readers.

P. PETERS.

## NEWS WITHOUT COMMENT

The Hungarian Lutheran Church with Bishop Zoltan Thuroczy of Nyiregyhaza at the head is to resume negotiations with the Communist-dominated government. Previously, government leaders sought an agreement with Lutheran Bishop Lajos Ordass of Budapest who was recently sentenced to prison for two years on charges of "foreign currency manipulations." Prior to his arrest, Bishop Ordass had been accused by Communist officials of opposing the government's program for church "reforms." Early last month, when rumors were rife that Bishop Ordass would resign, active control of the Lutheran Church was reported to have been placed in the hands of Bishop Thuroczy and Bishop Joseph Szabo of Balassagyarmat. Indications here are that the imprisonment of Bishop Ordass as well as the resignation of several top-ranking leaders of the Lutheran Church — all of them known to be opposed to the church-directed policies of the present regime — will be followed by a revamping of church leadership to remove so-called obstructive elements. A new Lutheran Synod is scheduled to be elected at a convocation to take place late this year. The expectation is that only church leaders sympathetic to the government will be chosen for office.

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The Hungarian Reformed Church, largest Protestant body in the country, and the Unitarian Church, one of Hungary's minor Protestant bodies, signed agreements climaxing negotiations for Church-State understanding initiated several months ago by the Ministry of Cults. The agreements stipulated that the religious bodies will continue to enjoy "the fullest religious liberty," and that the State will continue to make grants toward their upkeep. They enumerated certain educational institutions owned by the denomination which have been excluded from provisions of the new law nationalizing church schools in Hungary. In their replies the signatories, Minister Csiky and Bishop Revesz, pledged loyalty to the constitution of the new republic and said they would uphold all acts of the State that are "in harmony with God's revealed order." According to earlier reports, the agreement signifies Reformed Church acceptance of recent legislation nationalizing church schools, but exempting four leading Reformed colleges.. One important provision calls for the completion of Church-State separation within a period of twenty years, State grants to the churches to decrease gradually until the churches are entirely self-supporting.

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Inter-Lutheran Cooperation was approved by the United Lutheran Church in America at its 16th biennial convention. By unanimous consent, the convention granted synods of the Church the right to confer at any time with other participating bodies of the National Lutheran

Council regarding an equitable exchange or transfer of congregations "for the purpose of forming more compact parishes and generally to increase the effectiveness of the Church's ministry." The Committee on Inter-Lutheran Interests reported to the convention there are numerous indications that congregations and synods in many areas are seeking more effective pastoral alignments and exchange of congregations in order to make parishes more compact, and to avoid unnecessary expenditure in time, money, and manpower. Stating that the United Lutheran Church "cordially recognizes its sister Churches in the National Lutheran Council as possessors of the same faith and a like spirit to ours," the committee said that it looked "with high approval" on this trend. The convention also gave its constituent synods authority to enter into an agreement with any of the participating bodies of the National Lutheran Council for a merger of theological seminaries. Member bodies of the National Lutheran Council are the American Lutheran Church, Augustana Lutheran Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, United Evangelical Lutheran Church, Danish Lutheran Church, Finnish Suomi Synod, and the United Lutheran Church.

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**Bishop Hans Meiser of Bavaria**, president of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany, arrived here by plane from Frankfurt for a six-weeks' stay in this country. He came at the invitation of the National Lutheran Council and the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod. The prelate told reporters that the Lutheran Church, which had been in a struggle against the Hitler regime, is "getting along." "The Church has gotten a new start," he said, "and much of the credit is due to the Lutheran Church in America for its great help. The Lutheran Church has 1,650,000 members in Bavaria and its membership is increasing and is being swelled by 700,000 Lutheran refugees who have come into Bavaria from Communist-dominated Eastern areas since the end of the war," the German churchman said. Bishop Meiser will attend the convention of the United Lutheran Church in Philadelphia on October 9 and the convention of the American Lutheran Church in Freemont, Ohio, October 11. He will also speak at a number of Ohio Lutheran churches and will then proceed to St. Louis, Missouri, where he will deliver an address at Concordia Seminary on October 20.

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**A Four-Million Dollar Budget**, largest ever attempted, has been set for the year 1949 by the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, officials announced. The amount is \$400,000 over the 1948 budget. A total of \$600,000 has been allocated for work in Japan and New Guinea; \$1,286,500 will be raised for education; and \$1,500,000 will go towards a building program at the various colleges and seminaries. The Fiscal Conference, which drew up the budget, reported that 58,000 new members had joined the Church during the past year, making the total membership 1,639,331.



## REVIEWERS' DESK

**Old Testament Commentary.** A General Introduction to and a Commentary on the Books of the Old Testament. Edited by Herbert C. Alleman and Elmer E. Flack. Complete in one Volume. The Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Price: \$5.00.

