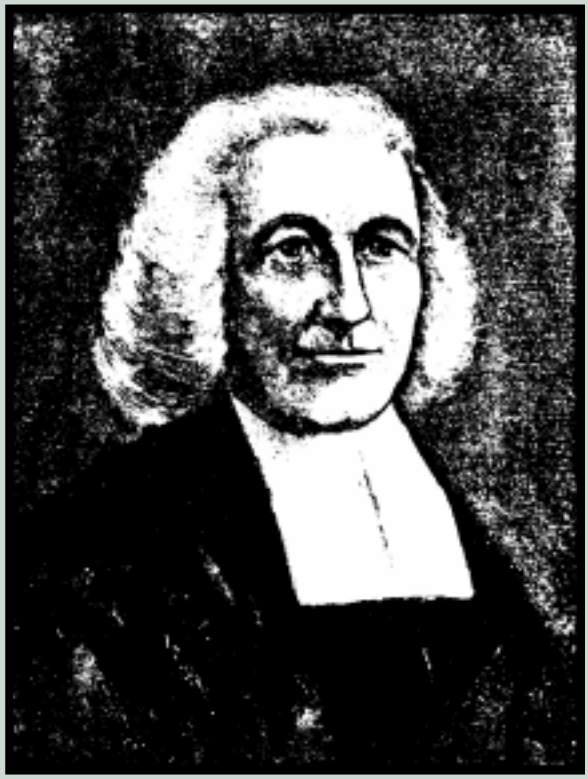
LOGIA

A JOURNAL OF LUTHERAN THEOLOGY



Henry Melchior

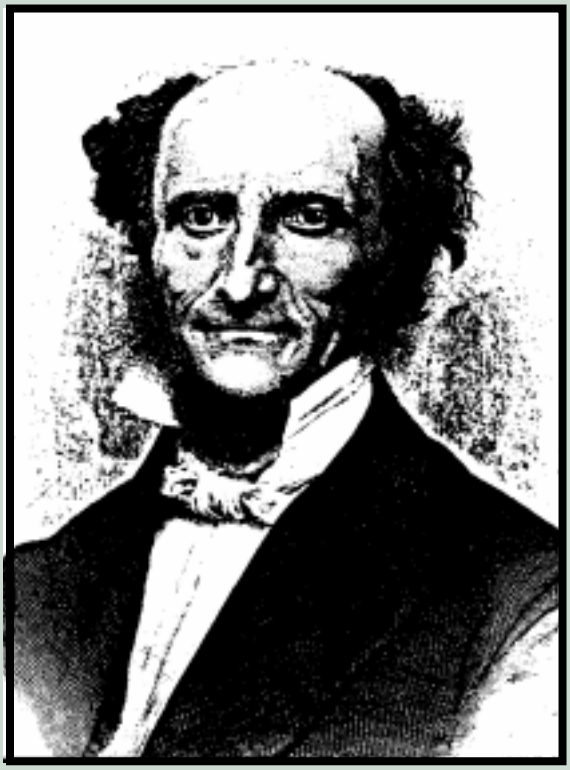
Mühlenberg

1711–1787

Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm

Walther

1811–1887



Lutheranism in America

EASTERTIDE 1996

VOLUME V, NUMBER 2

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Correspondence

■ To the Editors:

As I wrote in an earlier letter to *Logia*, I profit greatly from your publication.

I want to correct the note of credit on page 60 of Volume IV, Number 4, following the item "On Promise-Making" in the Colloquium Fratrum section.

I am E. L. Eckhardt, but my address is 5443 SE 44th Ct., Tecumseh, Kansas. My father, who will celebrate his 100th birthday come December 23, resides in the Arbor Manor in Fremont, Nebraska. I retired from Christ Lutheran, Topeka, on May 31 of this year.

Keep up the excellent work in your welcomed publication.

E. L. Eckhardt
Tecumseh, Kansas

■ To the Editors:

It was great to receive your two issues of *Logia* sent as complimentary copies. As I have looked over the journals I am thrilled with them. I have long wanted to receive such a Lutheran publication. I have enjoyed several other journals, from Ft. Wayne and St. Louis as an example, but *Logia* is far superior to them both.

When I last wrote to you it was because Dr. Preus had sent me a copy of the book on eschatology. At the time I wrote, I had not yet heard of his passing into our Lord's presence. I became Bob's friend in just the past two years as a result of serving with him on the newly formed Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, which will launch its work publicly with a summit gathering at Harvard University in April 1996. Dr. Preus was to give a major address. Also, he was to be the very first Lutheran speaker at the Philadelphia Conference on Reformed Theology in April (both here in Chicago as well as in Philadelphia) where I am also slated to speak. Now, sadly, I am taking one of his two messages myself, with R. C. Sproul the other. I have felt a great loss in the past few days and wished that I could have had more theological discussions with my friend who loved Christ and as a result served his confessional Lutheran church so ably. Bob had given me a whole new understanding of Luther, the Lutheran confessional life, and the value of the Reformed learning to listen more to their Lutheran friends. He modeled integrity, with genuine reformational ecumenical concern, where we could labor together for the cause of the gospel of grace. Since my own background is Baptist he was often amazed at my keen interest in Luther and Luther studies and loved to ask me questions, in turn, about my own historical traditions. I think we stretched each other as friends and associates. I know I grew to love him profoundly, and in such a short time.

John H. Armstrong, Director
Reformation & Revival Ministries
Carol Stream, Illinois

■ To the Editors:

I want to thank you for publishing *Logia*. It is an answer to those of us who hunger for a depth not found in most Bible study classes.

I would also like to suggest a subject. In *Logia* Reformation/October 1995 (4:4), I read the editorials regarding the LWML pledge, an article regarding women's ordination, and an article regarding Hermann Sasse's concern with Calvinism and its effect on Lutheranism. Finally there was also an ad for the book *Luther on Vocation,* which I read years ago and plan to purchase. These articles combined speak to a question that has bothered me.

What is the role of women in the church? What is our calling? What roles did women of the Old Testament play in God's plan? What role did the women at the foot of the cross play in the emerging church? If it was just to give money, why were they following Jesus and his disciples all over? They could give money from home. What was the role and position of the women mentioned in Paul's letters? What was the role of women in the early church? Were they not the backbone of the "social services" that the church in Rome offered to the people of that day? What did they do in the time of Luther? Would the preaching ministry, belonging to the men, have been received so eagerly without the contribution of the women? The book of James ties faith and works together. Are the spoken word and the word in action separate? Finally, what is the dif-

ference between Calvin's definition of vocation and Luther's? Did Calvin's preoccupation with work have anything to do with the degrading of "women's (unpaid for) work" both in the home and in the church?

It is time for us to stop dwelling on what women cannot do in the church and decide what they can and have been called to do, as well as what that calling does for the church and how it is related to the preaching ministry, the spreading of the gospel.

I have been troubled by this question because whether you want to believe it or not I was called to care for a severely disabled child who is now an adult. I am still called to this vocation despite the fact that it also calls me to poverty, to the hated position of "welfare mother."

I realized others also felt this way when I suggested that the quilts our LWML ladies made be hung over the back of pews one Sunday as an offering to God before we gave them away. No one wanted to do it, and I realized that they did not see quilt making as a service to God. Likewise, I wrote a service for a LWML rally in which each guest who brought a health kit for the ingathering would put it in baskets near the altar as a gift to God. When I got there the ladies had changed the service. Two small baskets with a couple of kits sat outside the communion rail. None of our guests were ever asked to present their gifts to God.

We might not have young women clamoring to be ministers of the word if women had a solid understanding of what their role is in the body of the church, if they felt useful, and yes, if they felt their tasks were of equal value to that which men have been called to. Note: since spouse and parent are a dual calling (both to men and women), this cannot be called "women's work."

Judith A. Wills
Two Harbors, Minnesota

LOGIA CORRESPONDENCE AND COLLOQUIUM FRATRUM

We encourage our readers to respond to the material they find in Logia *—whether it be in the articles, book reviews, or letters of other readers. While we cannot print everything that is sent, we hope that our Colloquium Fratrum section will allow for longer response/counter-response exchanges, whereas our Correspondence section is a place for shorter "Letters to the Editors."*

If you wish to respond to something in an issue of Logia *, please do so soon after you receive an issue. Since* Logia *is a quarterly periodical, we are often meeting deadlines for the subsequent issue about the time you receive your current issue. Getting your responses in early will help keep them timely. Send your Correspondence contributions to* Logia *Correspondence, 1004 Plum St., Mankato, MN 56001, or your Colloquium Fratrum contributions to* Logia *Editorial Department, 1004 Plum St., Mankato, MN 56001.*

The Church-State Relationship and Augustana XVI

in the Writings of C. F. W. Walther and S. S. Schmucker

James D. Heiser

It is paradigmatic that two men of such opposite points of view as Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther (1811–1887) and Samuel Simon Schmucker (1799–1873) became dominant figures in American Lutheranism[1] during the crucial decades surrounding the Civil War. These two men stood as near-polar opposites on almost every theological issue of their day, of which original sin, baptismal regeneration, confession and absolution, the Lord's Supper, and confessional subscription are only a few examples. The conflict between "Old Lutherans" and "American Lutherans" fixed the course of American Lutheranism throughout the following decades along a more confessional path than had obtained previously, with the result that some consider Walther "the dominating figure throughout the whole period"[2] of confessional revival, while Schmucker found the controversy had "alienated many of his former friends and clouded the evening of his days."[3] In the words of another author:

> If we want to generalize about nineteenth-century American Lutheranism, we have to say that it is not so much the story of the Gettysburg tradition as it is the story of the triumph of confessional orthodoxy. This Lutheran "success story" is in turn preeminently the story of Walther and the Concordia tradition.[4]

Nevertheless, the influence of these two men can be found, partially, in the scope of their vision:

> Both Schmucker and Walther were dedicated according to their own lights to the task of building a vital Lutheranism on American soil in accord with the demands of the particular situation here. Both men intended to take seriously what it meant to be Lutheran. Furthermore, neither man wanted to be parochial, and thus both were interested in the ecumenical task—even if they saw the task in two radically different perspectives.[5]

The "radically different perspectives" of these two men on the issues mentioned above have often been pointed out, and these issues were, no doubt, the central points in the struggle between "Old Lutherans" and "American Lutherans." The debate, after all, centered on the worship life of the church, particularly upon the marks of the church, the word and the sacraments. It is also true, however, that many other issues divided the two sides, even when their confessional statements were virtually identical. This study will examine the views of Schmucker and Walther concerning the church-state relationship, or more specifically, the life of the Christian under secular authority. This task will be accomplished by first comparing the general statements of the two theologians, followed by an examination of their views on a number of practical issues of their day.

CHURCH AND STATE IN THE THEOLOGY OF WALTHER AND SCHMUCKER

At first glance one might not expect to see much difference between the views of Schmucker and Walther, since both men claimed to base their teaching on the Confessions, without any great modification. As will be shown below, both theologians upheld the view that Augustana XVI teaches obedience to the state in all matters, unless commanded to sin, and both believed that the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions taught a separation of church and state.

Walther professed to ground his views in the Lutheran symbols when defending a careful division of secular authority from that given to the church. For example, in his address to the eighth Western District Convention on May 15, 1862, Walther's central task was explaining how to abide by the teachings of the *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope* within the American setting. Of particular concern for Walther was thIS passage:

> Especially does it behoove the chief members of the church, the kings and the princes, to have regard for the interests of the church and to see to it that errors are removed and consciences are healed. God expressly exhorts kings, "Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth" (Ps. 2:10). For the first care of kings should be to advance the glory of God. Wherefore it would be most shameful for them to use their authority and power for the support of idolatry and countless other crimes and for the murder of the saints (Tr, 54).

Walther admitted that "it was mainly through the service of those God-blessed princes, whom the Lord used as instruments, that the church of the pure confession became firmly rooted and was allowed to grow" during the years of the Reformation and immediately following, but he explained that

> Princes should indeed be guardians of the church, and their queens its wet-nurses — but by no means by taking the gov-

James D. Heiser is an S.T.M. candidate at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

ernance of the church into their hands, transplanting secular force into the church and bringing it to bear in their shame. In the church they are not strictly speaking princes and princesses but, the *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope* rightly says, distinguished members of the church.

One must not misunderstand the passage quoted from the *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope* in a caesaro-papist manner, as though Christian government still had some inherited natural right to interfere forcibly in the administration of the church.[6]

Walther cited Luther to defend his contention that it is not the duty of government to repress heresy:

One cannot oppose heresy with force. Another strategy is needed. This is a battle and a matter different from those dealt with by the sword. . . .

No matter how much one esteems the piety of a prince who proves himself to be the guardian and patron of the church by sincere love and care, the danger is always near that he will exceed the proper limit established by God and introduce secular power into the church — to the unspeakable harm of souls.[7]

Indeed, Walther declared American religious freedom to be among the blessings of God:

He has let us enjoy not only the pure milk of the gospel according to our Lutheran Confessions but besides this, in a measure such as was not the case even at the time of the Reformation, the freedom to establish this doctrine in life and to found truly evangelical and apostolic congregations which rule themselves after the norm of God's Word.[8]

The value of American religious freedom for maintaining a right relationship between church and state is a common theme in Walther's sermons. Walther observed during his Fourth of July address in 1853:

State and church, the civic and religious life are here separated from one another in such a way that the state does not inquire how its citizens come to God or what they trust for their salvation. . . . I maintain that this religious freedom is one of the brightest stars in the banner of our new fatherland . . . .

As the church cannot be a state, so also the state cannot be a church. A state is certainly not an institution of God by which its citizens are to be led to *eternal* life.[9]

Again:

What then is the most glorious, the greatest, yes, the only thing that the state can grant the true religion? Not privileges, but *liberty;* not government regulations which enforce beliefs of religion, but *freedom* of religion to proclaim these doctrines to the whole world; not the protection and spreading of religion with temporal power, but freedom of religion to defend itself and to reach out with the weapon of the persuasive Word; not control of the state, but *freedom* to live in the state, to have a hospitable reception, a place of refuge, a lodging-place.[10]

Walther also echoed the Confessions concerning the loyalty due to the civil authorities. According to Augsburg Confession XVI, "Christians are necessarily bound to obey their own magistrates and laws, save only when commanded to sin; for then they ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 5,29." This theme was repeated by Walther in a sermon on 1 Peter 2:1–10:

What if [the state] uses its powers *in behalf of* criminals and *against* the pious, does not punish the evildoers and praise the upright? Should a Christian obey it even then?

I reply: If it commands you to sin, to do something against your faith and a good conscience, then you dare not obey it; then it no longer commands in the name of him whose place it takes; then what Peter said to his government applies when it ordered him to be silent about the name of Jesus: "We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5,29. But if it does not order you to sin, then obedience is due it, even if it acts unjustly; for it is God's will that its laws be held sacred even when it is administered by impious people.[11]

It is not the duty of government to repress heresy.

Schmucker also believed in a clear division between the two kingdoms, with Christians owing allegiance to the ecclesiastical and civil authorities. This focus was reflected in early ecumenical works such as his *Fraternal Appeal to the American Churches.* Schmucker's proposed "United Protestant Confession" appended to this *Fraternal Appeal* addressed the Christian's relationship to civil government in its tenth article:

God the supreme Lord and king of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates to be under him, over the people, for his own glory and the public good; and to this end hath armed them with power, for the defense and encouragement of them that do good, and for the punishment of evil-doers. The power of the civil magistrate extendeth to all men, as well clergy as laity in things temporal; but hath no authority in things purely spiritual. Christians ought to yield obedience to civil officers and laws of the land: unless they should command something sinful; in which case it is a duty to obey God rather than man.[12]

Although the precise terminology is not the same, it can be seen that this article contains much in common with Article XVI of the Augsburg Confession. The chapter entitled "Of Political Affairs" in Schmucker's *Lutheran Manual* begins by running Article XVI in parallel columns of Latin and English, with the next

seventeen pages structured as a commentary on this article, clause by clause.[13] In his dogmatics textbook, *Elements of Popular Theology*, Schmucker cites the entire unaltered text of Article XVI at the head of his chapter on civil government.[14] The clear implication is that the chapter will be a commentary on this article. Indeed, Schmucker's alterations to Article XVI in his *American Rescension* were not as drastic as those found in other articles. Schmucker insisted that aside from the removal of the condemnatory clauses (as he had done throughout the Augustana) the *American Recension* deviates from Article XVI only in his removal of the term *imperial*.[15]

Schmucker's presentation of this article of faith did not vary much in the years following the "American Lutheranism" controversy, as can be seen in his 1860 *Evangelical Lutheran Catechism*. Chapter XXIV "Of Civil Government" stresses the central doctrinal points found in the Augustana, as becomes evident from a comparison of its six questions with the text of Article XVI:

> Q304. Whilst Christians faithfully discharge their obligations to the church, do they not also owe some duties to the civil government under which they live?
>
> Q305. What duties does God enjoin on civil rulers?
>
> Q306. May Christians accept civil office?
>
> Q307. Ought there to be any connection between church and state, as in Europe?
>
> Q308. What other duties do Christians owe to their civil magistrates?
>
> Q309. Are Romish priests exempted from the jurisdiction of the civil courts, as their standard authors claim?

As found in the other examples, Schmucker emphasized the independence of the two powers and the obligation owed to the civil authorities. In answer to question 304, the catechumen is told, "Yes; they are to regard civil government as a divinely appointed institution, whose powers are to be employed in accordance with God's word, for the benefit of the people, and whose lawful requisitions they are religiously bound to obey." Again, in response to question 307 we read: "No. The Savior says: 'My kingdom is not of this world'; nor has he authorized civil rulers, as such to exercise control over the church."[16]

Given the above preliminary analysis, therefore, one could expect general agreement between Walther and Schmucker on the relationship between church and state to be reflected in their practical application. This, however, does not prove to be the case.

CHURCH AND STATE IN THE THEOLOGICAL *PRAXIS* OF WALTHER AND SCHMUCKER

The Form of Government: Divinely Ordained?

Although the confessional approach expressed in Schmucker's *Elements of Popular Theology* and *Lutheran Manual* might appear similar to that of Walther, the author's views express a clear distinction between himself and the Saxon emigrant theologian. This difference is clearly delineated in Schmucker's willingness to esteem one *form* of government as more pleasing to God than another. Although Schmucker stated, "The Confessors do not pronounce any particular kind of government of divine origin," he went on to declare that the "Democratic or Republican form of government . . . is doubtless the most perfect form of government, as it secures in the highest degree the rights and happiness of all its citizens. Of this fact the history of our own favored country affords demonstrative proof."[17] Schmucker even proposed that "had the divine Savior prescribed any form, it doubtless would have been the republican; for such is essentially the form of government which he gave to his church . . . ."[18] When Schmucker cited "our illustrious fathers" he quoted the Declaration of Independence, not Luther or the Lutheran fathers of the Age of Orthodoxy![19]

Schmucker emphasized the independence of the two powers and the obligation owed to the civil authorities.

For Schmucker, the democratic republic was to be considered among the principles defended by the confessors at Augsburg:

> It is certainly commendable, that living under a government so defective, the confessors should have uttered not a word inconsistent with the purest principles of republicanism; nay, that they even asserted to the face of the Emperor, their right to resist such laws as they deemed sinful.[20]

Again:

> [T]he seeds of liberty, civil as well as religious, were sown by the Reformers; and the same principles which led them to protest against the corruptions, and resist the encroachments of the Papal hierarchy, led our fathers to erect the standard of liberty on these Western shores, exploded the absurd doctrine of passive obedience to kings, taught the crowned heads of Europe that their subjects have rights, which can no longer be trampled on with the impunity of the dark ages.[21]

One can see a tension in Schmucker's thought. Although admitting God did not establish a particular form of government, nevertheless he dismissed the "passive obedience" given to kings as an "absurd doctrine" and told the reader, in essence, that the American form of government really is the way Jesus would want it done.

Walther's views on this matter, however, were quite different. For Walther, it was not the pastor's place to establish God's attitude toward any particular *form* of government. As Walther observed in his "Fourth of July Address":

> If now you should desire that I blend my voice in the accustomed fashion of those who appear before the citizens of

this land on this day; that is to say, should you expect of me that I present a eulogy on the ingenuity of man which has erected the astounding, great, glorious, and richly blessed edifice of this republic, then you would, of course, soon be disappointed in me.

I am a Christian! . . . as a Christian I could never be a priest who would lay the offerings of praise and thanksgiving on altars erected to mortal men . . .

You would still less expect of me that I should point out the advantage of our republican constitution over the monarchies of our former fatherland . . . . You know that I am a theologian, a preacher of religion, a servant of the church. In considering this union of States today, I am naturally going to do so in relation to religion, to Christianity, to the church.[22]

In his sermon on 1 Peter 2:11–20, Walther denounced the "spirit of rebellion and insurrection" in which men

revile heads of government; yes, they pour upon them the vilest mockery and ridicule in words and writing. To be a king and to be a tyrant, to rule the people and to oppress them are considered synonymous. To exterminate all kings and privileged groups and grant democratic freedom to all people has been called the goal toward which the world is moving. When it has been attained the golden age will have come.

And what is the definition of a republic? A state where one can do what he wishes. Therefore the laws of the government are no longer considered sacred; if one conforms to the law it is only because one still feels himself too weak to oppose the power of the government. . . .

Yes, it is true that God has not decided whether the families of a country should unite to form a monarchy in which *one* person rules, or an aristocracy, where a group rules, or a republic in which the people themselves rule through elected officials. But *wherever governmental authority is established, it cannot be overthrown by force; it should be held sacred; God should be honored in his substitute and given that absolute obedience which children give their fathers.*[23]

Although Walther might personally have preferred a democratic republic over other forms of government, he did not presume a divine concurrence with his opinion. In fact, Walther demonstrated an awareness of the danger of Antinomianism inherent in democracy, to which Schmucker seems to have been oblivious.

The Relationship between the Faith, the Reformation, and Civil Rights

As was noted above, Schmucker professed in *Elements of Popular Theology* that "the seeds of liberty, civil as well as religious, were sown by the Reformers."[24] These civil liberties, he believed, had been best exhibited in the American republic. Schmucker asserted further on in the same work:

Let the American patriot recollect the language of his fathers, "that all men are created equal," and have unalienable rights, among which is "*liberty.*" Let him remember, that with these words on their lips, they invoked the blessing of Heaven on their struggle, and that He who rules in the heaven of heavens heard their cry."[25]

A government's ability to protect and expand the rights of its citizens was Schmucker's primary test of its legitimacy, and a government that fails to deliver in this respect may not be able to claim the loyalty of its citizens: "Under any one of these [various] forms of government the principles of the Reformers would have led them to remain obedient, *if it were administered in such a manner as to secure the rights and promote the happiness of its members.*"[26]

Although Walther might personally have preferred a democratic republic over other forms of government, he did not presume a divine concurrence.

This call to patriotic vigilance was specifically applied to the pastoral office in *The Christian Pulpit, the Rightful Guardian of Morals, in Political No Less than in Private Life*, when Schmucker called upon pastors "to hold up to the view of our rulers and fellow citizens [their duty] in their political action to recognize the universal brotherhood and equality of man in civil rights."[27]

The alleged link between the Reformation and civil liberties is maintained throughout Schmucker's writings. In his *Discourse in Commemoration of the Glorious Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*[28] Schmucker pronounced American civil liberties to be among the fruits of Protestantism: "Such was the glorious Reformation of the sixteenth century . . . . The fruits, both civil and religious, of this Revolution, we, in these United States, most richly enjoy."[29] Roman Catholicism's "very essence is an admixture of *civil* and religious despotism."[30]

The last feature of the Reformation to which we shall advert is, that it has delivered the civil government of the countries which embraced it, from papal tyranny, and has given a new impulse to civil liberty, which has been felt throughout the Christian world.

Since the relative tendencies of Protestantism and Popery have been fully developed and attentively studied, no fact in the philosophy of history is more fully established than that the former is intimately allied to civil liberty; and the latter to civil despotism.[31]

How much, how incalculably much the Protestant nations have gained by the Reformation, is demonstrated by their manifest and striking superiority to their Catholic neighbours in every thing relating to civil rights and liberty, to internal improvements, to domestic purity and happiness . . .[32]

[E]ven the venerable patriot Lafayette was constrained to exclaim to different American citizens, "If the liberties of

> your country are destroyed, it can only be by the *popish clergy;*" it becomes us to lend respectful attention to this subject, and in a suitable Christian manner, endeavour to resist the encroachments of the enemy.[33]

As was the case concerning the form of government, Walther's views on civil rights were rather different from those held by Schmucker. Unquestionably Walther upheld the Christian's use of his civil rights. In fact, he supported Protestant-run newspapers to counter "the other political papers in the west [that] are openly organs of anti-Christianity" in order "to provide in the upstanding families a Christian outlook on current events and to effect a conscientious use of civil rights and privileges among the people."[34] While opposing any attempt by the church to turn to the state in search of "hand-outs" or other support (for fulfilling her obligation to care for the poor, for example), such was not the case for individual Christians *as citizens:*

> That which is not a duty or a right of Christians, but only duties and rights of citizens, is something else again. Therefore we read that the apostle Paul as citizen appealed to Caesar (Acts 25:11) and appealed to his full citizen's rights (Acts 16:35–40).[35]

At the same time, however, Walther denounced the post-Civil War Missouri constitution for containing "a notorious declaration of inherent, inalienable human rights."[36] This opposition to "inalienable human rights" and particularly the idea of equality was Walther's first point of attack in his four sermons on communism and socialism:

> The first thing we have to consider is:
> 1. It is a fact that men are not equal.
> Throughout the creation every thing differs from everything else. God is accordingly not an equalizer, but one who creates dissimilar things. Man cannot, to save his life, make two things equal. The principle that all things shall be made alike is not founded in nature. The same is evident in man. . . . It would therefore be altogether unnatural to place human society in such a condition that all would be equal.[37]

Walther opposed a similar "spirit" which he believed was at work in the American Civil War, a spirit "possessing and poisoning increasingly more hearts, which wrings from us anew the cry of the blessed martyr Polycarp: 'God, what times hast Thou allowed me to experience!'"[38] Walther continued: "And should we say, what is this spirit for? — It is the spirit of the first French Revolution, whose motto was: 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' . . . these heralds explicitly declare: 'What are a million men against an idea!'"[39] Walther discerned echoes of Münzer and the "Twelve Articles of the Schwabian Peasants" in this quest for "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," and

> this spirit, which confuses Christian liberty with civil equality, is blowing over the entire country as a hot wind by which even many of the few plants which Christ had planted in these last days through his Word and Spirit wither and dry up. It is the revived spirit of Carlstadt.[40]

In short, Christians should avail themselves of the rights given them as citizens, but they should not consider such rights intrinsically "inalienable," standing higher than the state itself. The state stands higher than those rights it may choose to grant or remove. Any effort "to exterminate all kings and privileged groups and grant democratic freedom to all people" was rejected by Walther, as was the idea that "To be subject to an *unjust* government because it is of God and endure oppression at its hands without rebelling is now deemed weakness, cowardice unworthy of a free man, yes insanity."[41] Schmucker's priorities were precisely the reverse of Walther's in this regard, and this brings us to the next point.

Walther denounced the post-Civil War Missouri constitution for containing "a notorious declaration of inherent, inalienable human rights."

Christians and Revolution

The views of both Walther and Schmucker were closely tied to their assessment of the primacy of civil rights. Walther rejected his generation's revolutionary spirit in the strongest terms:

> God's Word tells us that one of the things which will announce the end of the world is that after a great fall from the faith there will be rebellion even against civil government, the sanctity of governmental authority will be denied and everywhere there will be bloody persecution. . . . If we compare the state of affairs in our day with this picture, we can see that also this prediction is being literally fulfilled before our very eyes.[42]

Walther viewed the driving for "equality" and "human rights" as indivisible from revolution against divinely established authority. Because people consider man to be the source instituting government,

> Many say: By nature every person is free, subject to no one, his own lord. It is only by common consent, they claim, that a few rule, the rest let themselves be ruled, that a few govern, the rest are subject to them. Subjects, therefore, always have the right to overthrow the government. The right of revolution is a holy inalienable right of all nations. . . .
> This, however, is a great ruinous error. God is not a God of confusion but order. God did not create *two* things to be on the same level. Throughout the entire world we find an

> endless gradation, in which one thing is subordinate to another. The whole creation is not a disconnected mass of things and beings, but an orderly *kingdom* divided into countless provinces. . . . Everywhere [God] has his substitutes clothed with his majesty who rule and govern.[43]

The focus was the same as in Walther's argument against socialism: revolution against authority is built upon the false premise that creatures are meant to be equal. They are not equal, and attempts to create a false equality lead to bloodshed and chaos and the violation of God's law because one is fighting against the very order of creation. Even if a government is impious and oppressive, a Christian must be obedient. Only a command to sin may (and then must) be disobeyed. Any other act of rebellion, no matter how noble the cause seems to the "old Adam," is a sin so serious that Walther links it to the "apostasy" of his age. As Walther explained,

> [I]f it does not order you to sin, then obedience is due it, even if it acts unjustly; for it is God's will that its laws be held sacred even when it is administered by impious people.
>
> With absolute clarity this says that Christians are to obey not only a good and gentle, but also a false and malicious, not only a pious but also a godless, not only an upright and fair but also an unjust and unfair government; for conscience's sake toward God they are to endure all injustice without resisting by force.[44]

Walther clung tenaciously to these fundamental principles even when threatened during the Civil War. As Walther declared to J. C. W. Lindemann,

> We are in grave danger because we do not go along with the Republican mob, this revolutionary party which has now hoisted the banner of loyalty with unspeakable hypocrisy. We simply rely on the Word — "Be subject to the government which has *power* over you" — not *right*, for where would we be then?[45]

He expressed this sentiment even more bluntly in a letter to Gustavus Seyffarth dated June 17, 1862: "Whatever our administration does in this war, we subject ourselves to that, according to Romans 13,1."[46]

Walther did not draw his definition of rebellion narrowly, either. In a sermon on the text "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's," (Mt 22:21) he included any avoidance of civil laws to be an act of rebellion:

> Our government was instituted by the will of the majority of all the people and is answerable to it. Yet it is God's ordinance and servant. God has given the sword of protection and vengeance, the scales of justice, into its hands. We should consider its laws holy and inviolable, its commands God's commands, its laws God's laws. . . . Yes, we should be ready to sacrifice our very life if our government demands it to preserve the common good, to go in battle against the country's enemy. It is no small sin to transgress a command of our government which we placed over ourselves, to make out a false tax return, or to transgress in a business deal its laws confirmed by God.[47]

Schmucker took a dim view of honoring authority when he believed civil rights to be at stake. He attempted to tie his view to that of the Reformers, declaring that "Under any of these [various] forms of government the principles of the Reformers would have led them to remain obedient, *if it were administered in such a manner as to secure the rights and promote the happiness of its members.*"[48] Considering Luther's well-documented reaction to the Peasants Revolt in 1525, it is hard to include Luther among whatever "Reformers" Schmucker had in mind. After all, while it is certainly true that Luther chastised the rulers, and even declared that they *deserved* to face revolt because of their sins, nevertheless he steadily maintained that to engage in such a revolt was sinful.[49]

Walther viewed the driving for "equality" and "human rights" as indivisible from revolution against divinely established authority.

Schmucker, however, made no effort to specify precisely whom he had in mind. Instead, he continued by asserting that "it is a principle maintained by the ablest writers on political philosophy, that resistance to any existing government becomes proper *and a duty*, only when the grievances actually endured or with certainty foreseen, outweigh the hazards of anarchy and violence always attendant on revolutions." Schmucker went on to declare that

> The Confessors inculcate the justice of revolution in those governments which fail to accomplish the just end of their establishment.
>
> But if rulers transgress their duty, and require aught that is improper, we are commanded to obey God rather than man. . . . Combination among the oppressed is necessary to a successful resistance of existing governments, and therefore proper. And combination of the oppressed to resist their oppressors is rebellion; its successful termination, revolution.
>
> Thus to withdraw and renounce his allegiance to any government, by which he is wantonly and seriously oppressed, is doubtless the indefeasible right of man; but it is based in the laws of nature, not in the provisions of the Constitution . . . .[50]

Here one finds a far different approach from Walther's, even though some of the terminology is similar. Rebellion is justified in the face of oppression, when the authorities require that which is "improper" and when the benefits "outweigh the hazards."

While Walther appealed to Scripture, Schmucker defended this "indefeasible right" on the basis of natural law and political philosophy. The ultimate decision whether a government stands or falls Schmucker declared to rest in the hands of the people, while Walther proclaimed this power belongs to God alone. In conclusion, then, it is clear that the views of these two men on the relationship between the governing authorities and civil rights were intimately linked to their beliefs concerning the right of the people to revolt. There is little hope for reconciling these two views, for they approach the question of authority from two fundamentally different perspectives.

Slavery and Abolition

The interrelated issues of slavery and abolitionism are perhaps the two where the contrast between the two theologians is the most striking. For Schmucker, slavery was an "abstract injustice and criminality in the sight of God . . . an evil moral, social and political, that no republican government can consistently cherish — that no Christian nation can rest quiet under its influence."[51] Schmucker was an abolitionist who became a slaveholder by marriage,[52] although he did speak "of his slaves as servants, treated them kindly, provided them with spiritual ministry, and arranged for their elementary education."[53]

Walther, on the other hand, once commented concerning Christian liberty: "For whoever is free of God becomes a slave of his own impulses, but whoever is a servant of God is a free man even if he were the slave child of a negro."[54] In essence, to be a Christian makes a man free in a way beyond any earthly freedom, and it is a freedom that no one can take away. Walther maintained that

> abolitionism, which holds and declares slavery as an essentially sinful relationship and every master of a slave thereby as a malefactor and therefore wants to abolish the former under all circumstances, is a child of unbelief and its unfolding, rationalism, deistic philanthropism, pantheism, materialism, atheism, and a brother of modern socialism, Jacobinism, and communism.[55]

Walther's rejection of abolitionism was not rooted in a pro-slavery mentality, as some have charged,[56] but in his hatred of rebellion of all kinds. Because, he believed, there was nothing in the New Testament condemning slavery, and since no one was forced against conscience to own slaves, there could be no justification for the tactics of the abolitionists. As Walther explained in 1869:

> What God permits the Christians in the New Testament to do and does not command them to put aside, but rather to control, cannot be sinful in itself. That is what God does with regard to slavery, which is nothing else than (to put it in Melanchthon's words) the legal deprivation of the capacity to possess property and to determine for oneself the type of occupation which one wishes to follow and the right to live in a place chosen by oneself.
>
> Insofar as this was ordered by law in America, American slavery was not sinful. But whatever was added to it contrary to God's order was just as sinful, godless and damnable as Roman slavery at the time of the apostles. Whatever the apostles did not condemn in Roman slavery, we may not condemn if we wish to be Christians. But anything of a sinful nature connected with American slavery we may not excuse, gloss over, or justify.[57]

It has been observed by Walther's defenders that the Missourian aligned himself with the South during the Civil War. This loyalty was not based on any love of slavery, but was rooted in two biblical principles: (1) being subject to those in authority (Rom 13), and (2) the conviction that the Scriptures did not condemn slavery, and thus Christians dared not go beyond God's Word. As one author has explained,

[For Schmucker] rebellion is justified in the face of oppression.

> Walther in his personal convictions indeed sympathized with the southern States. He had two reasons. In the first place, he and many of the fathers of our church were in favor of states' rights. . . . In the second place, while not favoring slavery, Walther took the position that slavery in itself was not against the Word of God . . . and he was horrified to read in so many church papers misinterpretations of the Bible, especially of St. Paul's and St. Peter's letters. But he never brought his political convictions to bear on the church and church conditions.[58]

Walther felt a great loyalty to the State of Missouri, declaring to Theodore Buenger in 1861, "I am a Missourian and therefore will never be moved to separate my fortune from that of my state unless I am forced. This state has so far protected me in life and property, so in the time of need I will not become unfaithful to it."[59] This loyalty placed Walther in considerable danger, as can be seen in another letter from the same year to Pastor J. M. Buehler:

> Since it seems that the battlefield would be fixed here under the very windows of the college (even Commander Boernstein, lying in the Marine hospital, putting his hands on a cannon, swore to shoot up this secessionist nest, as he loves to call our college), and since the governor presented a prospect of a military bill in our legislature, we have felt conscience-bound to close down the institution till further notice . . .[60]

If Walther's views on secession were still unclear, he went on to note:

> We have declared that if a state secedes from the Union, naturally the individual citizen will not revolt but will either

> emigrate or will subject himself to the seceding state government, according to the Bible passage: "Be obedient to the power that has authority over you." It does not say "Has the right over you."[61]

Schmucker, however, saw slavery as the great "exception" to American civil rights, a phenomenon that he believed demanded a solution. Slavery was "a reproach to our political system, and a violation of the rights of 'equal' man!"[62] This conclusion led Schmucker to become a moderate advocate of two proposed solutions: slave resettlement in Africa and abolitionism. Schmucker's support for resettlement, however, was quite mild. Although an "active member" of the American Colonization Society who "always regarded colonization as entitled a place, not indeed as in itself a remedy for American slavery, but as a source of much good for Africa,"[63] Schmucker had his doubts concerning the practicality of the concept. Schmucker believed that "African colonization" neither "can or will be extended so far as to remove entirely the negro from our land."

> Whilst voluntary colonization, in Africa and elsewhere, ought to be encouraged; it seems almost certain that a portion of our coloured population will always remain amongst us. Colonization, moreover, if conducted with any view to the entire removal of our slave population, will require a previous system of legislation for the manumission of the whole mass of slaves. This ought to be a simultaneous step. But when laws for the abolition of slavery shall have been enacted, the inadequacy of foreign colonization will appear as clear as demonstration. Many will moreover be unwilling to remove across the Atlantic, to an unknown land; and coercion would be unjust.[64]

The primary aim for Schmucker was the abolition of slavery, leaving the option of colonization up to those who had been freed. Schmucker was by no means as extreme as other abolitionists, however, observing that "our Southern fellow-citizens are also often unjustly censured; for not only had the present generation no agency in introducing slavery into the land; the majority of them profess themselves favourable to emancipation in general." In rebuttal to his fellow abolitionists Schmucker observed that "this great work has difficulties more formidable than some Christians in non-slaveholding states suppose." Indeed, the involvement of the North in the import of slaves meant that "the North comes in for a large portion of the guilt." In summary: "But in this noble enterprise there should be as little crimination as possible."[65] Even as the Civil War loomed, Schmucker took a moderate approach to the treatment of slaveholding states, urging teamwork in this task rather than division. It is worth noting, in conclusion, that Schmucker's life was placed in some danger during the Civil War when Confederate troops overran the Schmucker home during the battle of Gettysburg. Cannon fire had been turned on his home, seminary records were damaged, and a portion of Schmucker's personal library and furniture was destroyed. Schmucker had already fled the area, however, having been warned that Confederate soldiers planned to "arrest" him.[66]

CONCLUSION

It can be seen that the views of both men with regard to slavery and abolitionism were consistent with their views on other church-state issues. Fundamentally, the difference between these two theologians centered on their view of civil rights and the relationship of such rights to the established order. These views, in turn, were shaped by the status attributed to the republican form of government. For Walther, although he undeniably praised its benefits, the republic was seen as one option among many and its rise and fall were in the hands of the Creator. Schmucker's views in this regard displayed a greater tension, in which one might speak of the republic knowing a particular "divine favor," but not "divine mandate."

Throughout a survey of Schmucker's work one is struck by his adoption of the *Weltanschauung* of nineteenth-century American liberalism. A great proportion of the treatment of political affairs in *Elements of Popular Theology* is applicable only within the immediate setting of his generation's debate over the intent of the United States Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. The result of this approach is that such materials rapidly lose their value outside of their immediate cultural and historical context. By narrowing his vision of the Reformers to the narrow context of the American republic, Schmucker lost his ability to address himself to the church catholic. This may be considered a symptom of Schmucker's greater failure to equal Walther's success in "building a vital Lutheranism on American soil in accord with the demands of the particular situation here"—his focus was simply too narrow to meet the "ecumenical task."[67]

Walther, however, by consciously repristinating aspects of the teachings of Luther and the Lutheran Confessions concerning the church-state relationship, particularly the emphasis on the authority of the state,[68] aligned himself with a strain of teaching deeply rooted in the Lutheran dogmatic tradition. Walther's exegesis of certain key passages (such as Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2) and his ability to explain the teachings of the Lutheran symbols within the American context allow Lutherans easier access to their church's traditions, whereas Schmucker's views on a wide variety of issues simply stray too far from the historic Lutheran norm. LOGIA

NOTES

1. We have in mind here the phenomena of the Lutheran faith in America, not the more narrow category of liberal "American Lutheranism" as represented by the *Definite Platform* and the *American Recension of the Augsburg Confession.* This will be the application throughout this article, with exceptions designated by quotation marks.
2. O. W. Heick, and J. L. Neve, *A History of Christian Thought,* 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1946), 2: 305.
3. Abdel Ross Wentz, *The Lutheran Church in American History* (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1923), 170.
4. Leigh D. Jordahl, "Schmucker and Walther: A Study of Christian Response to American Culture," in *The Future of the American Church*, ed. Philip J. Hefner (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), 82.
5. Jordahl, 81.
6. C. F. W. Walther, "Church and State," trans. Robert Ernst

Smith, in *Essays for the Church*, 2 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992), 1: 65–66.

7. Ibid., 67.

8. Ibid., 68.

9. C. F. W. Walther, *The Word of His Grace: Occasional and Festival Sermons*, trans. and ed. Evangelical Lutheran Synod Translation Committee (Lake Mills, Iowa: Graphic Publishing Company, 1978), 153–154.

10. Ibid., 157.

11. C. F. W. Walther, *Standard Epistles* (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Printshop, n.d.), 243.

12. S. S. Schmucker, *Fraternal Appeal to the American Churches, with a Plan for Catholic Union on Apostolic Principles* (New York: Taylor & Dodd, 1839), 134.

13. S. S. Schmucker, *Lutheran Manual on Scriptural Principles: or, The Augsburg Confession Illustrated and Sustained . . .* (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1855), 178–195. The text concerning this article is virtually the same as that found in *Elements of Popular Theology*. The format is different, however, and a discursus on Christians and "just war" is included.

14. S. S. Schmucker, *Elements of Popular Theology: With Occasional Reference to The Doctrines of the Reformation, As Avowed before the Diet at Augsburg in MDXXX. Designed chiefly for Private Christians and Theological Students* (Philadelphia: Smith, English & Co., 1860), 326.

15. S. S. Schmucker, *American Lutheranism Vindicated* (Baltimore: T. Newton Kurtz, 1856), 62. The original text reads: "*Of Civil Affairs* they teach that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God, and that it is right for Christians to bear civil office, to sit as judges, to judge matters by the *Imperial* and other existing laws . . ."*Concordia, or Book of Concord. The Symbols of the Ev. Lutheran Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1922), 14 (English only edition).

16. S. S. Schmucker, *Evangelical Lutheran Catechism, Designed for Catechumens, and the Higher Classes in Sabbath-Schools* (Baltimore: T. Newton Kurtz, 1860), 116–118.

17. Schmucker, *Elements of Popular Theology*, 328.

18. Ibid., 330.

19. Ibid., 332.

20. Ibid., 327

21. Ibid., 328.

22. Walther, *The Word of His Grace*, 152–53.

23. Walther, *Standard Epistles*, 239–40, 242. Italics added.

24. Schmucker, *Elements of Popular Theology*, 328.

25. Ibid., 336.

26. Ibid., 328. Italics added.

27. S. S. Schmucker, *The Christian Pulpit, the Rightful Guardian of Morals, in Political No Less than in Private Life* (Gettysburg: H. C. Neinstedt, 1846), 17. Cited in Abdel Ross Wentz, *Pioneer in Christian Unity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 263.

28. S. S. Schmucker, *Discourse in Commemoration of the Glorious Reformation of the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Gould & Newman, 1838). Schmucker actually begins this discourse with the words "When in the course of human events!"

29. Ibid., 8.

30. Ibid., 70. Italics in the original.

31. Ibid., 96.

32. Ibid., 98.

33. Ibid., 124–125. Italics in the original.

34. C. F. W. Walther, *Selected Letters*, trans. Roy A. Suelflow (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), 146. Note: Walther was quite concerned about the effect secular papers were having on his parishioners: "our own Lutherans are in the political domain completely led by atheistic newspapers which determine their attitudes and from which they naturally absorb much more than politics, as you can well imagine" (150).

35. Ibid., 82.

36. C. F. W. Walther to Fr. Brunn, 8 Nov. 1865, *Briefe*, 1: 235, 236. Trans. Robert W. Paul in Carl S. Meyer, ed., *Moving Frontiers* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), 238.

37. C. F. W. Walther, *Communism and Socialism* (Hill City, MN: Hope Publicity Bureau, 1964), 25–26.

38. "Vorwort der Redaction . . ." *Der Lutheraner* 19 (3 Sept. 1862), in *Moving Frontiers*, 236.

39. "Vorwort der Redaction . . ." *Der Lutheraner* 19 (3 Sept. 1862), 1. [Passage not included in *Moving Frontiers* translation.]

40. "Vorwort der Redaction . . ." *Der Lutheraner* 19 (3 Sept. 1862), in *Moving Frontiers*, 236.

41. Walther, *Standard Epistles*, 240.

42. Ibid., 239.

43. Ibid., 241.

44. Ibid., 243.

45. *Letters of C. F. W. Walther: A Selection*, ed. and trans. Carl S. Meyer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1969), 104.

46. *Correspondence of C. F. W. Walther*, ed. and trans. Roy A. Suelflow (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, 1980), 61.

47. C. F. W. Walther, *Standard Gospels* (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Printshop, n.d.), 346.

48. Schmucker, *Elements of Popular Theology*, 328. Italics added.

49. For example: "Third, you say that the rulers are wicked and intolerable, for they will not allow us to have the gospel; they oppress us too hard with the burdens they lay on our property, and they are ruining us in body and soul. I answer: The fact that the rulers are wicked and unjust does not excuse disorder and rebellion, for the punishing of wickedness is not the responsibility of everyone, but of the worldly rulers who bear the sword." Martin Luther, "Admonition to Peace: A Reply to the Twelve Articles of the Peasants in Swabia," AE 46: 25.

50. Schmucker, *Elements of Popular Theology*, 330–331, 341.

51. "Dr. Schmucker's Letter" from *The Colonization Herald*, 1938, contained in the Corpus of American Lutheranism, Reel 34, Unit X.

52. Virginia did not allow their manumission—Schmucker freed several slaves the next year when he moved to Pennsylvania. For an extensive treatment of this incident, see Paul P. Kuenning, "American Lutheran Pietism, Activist and Abolitionist" (Ph.D. diss., Marquette University, 1985), 236–243.

53. Wentz, *Pioneer in Christian Unity*, 317.

54. Walther, *Selected Letters*, 59.

55. "Vorwort," *Lehre und Wehre* 9 (Feb. 1863): 34, trans. in *Moving Frontiers*, 234.

56. See Paul P. Keunning, *The Rise and Fall of American Lutheran Pietism* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1988), 134.

57. Aug. R. Suelflow, "Walther the American," in *C. F. W. Walther: The American Luther* (Mankato, MN: Walther Press, 1987), 25.

58. Ludwig Ernest Feurbringer, 80 *Eventful Years* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1944), 225–226. As noted above, other writers such as Paul Kuenning have charged that "Walther was convinced that the Scriptures upheld the American system of servitude, and he published several articles in his magazine, *Der Lutheraner*, by Dr. Wilhelm Sihler of Fort Wayne containing a definitive defense of slavery as an institution." Kuenning goes on to declare, however, "The official position of the Missouri Synod, typical of orthodoxy, was to remain silent on the subject, maintaining that the consideration of 'secular' matters by ecclesiastical bodies was improper" (134). Kuenning seems unaware that *Der Lutheraner* was an "official" publication of the Missouri Synod, so his charge that the Missouri Synod was "silent" is inconsistent with his own account. As to the charges of Walther's support for the "American system of servitude," we shall allow Walther's 1869 remarks to stand.