The objective of this Commentary is "to furnish Bible students and teachers with a compendium which will enable them to go further in their study of the Old Testament than by means of a handbook for teacher training" (p. III). To realize this objective students and teachers are first of all presented with an introduction of no less than 170 pages consisting of 13 introductory articles. Here the student and teacher will indeed find valuable material to aid him in studying the Old Testament. Especially the articles that deal with history (pp. 20-42) and archaeology (pp. 134-170), the latter written by the well-known and leading archaeologist, Professor W. Albright, are of great value. And much that is said in the other articles is indispensable to the student and teacher. But all this must be viewed and evaluated in the light of the new course that the 35 contributors to this Commentary have chosen and that has been set forth clearly by one of the contributors, the Rev. Chas. M. Cooper, in the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* of October, 1948, under the title: *Relevance of Recent Pentateuch Criticism*. They assert that they reject a criticism "which has often been negative and subversive of faith" (p. 8) and that "the critical opinion of extremists in this field (Graf, Wellhausen, and others) is not generally accepted" (p. 10). Again, "the processes of criticism have no place in this Commentary" (p. III), as they do, for instance, in the Sellin Commentary on the Old Testament. Still the sources "E" and "J", "D" and "P" are referred to as actual sources in the Commentary itself (p. 211) and many other results of negative Biblical Criticism are taken for granted. In short, "a conservative source theory" of modern criticism is accepted, while "the old popular view" is "discarded" (p. 10). Therefore "Moses was not the author of the written law" (p. 45) and Isaiah was not the author of the chapters 40-66, since "today practically all reputable Old Testament scholars accept the Exilic origin of Deutero-Isaiah" (p. 675). While we fully agree with the editors that the science of Biblical Criticism, which is the examination of the human and historical aspects of the Scriptures, is "legitimate" and "desirable," that "the Word of God invites investigation" (p. 10), and while we want to know how to appreciate that Biblical criticism that was practiced by Luther (Cf. Holman Edition, Vol. VI, pp. 393f., 406, 410, 424) and even in our time and midst by Professor A. Pieper in his Isaiah Commentary (cf. pp. XXVI-XXVII), still we agree with Theodore E. Schmauck in his "Negative Criticism and the Old Testament," 1903, that the ways of the Critics "may be harmless and in the line of progress," but that it is not less true "that behind the ways there is something deadly" and "that evangelical orthodoxy scents danger from afar" (p. 130). The question in

evaluating this Commentary is whether by accepting the results of the modern Critics the door to a "progressive evolutionary religious development" (ibid., p. 66) has been opened by the editors. We cannot convince ourselves that this door has remained closed when reading that "Hebrew religion finds expression not in a formulated theology, but in a great variety of prophetic and cultural ideas which were gradually crystallized in the life of Israel over many centuries," that "some of these ideas, even certain notions about God, are very primitive and quite unintelligible apart from a knowledge of the early social environment out of which they emerged" (p. 99). Again the statement that the prophets of Israel "first grasped the significance of monotheism and became its champions" presupposes an evolutionary progression in Israel's religion and places it on a level with all monotheistic religions.

How can the editors and contributors of this Lutheran Commentary open the door thus wide to the "findings" of modern Biblical Criticism and to the philosophical theory behind its literary problems? Our only answer can be that they are not adhering to the direct testimony of the New Testament and to that of our Lord Himself. It is this testimony to which Schmauck, Moeller, and Allis have consistently appealed, Allis in his final chapter on "The Final Question, What Think Ye of Christ?" (cf. chapter IV of "The Five Books of Moses"). Our question can also be answered by stating that the editors and contributors do not advocate the Scriptural doctrine of verbal inspiration and that they consequently ignore what both the Old and the New Testament have to say on the authorship of the books of the Old Testament.

Although it is clearly stated in this Commentary that "the Bible not only contains the Word of God, it is the Word of God" (p. 6), still "its infallibility and inerrancy lie in the living character of its eternal truths in Christ" (p. 7), not, of course, in the historical and archaeological data, to wit: "The story of Samson (pp. 13-16) has had such a long oral history that its present form is full of the elements of folklore" (pp. 146 and 366) and the oral transmission of the narratives of the Patriarchs and of Joshua "have refracted and transposed" their picture of the original events, so that "we must assume certain changes in detail" (pp. 144 and 140), while it is not necessary for us to accept the high totals given in the book of Numbers for the tribal census" (p. 143). Last but not least "the Old Testament contains annals which are in conflict with our present ethics" (p. 2). Students and teachers of the Old Testament who let themselves be guided by these assertions will be teaching an evolutionary progression of the Old Testament religion and of the writings that "are very reliable as a whole," but still are characterized by a "wide diversity in the historicity of minor details" (p. 147). We regret that the editors did not find it necessary to present to their readers the counter-arguments of those Old Testament scholars who to the present day have fought the findings of modern Biblical Criticism. Certainly it would have been in place, since

they were writing for students and teachers, to refer to Green, Schmauck, Wilson, and Allis, not to mention the many others who have done excellent work in uncovering the fallacies of the modern Critics.