59. *Correspondence of C. F. W. Walther*, 57.

60. Walther, *Selected Letters*, 149.

61. Ibid., 150.

62. Schmucker, *Elements of Popular Theology*, 332.

63. "Dr. Schmucker's Letter" from *The Colonization Herad*, 1938, contained in the Corpus of American Lutheranism, Reel 34, Unit X.

64. Schmucker, *Elements of Popular Theology*, 334–335.

65. Ibid., 332, 333, 336.

66. Wentz, *Pioneer in Christian Unity*, 326–329.

67. Jordahl, 81.

68. For example, Walther, "Church and State," 65–67.

Liturgical Uniformity in Missouri

Michael Henrichs

The liturgical question is agitating the minds of our people. The discussion pro and con has become lively and in some cases acrimonious. It has sometimes seemed to us a strange phenomenon that people can get so feverishly excited over this question. There have been extremists on both sides of the fence, and, as usual in controversial issues, they have taken the floor in vociferous asseveration of their extreme opinions . . . . The discussion, after all, concerns adiaphora and should not be permitted to assume controversial and actually divisive proportions. It should be conducted dispassionately and should be kept free of the venom and bitterness and recrimination which somehow or other seem to creep in wherever the subject is broached.[1]

Despite the apparent timeliness of the preceding quotation regarding current trends within the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, such was not the intent of its author. In fact, the editor of the *American Lutheran* was most certainly unaware that his editorial musings in the autumn of 1935 would have any application beyond the liturgical crisis that his church body was then facing.

Congregational worship life within the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States between 1917 and 1941 was anything but uniform or predictable. It was primarily during this period that the synod made the language transition from German to English. Just prior to this period, standard, suitable English liturgies were simply not available for use by English-speaking congregations. "Homemade" liturgies, which were introduced for temporary use in many English-speaking congregations, soon became the rule and norm for worship even after the synod's official English *Liturgy and Agenda* was issued in 1917. Even in congregations where the Common Service was being used, its execution was often mutilated. By 1935 the situation had grown so deplorable that Theodore Graebner mournfully described the synod's worship practice as "our liturgical chaos." Only after the issuance of *The Lutheran Hymnal* in 1941 was a degree of liturgical uniformity recovered and maintained throughout the synod.

With few exceptions, voices both official and unofficial within the synod between 1917 and 1941 spoke in favor of liturgical uniformity. The purpose of this article is to grant a new hearing to some of those voices and movements that beckoned the congregations of Missouri to forsake novelty and caprice in favor of more traditional forms of worship. The voices of this chorus were carried forth by periodicals such as the *Lutheran Witness* and the *American Lutheran.* Two periodicals of the "High Church Movement" within the synod, *Pro Ecclesia Lutherana* and *Una Sancta,* also provided an eloquent apology for the salutary benefits of the liturgy. Other essays, articles, and reports are also included in this writer's research. What follows is something less than an exhaustive study of the pertinent material. It is hoped, however, that what has been gathered here of a previous generation's coming to terms with the liturgy might in some small way clarify our ongoing discussion.

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EARLY ATTEMPTS AT UNIFORMITY

The incorporation of the English Synod into the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States in 1911 served as a catalyst for the proliferation of liturgical material in the English language. Since it first appeared in 1889, the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* had served as the chief source for worship material among the congregations of the English Synod. It contained almost all that was essential for worship in English, including orders of Morning Service and Evening Service, antiphons, hymns (with texts only), and the Augsburg Confession.

In 1911, in St. Louis, when the English Synod became the English District of the Missouri Synod, the new body presented to the synod in convention the manuscripts of the tune-text edition of the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* that were ready for publication by Concordia Publishing House. The *Evangelical Hymn-Book with Tunes,* when it was published in April of 1912, became the official hymnal of the Missouri Synod. Although several small English hymnals had been prepared earlier, none of these had been given official status.

The 1912 hymnal contained the following: the Common Service (which included orders for Holy Communion, Matins, and Vespers), introits, collects, invitatories, antiphons, responsories and versicles for the church year, prayers, a selection of psalms, 567 hymns, nine chants, sixteen doxologies, a table of the festivals of the church year with Scripture lessons and psalms appointed, indexes, and a short form for Holy Baptism in cases of necessity.[2]

In the years leading up to 1911, work had already begun within the English Synod to collect liturgical material with the desire to have "a common ritual for all sacred acts of congregations and their ministers." A committee on liturgical forms and forms for ministerial acts was appointed. The men who served on this committee were Dr. C. Abbetmeyer, Rev. H. Eckhardt, and Rev. G. Wegner. At the synod's convention in 1914 the English District reported that the manuscript for an English agenda had been completed. The synod referred the work to an enlarged commit-

tee whose duty it was to examine the work and make any necessary revisions before proceeding with the publication. This work took place between 1915 and 1917.

> The committee which performed this work consisted of Profs. W. H. T. Dau and T. Graebner and the Revs. L. Buchheimer and J. H. C. Fritz. For three years this committee held almost weekly meetings in the faculty room of Concordia Seminary. The entire text was read aloud, and changes were made either through immediate substitutions or alterations or by assignment of various sections to one or the other member of the committee. The work was done without remuneration.[3]

The committee's theology of worship and especially its understanding of the role of the liturgy are both evident in the "Foreword" to the *Liturgy and Agenda* of 1917. First the committee extols the freedom of the gospel of Jesus Christ by which the spiritual life of man has been emancipated from fixed forms of worship. In the very next paragraph, however, the committee notes that "Evangelical freedom from the old ceremonialism does not mean license and extreme individualism. There may be, especially in the joint public worship of Christians, things that are unbecoming." A theology of worship is developed further in the next paragraph of the foreword:

> The public worship of a number of Christians, by its very nature as a joint operation, requires ordering, to prevent confusion and collision. Moreover, whatever forms are adopted to express the homage of a company of believers, they must center around the communal interests of Christians. In the worship of the congregation the *vox ecclesiae* is to be heard, responding to, and re-echoing, the *vox Dei* in the Scriptures. Accordingly, the grand central truths of the Christian faith must find sole recognition and expression in a Christian formulary of worship.

The liturgy, then, is to serve as an expression and a confession of those grand central truths of the Christian faith:

> The liturgy of the Church and the official sacred acts of her ministers must be characterized by objectiveness. The entire liturgy is really a confession on the part of the whole Church, and its forms must be in harmony with the common faith of all its members, so that any Christian who chances to come into an assembly of worshipers can at once intelligently and sympathetically enter into the religious exercise, and any non-Christian who witnesses an act of Christian worship is at once informed regarding the essential, basic, central facts of the religion of Christ.

Also, regarding the confessional nature of the liturgy, the committee writes, "By her liturgies and *agendas* the Lutheran Church had offered to the world the evidence of her apostolic and ecumenical character."[4]

The *Liturgy and Agenda* of 1917 was the first comprehensive collection of liturgical services, prayers, and rites to be available to the ever-increasing number of English-speaking congregations within the Missouri Synod. In addition to those forms already provided in the hymnal of 1912, the *Liturgy and Agenda* supplied an additional Morning Service (without communion), a Confessional or Preparatory Service, and an Afternoon Service. Under the General Prayers were included the Litany, the Suffrages, the Morning Suffrages, the Evening Suffrages, the Bidding Prayer, and General Prayers. Forms were provided for Baptism, Confirmation, the Reception of Converts, the Reception of Voting Members, Announcement of Excommunication and of Restoration, Marriage, Burial, Ordination, Installation, and Dedications of various things. Musical accompaniment was also included.[5]

"Evangelical freedom from the old ceremonialism does not mean license and extreme individualism."

Liturgy and Agenda received high praise from numerous sources when it appeared in 1917. The anticipation that had preceded its publication had given way to giddy excitement by the time this review appeared in the *Lutheran Witness* in September 1917:

> Here at last is the book for which we pastors have been waiting, sighing, and praying. We believe that nothing more is needed than simply the announcement that it is upon the market and ready to be mailed to anyone who orders it. After a careful examination we can truthfully state that it is everything which the publishers claim for it. We feared that after all the careful preparation there yet might be some deplorable omission; but our fears, we are glad to say, proved vain. So far as we can see, nothing is omitted . . . There are many other features which will delight the pastor, delight him every Sunday when he takes the book in hand. Every one of our congregations should buy this book at once.[6]

Lehre und Wehre, likewise, did not restrain its delight in the new publication:

> Und was die Ausstattung betrifft, so haben wir ein Kunstwerk ersten Ranges vor uns, das in jeder Beziehung die Kritik herausfordern kann, und dessen sich niemand zu schämen braucht, auch nicht wenn er mal unter Königen und Millionären zu amtieren hätte. Unser Verlag sagt: "This book has been long in the making, but now it is on the market, and, to quote freely a German proverb, as slow as it was in its perfecting, so high it is in its perfection. It is believed that this will rank as really the first approximately perfect book of church-forms ever published in any division of the English Lutheran Church, and certainly the most nearly perfect book of forms in the Missouri Synod, either English or German."[7]

The publication of the *Liturgy and Agenda* was indeed a milestone in the young life of English-speaking Lutheranism. Taken together with the enthusiasm that surrounded the quadricentennial of the Reformation, there was a growing sense of identity among Lutherans in the United States. But despite the superb quality of the new worship materials that were now available and a rediscovered pride in their religious heritage, the English congregations of the synod were slow in achieving uniformity in worship practices. In fact, by all accounts, liturgical uniformity in the synod would show little development in the two decades following 1917. Writing some eighteen years after the *Liturgy and Agenda* was published, an exasperated Theodore Graebner bemoaned the liturgical uniformity that failed to materialize:

> In causing this new liturgy to be printed, our Synod unquestionably intended to make possible a liturgical uniformity in our congregations in order that this element might be conserved during the transition from German to English. The men who labored upon this book certainly had nothing else in mind. If misgivings at times arose within them regarding the adoption of the complete Common Service through the length and breath [*sic*] of our synod, no presentiment of the confusion which would characterize our liturgical status even fifteen years after the adoption of the new church-book ever entered their minds.[8]

"OUR LITURGICAL CHAOS"

It is difficult to ascertain the precise extent of this liturgical confusion. Whether it was concentrated in congregations of a certain size or location is well beyond the scope of this study. The "liturgical chaos" itself, however — the acts and omissions that detoured liturgical uniformity — is rather well documented in a number of sources from the period under study.

Already in 1917, the very year the *Liturgy and Agenda* was published, an article by C. Abbetmeyer entitled "The Proprieties of Worship" appeared in the *Lutheran Witness*. Here Abbetmeyer contrasts the elements and attitudes of Lutheran worship with the practices of the Roman system and the Reformed Church. While stressing the distinctiveness of the Lutheran service, he notes with alarm a tendency among Lutherans in this country to cave in to a largely rationalist and puritanical environment. According to Abbetmeyer, Lutheran custom and Lutheran worship belong together.

> Even at the present time there is an eclecticism which employs Roman statuary, Episcopal chancel railings, Reformed pulpit stands, etc., without regard for the inner fitness of things. What can a patchwork made up of indiscriminate borrowings, meaningless or misleading, signify in Lutheran worship? It betrays, not only bad taste, but, what is more serious, lack of Lutheran self-respect and indifference to, or failure to recognize, the forms which harmonize best with the Lutheran conception of worship.[9]

Although articles relating to worship and liturgy appeared periodically in the *Lutheran Witness* during the twenties and thirties, only a few addressed the problem of liturgical confusion directly. One such article, written by W. G. Polack, was published in July 1925. Titled "Our 'Uncommon' Service," the article was crafted in the form of a discussion between a pastor and a lay delegate at a synodical gathering. The layman sought to know "the reason for the great diversity in our church services." As he saw it, "Every church seems to have its own private service, different in whole or in part from any others. A visitor, if he can take part in the liturgy at all, is at a great disadvantage."[10] An editorial by Theodore Graebner in August 1932 shows that the liturgical situation was still festering.

He notes with alarm a tendency among Lutherans in this country to cave in to a largely rationalist and puritanical environment.

> We have again made the observation during a trip to Massachusetts and have had it confirmed by a number of others that there are not very many churches in our Synod which have the same English order of service. The 1932 Pilgrim was able to take part in the singing of hymns, but in most cases he was unable to find his way through the chanting of the liturgy. Familiar portions would be omitted, the order of others changed, while in some cases there were no responses by the congregation at all, not even "Amen."

Graebner concludes the paragraph facetiously:

> The writer, however, as one of those who wrote and compiled the English church-book (*Liturgy and Agenda*) now in use in our congregations, may be permitted to say that it might have been better not to print the English order of service in book form at all, but to print each part on a separate card, so that pastors or church committees might with the utmost ease arrange them to suit their fancy.[11]

Like the *Lutheran Witness*, the progressive *American Lutheran* also took a healthy interest in the worship life of the Missouri Synod. In February 1934, however, it diagnosed Missouri's liturgical practice as particularly unhealthy and most un-Lutheran:

> It is beyond gainsaying that especially our English-speaking Lutheran Church has permitted much of Lutheranism's liturgical heritage to fall into disuse and to be replaced by ecclesiastical crudities and vulgarities and by insipid sentimentalities borrowed from the hip, hip, hurrah meeting house "services" of the American sects. The hours of worship in many Lutheran churches are characterized either by a crude barrenness or by silly theatricalities. . . . In most cases even the incomplete and rather mixed-up liturgical

> offerings of our own hymn-books are practically unknown. The beautiful musical possibilities of the versicles, introits, graduals and psalm-tunes have not even begun to come into their own. The communion service is often rendered with strange interpolations that are offensive even to the unliturgical mind. Confusion unbounded reigns upon the liturgical field.[12]

The issue of liturgical uniformity within the Missouri Synod came to a head when, in 1935, an essay entitled "Our Liturgical Chaos" was published by the prolific Theodore Graebner, who was serving on the St. Louis faculty and as editor of the *Lutheran Witness*. Graebner's assessment of the liturgical scene in Missouri was a scathing indictment of the diversity that characterized most English services. Due to her lack of uniformity, Graebner declined to classify Missouri as a liturgical church body:

> Of the congregations of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States it may be affirmed that they have a liturgical form of public worship. But looking at the body as a whole and remembering that an essential mark of a liturgical church-body is uniformity, one hesitates to list the Missouri Synod among the liturgical churches. At the present day our congregations still possess in their German order of worship a set form which is followed with only slight variations everywhere. It is otherwise with our English services. The situation here can best be described in the phrase at the head of this essay. We have liturgical chaos, a confusion which is not at the present time giving way to order and uniformity, but which is growing worse confounded.[13]

Graebner's thorough treatment of the liturgical dilemma in Missouri traces its root cause to the meager amount of liturgical material available in English prior to 1917. Without authorized standard liturgies, "Individual pastors helped themselves by making translations from German books according as needs arose in their work, or borrowed material which appeared suitable to them from existing English liturgies. This was done, of course, at the sacrifice of uniformity."[14]

Graebner's assessment of the liturgical scene in Missouri was a scathing indictment of the diversity that characterized most English services.

While, according to Graebner, some congregations had rejected any and all liturgical forms, the more widespread problem was "the Common Service rearranged and condensed, with special original features added and no attempt made to conform to the standards or practises of any congregation, be it even in the same city." To support his assertion Graebner listed some twenty actual orders of service that demonstrated the re-orderings, omissions, and innovations that constituted the existing confusion.[15]

Graebner was undoubtedly sensitive to this lack of uniformity, not only because he had been involved in editing the now neglected *Liturgy and Agenda*, but also because he frequently preached in a variety of congregations across the synod. As a guest preacher Graebner found it difficult to adjust to the "spirit of emendation" that permeated so many congregations, and that was too often evidenced in the church's altar book.

> But the weight becomes almost insupportable when revisions have been written over revisions, the pen-written changes crossed out by a redactor who has written them with pencil in perpendicular on the margin, with braces, arrows, and a system of serpentine lines indicating after which remnant of the original text the insertion is to be made. Possibly the climax is reached when the margin says "Here to page 57."[16]

The Graebner essay cast ripples throughout the synod and also impacted the development of *The Lutheran Hymnal*. An editorial in the *American Lutheran* in January 1938 made reference to "Our Liturgical Chaos" and echoed Graebner's sentiment. The editorial characterized the orders of service currently in use as ranging from "the most sadly mutilated and expurgated versions of the Common Service to the most horrifying homemade concoctions."[17] Likewise, the *Reports and Memorials* for the synod's 1938 convention contained the following overture submitted by the Leavenworth Regional Pastoral Conference:

> WHEREAS, We are confronted with what is commonly referred to as the "liturgical chaos"; and
> WHEREAS, There is now lacking a liturgy with sufficient directions for the liturgist, especially also in regard to the proper placement of Baptism and other official acts; be it
> *Resolved*, That we petition the Hon. Synod to provide such an *officially endorsed liturgy* . . . encouraging its universal adoption by the congregations.[18]

On the basis of this and other overtures, the Committee on the Hymn-book made several recommendations to the synod in convention, among them, "That the liturgical part of the hymn-book receive special consideration throughout."[19]

AN EXTREME (?) REACTION

Responses to the liturgical disarray within the Missouri Synod emerged not only from articles and essays, but also in the form of a new liturgical movement. The Liturgical Society of St. James was founded in 1925 in Hoboken, New Jersey. The society's membership was limited to clergy and laity of the Synodical Conference. The Society of St. James, however, was only one branch of a larger movement known as the "High Church Movement" among Lutherans in America.[20] By 1938 the Society of St. James was defunct, and its academic work was then carried on by the Liturgical Institute of Valparaiso University.

The official organ of the Society of St. James, *Pro Ecclesia*

Lutherana, was inaugurated in 1933. In the publication's first issue the chairman of the society, Rev. Berthold von Schenk, outlined the society's policies:

> It is the purpose and the policy of the Liturgical Society of St. James to further that which we now have and to bring to our appreciation our rich liturgical heritage by restoring such things as have been neglected in many parts of our church. We are bringing nothing new, nothing which is not our own possession. We are promulgating no new doctrines, nor are we denying any of them.[21]

While the society recognized that a strict liturgical uniformity per se was unattainable, its membership believed that vast improvement in liturgical practice was, nevertheless, possible. Not surprisingly, the society deplored an individualistic view of worship.

> The Christian life should be theocentric, as opposed to egocentric pietism. The fostering of the liturgical life therefore brings about the realization of participation in the *Corpus Christi Mysticum,* and therefore must be the destroyer of individualism, so inimical to the Christian life.[22]

Outside responses to the new liturgical society were various and sometimes extreme. The society's members were pejoratively referred to as "Jesuits in disguise" and "ecclesiastical dressmakers" in some circles. Theodore Graebner, writing in the *Lutheran Witness,* gave the society a tempered endorsement.

> It is a reaction, in some respects extreme (we once counted thirty candles, all lighted, and the vestments are many and colorful), to the bare and mutilated service which has become the rule in our English gatherings for worship. The society wants our church to be once more a liturgical church. In this respect the writer — who has seen much of his work on the *Agenda* now in use in our churches go for naught (as witness the chaos of stunted and almost unrecognizable "common services" in vogue) — is in full accord with the sponsors of the movement.[23]

Voices raised from outside the Synodical Conference pleaded for tolerance of the new movement.

> The St. James Society is a little band of men who believe that there is no wrong in trying to understand the art of worship and to study the traditions of the Christian church — not least the words of Luther himself — for possible help in making the worship of the congregation more beautiful, more orderly, more meaningful.[24]

The *American Lutheran*, while sympathizing with the goals of the society, lamented the unfortunate zeal of some members.

> Unfortunately the zeal of some of our proponents of the liturgical movement has led them to extravagances of such startling character that they brought about in clergy and laity a reaction of resentment and animosity and precipitated a discussion which has tended definitely to retard the beneficial influences which the liturgical movement promised to have.[25]

Even *Time* magazine was prompted to take notice of the commotion created by the Society of St. James.[26]

A LITURGICAL APOLOGETIC EMERGES

Although they advocated various approaches and remedies, nearly all of the voices that expressed concern over Missouri's liturgical heritage between 1917 and 1941 argued in favor of an increased liturgical uniformity throughout the synod.[27] No one demanded a return to legalistic ceremonialism. No one denied the freedom that Christ has given to his church in matters of worship. Nearly every voice that contributed to the liturgical debate acknowledged, however, either explicitly or implicitly, that a uniformly and universally prayed liturgy is "good, right, and salutary" for the life of the church. The remainder of this study will attempt to categorize the various arguments that were set forth in defense of the liturgy and to summarize the salient points contained therein.

Nearly every voice acknowledged that a uniformly and universally prayed liturgy is "good, right, and salutary" for the life of the church.

The liturgy of the church is an audible expression of her spiritual unity. It not only binds together the saints of a given congregation, but also serves as a bond with the great *Una Sancta*. The same risen Christ who feeds the local congregation with his word and sacrament is likewise feasting with the Church Triumphant. Berthold von Schenk, writing in 1934, viewed this liturgical unity in terms of family life.

> We dare not overlook this great truth that the parish is a family. The liturgy of the church also brings this out. It is based on the family idea. The congregation meets on Sundays and feast days. These are family festivals. They celebrate the great events in the life of the Elder Brother who has been lifted up and is now preparing a place for them in the colony of heaven . . . . The liturgy carries this out in the proper of the day.[28]

The connection between liturgy and the unity of the church also found expression through articles in the *American Lutheran*. An article by Ernst Pfatteicher, reprinted in 1935, stated,

> The liturgy is related to life. It is the binder that unites us in the common worship of almighty God. . . . Loyalty demands a certain sacrificial subordination of our tastes and fancies to the common weal.[29]

A more substantial treatment of liturgy and the unity of the church was given by Herbert Lindemann in an article titled "The Church and Worship." Lindemann described the essence of corporate worship:

> Corporate worship is not the worship of an isolated congregation assembled within the walls of a church building. It is the worship of a small branch of the tremendous family of God, the "great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues." It is a worship conducted in union with the entire church in earth and heaven.

Lindemann conceived that this essential connection in worship between the Church Militant and Triumphant should have a direct influence on the forms of our worship.

> If, therefore, the church at a given time and place comes together for the formal worship of God in the consciousness of her essential unity with the church of past ages now made triumphant, it would seem altogether fitting that she use those media of expression in which in the past the people of God have expressed the adoration of their souls. The logical consequence of the doctrine of the *Una Sancta* is the use of a thoroughly catholic liturgy and the employment of thoroughly catholic ceremonies.

Not surprisingly, Lindemann advocated worship forms that have been utilized by the church down through the centuries:

> The techniques of worship which have stood the test of time and that have been found valuable by the church of past generations are not lightly to be cast aside. Most of them were developed in an age that knew a great deal more about worship than our own hard-headed, commercial civilization.[30]

As the production of *The Lutheran Hymnal* drew nearer, the understanding of the liturgy as an expression of the church's unity became even more pronounced within the synod. Richard Caemmerer, writing in the June 1938 *Concordia Theological Monthly*, noted,

> Away from home the worshiper feels himself spiritually akin to his brethren of the faith where liturgy is familiar. In fact, if that liturgy preserves the traditional forms, he will feel himself akin to the church of the past and will grow in appreciation of the church universal. Conversely, a lack of uniformity in liturgical forms is a cause of bewilderment in worship and a testimonial to a lack of that brotherly consideration which will lead units of the church, also in adiaphora, to yield to the common good.[31]

Finally, reflecting on the completion of the new hymnal in 1941, W. G. Polack wrote, "the fond hope of having one hymnal for the churches of this body has been realized, giving us another outward manifestation of the unity of faith." It was his hope that the new hymnal and common liturgy would "help us all more and more to appreciate this unity of spirit in the bond of faith."[32]

The arguments in favor of liturgical uniformity that appeared in the pages of the *Lutheran Witness* were based predominantly upon the premise that liturgical uniformity was the most expedient way to achieve good order. Everyone, and especially Lutherans away from home, it was said, could benefit from liturgical uniformity. A letter from "A Layman" in 1931 expressed a common sentiment: "We are strangers on earth, but I feel that, after we enter our house of worship, we should be at home; and I believe that uniformity of service would help more than all the handshaking to make one feel at home when visiting any of our many churches."[33] A similar letter appeared in February 1933, which expressed delight "to note that the *Witness* is working for greater uniformity in our church liturgy. In my home town there are about 25 churches of the Missouri Synod, and I do not know of two that use the same liturgy."[34] Finally, with the appearance of *The Lutheran Hymnal* in 1941, the *Lutheran Witness* printed pleas to "follow the entire service exactly."[35] For editor Theodore Graebner the publication of the new hymnal was a chance to lead the synod to freedom from the shackles of its liturgical chaos.

This essential connection in worship between the Church Militant and Triumphant should have a direct influence on the forms of our worship.

Liturgical worship was also promoted in the synod by pointing out how the liturgy is able to advance the church's doctrinal position — ever a wise tactic within the synodical context. Liturgy and doctrine are inseparable, as the well-known maxim *Lex orandi lex credendi* demonstrates. Hence, when the mode of worship is altered, the doctrines of the church also risk alteration. C. Abbetmeyer made this connection in the *Lutheran Witness* in 1917, when he wrote, "as our worship is Lutheran worship, it is proper that . . . we should observe also those customs relating to . . . the mode of worship that serve best to give Lutheran doctrine an appropriate and effective setting."[36] An article that appeared in the *Lutheran Witness* in 1935 made the connection between liturgy and doctrine even more explicitly:

> The form of worship is closely bound up with the faith confessed by the worshiper; so the Lutheran service is associated inseparably with the pure doctrine this church proclaims. A departure from the truth is inevitably followed by corrupt worship. . . . When strange worship is introduced, can one be criticized for looking a bit skeptically at the doctrine and practise? A slight change in the form of worship, if not actually false, may give undue prominence to non-essentials, which then threaten to eclipse the great essentials of faith.[37]

Herbert Lindemann, writing in the *American Lutheran* in 1937, admonished those in the synod who believed they could play around with liturgical forms without affecting doctrine. If worship and doctrine are entirely independent of one another, Lindemann argued, then the church has been afflicted since infancy with a pharisaical formalism:

> Neither liturgy nor worship can be divorced from doctrine. The general impression at present seems to be that these have nothing to do with one another. Liturgics is thought of as a hobby instead of a department of theology. . . . But it appears necessary, in view of a rather general patronizing attitude toward the liturgical movement, to state that forms and ceremonies are simply expressions of theology; and if they are not, then the church is in the throes of dead formalism.[38]

In the conclusion to Lindemann's article, which appeared one month later, the connection between liturgy and doctrine was summarized in no uncertain terms. "Liturgy is valueless except as it gives expression to the church's faith in revealed truth. . . . Liturgy exalts doctrine."[39] The Liturgical Society of St. James also sought to highlight the deep connection between liturgy and doctrine, partly in defense of the liturgical movement itself. By reclaiming the lost treasures of the liturgy, so it was argued, the church was only augmenting her doctrinal bulwark. "Liturgy and Bible go hand-in-hand. The Liturgical Movement has this task to make the Book of Life one for daily life."[40]

The liturgy's unique relationship to doctrine is closely related to its role as a public confession of faith. Through the liturgy the church prays and proclaims the wondrous truths that have been revealed by prophets and apostles. A 1917 article in the *Lutheran Witness* shows the liturgy as both a means of personal appropriation and of public confession:

> As to contents, the liturgy is so strongly permeated with the teachings of the Word that the body of Christian truth is practically contained in it, and in worship these doctrines are devotionally appropriated. Its structure is such as to deal practically with the soul's unchanging needs, making the service, in effect, a devotional, edifying study of God's Word, a personal appropriation and public confession of the faith of the church in prayer and praise.[41]

Although this aspect of the liturgy is not heavily accented in the writings of Theodore Graebner, he sees the liturgy's confessional value as well. "Our Lutheran liturgy renders the acts of public service true acts of confession of faith. This is true especially of the Sunday morning worship in our church. . . . The mere presence in such a service should result in edification."[42]

An additional argument made in support of the liturgy concerned its educational value. Simply put, the liturgy is a powerful and effective teacher. Repeated exposure to the Common Service was heralded as an influential pedagogical method. Although it was never to supplant catechization, exposure to the liturgy, good stained glass, paintings, and other forms of Christian art was upheld as an aid in religious instruction.

> The Common Service is an excellent thing because, for one thing, it causes the sinner to repeat a prayer in which he confesses his sinfulness, and his entire dependence upon his Savior's merit. It contains an absolution which sets forth in clearest language each Sunday the conditions under which the sinner is absolved or pardoned by the Lord. The *Gloria in Excelsis* (sometimes omitted out of sheer laziness), contains most valuable doctrinal truth regarding the Holy Trinity.[43]

Herbert Lindemann, writing ten years later, described this pedagogical role of the liturgy as its "impressive" function, contrasted with its "expressive" function:

"Liturgy is valueless except as it gives expression to the church's faith in revealed truth. . . . Liturgy exalts doctrine."

> But "impressive" means that it is the duty of the church to teach the people how they ought to feel in the presence of God. Our attitude, upon beginning worship, is almost never ideal. We do not repent as we should, we do not give the heartfelt thanks that we should, we do not pray as we ought. . . . Here is the mission of the liturgy, which teaches us concerning our sins that we should be "heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them," which lifts up our eyes in the *Gloria* to him who is Most High in the glory of God the Father, and which instructs us how to approach the Lord's altar in the *Agnus Dei,* telling us that we are coming to the Lamb of God who has taken away the sins of the world and grants us his peace.[44]

This same conviction regarding the pedagogical value of the liturgy was expressed by Graebner's essay "Our Liturgical Chaos."

> The value of a liturgical service that really means something and expresses something in a plain way is beyond estimation. A liturgical service, because of its repetition every Sunday, will become a part of a person's religious thought and expression. Our Lutheran service contains such large quotations from the Bible that they become almost invaluable because of their educational value.[45]

Whenever the worship forms of the church are discussed within Lutheranism, the term *adiaphora* is almost certain to emerge. This was also the case between 1917 and 1941. It was never denied in any of the literature reviewed for this study that different customs and practices may exist within a given communion without disrupting the unity of faith. Uniformity in customs has never been considered a mark of the church and Lutherans have never insisted on it. Yet to those given to push the limits of this

freedom through all sorts of novel and innovative forms, replies were frequently made.

> Notwithstanding this liberty, however, the trend toward uniformity has naturally been strong. Lutheran doctrine has developed a distinct and suitable type of *cultus,* in which the great truths of Redemption are impressively set forth. The Lutheran Church . . . has preserved those usages of the past, relating to the seasons of the church-year, the appointments of the church-buildings, and the liturgical church-service, which, being "good" and serviceable, suit the true church of God in all ages.[46]

An editorial in the *American Lutheran* of May 1940 directed words of caution toward the high church movement and liturgical innovators alike: "Adiaphora cease to be adiaphora when some custom in a given communion develops confessional significance." The use of ordinary bread in the sacrament and baptism by immersion were given as examples of things no longer considered strictly adiaphora in light of practices in the Reformed and Baptist churches. The editor offers this caution to all concerned with the liturgical question: "Ought we not make sure that by introducing new customs into the Church we do not break a tie which helps to bind our communion together?"[47]

The liturgy is also a "translator" of sorts, mediating interaction between the church and her Lord, giving expression to what the finite human mind cannot otherwise begin to fathom. While acknowledging that dogma is invaluable, Herbert Lindemann also maintained that "a living religion must have something more in it than theological distinctions." He continues, "For the great truths of our holy faith are mysteries. One gets to a certain point in understanding them, and beyond that point the mind is useless. . . . A healthy worship is built upon the true approach to the incomprehensible God."[48]

Perhaps no publication devoted as much time to the liturgy as a mediator between the human and divine as did *Una Sancta,* which effectively replaced *Pro Ecclesia Lutherana* as the official organ of the high church movement in the Missouri Synod. Joseph Simonson, a pastor in St. Paul, Minnesota, suggested that "the purpose of liturgy is to render articulate, with the aid of art and science, the simple, wordless upreach of the individual soul to God and the outreach of one man to his fellows." Simonson concluded with the following description of liturgy:

> Liturgy is a vital growth. It is not a thing compiled by clever editors from some sort of Christian anthology. Above all, it recognizes religion's ultimate reality, God. In a service of public worship . . . the individual experience is criticized, what there is in it of universal truth is discovered and cast into significant form. The church's public service gives to the lone Christian added clarity, expanded meaning, and adequate expression for his own personal religion.[49]

A few additional statements were also made in support of liturgical uniformity that received little or no treatment beyond the sentence in which they were contained. In such cases liturgical uniformity was encouraged because the liturgy helped to curtail emotionalism in the service and because even many of the Reformed churches were beginning to acknowledge the usefulness of the liturgy during this period.

LITURGICAL UNIFORMITY RE-EMERGES

By the fall of 1937, there were indications that the trend of the previous two decades concerning liturgical laxity and confusion was gasping its final breath. An optimistic editorial in the *American Lutheran* entitled "The Spirit of Worship" contained this opening sentence: "There seems to be a definite indication that the spirit of worship in our circles is on the upward trend."[50] The writer of the editorial detected a growing trend of improvement within the congregations of the synod in such matters as architectural design, a growing interest in liturgics and hymnology, and the increasing frequency with which the Lord's Supper was being celebrated. Similarly, among the clergy pastoral conferences were more frequently opened with a liturgical service, as opposed to "a perfunctorily read Scripture passage" amidst a meeting room clouded with a haze of tobacco smoke.

"Adiaphora cease to be adiaphora when some custom in a given communion develops confessional significance."

The publication of *The Lutheran Hymnal* in 1941, became both the catalyst and the means for nurturing the developing liturgical uniformity throughout the Synodical Conference. At the synod's 1941 convention, memorial 709, to "discontinue publication and sale of present hymnal," was adopted with the goal of bringing about "uniformity in the Synodical Conference in respect to hymn-books and liturgy."[51] W. G. Polack, who had led the committee on the new hymnal, assessed the effect of *TLH* in the *Lutheran Witness* in December 1941:

> Without exception the letters that I have received thus far indicate that there is a very general and wholehearted desire throughout the length and breadth of the Synodical Conference to introduce and use the liturgical services as given in the new hymnal. The liturgical chaos in our circles which we all deplored, but which already during the past decade had begun to disappear, now seems to be definitely on its way out. In its place we shall have, God willing, not a rigid, stereotyped *uniformity*, but an adherence to the rubrics in the interest of a real unity in our divine services.[52]

Even among the high church crowd, the new hymnal was reviewed as a "high class production."[53]

Between the two World Wars the Missouri Synod struggled to maintain her liturgical identity in the face of sweeping changes in the language of her membership and an increasing commercialization of the American culture. The call for liturgical uniformity was eventually heeded for a variety of reasons, not the least of

which was the forum for discussion of the liturgy provided by periodicals such as the *Lutheran Witness* and the *American Lutheran*. These publications repeatedly reported on the liturgical topsy-turviness regularly observed throughout the synod, while holding before their readers the joy and edification to be realized in a uniform observance of the Common Service.

Some comparisons and contrasts are evident between the liturgical chaos of the Missouri Synod before World War II and the current liturgical dilemma throughout Lutheranism. By way of comparison, it was a change in language that precipitated the first fall away from liturgical worship, and our current struggles with liturgical worship are no less related to language. Words in the English language today are systematically being stripped of their precise meaning and definition. In the world of Postmodernism, words are utilized for the exertion of power and created effect, while the technical meaning of the word is seen as unimportant. It should therefore come as no surprise to us that the theologically loaded words of the liturgy are so easily set aside today in favor of words that seem more effective and potent.

But our current trouble with liturgical worship is to be contrasted with its earlier outbreak in two critical areas. First, what occurred between 1917 and 1941 in the Missouri Synod was a crisis in *liturgical uniformity*. The liturgy was, by and large, present in the services of synodical congregations — mutilated, distorted, not always recognizable, but in use nonetheless. The current dilemma surrounding liturgical worship has already spread to an advanced stage in which the liturgy has very nearly disappeared altogether in many synodical settings. Today a recovery of the liturgy itself is desperately needed. Calls for liturgical uniformity today could be addressed only to a dwindling audience. Second, our current liturgical dilemma lacks a significant public forum in which discussion and education on the liturgy might be carried forth. Although some periodicals and some people are attempting to raise liturgical awareness in pockets throughout Lutheranism, the long arm of influence exerted by the *American Lutheran* and the *Lutheran Witness* before 1941 has either disappeared or withered, respectively.

The eloquent and pastoral manner in which the synod was beckoned to embrace the liturgy in the decades preceding 1941 serves as a historical paradigm for the recovery of the theological treasures to be found in liturgical worship. And though the liturgical chaos of the present age is largely of a different sort than was experienced seventy years ago, the apology made for the liturgy at that time remains just as true and certain today. LOGIA

NOTES

1. "The Liturgical Question," *American Lutheran* 18 (November 1935): 6.
2. *Evangelical Hymn-Book with Tunes* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), 1924.
3. Theodore Graebner, "Our Liturgical Chaos," in *The Problem of Lutheran Union and Other Essays* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1935), 136.
4. *Liturgy and Agenda* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1917), iii–v.
5. Ibid., v.
6. "The Reviewer," *Lutheran Witness* 36 (September 4, 1917): 281.
7. "Literatur," *Lehre und Wehre* 63 (September 1917): 409.
8. Graebner, "Our Liturgical Chaos," 137.
9. C. Abbetmeyer, "The Proprieties of Worship," *Lutheran Witness* 36 (June 26, 1917): 192.
10. W. G. Polack, "Our 'Uncommon' Service," *Lutheran Witness* 44 (July 14, 1925): 222.
11. "The Pilgrim Goes to Church," *Lutheran Witness* 51 (August 30, 1932): 304.
12. "Liturgical Forms," *American Lutheran* 17 (February 1934): 4.
13. Graebner, "Our Liturgical Chaos," 135.
14. Ibid., 136.
15. Ibid., 156. Some typical examples included: "Omits one of the responses before the confession, also the *Kyrie* and *Gloria*. Omits Creed, General Prayer, and offertory"(157). Also: "Of the confession the 'O most merciful God' is omitted; also the *Kyrie* and *Gloria*. The Creed follows at once after Scripture-reading. There is no offertory, and the service closes with the stanza of a hymn read by the pastor"(158).
16. Ibid., 163.
17. *American Lutheran* 21 (January 1938): 7.
18. *Reports and Memorials* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1938), 213.
19. *Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1938), 257. This and other committee recommendations were adopted by the synod.
20. For a synopsis of this movement see David L. Schiedt, "The 'High Church Movement' in American Lutheranism," *Lutheran Quarterly* 9 (November 1957).
21. Berthold von Schenk, "Policies of the Society," *Pro Ecclesia Lutherana* 1 (1933): 1.
22. Berthold von Schenk, "The Task of the St. James Society," *Pro Ecclesia Lutherana* 2 (1934): 1.
23. Theodore Graebner, "A Liturgical Conference," *Lutheran Witness* 52 (October 10, 1933): 347.
24. Conrad Bergendoff, "Pro Ecclesia Lutherana," *Augustana Quarterly* 13 (1934): 166.
25. "The Liturgical Question," *American Lutheran* 18 (November 1935): 6.
26. See "Lutheran Liturgists," *Time* 23 (February 19, 1934): 26.
27. Richard Caemmerer, writing in 1938, opted for a more moderate view of liturgical uniformity. While upholding the value of liturgical uniformity, he cites examples from Luther to uphold the thesis that "The liturgy is not to be viewed as a sacred deposit that is tampered with only by impious hands. But rather it is a valid principle that the liturgy is to be accommodated to the given parish situation." To read his entire argument see Richard R. Caemmerer, "On Liturgical Uniformity," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 9 (June 1938).
28. von Schenk, "Task," 9.
29. Ernst P. Pfatteicher, "The Saint Who Knew How — St. Ambrose," *American Lutheran* 18 (September 1935): 11.
30. Herbert Lindemann, "The Church and Worship," *American Lutheran* 20 (October 1937): 11, 12.
31. Caemmerer, 432.
32. *Reports and Memorials* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941), 217.
33. "Our Liturgical Confusion," *Lutheran Witness* 50 (June 9, 1931): 206.
34. "Our Liturgical Chaos," *Lutheran Witness* 52 (February 14, 1933): 57.
35. See "Follow the Entire Service Exactly," *Lutheran Witness* 60 (September 30, 1941): 341. Also "Follow the Entire Service," *Lutheran Witness* 60 (October 14, 1941): 347.
36. C. Abbetmeyer, "The Proprieties of Worship," *Lutheran Witness* 36 (June 26, 1917): 191.

37. Lawrence Gallman, "The Common Service Belongs to the People," *Lutheran Witness* 54 (October 8, 1935): 345.
38. Herbert Lindemann, "The Church and Worship," *American Lutheran* 20 (September 1937): 10.
39. Herbert Lindemann, "The Church and Worship," *American Lutheran* 20 (October 1937): 12.
40. von Schenk, "Task," 10.
41. C. Abbetmeyer, "The Proprieties of Public Worship," *Lutheran Witness* 36 (August 7, 1917): 241.
42. Graebner, "Our Liturgical Chaos," 141.
43. F. R. Webber, "The Educational Value of the Liturgy," *American Lutheran* 10 (March 1927): 5.
44. Herbert Lindemann, "The Church and Worship," *American Lutheran* 20 (October 1937): 12.
45. Graebner, "Our Liturgical Chaos," 140-41.
46. C. Abbetmeyer, "The Proprieties of Worship," *Lutheran Witness* 36 (June 26, 1917): 191.
47. "Adiaphora," *American Lutheran* 23 (May 1940): 4.
48. Herbert Lindemann, "The Church and Worship," *American Lutheran* 20 (September 1937): 10.
49. Joseph Simonson, "A Liturgical Meditation," *Una Sancta* 2 (September-October 1941): 95.
50. "The Spirit of Worship," *American Lutheran* 20 (October 1937): 1.
51. *Reports and Memorials* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941), 223.
52. W. G. Polack, "A Reply," *Lutheran Witness* 60 (December 9, 1941): 424.
53. "The Lutheran Hymnal," *Una Sancta* 3 (May-August 1942): 149.

Grabau and Walther

Theocentric versus Anthropocentric Understanding of Church and Ministry

Lowell C. Green

The doctrine of the church and its ministry continues to be one of the most perplexing problems in Lutheran theology and practice in America. It is of course true that some writers refer to a "traditional Lutheran doctrine of church and ministry," but among those who claim such a traditional doctrine, the opinions range all the way from a hierarchical stance on one side to a position in which the pastoral office exists only as a function that can also be filled by lay persons.[1]

During the nineteenth century, powerful debates over this doctrine engrossed the Lutheran churches of Europe and America. Indeed, as a recent Swedish writer expressed it, the best way to orient oneself to the various emphases of Lutheran ecclesiology is to revisit the debates of the nineteenth century.[2] In North America the classical debate was between Johann August Andreas Grabau of Buffalo and Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther of St. Louis. After presenting the issues, this essay will investigate the *Hirtenbrief* (Pastoral Letter) of Grabau from 1840 and Walther's reply of 1852 in *Kirche und Amt.*

THE TWO MAIN TYPES OF DOCTRINE REGARDING CHURCH AND MINISTRY

It can be said that in the history of doctrine there are two opposite positions from which all others are derived: a theocentric doctrine of church and ministry, in which the church originates in Christ, who himself founds it and calls its pastors and preachers; and an anthropocentric position, in which the church is the sum total of people who have come together to constitute a church and who themselves call a pastor from their midst (transferal theory). The former is based upon biblical teaching, and the later is derived from social contract theory and democratic ideology.[3] Let us analyze in turn these two approaches.

Scriptural Evidence for a Theocentric Doctrine of Church and Ministry

Proponents of a theocentric understanding of church and ministry point to the biblical evidence and insist that both church and ministry were founded by Jesus Christ himself. It would go beyond the limits of this study to present a detailed exegetical analysis. Nevertheless, it is necessary briefly to refer to several statements of the New Testament.

In Matthew 16:18 Christ declares to Peter, "You are a rock, and upon this rock I will build my church." And Paul reminds the church at Ephesus that they are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ himself as the chief cornerstone (Eph 2:20). Here the church is seen not as something made by human hands but as a building erected by God himself.

The apostolic office, as well as its successor, the holy ministry, was chosen by God himself and not by man. The twelve apostles were directly appointed by the sovereign decision of Jesus Christ, God's Son. All four Gospels tell how Jesus himself selected his disciples (Jn 1; Mt 4, 9, 10; Mk 1–3; Lk 5–6), and Jesus reminded them on their last evening together, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" (Jn 15:16). Jesus promised to Peter before his death and resurrection, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt 16:19; 18:18).[4]

On Easter evening Jesus fulfilled his earlier promise to Peter with the institution of the holy office of preaching and absolution. Jesus said, "'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.' And . . . he breathed on them, and saith unto them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained'" (Jn 20:21–23). The office of the keys must not be twisted into words addressed to all Christians; Jesus spoke only to the disciples and not to everyone. By analogy, these words apply to the ordained pastors today. Furthermore, we notice that only the eleven disciples were addressed when the risen Lord said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt 28:19–20). In Acts 1:8, Jesus charged his disciples: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."[5]

The New Testament apostolate was unique. The Twelve, who had followed Jesus, had witnessed his death, and had seen him after his resurrection, held a position that could be held by no others in church history.[6] But the apostles, and later in particular the apostle Paul, chose and ordained preachers and missionaries whom they sent out to continue fulfilling the missionary command of Christ. And according to classical Lutheran doctrine, the office of the holy ministry of word and sacrament continues today as the extension of the office of the apostles.

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Social Contract Enthusiasm as the Basis for an Anthropocentric Doctrine of Church and Ministry

Since transferal views of the ministry have been very popular in our time, we need to trace their historical and philosophical derivation from secular thinking, such as notions of popular sovereignty. The social contract theory is commonly traced back to Aristotle. The later Stoic philosophers taught that authority is primarily vested in the people. Although the people have the inborn "right" to rule themselves, for practical considerations they transfer this right to their political leaders. Therefore rulers have their power by the consent of the governed. When those rulers fail to serve those whom they govern, the latter can remove their consent and overthrow their rulers.

Luther's point was that every local church has the same authority as the universal church, of which it is part.

Social contract thinking became important during the great conflicts between emperor and pope in the Middle Ages. It is incorrect to say that this was a conflict between state and church, concepts that did not exist at that time. The question raised in such a unified society, which embraced both state and church, was this: whether the Holy Roman Emperor or the Bishop of Rome, the pope, should rule the *Corpus Christianum.* In support of the pope, Manegold of Lautenbach adapted the concept of popular sovereignty to attack the German king, whose position, he said, was elective, and therefore he ruled only by consent of his people. Therefore, Manegold claimed, King Henry IV should be deposed because of his "wicked assault" on Pope Gregory VII, God's own chosen representative. Supporters of the emperor and adversaries of the pope, such as Siegebert of Gembloux, held that the pope did not rule by divine right, but that his powers had been conferred upon him by consent of the bishops. Pope Gregory VII had acted as a tyrant and as the enemy of God in deposing Emperor Henry IV, the divinely ordained king and emperor appointed by God himself. Therefore the bishops and princes should depose this sacrilegious pope and replace him with another bishop of their choosing.[7]

It has been insisted by some that the early Luther held to social contract thinking in his doctrine of church and ministry. As a matter of fact, there are statements that tend to support this claim. After 1523, however, such statements disappear in favor of a strongly theocentric understanding of church and ministry.[8] Since these remarks from Luther's formative years have been utilized recently to support transferal views of church and ministry, let us look into them more fully.