Despite these our objections we are, nevertheless, of the opinion that this Commentary should be in the library of every Lutheran pastor who wants to remain abreast of the positive progress that has been made by Old Testament scholarship in the past century. As a one-volume commentary it, of course, cannot satisfy the demands placed on a commentary that devotes one whole volume to each Old Testament book. Still within its 722 pages it contains much valuable interpretation and information and hardly ever disappoints the student seeking historical and archaeological data. The authors have refrained from tiring their readers with many different interpretations of a single passage, but have simply given *their* interpretation. This is finally all that students and teachers of the Old Testament can ask of any commentator or school of commentators.

P. PETERS

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**A Brief History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America.** By John Theodore Mueller. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri. Price: 30 cents, net.

The occasion for the publication of this book, as stated on the fly leaf, was the Diamond Jubilee of the Synodical Conference. Since the founding had taken place in 1872 and the Conference did not meet in regular session in 1947 but August 3-6 of this year, no elaborate celebration of this event had been planned. However, with the passing of the year of the Jubilee and the approach to this year's convention, the conviction gained ground in our circles of the appropriateness of some outward token of our gratitude to God, and in commemoration of His goodness in working such a unity of spirit among participating synods that it culminated in the forming of this federation. Consequently, the president of the Synodical Conference, the Rev. E. Benj. Schlueter, as late as May, 1948, with the full support of its Missionary Board, asked Dr. J. Th. Mueller, professor in Concordia Seminary of St. Louis, Missouri, to write a short history of the Conference and to have it ready for distribution, if possible, at the time of the fortieth convention at Milwaukee in August. Dr. Mueller accepted the commission and produced this book under the above title in the few months at his disposal between then and the date of the meeting.

The brevity of time is sufficient explanation why only a short history could be written. One may regret that many incidents in the history of this church federation are not mentioned at all. Others are merely touched upon or, at best, could find only a sketchy treatment. But this very brevity may well prove a blessing. Many members of our congregations, we are convinced, will sooner read the few pages here offered and thus become acquainted, to a degree, with the struggles of the founders, and the purpose and work of the Conference, than they would work their

way through a voluminous work on the 75 years of its history. Articles printed from time to time in the periodicals of the member synods and books on their history serve to supply, in part at least, our Christians with information on happenings which have been, and are now, shaping the history of the constituent bodies as well as that of the Synodical Conference.

The booklet is heartily recommended. The pictures inserted in the text, we feel certain, will prove a welcome addition. The price is so low that it lends itself to wide distribution.

M. LEHNINGER.

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**This Blest Communion!** A series of communion sermons based on the common service of Christendom, by Paul H. Burgdorf. 208 pages. Price, \$2.00. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1948.

This volume of communion sermons is unusual for several reasons. Nowhere in any of the sermons did we find any statements which might make it appear to the guests that they are exposing themselves to serious peril when attending the Lord's Supper, either by lacking a "proper measure" of repentance, or because they failed in some way to prepare themselves properly. To the contrary, every sermon closes on a tone of hearty invitation to come to the Lord's Table with rejoicing hearts in order to receive the supreme blessings offered us there. One is sincerely pleased over a truly evangelical tone so rarely found in sermon literature pertaining to Holy Communion.

The other unusual feature is that each sermon was based on some part of the Order of Worship known as Holy Communion found in the liturgical section of our new hymnal. The author preaches on the following parts in the Order of Worship: the two first versicles, the Kyrie, the Gloria in Excelsis, the closing pulpit vow, the offertory, the Sanctus, the Lord's Prayer, the Words of Institution, the Nunc Dimittis, the Post-Communion Verse, and the Benediction. In each case a text from Scripture, quoted verbatim in the Order or serving as a basis for a section in the Order, is used.

Both form and content of these sermons deserve a high rating.

A. SCHALLER.

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**A Beginning Greek Book**, based on the Gospel according to Mark. Revised edition. By John Merle Rife. 217 pages. Published by the author at New Concord, Ohio, 1948.

In 1946 we had the pleasure of introducing this new Greek text to our readers. The publication of a revised edition so soon after the original edition appeared seems to indicate that it received widespread approval and merited the commendation previously offered in this column.

A. SCHALLER.