In 1523, the evangelical community of the small Saxon city of Leisnig and surrounding villages confronted Luther with an unusual problem. The entire community of nobility, townsmen, and peasants had become Lutheran and wanted a Lutheran preacher, but medieval canon law had placed them under the patronage of a Cistercian monastery, which opposed their reformation. Luther defended the right of the people at Leisnig to call their own preacher in a treatise published under the title *That a Christian Assembly or Community Has the Right and Power to Judge Teaching and to Call or Discharge Teachers: The Basis and the Cause out of the Scriptures.* Some American interpreters have interpreted this treatise outside its historical context. The word *Gemeine* meant "community"; its leaders at Leisnig were the *ehrbare Männer* (nobility within the parish), *Rat* (mayor and aldermen), *Viertelmeister* (masters of the guilds of the weavers, bakers, cobblers, and coopers), and the *Ältesten* (leaders of the merchants).[9] Luther was addressing the civic leaders and not a "voters' assembly" or even "church council" in the American sense. Therefore Luther's words should not be used here as a proof-text for the transferal of word and sacrament from the congregation to the called preacher or for the doctrine of congregationalistic supremacy. Instead, Luther's point was that every local church has the same authority as the universal church, of which it is part. Therefore, after the analogy of the universal church, the local church could call its own preachers and teachers.

On the basis of John 10:27, "My sheep know my voice," Luther contended that lay people were competent to judge whether teaching was in accord with Christ's teachings or not. Each member had responsibility for the salvation of the other members of the church, and, as a member of the "royal priesthood of believers," was eligible to teach. But for the sake of order, the community should select a qualified leader as pastor and commit to him the work of administering the means of grace.

In another pamphlet of 1523, *On Establishing Ministries for the Church,* written to his followers in Prague, Luther seemed to base the ministry of word and sacrament upon the royal priesthood.[10] He added: "The ministry of the Word is the highest office in the church, absolutely unique and also common to all who are Christians, not merely by right but also by command."[11] A similar line of thought recurred in the *Exposition of 1 Peter,* which Luther published in 1523. Here he went out from the words of 1 Peter 2:5, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood." Luther commented that the religious community was to select one from its number to exercise the power that they all held in common; they had the right both to select a pastor and to depose him again at will (WA 12: 309). Although these two statements sound like the modern transferal view of the ministry, we should be cautious enough to note that Luther does not say here that the ministry is transferred from people to pastor. But it seems clear that between 1520 and 1523 he did teach that the local community has the right to choose its own pastor, a position that was used by the later adherents of social contract theory or by the disciples of Schleiermacher to support nineteenth-century transferal views of church and ministry.[12]

Luther's faith in the local congregation was shaken by his experience with Carlstadt and other extremists after 1521. The enthusiasm of the *Schwärmer,* the fanaticism of extremists such as Carlstadt and Müntzer, and the violence of what he called "the robbing and murderous horde of the peasants" convinced Luther that he must follow another course. From this time on, Luther

more and more emphasized the theocentric character of church and ministry. In the visitations that began in 1526, increasing supervision was given to the territorial churches.[13]

Already in the Advent Postil of 1522, Luther declared that the ministry does not come *from* us but *to* us:

> To serve Christ and to serve God is called by St. Paul the filling of an office which Christ has committed to him, namely, preaching; it is a service which goes forth from Christ and not to Christ, and that comes not from us but rather to us; that you must clearly see, and it is very necessary, for otherwise you cannot know what these words of Paul mean: *minister, ministerium, ministratio, ministrare*, etc. (WA 101, 2: 122, 19–24).

Among his *Sermons on John 16–20,* there is a sermon on John 20:19–31 from 1529 in which Luther unmistakably referred the words of Christ to the apostolic office and the pastoral ministry. Luther preached:

> After He by his word and work had strengthened them in the faith of his resurrection, he committed to them the office of preaching and gave them power and authority to forgive and retain sins. Thereby he showed what the office of preaching is, namely, such an office that our life and salvation stand within it. . . . It is an excellent office and Word which he here commended to the disciples; therefore one shall not regard it as unimportant. . . . The office of preaching is such a precious thing [to Paul] that he calls it the word of reconciliation with God and a message in the stead of Christ [2 Cor 5:19–20] and the office of the Holy Ghost [2 Cor 3:6] (WA 28: 466, 11–21).

Here the ministerial office is linked directly to Christ without any transferal from the priesthood of believers, and the office of preaching is Christ's gift to the priesthood of believers, not a "possession" that they exercise at their own will. (See below, "The Christological Problem.")

Social Contract Thinking in the Enlightenment and Romanticism

Modern Protestant independence and congregationalism go back to the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century, who insisted upon the separation of church and state and the autonomy of the local congregation. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, these notions merged with the concept of popular sovereignty to form modern democratic theories of government as well as a new secularized doctrine of church and ministry. Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) taught in his powerful writings that political rule is not by "divine right" but by consent of those who are governed, and inspired Frenchmen to rebel against the decadence and tyranny of the Bourbon monarchy. He also applied his views to attack previous views on parent-child relationships and to advocate a child-centered plan of education (*Social Contract*, 1762; *Emile,* 1762).

Long before the French Revolution broke out, however, American freethinkers such as Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson had responded to the teachings of Rousseau. The Declaration of Independence questioned the traditional Christian teaching that "the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom 13:1) and replaced the theory of "the divine right of kings" with the view that government is only by the consent of those who are governed. This became the cornerstone of American democracy, and its teachings quickly spread to a world suffering from the tyranny of absolute kings and princes.

Friedrich Schleiermacher was the most important middleman who applied the social contract theory to an anthropocentric doctrine of church and ministry.

The great Reformed theologian at the University of Berlin, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834), was the most important middleman who applied the social contract theory to an anthropocentric doctrine of church and ministry. He greatly influenced all subsequent thinkers in Lutheran as well as Reformed camps. With a background in Pietism and Romanticism, both of which celebrated the autonomous individual, the virtuoso religious personality, and the notion of religion as a unique personal experience, Schleiermacher went forth in his battle against theological Rationalism. And since the Rationalists had destroyed the authority of the Bible through their biblical criticism, he proceeded to circumvent the problem and write a dogmatics that was independent of biblical proofs. Schleiermacher established the Christian religion upon the concept of the pious self-consciousness of the individual believer. Since his theology was grounded upon experience, no biblical critic could assail its basis. He defined faith as "the feeling of dependency upon God" and the church as the conscious coming together of those who have experienced this feeling of dependence upon God. Thereby the formation of the church was by a kind of social contract. Like-minded people came together and formed the church. Since the church was based upon a religious experience (their feeling of dependence upon God), a feeling which they all possessed in common, they all possessed spiritual authority equally. But for practical reasons, the congregation would delegate one of its number to serve as minister; upon him they *transferred* the "right" to administer the functions of the ministerial office. Here we find the roots of the transferal view of the ministry that was to pervade thinking about church and ministry in America as well as Germany.

We should not overlook the fact that in Schleiermacher's reaction against Rationalism, he not only changed the source of theology from the Scriptures to the pious self-consciousness of the theologian, but he also removed the *media salutis* from church and ministry and replaced them with the religious experience of pastor and people. This was in line with the Pietism of Schleiermacher's youth. It also expressed his position as a Reformed the-

ologian toward the church service. Whereas Lutherans speak of a divine service in which God "serves" his people with the means of grace, the Reformed have a concept of the church service as a "worship of the deity." Thus a divine service for Lutherans is a work of divine grace performed by God through the office of the ministry; contrariwise, a "worship service" is a human good work. In Lutheran churches today the Lutheran doctrine of the divine service has been widely replaced by Schleiermacher's concept of worship.

Schleiermacher's change of the theological curricula, which was generally accepted also by Lutheran seminaries, did further damage to Lutheran theology. He removed the study of the divine service from systematic theology and placed it under the new discipline of practical theology ("liturgics"). In other words, for him as a Reformed thinker, the study of the divine service was a matter of technique rather than of doctrine. Why did Lutherans fail to discern this? Why do we today follow Schleiermacher in modeling our seminary curriculum after his thinking instead of ours? How can we permit the divorce of the divine service from doctrinal theology?

It remained only for Ritschl to say that the pastor "represented" the congregation (rather than God!) in the divine service.

In spite of these inconsistencies, the Reformed theology of Schleiermacher was very quickly adapted to Lutheran theology. An important thinker who strongly influenced nineteenth-century Lutheran theology was Johann Christian Konrad von Hofmann (1810–1877), a leader of the "Erlangen School." Hofmann and his Erlangen colleagues adapted the ideas of Schleiermacher by teaching that the ministerial office is transferred from the congregation to the pastor. These Erlangen men included Johann Wilhelm Friedrich Höfling (1802–1853), Adolf Harleß (1806–1879), Gottfried Thomasius (1802–1875), and Theodosius Harnack (1817–1889). They were joined in this by their famous liberal opponent, Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889). Harleß, who was more moderate than other representatives of a transferal theory, thought that the public office of the ministry grew out of the royal priesthood of believers; the authority of the pastoral office rested upon the authority of the congregation, which it transferred to the pastor. Höfling was more drastic when he concluded that the pastoral office was an "emanation" or an "organization" of the priesthood of believers based on the "collective rights" of the congregation. He spoke of the pastor as preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments in the name of the congregation and by its authorization "for the fellowship and by permission of that fellowship."[14] We note that here a human organization had taken the place of Christ, who had said, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn 20:21). And it remained only for Ritschl to say that the pastor "represented" the congregation (rather than God!) in the divine service. This was the total surrender of the classical Lutheran doctrine, according to which the church service is a divine service because God is the one who acts, the pastor is his representative, and the congregation is the passive recipient of the means of grace.

Transferal notions of church and ministry were notably opposed by Wilhelm Löhe (1808–1872),[15] August Vilmar (1800–1868),[16] and Theodor Kliefoth (1810–1895).[17] In America, besides the pupils of Löhe, such as Sigmund and Gottfried Fritschel, the principal spokesman for a theocentric doctrine of church and ministry was Grabau. Although one must applaud Grabau's insistence upon sound doctrine and practice, one will also find occasion to criticize several of his positions.[18]

PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THE POLITICIZATION OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRY

The Experience in the Old Prussian Union

Although Johannes Andreas August Grabau (1804–1879) came from Germany like Walther, he came out of a very different historical and theological context. The background for understanding the life and work of Grabau is the German state church, resulting from the seizure of power over the Lutheran Church by the cities, princes, and estates. During the Reformation, Luther had tried to prevent the worldly princes from getting control over the church. He was followed in this by the so-called Gnesio-Lutherans of the following generation, led by the indomitable Flacius, who resisted the growing trend toward the state church.[19] But the movement could not be halted. The old Roman bishops had failed to administer their dioceses, and the Lutheran princes and other estates all too willingly stepped in as "emergency bishops" to right the wrongs. Melanchthon and his followers had been willing to let the princes and estates take over, and the pastors and congregations soon found themselves under the control of a state church.

In some cases the Lutheran princes exerted a most beneficial influence upon the affairs of their churches.[20] But all too often things did not go very well. Some princes practiced manipulation and interference, which were harmful to the church. Particularly in Brandenburg, after the conversion of the electoral family to the Reformed religion (Johann Sigismund, 1613), manipulation and oppression were notorious. Already in the seventeenth century the "Great Elector" of Brandenburg cruelly persecuted the noble hymn writer Paul Gerhardt. Using Brandenburg as a base for expansion, the electors annexed parts of Saxony, Prussia, Pomerania, Lower Saxony, Westphalia, and the Rhineland, and assumed the title of "King in Prussia." The lowest level was reached when King Frederick William III forced the pastors and laity of seven thousand Lutheran churches and three hundred Reformed congregations to come together in the Prussian Union. Many objected for reasons of conscience, but the king would tolerate no dissent. A fierce persecution broke out against those who could not accept the new Union Church. The use of the "Union Agenda" was required of Lutherans (but not of the Reformed, who rejected it). Reformed practices, such as breaking the bread

in the Lord's Supper, were made compulsory.[21] Many who resisted were cast into prison. When Johann Gottfried Scheibel of Breslau sent an appeal to King Frederick William III, he received this curt reply: "Regarding the troubling of consciences, nothing can be said. It is the duty of subjects to obey the orders of the King." Scheibel was suspended from the pastoral office.[22] After this a general persecution of Lutherans broke out.

The most notorious case was at Hoenigern in Silesia. When the secular powers suspended Eduard Kellner, their beloved pastor, the whole congregation gathered before their church to demonstrate for their pastor and to block the seizure of their building by the government. When the administrator commanded them to turn over the keys to the church, the members refused. Some little old ladies, who had plugged up the keyholes to prevent entry, stood weeping and guarding the doors. After three months of threats and entreaties had failed, the king sent an army of four hundred infantry and a cavalry of fifty cuirassiers and fifty hussars to force these Lutherans to submit to the Prussian Union. They arrived on December 24, 1834. As the congregation sang hymns in front of their church, blocking an entrance, the soldiers charged the people with sabers, thereby scattering them, forced open the doors of the church, and took it into their keeping.[23] The next day, a Christmas Service was held by Pastors Hahn and Bauch, who had been sent by the king, before an empty church.[24] It was from such religious persecution that a thousand Lutheran refugees fled to the New World under Pastor Grabau.

Grabau's Reaction against the Politicization of Church and Ministry in Prussia

Grabau was born at Olvenstedt, a village near the city of Magdeburg in the Province of Saxony, an area that had been placed under Prussian control by the Congress of Vienna (1815). Following the early death of Grabau's father, his mother struggled to get a good education for her son. He attended the famous cathedral school at Magdeburg and then went on to study at the nearby University of Halle. Magdeburg had once been the center of the strict Gnesio-Lutherans, and the Formula of Concord had been written in the neighboring Bergen Abbey. Halle had long since become a center of pietistic and liberal theology.

After ordination, Grabau was placed as pastor in the St. Andrew Lutheran Church of Erfurt, which was in the Prussian Province of Saxony (to be distinguished from the more southerly Kingdom of Saxony, Walther's former home). Thereby Erfurt had come under the Union Church, and Grabau found himself in conflict with the church politics of the Prussian state. As a Lutheran pastor he had pledged faithfulness to the Holy Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and the Saxon Church Order.

What was the Saxon Church Order? Although medieval canon law was abolished in the Reformation, Lutheran theological schools have always retained the study of evangelical church law.[25] The church orders *(Kirchenordnungen)* had laid down the teaching basis for the churches (the Scriptures and Confessions), had defined the doctrine of church and ministry, had established standards for the divine services, and had laid down various rules for the operation of the parishes as well as the church at large. The Union Church stood in obvious contradiction to the Confessions and church orders. When Grabau defended this legal basis of his congregation at Erfurt, he was accused of defying the government and was cast into prison.

Grabau Leads the Refugees from the Prussian Union to America

Grabau is of historical importance for at least three reasons. The first is as an historical leader. He was one of many Lutherans who were persecuted by the "King in Prussia" for defending their faith. Grabau, after a heroic profession of his faith that brought on him long imprisonment, led several thousand religious refugees to a new life in Buffalo, New York, and points westward.[26] Second, he became a "church father" in the New World where he was an important leader of the *Altlutheraner* (Old Lutherans), that is, those who upheld the original Lutheran faith and practice. On June 25, 1845, in Milwaukee, he founded "Die Synode der aus Preussen eingewanderten lutherischen Gemeinden," commonly called the Buffalo Synod. Out of Grabau's work emerged many congregations that became part of the Missouri and the Wisconsin synods. Grabau, more than any other Lutheran leader at Buffalo, carried out tireless missionary journeys and established most of the early Lutheran congregations in western New York and southern Ontario. As parish pastor, Grabau sought to restore the practices of Old Lutheranism, including private confession and absolution, divine services that followed traditional Lutheran liturgical practices, and suitable ecclesiastical art. For example, emphasis was placed upon the crucifix with the figure of Christ as emblem of the real presence in opposition to the Reformed preference for the empty cross.[27] His third contribution was as a theological thinker, writer, and teacher. His theological method was based upon the Scriptures, the Confessions, and the church orders of post-Reformation Lutheranism. Grabau founded Martin Luther Seminary at Buffalo and served on its faculty for many years. He founded and edited the church paper, *Informatorium.* After the schism of 1866 he established a new periodical, *Die Wachende Kirche.* These became vehicles of his teachings on faith and practice. He also edited an excellent hymnal, which was highly liturgical in character and beautifully printed and bound.[28]

As parish pastor, Grabau sought to restore the practices of Old Lutheranism.

Grabau was disliked by many of his contemporaries. He was characterized as being haughty and overbearing, as being excessively polemical, as being aggressive and even violent in theological conflicts, as desiring to be the *Herr Pastor* and dominate the congregation,[29] as greedy for power over others, as lacking a sense of democracy, as being "high church," Romish, or papal in his pretensions, as being void of Christian charity, as being fanatically confessional in his Lutheranism, as legalistic, and as repristinarian and out of step with the times. Subsequent evaluations of Grabau

have been predominately negative. It is felt by many critics that he should not be given a fair hearing today. To say that a professor or pastor espouses the ecclesiology of Grabau is regarded in some circles today as the ultimate disgrace. This hinders the impartial discussion of his teaching. Since no scholarly study of Grabau has ever been published, and his most famous work, the *Hirtenbrief* (Pastoral Letter), is often blamed but rarely read, we shall undertake a brief analysis of this important document.

THE *HIRTENBRIEF* OF GRABAU, 1840

This letter, which was ten pages in length, was first published as a small pamphlet.[30] It opened with a modest statement giving Grabau's views on church and ministry, asking for the readers to offer their comments, and stating the author's willingness to be corrected. The reader almost immediately learns that the occasion for this *Hirtenbrief* (Pastoral Letter) is Grabau's discovery of a crisis in pastoral leadership. The indigenous Lutheran denominations that were present before Grabau's arrival were often infected by rationalism and the "American Lutheranism" advocated by Schmucker, who had rewritten the Augsburg Confession to make it acceptable to the Reformed. Lutheran immigrants, who did not understand the wiles of America, were desperately looking for pastors, while men of other confessional persuasions were deceitfully presenting themselves as Lutheran pastors. In his *Hirtenbrief* Grabau warned the German immigrants against accepting false leaders who were really wolves clad in sheep's clothing.

Grabau referred particularly to the Holy Supper as belonging to "the priestly function of the office."

In the introduction Grabau acclaimed the privilege of living in a new country with freedom of religion and freedom of the church. He warned, however, that this freedom might also be misused. In such a case, the purpose of their emigration "out of the land of persecution of the church" would be wasted. Since there is but "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," the unity of the church must be preserved. Grabau placed the burden for such preservation at the feet of the pastors.

After referring to the problem of establishing a truly Lutheran church in a new world where the spirit of separatism had combined with rampant individualism, enthusiasm, and religious error, Grabau based much of his argument in the *Hirtenbrief* upon AC XIV: "Concerning order in the church, it is taught that no one should publicly teach or preach or distribute the sacraments without an orderly call *[nisi rite vocatus]*." Grabau now pointed out that several men such as Gattel, Bauernmeister, Amereyn, and Roggenbuck, lay preachers coming from the Methodist and Baptist sects, were a threat to the Lutheran congregations. He referred particularly to the Holy Supper as belonging to "the priestly function of the office [of the ministry]" and warned against receiving the sacrament from anyone without "a right and complete churchly call to the public administration of the holy sacraments."[31]

Grabau cited the sacred Scriptures, the Lutheran symbols, and the sixteenth-century church orders as three guides to developing a sound Lutheranism in America.[32] Since the young congregations had been plagued by the shortage of pastors and had been endangered by unsuitable candidates, Grabau laid down the principles for calling a suitable pastor.[33] The candidate must be rightly grounded in the teachings of the church and must be a diligent theologian. He must possess the gifts of the Holy Ghost and be empowered by the Spirit. Good order dictated that he should be examined by true ministers of the church. His examination must establish that the candidate had been properly instructed and that he had been empowered by the Holy Ghost for the work. During a period of serving in lesser offices in the church, he must show himself by pure teaching and godliness of life. It must be determined that the candidate was a faithful steward of the mysteries of God, as observed in his teaching and life. He was not to become a servant of men or serve according to his own whims, but according to the principles established by the church.

The following steps should be followed in calling a new pastor:

> (1) The congregation should pray until it finds a qualified man. They should examine the man according to 1 Timothy 6:12, determining that he gives a good confession and is not a novice. If the entire congregation cannot take part in all these steps, then their representatives are to carry out the task.
>
> (2) If the candidate is not yet ordained, ordination should follow with the laying on of hands by all the pastors who are present.
>
> (3) In the public installation the candidate is to be presented to the people as a shepherd truly called by God, with the congregation as his true fold. The new pastor promises to be faithful in teaching and in life. The congregation promises faithfulness and obedience in all things not contrary to the Word of God.[34]

Because of the shortage of suitable pastors on the American frontier, Grabau advised congregations not to accept unqualified men and warned them against false prophets. He gave the following suggestions:

> (1) Pray for a true servant, in order that God may undo the damage that has been committed by false shepherds.
>
> (2) Do not let false pastors baptize your children. Wait until a true pastor comes, or let the father of the baby or a friend perform the baptism.
>
> (3) Wait for the Lord's Supper until a true pastor is available.
>
> (4) As to marriages, wait for the pastor to come, or else let one of the brethren perform the ceremony now and have it confirmed later by the pastor. The marriage ceremony should be held according to the form in Luther's *Traubüchlein.*
>
> (5) As to church services, elders or teachers should read printed sermons and conduct the service when no pastor is

present. Elders, however, should remember that they are not competent to judge doctrine. According to 1 Timothy 4:16, only the pastors are to serve as shepherds and watchmen.[35]

Grabau devoted a special chapter to the subject "Regarding the Necessity of the Right Call." He pointed out that Paul always mentioned his credentials and described himself as one who had been "called to be an apostle through the will of God." Grabau wanted to emphasize that the pastoral call is not human but divine. He stated:

> God wills to deal with us on earth by means of the public office of the church, and, by means of the same, to instruct, absolve, commune us, and the like. Therefore the church must have a certain and unmistakable witness that the person in the office is a minister who has been certified in divine order and according to the divine will. . . . Accordingly, the church has believed from oldest times that not only the Words of Institution but also the right divine call and commission belong to the right administration of the holy sacraments and the dispensation of absolution; and even if the person of the minister were evil, the Words of Institution are still effective on account of the office, to which the Lord still commits himself. Christ lays his certification in the office and on absolution and the sacraments as he once instituted them. He wills again and again to accomplish this and to give his blessings by means of the Word that is thereby used.[36]

Here we have a truly Lutheran view of the Word as God's reaching into human lives through the agency of earthly pastors.

In the third part, Grabau gives a lengthy presentation on "The Right Understanding of the Doctrine of Filling the Churchly Office in the Smalcald Articles."[37] He begins by asserting that the Lutheran Church is identical to the old Roman Church, and then rejects Roman Catholic teachings that restricted ordination to the pope and bishops. Contrary to those who charge him with clericalism and expect him to restrict the congregation (*Gemeine*, not *Gemeinde*), he accuses the Roman bishops of excluding the people, and asserts:

> The congregation must never be left out of the call *(Wahl)*, election *(Zustimmung)*, and prayer; only the pope removed from congregations the right to choose and elect, and he fills pastoral positions arbitrarily, on which account the pope is a spiritual and worldly tyrant.[38]

Those who have not been properly called will become weak in the trials of the ministry. But those who are assured that they have been called by God will comfort themselves and be built up by Christ's promise: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt 28:20).

Grabau leveled an attack at independentists or sectarians.

> Here one must understand the right meaning of the fathers in the Smalcald Articles and not believe that the fathers would have permitted such arbitrariness *(Willkühr)* as to teach that every congregation or every group that falls away from the true church and honors itself with the name of congregation can, as it wishes, raise up some man to the spiritual office from its own midst.[39]

These words were likely intended for sectarians who blithely turned their backs upon the traditional churches and then claimed to derive full authority from the new churches that they themselves had founded.[40] But in the situation of American Lutheranism in 1840 this statement hit a tender spot among Missouri Lutherans. They took this as a challenge, and their reply was forthcoming.

Grabau wrestled deeply with the problem of distinguishing form and substance.

The problems of adapting confessional Lutheranism to the American frontier were enormous.[41] Grabau wrestled deeply with the problem of distinguishing form and substance. It may be that he was too reluctant to give up the old, but it could also be argued that many of his opponents too easily labeled old-world substance as mere form. We still need to engage in that struggle. In the past, we were too quick to label certain customs and practices as adiaphora, only to discover that they belonged to the substance of Lutheranism. Time has shown that past generations were not critical enough in the necessary work of replacing the German language with English. In setting up a new theological vocabulary or terms used in the church service and in the adoption of hymns from the English repertory or in the translation of Lutheran hymns, mistakes were made. How much of the German or Scandinavian heritage could be abandoned, and how much belonged to the true and genuine substance of the faith?[42]

PROBLEMS STEMMING FROM THE HISTORY OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD

When the Missouri Synod was organized in 1847, the men sent by Löhe outnumbered the group led by Walther of Perry County, Missouri. The latter group had had difficult experiences. Leaving Saxony in 1838–1839, they had envisioned a theocratic society under the leadership of Martin Stephan, to whom they had given the title of bishop. But such a merging of the two kingdoms would only lead to trouble. Already in May 1839 the colonists had expelled Stephan for moral and administrative misdeeds. After the departure of Stephan, the pastors tried to continue his theocratic enthusiasm and rule of the colony. This led to a growing split between clergy and laity and to economic chaos. During the search for a new form of administering their religious and secular affairs, a prominent layman and lawyer, Carl E. Vehse, developed a radical view in which he derived both church and ministry from a politicized concept of the priesthood of all believers.[43] In the controversy that followed, Walther gradually took the lead in

what proved to be a moderation of the position of Vehse and the development of the concepts of church and ministry with a dominant congregation and a submissive clergy.[44] Walther's doctrine of church and ministry was a compromise that helped save the day for the beleaguered Saxons in Perry County, Missouri — but how would it stand the test of time?

Walther presents an anthropocentric concept when the church is only a sum total.

The situation in the city of Buffalo was completely different from rural life in Perry County. Whereas Grabau was seeking to maintain a distinct Lutheran identity in doctrine and practice in the midst of a pluralistic American society, was faced with the need to expose impostors who falsely claimed to be Lutheran pastors, and needed to find more truly Lutheran pastors to serve as leaders, the Saxons under Walther, with a plentiful supply of pastors, were trying to ensure the power of the laity and the supremacy of the local congregation by the application of American democratic principles. It was not surprising that, coming from opposite circumstances, they soon found themselves in opposing doctrine and practice.

THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN GRABAU AND WALTHER

Walther wrote his famous book on church and ministry, *Kirche und Amt,*[45] as a polemical reply to Grabau's *Hirtenbrief.* In the heat of the conflict Walther expressed some positions that become subject to criticism when reviewed in the light of the Scriptures and the Confessions. Walther's volume was divided into two main parts: the first on the church and the second on the ministry.

We shall begin with part 1 of *Kirche und Amt,* the part on the church. Here we note that in Thesis I, Walther writes that the church, properly understood, is the congregation of the holy, that is, the sum total *(Gesammtheit)* of all those who have been called through the gospel out of the lost and condemned human race by the Holy Ghost, who genuinely believe, and, through this faith, are sanctified and made to be one body with Christ.[46] Walther, in calling the church the *Gesammtheit* or sum total of believers, appears to believe he is following the scriptural and confessional usage of the word *congregatio,* but such an interpretation is faulty.[47] In a genuinely theocentric definition, Christ would be the chief member of the church with the other members called his body. Walther presents an anthropocentric concept when the church is only a sum total.[48] A sum total of what? Only of true believers. But what about Christ, the chief member of the church, which is his body? And what about those who are not perfect, those whom the Holy Ghost is accusing of sin by the law, and in whom he is carrying on the work of sanctification as described in the Third Article? Are they not part of the church? A little later, under Thesis II, we shall find Walther employing the old pietistic distinction of the converted and the unconverted, which we have already noted above.

An examination of the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism leads us to a more accurate perception of the usage of *congregatio* in the Lutheran Confessions. We read in AC VII:

> It is also taught among us that a holy, Christian church must be and remain at all times; this is the gathering of all believers, among whom the Gospel is purely preached and the holy sacrament is given out in accord with the Gospel (German).
>
> They teach that one holy church will remain forever. Moreover, the church is the gathering of the saints, in which the Gospel is purely taught and the sacraments are rightly administered (Latin).

Likewise, SC II (the Third Article) reads:

> just like he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christendom on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith (German original).
>
> just as he is wont to call the whole church on earth, to gather, illuminate, sanctify it, and to preserve it in Jesus Christ through the one true faith (Latin paraphrase).[49]

In the above examples from the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism, *congregatio* means "gathering." Walther translated *congregatio* as *Gesamtheit* or "sum total." Both translations, "gathering" or "sum total," describe a coming together around word and sacrament. But when Walther chose the latter translation, he unconsciously shifted from a word that described being called as the work of the Holy Ghost (*sammlet, congregare,* "gathers") to the coming together themselves by people upon the basis of a conscious decision to do so (as also Schleiermacher).[50]

Another problem arises in Walther's Thesis II: "No godless one, no hypocrite, no unregenerate person, and no heretic belongs to the church in its proper sense."[51] If the church, where the word is preached, is only for "converted" people, how can the Holy Ghost carry out the work of sanctification that Luther outlined in the Catechism? Walther's error here is in following the pietistic distinctions of before-and-after "conversion": before "conversion" a person is unregenerate and a sinner, and afterward he is regenerate and no longer sins "willingly." This concept from pietism was unknown to Luther or Melanchthon. And the before-and-after distinction leaves little room for Luther's concept of the believer as *simul justus et peccator.* Therefore this thesis militates against the proper distinction of law and gospel. In the Small Catechism, Luther called baptism "a washing of regeneration" (SC IV, 3) with a reference to Titus 3:5–8. This means that everyone who has been baptized has been regenerated. When Walther follows the pietistic distinction of baptized members of the church and labels some regenerate and others unregenerate, however, he introduces a point of tension with Luther's doctrine of baptism and with the Scripture of Titus 3:5–8.

The problem is heightened when in Thesis III Walther follows the concept that the church in its proper sense *(im eigentlichen Sinne des Wortes)* is "invisible," that is, that it is most properly a

church without outward ceremonies such as preaching and the sacraments. We know of course that the roots of this notion of an "invisible church" lie in the Reformed theologians, who followed Neo-Platonic thinking with its dualism of the material and the spiritual. They consequently denied that a material thing, such as bread and wine, could convey a spiritual gift, such as the body and blood of Christ. Consequently, they held to a "Platonic" or spiritualized doctrine of the church and its ministry and the distinction of a lower, visible church and a higher, invisible church.[52] It is hard to understand why this distinction was taken over by Lutheran theologians in the later sixteenth century. It stood in serious tension with the Lutheran teaching of the preached word and the sacraments *(the media salutis),* and it could only weaken Lutheran dogmatics.[53] Grabau vigorously rejected the notion that there were two churches, one visible and another invisible, and led his Missouri opponents to admit finally that there was only one church with visible and invisible characteristics.[54]

One is disappointed when Walther carries these ideas to their logical conclusion in Thesis IX: for attaining salvation, it is unconditionally necessary to have fellowship only with the invisible church, to which alone the wonderful promises originally were given.[55] This apparently means that the promise of salvation is given exclusively to the "invisible church," that is, the one without the visible means of grace.[56] Walther here makes a fatal statement when he relegates the word and sacrament to the "visible church," which is not necessary for salvation. Regardless of what he says about the office of the ministry, the manner in which he has compromised the means of grace has fatally weakened his doctrine of church and ministry. And since the doctrine of the transferal of the "right" to administer word and sacrament is delegated by the members of the congregation to their pastor, a synergistic element is introduced into Walther's doctrine of church and ministry that is strangely at odds with his magnificent work *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel.*

CRITICISMS OF WALTHER'S DOCTRINE FROM LÖHE

Wilhelm Löhe (1808–1872) was a remarkable man. As a young vicar he was shunned by jealous colleagues and at last relegated to the pastorate of the tiny rural village of Neuendettelslau. Not only did Löhe become an exemplary pastor who made important developments in catechesis and liturgics and whose powerful preaching drew listeners from great distances; not only did he found a deaconess movement and establish schools, orphanages, and houses of mercy; not only did he take the lead as a Lutheran theological writer and secure the reform of the Protestant state church, so that Reformed and Lutheran congregations were separated and a discrete Confessional Lutheran Territorial Church was established; but in our context, it is most important to recall that he established the "Society for Home and Foreign Missions in the Spirit of the Lutheran Confessions," under which he founded a seminary for foreign missions. In his work with foreign missions Löhe became the founder of the Lutheran Church of Australia, of the Missouri Synod work in Michigan and Indiana, and of the Iowa Synod. From his mission seminary Löhe sent many pastors and candidates of theology to America. In fact, at the time the Missouri Synod was organized in 1847, the majority of its pastors had come from Löhe.

Thus at the founding of the Missouri Synod Löhe was disturbed upon reading its new constitution. In a letter written to Walther he warned of democratic enthusiasm: "We fear, certainly with a perfect right, that the fundamental strong mixing of democratic, independent, congregationalistic principles in your constitution will cause great harm, just as the mixing in of princes and secular authorities has done much harm in our own land."[57] Löhe admonished Walther that the Missouri Synod was building too much upon secular democratic ideas in America and warned him that someday the lack of central authority would be deeply regretted. Löhe also criticized the constitution of the Missouri Synod because it denied suffrage to clergy not serving congregations, such as seminary professors and other theologians, thereby depriving the church of a decisive theological voice.

The roots of this notion of an "invisible church" lie in the Reformed theologians, who followed Neo-Platonic thinking.

Löhe's warnings were not groundless. Already in Walther's day, lay people could not always be depended upon to vote for sound doctrine and practice. And lately, a growing spirit of independentism has resulted recently in a serious decline in accountability and church discipline in the Missouri Synod. During the conflicts of the 1970s Walther's teaching did indeed come back to haunt the synod, when congregations asserted their supremacy in matters of doctrine and life, defied synodical discipline, and gave their support to groups that rebelled against the synod. They justified these measures by appealing to Walther's doctrine of congregational supremacy and autonomy.

Löhe's comments were not welcome to the leaders of the new Missouri Synod, and, in order to avoid conflict, he turned over to Missouri the work he had begun among them and started a new mission field with the Iowa Synod. Nowhere was the balance struck between the human and divine qualities of church and ministry better than among the followers of Löhe who became the fathers of the Iowa Synod, particularly George and Sigmund Fritschel. In the Iowa Synod and its successor, the American Lutheran Church of 1930, the constitution specified that the church consisted both of pastors and congregations, with safeguards to provide for the best interests of both.[58]

SOME CLOSING OBSERVATIONS

The Christological Problem

The most damaging aspect of the transferal theory is the opinion that the local congregation possesses the *media salutis,* the instruments of salvation (means of grace). This is based upon the notion that Christ is not really present in his church today (doctrine of ubiquity in Luther and Brenz; doctrine of multivolipresence in Melanchthon and Chemnitz). A preacher in Erlangen

once told the congregation that at the Ascension Christ did not retire from his work as Savior in order to enter a well-deserved rest, as some imagined, but that Christ is still present in the church today. This reminds us that the doctrine of church and ministry must be connected directly with Christ.

Lutheran Christology is violated when it is taught that Christ is no longer active but has given word and sacrament as some sort of earthly possession. Unfortunately, Pieper insisted in regard to the pastoral office:

> The word and sacrament, in which they minister, are and remain the immediate property *(Eigentum)* of the congregation, and merely the administration of them in the name of all is delegated *(übertragen)* to these certain persons by the congregation.[59]

The notion that Christ has given the means of grace to the congregation so that they are a static possession or *Eigentum* of the congregation, who then transfer this possession to "their" pastor, brings us uncomfortably close to the Reformed assumption of the "real absence" rather than the real presence of Christ.

In Lutheran thinking, word and sacrament come directly from Christ.

In Lutheran thinking, word and sacrament come directly from Christ. In his baptismal hymn, Luther sings that when the pastor pours on water, it is really God who baptizes.[60] When the pastor distributes the sacramental species, Christ is truly there with his body and blood. The words of the sermon are the words of God himself, speaking through the lips of his earthen vessel, the preacher. Luther declared in a sermon that when a person doubted whether the pastor could give him a valid absolution, he should be taught to say:

> Neither the preacher nor any other person absolved me; it was not the parson *(Pfarrherr)* who taught me to believe it. But God spoke through him and did this thing; of this I am certain. For my Lord Christ ordered that this be done and said: "As the Father hath sent me, so also send I you" (WA 49: 146, 26–30).

Therefore word and sacrament are not the property either of the congregation or of the pastoral office, but remain in Christ's hands. There is no room for a transferal view of the ministry. Christ is not absent. He has not abdicated, nor turned over his work of mediation to the congregation. The people have nothing to transfer to the pastor that Christ cannot give and does not give to them through the pastor in a better way. Christ, who sent the first apostles by his own authority and in his own name, still sends his ministers directly today. The christological character of church and ministry must be preserved.

Relationship of Church and Ministry to the "Royal Priesthood of All Believers"

The royal priesthood is commonly said by textbooks to have been one of the "three cardinal doctrines of the Reformation," taking its place with justification by faith and the authority of Scripture. But was the doctrine of the royal priesthood of believers really that prominent? It appeared in Luther's early Reformation treatises of 1520, but after this it became increasingly scarce in his writings. This concept hardly ever appeared in the writings of the second Lutheran reformer, Melanchthon, and is missing in the Lutheran Confessions.

The royal priesthood of believers is the direct result of justification. It teaches that since Christ has atoned for us, we no longer need a priest to intercede for us to the Father; all that separated us from God has been removed. The Old Testament priesthood has been abolished; every believer is now his own priest and has direct access to God (1 Pet 2:9–10). Unfortunately, this beautiful and meaningful concept has been taken from its rightful place in the doctrine of justification and has been given political overtones. It has been subjected to these two misuses: (1) it has been placed in rivalry with the office of the ministry and has been used to promote the struggle of lay people against the clergy, and (2) it has been used as the foundation for the doctrine of the ministry. This has happened in spite of the fact that the existence of the priesthood feeds upon the ministry of word and sacrament, and despite the difference between priesthood and ministry, as Luther strongly asserted: "It is true that all Christians are priests, but they are not all pastors."[61]

In the struggles between Grabau and the Missouri Synod, both sides erred in these regards. Grabau erred in trying to ascribe a priestly function to the pastoral office; and some on the opposing side erred when they claimed that the royal priesthood possessed the right to preach or distribute the sacraments, and then, in a transferal theory, they delegated their "right" to the pastors.

Grabau had been disturbed by the tendency in the church on the American frontier to have laymen exercise certain functions of the office of the ministry. He had attempted in the *Hirtenbrief* to deal with this problem on the basis of AC XIV, which states: "No one should publicly teach or preach or distribute the sacraments in the church without a regular call." Grabau wrote that the German immigrants seemed to accept this principle with regard to public teaching or preaching. The abuses came when impostors pretending to be Lutheran pastors presented themselves to administer the sacraments. Grabau called this second function of the ministry "the priestly function of the office." As scriptural proof, he rather inappropriately cited Hebrews 5:4: "And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was." This verse actually taught the exclusiveness of Christ as the last High Priest. Grabau erred when he used this verse to prove that the sacramental work of the ministerial office was a priestly function. Nevertheless, Grabau was correct in insisting that AC XIV reserved the work of preaching and distributing the sacraments to the regularly called ministers.

Walther saw the error in Grabau at this point, so that he correctly wrote in Thesis I of Part II of *Kirche und Amt:* "The holy office of preaching or the office of the pastor is a different office from the office of priest, which all believers possess."[62] But was

the priesthood of believers really an "office" in the church? And, although Walther was right in denying that the transferal of the pastoral office was derived from the priesthood of believers, how could one separate the priesthood of believers from the congregation, which allegedly conferred "its possession," the instruments of salvation (*media salutis*) upon "its pastor"? If they claimed that the right to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments had been given to all believers as the "church" (they meant "congregation"!), and that the congregation in turned delegated this "right" to the pastors, whom they themselves chose and called, were they not committing the same error as Grabau in considering the office of word and sacrament to be a priestly function? As both Walther and Pieper taught, it is better that the office of the ministry be kept distinct from the doctrine of the royal priesthood of believers. But neither was successful.[63]

To Whom Is the Office of the Keys Given?

There is much ambiguity in Lutheran theology about the keys.[64] In the expression "office of the keys," the word *office* can only refer to the office of the ministry. The keys, which are given to that office, are synonymous with preaching, the sacraments, and absolution. These are given, in the first place, to the church, especially in its local form, the congregation. Luther assigned the keys both to the clergy and the laity. For him, the primary father confessor was the pastor; but in an emergency, any Christian could hear confession and bestow forgiveness upon his fellow believer. Nevertheless, just as lay preaching is only the exception, so hearing of confession and bestowal of absolution by lay people has never been more than an occasional action. And the solemn practice of confession and absolution, revived in the nineteenth century under Löhe and Grabau, has largely disappeared today, in spite of the fact that it is advocated in the Catechism and the other Confessions.

The Saxon immigrants in Missouri evidently intended to set up a theocracy under Stephan, in which the clergy would rule the secular as well as the spiritual aspects of life in the colony. When Stephan was deposed, Walther and the other remaining pastors tried to preserve the theocracy, seemingly oblivious to the fact that a theocracy confounds the two kingdoms, secular and spiritual. When they were forced to give in to the demands of the laity for a democratic system, theocracy was replaced by a new version of caesaropapacy: the spiritual governance was placed under the laity. In practice, the priesthood of believers was politicized. In the years that followed, the laity were able to control the clergy, so that their prophetic voice was stifled. The solution needed was the proper application of the two kingdoms structure.

This inevitably brought with it the functional loss of the office of the keys, their use as applied to the pastoral office. Although the synodical catechism retained the portion on the Office of the Keys, it has played little role in the recent history of the Missouri Synod. Pieper in his dogmatics ignored the office of the keys and spoke only of the priestly keys given to all Christians.[65]

In commenting on John 20:21 ("As my Father hath send me, even so send I you"), Luther said that with these words Christ committed the office of preaching to the disciples and brought the passion and resurrection of Christ into its right use and practice.[66] The keys were given to the spiritual, not to the political governance. "There you have the true spiritual governance, which one must separate as far from the political governance as heaven and earth are far from each other. Now those who are in such a spiritual governance are true kings, true princes, true lords, and they must rule."[67] It is the task of the ministers to forgive or retain sin. But in case of an emergency, also a layman[68] can share the gospel and announce the forgiveness of sins.[69] Luther did not say that a layman can do this because the keys have been given to all but ordained ministers, nor can they do this because they are members of the priesthood of believers, but because the gospel has been committed to all Christians. This announcement belongs to the spiritual, not to the civil governance. And although the spiritual governance belongs principally to ordained ministers, the spiritual rule is shared also by parents and even magistrates, insofar as they are believers and share the gospel with those with whom they have to deal.

CONCLUSION

It is a pity that the doctrinal debates between Missouri and Buffalo were carried out in a kind of win-or-lose approach, rather than the humble attitude that both parties were in search of pure doctrine and might learn from each other. In the end, it was Grabau who "lost," and it appeared as though this proved that his theocentric views of church and ministry were wrong and those of Missouri were consequently right. But this common assumption needs to be questioned. And in defense of Grabau and the position of the Buffalo Synod, it must be admitted that the leaders of the Missouri Synod sometimes overpowered Buffalo with arguments that were less consistent with confessional Lutheran theology than those of Grabau.

In the expression "office of the keys," the word office can only refer to the office of the ministry.

Walther was not so radical as those in the Missouri Synod who later reinterpreted his writings to achieve their political goals. For example, his concept of the congregation was not as narrow as that of his later followers. We should note that when Walther spoke of his congregation at St. Louis, he was speaking of the totality or three or four parishes, a *Gesamtgemeinde*. He did not harbor an independentistic concept, nor did he favor the isolationism of the congregation from the synod. Rather, he expected congregations to work together and share.

Unfortunately, Walther's position came more and more to be interpreted by some of his followers according to democratic enthusiasm and the views of Schleiermacher: the church as the coming together of like-minded individuals who form a local congregation and then transfer to one of their number the "right" to administer word and sacrament. The warnings of Grabau and

Löhe against permitting democratic ideas to color ecclesiology seemed unpopular and unsuitable in the land of Jeffersonian democracy. But in the last decade of the twentieth century, problems of church and ministry, considered all too hastily in the previous century, are haunting the various Lutheran churches in America. We need to listen to Grabau and Löhe again.

Both anthropocentric and theocentric views of church and ministry, coming from Walther and Grabau as well as Löhe, are a part of the heritage of the Lutheran churches in America. The Lutheran Church today must rid herself of sociological and political notions of church and ministry, no matter who held these in the past, and must return to the clear teaching of the sacred Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. She must turn to a theocentric doctrine and practice of church and ministry. "For there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph 4:5–6). LOGIA

NOTES

1. At the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), it was said that the new church would follow the "traditional Lutheran doctrine of church and ministry." But such a consensus has never existed. Kurt Marquart describes four distinct types among which one must decide: the types of the Eastern Orthodox and the Roman Catholic, on the one hand, and the types of the Lutheran and Reformed, on the other hand. Kurt Marquart, *The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance*, Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics 9, ed. Robert D. Preus and John R. Stephenson (Fort Wayne, IN: International Foundation for Lutheran Confessional Research, 1990), 9–11. But Marquart overlooks the fact that Lutheranism has at least two distinct and opposite types, a theocentric and an anthropocentric view of church and ministry.

2. Ernst Kinder, *Der evangelische Glaube und der Kirche* (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1958), 147, n. 1. Kinder refers to the Swedish theologian Holsten Fagerberg, *Bekenntnis, Kirche und Amt in der deutschen konfessionellen Theologie des* 19. *Jahrhundert* (Uppsala: A. B. Lundequistska Bokhandeln, 1952), especially 101 ff., 121 ff., 197 ff., 225 ff., 273 ff., 286 ff.

3. The theocentric foundation of the church is stressed in the essays by Swedish theologians as edited by Anders Nygrén, *This Is the Church*, trans. Carl C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952). See especially essays by two New Testament scholars: Anton Fridrichsen, "The New Testament Congregation," 40–61, and Hugo Odeberg, "The Individualism of Today and the Concept of the Church in the New Testament," 62–74.

4. Grabau made a strong case that the office of the keys belongs to the pastoral office and not the congregation as such, citing AC XXVIII, 5: "The power of the keys or of the bishops is a power and command of God in accord with the gospel to preach the gospel, forgive and retain sins, and to distribute and administer the sacrament. For Christ sent out the apostles with this command" (author's translation of *BSLK,* 121). Cf. Tappert, 81–82. The statement of Grabau is in *Kirchliches Informatorium* 1, no. 3 (Sept. 15, 1851): 22–23.

5. In the congregational constitution of Grabau's Trinity Old Lutheran Church, Buffalo, it was stated that the office of the keys, as discussed in Matthew 18:15 ff., belonged to the pastoral office (Art. III, §10), but that Matthew 18:16, "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," applied to the office of church director (*Kirchenvorsteher*) or elder (Art IV, §17). Reprinted in Christian Otto Kraushaar, *Verfassungsformen der Lutherischen Kirche Amerikas* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1911), 109. Walther of the Missouri Synod, however, thought that the office of the keys was given not only to the pastors but also to the entire priesthood of believers, that is, to the lay members as well. Yet although the keys were given to all, the office of the keys was exercised only by the pastors.

6. Against recent opportunistic interpretations that turn the words of Christ in Acts 1 into a general exhortation to everybody to do evangelism, we insist that these words were spoken only to the disciples, who were direct eyewitnesses of his death and resurrection. Our doctrine rests upon the unique witness of the New Testament apostles who had seen him die on the cross and then saw him again after the resurrection. An eyewitness is someone who was there.

When we tell others "What Jesus means to me," this is not an apostolic witness but a personal testimony. When we elevate the testimony of our own religious experience to the level of apostolic authority, we degrade the apostolic basis upon which the sacred Scriptures are built. And when we undercut the holy office of preaching and absolution, we deny what the scriptural teaching of Luther and the Confessions said about the faith that comes from hearing the Word of God (Rom 10:17).

7. Regarding these medieval historical writers, see Wilhelm Wattenbach and Robert Holtzmann, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter: Die Zeit der Sachsen und Salier*, part 2: Das Zeitalter des Investiturstreits (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1967). See especially Manegold of Lautenbach, 401–405, and Siegbert of Gembloux, 395–396 and 410–412. Manegold is regarded as the first in the middle ages to propound the concept of popular sovereignty. For a discussion of these men in English, see James Westfall Thompson and Bernard J. Holm, *A History of Historical Writing*, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1942), 189–191.

8. Regarding the relation between Luther and his medieval predecessors on the doctrine of church and ministry, see Werner Elert, "Lutherische Grundsätze für die Kirchenverfassung" (1935), reprinted in *Ein Lehrer der Kirche: Kirchlich-theologische Aufsätze und Vorträge von Werner Elert*, ed. Max Keller-Hüschemenger (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1967): 113–127. On the gradual development of Luther's doctrine of church and ministry after 1520, see my article "Changes in Luther's Doctrine of the Ministry," *Lutheran Quarterly* 18 (1966): 173–183. Marquart staunchly denies that there were differences in the early and the mature Luther; in *The Church*, 115–119.

9. The societal structure of Leisnig is discussed in Otto Clemen, ed., *Luthers Werke in Auswahl* (Berlin: Walter DeGruyter, 1950), 2: 408, footnote.

10. "Primum igitur officium, nempe verbi ministerium, esse omnibus Christianis commune . . ." WA 12: 180, 17–18.

11. "ministerium verbi summum in Ecclesia officium esse prorsus unicum et omnibus commune, qui Christiani sunt, non modo iure, set et praecepto." WA 12: 181, 17–19.

12. It is important to note the following conditions that must be recognized by those who would cite Luther in support of a transferal view. (1) Any such tendencies in Luther tended to disappear after 1523 and to be replaced by a strongly theocentric view of church and ministry. (2) In his earlier writings, Luther intended to say that, in extreme cases such as Leisnig and Prague, the congregation could function without the Roman bishop, not because it was a local congregation, but because it was a part of the total church and bore the marks of the church as a whole. He was not advocating independentism or religious separatism, unlike the English Congregationalists, whose thinking proved irresistible to the German Lutheran immigrants in America. (3) In his mature writings, when Luther says *Gemeine*, he thinks of the church in a wider sense than any one local parish. It is erroneous when Pieper, in interpreting Luther, understands *Gemeine* as *Gemeinde* in the sense of the autonomous American congregation. This kind of ecclesial body was unknown to Luther. (4) Much later transferal theology tends to be synergistic, when it says that the congregation "possesses" or has "rights" to the means of grace. This conflicts with the spiritual dependence taught in the Third Article of the Small Catechism. See also my remarks below, "The Christological Problem."

13. See Elert, "Luthers Grundsätze," 116–117.

14. Edmund Schlink, *Theologie der lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1948): 329–330.

15. Grabau published the following statement of Löhe: "In that they [Missouri] derive the pastoral office from the spiritual priesthood of all Christians and see it as an authorization committed to the congregations, and teach accordingly, they place into the hands of their congregations

that democratic superior power which helps nobody. If the sheep can choose their own shepherd, or can remove, forsake, or denounce him, they will only be able to be pastured as their itching ears direct, and at last they will feed themselves, i.e., not be fed at all, ever remaining unshepherded flocks, in spite of all the shepherds. The American pastors are much to blame for this development. To be sure, Pastor Grabau at Buffalo has challenged the doctrine of the Missourians on the pastoral office as they base it on the authority of Luther, and he has opened a powerful debate in writing. But this controversy, passionately carried on from both sides, is sad, especially since Pastor Grabau in several instances also discloses questionable positions." *Kirchliches Informatorium* 1, no. 1 (July 15, 1851): 11. Grabau also cited the following from an essay of Löhe: "If only from the beginning we had placed less confidence upon the growing experience of our brethren and made stronger opposition, we should not share the blame when today it is thrown up to Grabau things which must turn pale in the light of the divine Word. . . . I cannot avoid expressing the fear that the Missouri Synod would not have experienced so great an outward growth if it had not been willing to present a doctrine of the pastoral office which was very comfortable to American thinking." Ibid., 12.

16. For Vilmar's views on church and ministry, see the article by Johannes Haußleiter in *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* [hereafter abbreviated *RE*] (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1908), 20: 657, 41–55; cf. 657, 55–658, 2.

17. See Haack's article on Kliefoth, *RE* 10: 566–575, and especially this characterization: "With great energy he emphasized the divine founding of the church through the salvific deeds of the triune God, its divine foundation in the ongoing work of Christ and his Spirit, mediated and guaranteed in the means of grace, the divine institution of the office of the means of grace, and the necessity of the organization and incorporation of the church in church order and church government. Without denying the distinction in the congregation between the *coetus vocatorum* [gathering of the called] and the *vere credentium* [gathering of true believers], he built his definition of the church out of the empirical *coetus vocatorum*. For him, the church is not an isolated and atomistic concept, consisting only of completely similar individual congregations of saints, but a living organism, for which the dualism of church and congregation, teachers and listeners, those who rule and those who obey, is basic. She is an historical phenomenon above every individual congregation. She is the institution of salvation where God wrestles with what is bad in the souls and bestows the salvation of the world . . . . The territorialism of the omnipotent state which denied the independence of the church, as well as the collegialism of folk sovereignty, as they were growing upon Reformed ground, which seemed to him to endanger the office of the means of grace, the unionism which wanted to absorb the Lutheran Church and threatened its confession . . . these were the foes against which he fought, while his goals were the restoration of the Lutheran Territorial Churches and the strengthening of Lutheranism by a closer working together." Ibid., 572–573.

18. See Gottfried Fritschel, "Die Lehre der Buffalo Synode von der Kirche." *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 5 (1880): 174–183. Fritschel provided many citations from the writings of Grabau and the Buffalo Synod to support his moderate criticisms of their positions. Particularly he criticized the claim of Grabau that it is necessary to belong to the Lutheran Church to be saved. The Fritschels were personally acquainted with Grabau, for Sigmund and Gottfried, with their parents, had been guests in the home of Grabau in Buffalo in 1857, and Sigmund had served as pastor of a Buffalo Synod church in Detroit for two years. See Sigmund Fritschel, "Zur Erinnerung an Gottfried Leonhard Wilhelm Fritschel," *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 13 (1889): 139. Wilhelm Löhe had firmly insisted that a Christian may be saved even if he is a member of a heterodox church. See his *Three Books about the Church*, trans. James L. Schaaf (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 93–96.

19. See Oliver K. Olson, "Theology of Revolution: Magdeburg, 1550–1551," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 3 (April 1972): 56–79.

20. At times the princes showed a sincere interest for true reform and the readiness to make wise provision for the church, providing excellent leadership in what is called the Golden Age of Lutheranism (1530–1750). Great advances were made in church life and popular education under such men as Duke Christopher of Württemberg and Ernest the Devout of Saxe-Gotha, in theological and scientific scholarship, and in church music and the arts. See my articles "The Education of Women in the Reformation," *History of Education Quarterly* 19 (Spring 1979): 93–116, and "Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Gotha: A Seventeenth-Century Prince of Luther's 'Christian Nobility,'" *Cresset* 19 (March 1975): 22–27.

21. I own a copy of the following edition of the Union Church Agenda: *Agende für die evangelische Kirche in den Königlich Preußischen Landen. Mit besonderen Bestimmungen und Zusätzen für die Provinz Sachsen* (Berlin: Dietericischen Buchdruckerei, 1829). Since this is the edition that was printed for the Province of Saxony, where Grabau served, this is the agenda that brought about his imprisonment and eventual migration to Buffalo.

22. *RE* 12: 2.

23. Two hundred years earlier, Landgrave Moritz the Learned of Hessen, who had converted from Lutheranism to Calvinism, had sent soldiers to seize St. Mary Lutheran Church in Marburg and had the soldiers force the Lutheran people with sabers to receive communion according to the Reformed manner. When pastors and people resisted the Reformed practice of breaking the communion bread, Moritz ordered the bakers to put pieces of iron into the wafers so that the people would be required to break them. See "Verbesserungspunkte," *RE* 20: 493–498. On the violence used to convert Germany to Calvinism and the communion wafer story, see Hans Preuß, *Von den Katakomben bis zu den Zeichen der Zeit: Der Weg der Kirche durch zwei Jahrtausend* (Rothenburg ob der Tauber: Martin Luther-Verlag, 1960), 189–191.

24. *RE* 12: 6.

25. It might be said that church law is a safeguard against the machinations of church politicians that we lack in America, where synod presidents, district presidents, or "bishops" sometimes take the liberty, *ad hoc*, to create their own laws.

26. For a study of the Prussian refugees in Buffalo by a social historian, see David A. Gerber, "The Pathos of Exile: Old Lutheran Refugees in the United States and South Australia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History. An International Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (1984): 498–522. Gerber is a professor in the history department of the State University of New York at Buffalo. Theological aspects are treated in *Confessional Lutheran Migrations to America: 150th Anniversary* (Buffalo: Eastern District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1988). The principle author is Eugene W. Camann; others include Karl and LaVerne Boehmke, Hellen Mueller Ulrich, Walter H. Koenig, Albert H. Gaal, and Karl and Marie Brenner.

27. In the last part of his *Hirtenbrief* Grabau discussed liturgical matters. He defended the use of candles and the crucifix on the altar, making the sign of the cross, the chanting by the pastor of the collects and the blessing, and the chanting by the congregation of the responses. Regarding chanting in general, he stated: "Singing is always more inspirational that reading." Referring to Paul in 1 Corinthians 14, he reminded that Paul did not speak of reading psalms but of singing psalms. "Therefore, the church is right when it chants psalms at the altar or allows singing, and when itself sings the 'Amen' to such chanting" (19). He insisted: "The sign of the cross in the true church is not a sign of magic or witchcraft, but a memorial sign and a confessional sign, as the ancient church practiced it before the origins of the papacy. The crucifix or the portrait of the crucified Christ is not a picture for adoration or veneration, but rather a public confessional expression of the church, that the crucified and ever-present Christ who is pictured before her is present in Word and sacrament, and that he is her foundation, her head, and her hope" (19–20). At a time when candles were regarded as "Romish," Grabau defended the use of altar candles on the grounds that they refer back to the night in which Christ was betrayed and instituted the Holy Supper. Our salvation is not dependent upon keeping these practices, but so long as they are not contrary to the Scriptures, they can be helpful to souls and should therefore be retained.

28. The title of Grabau's hymnal was *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Gesang-Buch worin 500 der gebräuchlichsten alten Kirchen-Lieder Dr. Martin Lutheri und anderer reinen Lehrer und Zeugen Gottes zur Beförderung der wahren Gottseligkeit ohne Abänderungen enthalten sind, für Gemeinen, welche sich zur unveränderten Augsburgischen Confession und den übrigen Symbolen der Kirche bekennen.* My copy is the 8th ed., Buffalo: Reinecke & Zesch, n.d. Regarding Grabau's liturgical and hymnological work, see Karl

and Marie Brenner, "J. A. A. Grabau: The Restoration of Orthodox Worship," in *Confessional Lutheran Migrations to America*, 94–103.

29. One commonly hears pastors from Germany charged with having been conceited because they expected to be called "Herr Pastor." Such charges display the ignorance of those who make them. It is a courtesy of the German language that every adult male is addressed as *Herr,* the equivalent to *Mr.* Thus a carpenter is addressed as "Herr Zimmermann," a blacksmith as "Herr Schmied," the waiter as "Herr Ober," or a cobbler as "Herr Schuster." Likewise, women are addressed as *Frau,* as "Frau Bäckerin" or "Frau Lehrerin." The time is long overdue to quit accusing first-generation pastors of pridefulness because they expected to be addressed as "Herr Pastor" and instead to recognize this as a linguistic matter.

30. I used the following copy: *Der Hirtenbrief des Herrn Pastors Grabau zu Buffalo vom Jahre* 1840. *Nebst den zwischen ihn und mehreren lutherischen Pastoren von Missouri gewechselten Schriften,* ed. Gotthold Heinrich Löber of Altenburg, Mo. (New York: H. Ludwig Co., 1849). The *Hirtenbrief* is reprinted in this work, 11–20. The copy that I used had been bound at the end of the *Notwehrblatt,* 1857–1858, ed. Friederich Lochner. Since this document is hard to find, I not only express my thanks to the owner, but supply his name and address as follows: Mr. Eugene W. Camann, 6697 Luther St., Niagara Falls, New York 14304. Camann is one of the principle writers in the book *Confessional Lutheran Migrations to America*, noted above.

31. *Hirtenbrief,* 12.

32. Although his point was worth consideration, his proof-texting from the Ap XIV was not valid. He quoted the Apology as follows: "Wir haben uns etliche Male auf dem Reichstage von der Sache hoeren lassen, dass wir geneigt sind, alte Kirchenordnung zu erhalten." Compare *BSLK,* 296. Grabau was misquoting his source when he used it as a proof-text for the retention of old Lutheran church orders of the sixteenth century. The term that he cited, *alte Kirchenordnung,* was the German translation for the original Latin text, which read *ecclesiasticam disciplinam,* meaning "church discipline" or "church polity," a reference to the Roman canon law. In the succeeding lines, Melanchthon expressed the willingness of the Lutherans to subject themselves to the bishops and canon law, a willingness that had been frustrated by the corruption of the bishops, who themselves did not follow the laws of the church. Although Grabau's citation of Ap XIV did not support his case, his appeal to study the church orders was well taken. Later generations, which have been careless in studying the sixteenth-century church orders, which also include the Lutheran Confessions, have missed important guidance for the life of their churches.

33. *Hirtenbrief,* 12–13.

34. Ibid., 13–14.

35. Ibid., 17–18.

36. Ibid., 14–15.

37. Ibid., 16–19.

38. Ibid., 17.

39. Ibid., 17.

40. Grabau criticized the pietistic tendency to reduce the church to individual Christians and then claim that each individual possessed the office of the keys instead of the ordained clergy. "This lax separatistic tendency carries with it a terrible fragmentation of the church, in that it seeks the location and residence of the keys no longer in the true ecclesiastical gathering in Jesus' name (Mt 18:20)." He adds that the Smalcald Articles apply 1 Peter 2:5, 9 to the "true church" or "gathering in the name of Jesus," and not to the individual in accordance with his personal state of grace. *Kirchliches Informatorium* 1, no. 3 (Sept. 15, 1851): 23.

41. The noted secular historian Frederick Jackson Turner developed the controversial thesis that American culture, beliefs, and institutions were the result of the interplay of European tradition with the situation on the American frontier. Although I do not accept Turner's thesis as universally valid, it really does express the problem that our fathers experienced when they tried to plant the Lutheran faith in a new world.

42. Part of the problem of Americanization lay in adopting the English language, in which theological substance at times was misinterpreted. An example of the difficulty in translating from German into English is found with the word *Gottesdienst,* literally "God's service." This word recognizes that God is the subject and not the object, and that the principle means are the *media saluti.* In contrast, the word "worship" was commonly used in English-speaking churches with Arminian doctrine and practice, in which the "worshiper" had the need to secure the favor of an angry God by ascribing the highest "worthship" to the deity. Thus when the German word *Gottesdienst,* a divine activity, was translated with the English word "worship," a human activity, a shift in theological understanding was the unfortunate result. Another example is *king.* The word *king* rarely occurs in German hymns. But translations of German hymns often inserted this word to rhyme with *sing* or *ring.* This addition sometimes introduced uncomfortable associations with the Calvinistic concept of "sovereign Lord" or the Roman concept of "Christ the King." Every generation must review this process and decide where it shall take its stand in harmony with the Scriptures and the Confessions.

43. On the difficulties in the Saxon colony in Missouri, and their shift from a "hierarchical" to a transferal doctrine of church and ministry, see Walter O. Forster, *Zion on the Mississippi: The Settlement of the Saxon Lutherans in Missouri* 1839–1841 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), especially 411–506. On the early development in the Missouri Synod, see Carl S. Meyer, ed., *Letters of C. F. W. Walther* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 32–52. A number of sources with helpful historical introductions are given in Carl S. Meyer, ed., *Moving Frontiers: Readings in the History of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964). See also the important monograph by Martin Schmidt, *Wort Gottes und Fremdlingschaft* (Erlangen: Martin Luther Verlag, 1953). In the appendix Schmidt reprints "Wilhelm Löhes Zuruf aus der Heimat an die deutsch-luth. Kirche Nordamerikas," together with the signatures of the friends in Germany.

44. Marquart, *The Church,* 112–113, is not successful when he tries to prove that the term *Übertragung* did not really mean "transferal" but "conferral." The German preposition *über* is related to the Latin *trans,* not *cum,* and this usage was intentional by the theologians who employed it. Marquart wants to deny that Missouri did in fact teach such a transferal (114). But see the example in Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, 3 vols. + index vol., trans. Theodore Engelder et al. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950–1957), 3: 439–440, where, pursuing an obscure remark of Luther, Pieper claims that a missionary coming into a new pagan land has no "office of preaching" until he has won converts. Only after they have organized a Missouri Synod-style congregation that can give him a call does he has a true call to ministry, given him by the transferal of congregational authority to him. I have discussed these matter at greater length in my *Adventures in Law and Gospel: Lectures in Lutheran Dogmatics* (Fort Wayne, IN: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1993), 180–182 and 193–197.

45. Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt. Eine Sammlung von Zeugnissen über diese Frage aus den Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche und aus dem Privatschriften rechtgläubiger Lehrer derselben.* Von der deutschen evangel.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten als ein Zeugnis ihres Glaubens, zur Abwehr der Angriffe des Herrn P. Grabau in Buffalo, N.Y. Zwickau: Verlag des Schriftenvereins der sep. evangel.-luth. Gemeinden in Sachsen (Leipzig: A. Deichert Verlag, 1852); my copy is the 4th ed., 1894.

46. Walther, *Kirche und Amt,* 1.

47. Walther's understanding of scriptural and confessional teachings on church and ministry was hindered by his tendency to understand the *communio sanctorum* in the Apostles' Creed as a definition of the church, which he considered to be the sum total of believers, rather than the gathering of believers (SC II, Third Article). This made it difficult for him to avoid a sociological or democratic doctrine of church and ministry or to avoid the trap of social contract thinking.

48. The Swedish New Testament scholar Hugo Odeberg protests at the over-individualization of the church by which one understands it only as the sum total of its members. He describes such a view as follows: one gathers branches from the east and west, from the north and south, heaps them together, and says, "This heap is the church." What is wrong? he asks. Answer: there is no real connection between that heap and Christ. Hence there is no explanation of its life and being. Odeberg writes: "The fact that must not be overlooked is precisely this, that it is Christ, the living

actual Christ, in whom the church has its origin." Hugo Odeberg, "The Individualism of Today and the Concept of the Church in the New Testament," in Nygrén, ed., *This is the Church,* 66. Like Elert, Odeberg insists that the church is best described as the body of Christ, with our Lord as its principal member. This aspect is lacking in Walther's doctrine.

49. Here are the original texts. AC VII (German): "Es wird auch gelehret, daß alle Zeit musse ein heilige christliche Kirche sein und bleiben, welche ist *die Versammlung aller Glaubigen,* bei welchen das Evangelium rein gepredigt und die heiligen Sakrament lauts des Evangelii gereicht werden." AC VII (Latin): "Item docent, quod una sancta ecclesia perpetuo mansura sit. Est autem ecclesia *congregatio sanctorum,* in qua evangelium pure docetur et recte administratur sacramenta" (*BSLK,* 61). SC II , 3 (German original): "gleichwie er die ganze Christenheit auf Erden berueft, *sammlet,* erleucht, heiliget und bei Jesu Christo erhält im rechten einigen Glauben." SC II , 3 (Latin paraphrase): "quemadmodum solet totam ecclesiam in terra vocare, *congregare,* illuminare, sanctificare et in Jesu Christo per rectam unicam fidem conservare" (*BSLK*, 512). Emphasis added.

50. The problem of whether *communio sanctorum* presents a genitive of persons (the church) or a genitive of things (the sacrament) is thoroughly discussed in Werner Elert, *Eucharist and Church Fellowship in the First Four Centuries,* trans. Norman E. Nagel (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), especially 1–14 and 204–223.

51. Walther, *Kirche und Amt,* 10.

52. Kinder presents a very lucid discussion of the hiddenness of the church. He points out that one can speak of the "invisibility" of the church in two ways: in an ontic and in a noetic sense. He rejects the ontic concept of invisibility—"that the true church is fundamentally only a spiritual or transcendent phenomenon, which stands opposite to the empirical church, to which it is fundamentally strange and inwardly unrelated; the ontic invisibility is therefore exclusive. Second, there is a noetic sense, in which the empirical appearance fundamentally belongs to the church, and that the true church is therefore also 'visible,' while nevertheless its innermost character is not 'visible,' i.e., is not directed to the methods of empirical epistemology, but can only be known through faith. The noetically understood 'invisibility' therefore does not exclude that which is visible in the church but rather includes it. That which is characteristic of the church is not therefore, as in the ontic approach, something which is opposite or behind its outward appearance, but it lies within it, in such a way, however, that it is hidden to natural abilities of comprehension and is revealed only to faith." Kinder, *Der evangelische Glaube,* 93. The dualistic concept of Reformed theologians is an ontic view that downplays the visible word-and-sacrament character of the church. Only in a noetic sense can we use the paradigm of an invisible and visible church. I should like to add that in Lutheran thinking this paradigm must usually be understood as a paradox.

53. Marquart, *The Church,* 10–11, approves the use of the terms *visible* and *invisible* in regard to the church, with the safeguard that there are not two churches but only one church. Over against the use of Calvin's visible-invisible paradigm that has been borrowed in Lutheran dogmatics, it is important to heed Elert's warning: "The church, which, as he [Luther] demands again and again, should be believed, is 'invisible' in exactly the same sense as all the other constituents of faith are invisible. It must be believed contrary to all appearances. Therefore it is not 'invisible' in the Platonic-idealistic sense, but in the evangelical-realistic sense it is 'hidden' (*abscondita*)." Werner Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism,* vol. 1, trans. Walter A. Hansen, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), 260; *Die Morphologie des Luthertums,* 2 vols. (Munich: Kaiser, 1952), 1: 229. See also Herbert Olsson, "The Church's Visibility and Invisibility according to Luther," in Nygrén, ed., *This is the Church,* 226–242.

54. Heinrich von Rohr, a pastor in the Buffalo Synod who was critical of Grabau in 1866 but refrained from joining the Missouri Synod, gave this report of the Buffalo Debate of 1866: "Zugleich wurde erklärt, daß man zwar zwischen sichtbarer und unsichtbarer Kirche unterscheide, sie aber nicht von einander scheide, sondern aus Gottes Wort überzeugt sei, daß die sichtbare Kirche keine andere, als die unsichtbare sei, nur daß, wenn die Kirche entweder sichtbar oder unsichtbar genannt wird, ein und dieselbe in verschiedener Rücksicht betrachtet werde." *Das Buffaloer Colloquium, abgehalten vom 20. November bis 5. December 1866, das ist, die schließlichen Erklärungen der die Synode von Buffalo und die von Missouri, Ohio u. a. Staaten vertretenden Colloquenten über die bisher zwischen beiden Synoden streitigen und besprochen Lehreren* (St. Louis: Aug. Wiebusch u. Sohn, 1866), 2.

55. Walther, *Kirche und Amt,* 160.

56. Although he also used this problematic terminology, Wilhelm Löhe avoided the trap Walther fell into of seeming to have two churches, but carefully preserved the identity of the visible and invisible church. He wrote: "All those who belong to the invisible church also belong to the visible one and by their words and deeds confess what God has put into their hearts." *Three Books,* 88. On the problem as to whether the church is visible or invisible, Schaaf in a footnote, ibid., points to the presentation in Holsten Fagerberg, *Bekenntnis, Kirche und Amt*, 127–131. After insisting that both the church visible and invisible are but one church, Löhe adds: "In short, the visible church is the tabernacle of God among men, and outside it there is no salvation. A man separates himself from God the Father if he separates from the church, his mother. He separates himself from the eternal bridegroom if he separates from the bride of Christ. He loses Christ's spirit if he tears himself from his body. As a man stands in relation to the church, so he stands in relation to his God." *Three Books,* 90.

57. Meyer, *Moving Frontiers,* 122, n. 24. One might comment on Löhe's warning by noting that, in fact, the rule of the German church by the lay princes was replaced in America with the rule by the lay voters assemblies and church councils. This was a reincarnation of that mixing of the two kingdoms which had taken place within the state churches. This writer knows of Missouri Synod churches where the lay leaders interfere in theological and pastoral matters, such as forbidding their pastor to practice closed communion. See also "Löhe's Heartbreaking Farewell," letter of Aug. 4, 1853, as he peacefully turned over his congregations in northern Michigan to the Missouri Synod, in Meyer, *Moving Frontiers,* 122–125. Several times Löhe spoke out in favor of Grabau, and once expressed regret that he had not tried harder to move Missouri from the course that it took. Grabau cited Löhe as follows: "This separatistic tendency which destroys the church has left its stamp in the Missouri Synod to the dishonor of the Lutheran Church. Contrariwise, the symbolical books are above such destructive separatism; they consider the entire church as the gathering in the name of Jesus, and therein especially the preaching office with the gospel as the seat and residence of the Keys." *Kirchliches Informatorium* 1 (1851): 23.

58. The heritage of the Iowa Synod was lost when the American Lutheran Church of 1960 declared in its constitution that the church consisted only of congregations. Thereby pastoral conferences were abolished and replaced by conferences of congregations, and the theological foundations were irreparably damaged. This unfortunate step helped prepare for the developments in doctrine and practice of the subsequent Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. See my article "Toward an Evangelical Understanding of the Lutheran Confessions," *Lutheran Quarterly* 9 (1957): 234–249.

59. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics,* 3: 457; for the original German, see Franz Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik,* 3 vols. + index vol. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1917–1928), 3: 521.

60. The original German text of Luther's "Christ, unser Herr, zum Jordan kam" is given in Karl Eduard Philipp Wackernagel, *Das Deutsche Kirchenlied von Martin Luther bis auf Nicolaus Herman und Ambrosius Blauer* (Stuttgart: S. G. Liesching, 1841), 149–150. (My copy of Wackernagel originally belonged to Sigmund Fritschel.) A modernization of the German original and an English translation by Richard Massie, alt., "To Jordan came our Lord the Christ," are given in *The Hymns of Martin Luther,* ed. Leonard Woolsey Bacon and Nathan H. Allen (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1883), 68, #34. This version was reprinted in *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1924), #401. A less literal translation by Elizabeth Quitmeyer, alt., "To Jordan came the Christ, our Lord," is given in *Lutheran Worship* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1982), #223. Closer to Luther is the translation by Hermann Brueckner in *American Lutheran Hymnal* (Columbus, 1930), #42. Only Massie and Brueckner translated the last verse of st. 2, "[Gott] is alhie der Tauffer," "[God] is the true Baptizer." No translator has given a literal rendition of these words from st. 4: "Das wir nicht sollen zweifeln dran,/ wenn

wir getauffet werden/ all drey person getauffet han,/ damit bey vns auff erden/ zu wonen sich ergeben." In English the words read literally as follows: "That we should never shelter doubt/ When we receive baptism/ That all three persons have baptized,/ So that they, with us on earth/ To dwell, themselves have given." Here there is no passivity on the part of God, no "divine absence" at baptism, nor is the sacrament imagined to be a possession of the local congregation who transfer or confer their *Eigentum* upon their pastor.

61. *Exposition of Psalm* 82 (1530), WA 311: 211. "Es ist war, alle Christen sind priester, aber nicht alle Pfarrer."

62. Walther, *Kirche und Amt,* 174.

63. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics,* 3: 440–443.

64. In his relatively early masterpiece, *Morphologie des Luthertums* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1931; reprint 1952), 1: 297 ff., Werner Elert emphasized the keys as belonging to the congregation. The same is true in the English translation, *The Structure of Lutheranism* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), 339 ff. Nevertheless, in his dogmatics, which first appeared in 1940, he related the keys to the ministry when he wrote: "The administration of the Keys has been conferred on the same office as the administration of the sacraments and the preaching of the Word." Elert, *Der christliche Glaube,* 3d ed. (Hamburg: Furche Verlag, 1956).

65. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* 3: 193–194; 413–414; 452–453.

66. *House Postil,* 1544, WA 52: 267, 3–6.

67. The original text: "Da habt jhr das rechte geystliche Regiment, welches man ja so weyt vom weltlichen Regiment soll sondern, alß weyt hymel und erden von einander sind. Die nun in solchem geystlichen Regiment sind, die sind rechte Koenig, rechte Fuersten, rechte Herrn unnd haben zu regiern." WA 52: 268, 1–4; cf. WA 49: 143, 7–16.

68. WA 52: 270, 31–32; 274, 30–32. WA 49: 146, 10–12.

69. WA 52: 273, 13–15.

The ELCA: Its Past, Present, and Future

David A. Gustafson

On January 1, 1988, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the unification of the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), the American Lutheran Church (ALC), and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC) brought together approximately 5.3 million members in about 11,000 congregations, served by some 16,000 pastors. It became the largest Lutheran body in America.

Unlike previous mergers, the process that led to the formation of the ELCA was well documented. No negotiations were conducted in smoke-filled rooms behind locked doors. The process was open. Edgar Trexler, in his book *Anatomy of a Merger: People, Dynamics, and Decisions that Shaped the ELCA* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1991), describes the process as "a grand experiment." This process was characterized by openness and representativeness. The Commission for a New Lutheran Church (CNLC) consisted of seventy members, selected by gender and race and apportioned between clergy and laity. This group would attend to the details of putting together the structures of the new church body. Their meetings were open; suggestions were invited from the constituencies of the bodies involved; decisions were made in a democratic fashion.

Problems were evident from the very beginning, however. There were major disagreements between the LCA and ALC. It had been assumed that, based on a common confessional commitment, these two bodies would have few differences; such was not the case. The areas of greatest tension were ecclesiology and the ministry.

With regard to ecclesiology, the question to be answered was where authority should reside. The ALC representatives argued that it resided in the congregation, while the LCA representatives said this view was not consistent with the Confessions and pushed to view the church in a larger context, contending that authority lies in several expressions of the church — including the congregation, the synod, and the national church body. In a related matter, the LCA representatives, especially Bishop James Crumley, thought that theological considerations should take precedence in the making of decisions regarding the organization of the church; ALC representatives, such as Bishop David Preus, wanted the wishes of the people to take a more prominent role. Many of the initial constitutional provisions reflected such a congregationalist view that the LCA bishops intervened, threatening to withdraw from the merger. Because of their objections, changes were made that reflected a better balance between the authority of the congregation and the larger church.

Regarding the ministry, the issue was how the ordained ministry was related to the priesthood of all believers. This issue generated intense conversations. Some, especially on the ALC side, thought the ordained ministry derived its authority from the priesthood of all believers, a functional view of the ministry. Others, primarily from the LCA, argued that the ordained ministry's authority is derived from its divine institution. Another question, the status of parochial school teachers who were engaged in a teaching ministry in the AELC, added more confusion to the mix. The question of the ministry was never resolved; the CNLC recommended that a commission be formed that would study the matter for six years and then make recommendations to the ELCA.

One of the unique features that emerged from the CNLC was the adoption of a quota system for selecting voting delegates to assemblies and membership on committees and commissions. Fixed percentages of different groups (women, blacks, and so on) were to be represented on all the various church advisory and governing bodies. The goal was a church that was inclusive. The ELCA planned to extend itself beyond its traditional northern European base and reach out to various minority groups. Inclusiveness became the defining mark of the church and affected almost every decision that was made. People were given authority to make decisions, not because of their expertise but on the basis of the group to which they belonged. The quota system received wide opposition, but it became a fixture in the ELCA.

Early on, there was much uneasiness about the proposals that were coming out of the CNLC. Perhaps the most significant document written during that period was the "One and Nine Questions," an editorial statement published by the *Lutheran Forum* in the April 29, 1983, issue of the *Forum Letter.* In response to the CNLC proposals, the editors asked theological questions such as, Will this proposal enhance the preaching of the gospel, enhance the practice and understanding of Baptism and Eucharist, help deepen the devotion and discipleship of believers, contribute to vitalizing church leadership, strengthen the theological integrity of our community, help animate the fullness of the ministries of the church, help advance the evangelization of all people, make more credible and effective the witness and work of Christians in society, and strengthen Lutheranism's gift to the whole body of Christ? The questions asked went to the heart of the meaning of the church and its mission. Subsequent issues of *Forum Letter* carried lengthy

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commentaries on each of the questions. As one reads those questions and commentaries today, the issues they raised and questions they posed are still valid.

Is this to be an institutional merger or a renewed church? That question was raised regularly during the deliberations of the CNLC, and it is still being raised today. One of the weaknesses of the whole process that brought about the establishment of the ELCA was the fact that theological issues were seldom discussed, and when theological questions did arise there was great reluctance to discuss them in detail or to come to any definite conclusions.

Three questions that were never resolved concerned seminaries, theological deliberation, and confessional subscription. Regarding the seminaries, the issue was their very purpose and aim. Do they exist to train theologically the future pastors of the church, or are they professional schools that are minimally accountable to the church? Will theological deliberation play a key role in decision-making? Will the theological faculties provide theological leadership for the church, or will important decisions be left to national assemblies, where theological expertise is evident in only a few delegates? Will confessional subscription be taken seriously, the Confessions binding with regard to what is preached and taught in the church, or will they be regarded as historical documents of a bygone era, which only inform us? The CNLC opted to distance themselves from these essential questions, resulting in theological confusion in the ELCA that exists to the present moment.

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In its zeal to create a new church, the CNLC indeed created something new, but was it the body of Christ, subject to the gospel, which is at the very heart of the church? Ideas such as inclusiveness and policies such as the quota system left the ELCA open to the influence of various interest groups, each trying to make its agenda the church's agenda. This is reflected in the church's structures. For example, the ELCA now has special commissions that were unknown to all the predecessor bodies — the Commission for Women and the Commission for Multicultural Ministries. In addition, the Commission for Church and Society has grown to the point where, by best estimates, it constitutes 20–25 percent of the national church staff.

Various occurrences have unsettled the short life of the ELCA. Very early the "Guidelines for Inclusive Language" was developed. This document, produced mainly by the Commission for Women, advocated eliminating the masculine nouns and pronouns for God and Christ. This document claimed to express the position of the ELCA, yet it had no official standing or approval. Questions regarding the use of inclusive language caused controversy. For example, the use by some of "Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier" as the baptismal formula became such an object of concern that the Conference of Bishops released a statement upholding the traditional formula of "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Another more recent controversy developed over the first draft of the "Statement on Human Sexuality," which advocated recognition of committed homosexual relationships and allowing homosexual unions. These examples illustrate the theological confusion that is present in the ELCA. Gerhard Forde, professor at Luther Seminary and a member of the CNLC, sounded the alarm during the course of the CNLC's deliberations. At one point he observed, "Nowhere in the documents do we hear the word 'catholicity' to describe ourselves, only 'inclusiveness'." Forde proved to be right; inclusiveness replaced catholicity as the defining mark of the church — the result being that, in the instances cited above, fidelity to the Scriptures and the tradition of the church (creeds, confessions, liturgy) has been threatened or simply ignored.

The decision mechanisms that were put in place by the CNLC, and which became reality in the ELCA, have been no help in solving its theological dilemmas. The quotas call for every assembly to be made up of 40 percent clergy and 60 percent laity, with 50 percent of the laity being women. In addition, provisions were made to include minority representation. While this is in some respects laudable, it carries with it some great liabilities. The clergy, who should possess theological knowledge, have been reduced to a minority role. Many have pointed out, not without foundation, that the ELCA merger process expressed a pervasive anti-clerical mood. Other evidences of this are the fact that only active parish clergy can vote at assemblies; a proposal for an assembly of theologians who would deliberate the theological issues confronting the church was defeated; and finally, the Conference of Bishops was given no authority, only an advisory role. Decisions at assemblies, which affect the entire church, are made by people who, because of their lack of theological sophistication, can easily be influenced by presenters from the national church office. In the interim between assemblies, the church's policies are determined by a bureaucracy that is, in the opinion of many, accountable only to themselves.

The power and influence of "Higgins Road" has been and continues to be a bone of contention within the ELCA. This is more than a mistrust of bureaucratic structures. There exists the suspicion that the church is being unduly influenced by interest groups such as radical feminists, gay and lesbian groups, and advocates of various social causes. Some have contended that "Higgins Road" resembles the left wing of the Democratic Party and that sociology and politics have replaced theology as the standard for what the church says and does. This, in turn, has led to a widespread fear that the church will become nothing more than a reflection of American society and culture. There has also been evident a spirit of expediency. For example, the national church has supported the Church Growth Movement, probably in an attempt to stop declining membership and reduced benevolence giving.

Concerns for the ELCA's future have been expressed in many quarters; however, the most pointed expression of those concerns was presented in a document issued on the Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lord, March 25, 1995. It was entitled *9.5 Theses Con-*

cerning the Confession of the Faith in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and was initially signed by eight pastors from New Jersey. Its message was straightforward and to the point: "The ELCA is in a crisis — a crisis of faith. The critical question is whether this church will prove faithful to the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures and the catholic creeds and evangelical confessions, or fall into apostasy — a fall which could go either to the right or to the left."

Enthusiasm, fundamentalism, nationalism, and pietism were listed as ideologies to the right; ideologies to the left included activism, feminism, and advocacy. The struggle appears to be conservative versus liberal, but the real struggle is for faithful adherence to the Scriptures, creeds, and confessions. The *9.5 Theses* were intended as a tithe on Luther's *Ninety-five Theses.* In each case, orthodox truths were affirmed and false teachings were rejected. The overall contention was that "the Word of God is silenced among us and driven out of the Church" when the church fails to confess and live those orthodox truths. The *9.5 Theses* have been disseminated and have appeared in many Lutheran journals (see *Logia*, Eastertide/April 1995). Most of the Advent/November 1995 issue of the *Lutheran Forum* was devoted to the *9.5 Theses* and contained commentaries on each of the theses, written by their authors. The commentaries, written by parish pastors, show great depth and are, in my opinion, the most substantial contribution to date to the theological issues facing the ELCA. They reveal that there is a strong confessional presence in the ELCA and that those who are committed to confessional integrity will be heard and are willing to wage battle for the church and the truth of the gospel.

What lies in the future for the ELCA? Many of the problems facing the ELCA can be traced back to the way in which the church was organized. The ELCA is also, of course, experiencing the same struggles and conflicts as other religious groups in the United States. The issue of how the church relates to the culture (not a new one) still causes lively debate and controversy. But the main task facing the ELCA is that of recovering a sense of confessional consciousness — a commitment to its identity as a confessing movement within the church catholic. If it can achieve that recovery, it will be unified under the gospel and carry out its mission; if such a recovery is not achieved, then only division can result.

It is always dangerous to attempt to predict the future, but some hopeful signs have appeared. At its 1995 Assembly, H. George Anderson was elected as Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, succeeding Herbert Chilstrom. Chilstrom's leadership has been criticized on several points. Many have felt that he was too tolerant of the special interests that tried to influence the ELCA. Others wondered if some of those interests reflected his own views — for example, Chilstrom strongly advocated adoption of the first draft of the "Statement on Human Sexuality." There was a strong feeling that Chilstrom did not have the theological background to deal with the problems facing the ELCA. Anderson, on the other hand, is a church historian who knows the tradition and has stated that he is committed to teaching and passing on that tradition. Anderson's election was greeted with enthusiasm and the hope that under his leadership the ELCA would be put on the right theological track.

Another sign of hope is the emergence of the Conference of Bishops in giving some direction to the ELCA. Bishops have traditionally been pastors and teachers in the church, but in Lutheranism in America (especially when they were called presidents) they more resembled corporate executives. With the change in title, there has been a shift toward the traditional role of bishop. As pointed out earlier, the ELCA constitution assigned the Conference of Bishops only an advisory role. Nonetheless, the bishops are beginning to assume authority, speaking out on various issues and providing some theological direction to the ELCA. Their statement on the use of the traditional Trinitarian formula in baptism signaled their willingness to assume greater teaching responsibilities. Every indication is that this will continue, and newly-elected Presiding Bishop Anderson has indicated that he favors their involvement.

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There are, however, issues of concern — many of which are scheduled to be acted on at the 1997 Assembly. No less than three ecumenical proposals are up for consideration, as a package. Nothing has been previously said about ecumenism in this essay, but the ELCA's ecumenical situation is an indication of its lack of theological stability. The proposal to enter into full communion with the Presbyterian Church USA, the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ is fraught with difficulties. It is admitted that there is no agreement as to the Real Presence, the very heart of the meaning of the Eucharist; in addition, there are questions regarding the authority of confessional statements. The proposed Concordat with the Episcopal Church needs more discussion, especially on issues regarding the ministry. The ELCA is still unclear on this matter. The six-year study on the ministry, which was mandated in the merger, was carried out but achieved no more clarity on the subject than was present before. Of all the proposals, the mutual dropping of the sixteenth-century condemnations between Lutherans and Roman Catholics appears to have the least difficulty.

The responses to the study on sacramental practices have revealed widespread confusion regarding the sacraments — which are of the essence of the church. The report has some good points (discouraging indiscriminate baptisms and encouraging weekly Eucharist), but other proposals such as allowing a layperson to celebrate the Eucharist under certain circumstances, not consecrating new elements when one runs short, and the use of grape juice for alcoholics are causes for concern. It is to be hoped that these issues will be addressed in a way that is consistent with Lutheran confessional and liturgical traditions.

The purpose of seminaries has still not been adequately dealt with. This is evident in the report of the Task Force on Theological Education. The report is mainly concerned with effi-

ciency, economy, clustering of seminaries, and improved means of communication; but the report does not deal at all with seminary curricula. Over the years, requirements in the core disciplines of Bible, church history, and theology were reduced as sociological and psychological courses were added, either in the form of requirements or as electives. This can only result in seminary graduates having less knowledge of the Scriptures and the tradition and a diminished (or confused) consciousness of what it means to be a pastor. If the church does not deal with this matter, Lutheran identity will be threatened, and the ELCA will experience the theological erosion that is so characteristic of American Protestantism.

A word needs to be said on another subject, the Church Growth Movement. The ELCA is not alone in being confronted by this phenomenon; its influence has also crept into the other Lutheran church bodies in America. This movement is seductive because it offers a vision of success in terms of numbers and dollars. But, in order to achieve this success, the church needs to play down its own distinctiveness and cater to people's perceived needs. Distinctive doctrines are played down; the traditional liturgy is discarded; the sacraments are diminished. In short, the church ceases to be the church that offers salvation and instead becomes a social center that only entertains. I believe that this may be the single greatest threat to the church, and that threat must be met with an intense commitment to orthodox teaching and practice — vigorously to uphold the integrity of the catholic tradition, of which we Lutherans are a part.

As Lutherans, we believe in the indefectibility of the church — that God, through the work of the Holy Spirit, will preserve the church in some form to the end. The ELCA, however, deserves to survive only insofar as it is faithful to the Lutheran confessional heritage. Many of the problems it has faced in its short history are due to the fact that, in its attempt to be inclusive, it has tried to be all things to all people. But catholicity, the true mark of the church, implies a wholeness in the church's faith and life, its doctrine and worship. Catholicity calls the church to a particular confession and a particular mission — proclaiming Christ as the Redeemer of the world and being an instrument in the redemption of sinful people. If the ELCA is faithful in these matters, it will endure; if not, then its future is uncertain. The next few years will tell us a great deal. We who care about the ELCA's future must pray that the Spirit will work to enable the ELCA to be faithful to its calling and to carry out that calling with zeal. LOGIA

J. A. O. Preus

By Leigh Jordahl

The death of Jacob Aall Ottesen Preus ("Jack" to everyone who knew him — he didn't like formality and wore his earned and honorary doctor titles lightly) took from this life an extraordinarily controversial church leader. I knew him already when I was a grade-schooler in Decorah, Iowa. Later our acquaintance became intimate and continued so until the time of his death. He spent a lot of time with his grandfather, aunt, and uncle, who lived in the old Haugen house directly across the street from my paternal grandparents' retirement house in Decorah. The senior Mrs. Preus had been a Haugen and was so admired by my maternal grandparents that they named my mother Idella after Idella Haugen. By the time Jack came to Luther College in 1937, my grandfather was becoming senile. Grandma hid the car keys from him. She was not generous in lending the car out even to her own grandchildren. Yet she found Jack so likable that she happily gave the keys to him to let him transport his aunt and her numerous brood of children around town. The Haugens, once a leading merchant family, had been hard hit by the Great Depression and only barely kept themselves above water. So, in any event, Jack became their chauffeur via Grandpa's car, and was a jolly entertainer of the neighborhood children.

My mother, not much of a churchgoer after my father abandoned her and she was treated as though the guilty party by the clerical Jordahls, joined no church. Earlier in Mason City she had attended the Wisconsin Synod church. Nevertheless, she sent us to Sunday school and confirmation class at the historic First Lutheran Church in Decorah, long associated with the Preus family. There I got to know Jack, as he often substituted as teacher of our confirmation class. For all of us (I think there were thirty-three of us in the class) his sessions were a treat. Always casual, he sat on the desk with his legs crossed underneath himself and made learning fun. He teased us when we didn't know our lessons, and the teasing was effective. Significantly, he never teased the backward, slow learners, not even the poor boy who never could get right even the "What does this mean?" of the First Commandment. Most significantly, despite the digressions and relaxed, jolly style, he taught us more in his half-dozen sessions than we learned in all the rest of the one-year course. Best of all for the class, we were never bored and didn't watch the big clock on the wall behind our teacher. Later I got to know Jack even better when his younger brother, Robert, became my best friend at college. So, all in all, I knew Jack for over half a century; at 74 he was the same man I knew when he was 21. (He always said that a person's personality changes when he becomes an official; with Jack that didn't happen). When I interviewed him for the Lutheran Archives project in the mid-1970s it was as though he were still the young college student I had known in 1939.

Almost always jovial, always quick to form judgments, infatuated with watching people and sizing them up, impetuous, and given to generalizations expressed in sometimes wild hyperbole, he was restless, and, for someone so amazingly bright, too much on the move to become, as his younger brother did, a theologian in depth. And, as is well known, he hated face-to-face confrontation. It was a flaw in his character that (as is also reported of President Clinton) he tended to improvise and imply pacification when issues at hand should have been openly addressed and thrashed out. For that he sometimes was accused of being double-tongued. (I don't want to put too fine a point on that, since I wonder who could have done better at the tasks that confronted Preus when he came to leadership in the terribly divided Missouri of 1969.) Neither can I imagine Jack Preus plugging along year after year in a pastorate where nothing exciting was apt to happen, as, for instance, the *Faith-Life* editor did for forty years in a non-growing country parish. Not that Jack sought or received much glory, but he was once lightheartedly described as a man who ate Mexican jumping beans for breakfast.

Despite my frequent disappointment with Preus's improvisations and special disappointment during the crisis years of his presidency, when he sometimes used exactly the wrong people to do the demanding jobs of sorting out issues of doctrinal faithfulness, I summed up his life to a mutual friend as Paul Hensel in 1963 had summed up his sometime-adversary, Norman Madson, long-time chief leader of the ELS and Hensel's acquaintance of many years: "A serious theologian who loved his Savior." Above all, Preus saw no way to preserve the faith without the traditional doctrine of Scripture.

The obituary accounts of Jack Preus were numerous and mostly not surprising. Following the lead of the *New York Times,* the secular papers portrayed him as a fire-breathing, hard-nosed, heresy-hunting fundamentalist who produced a major schism. Surprisingly, the *Christian Century* was less harsh. Despite Preus's more than a decade of energetic and unglamorous service to the ELS, its *Lutheran Sentinel* carried an only slightly-veiled portrayal of him as a man of compromising character. The *Lutheran Witness* put out a memorial issue with Preus's picture on the cover. The write-up was exactly what we might expect as a public relations production. A close friend reports that the funeral itself was an exercise in unperceptive hagiography with nary a trace of real gospel proclamation.

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The *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* article was a bland chronicle. Most interesting was an obituary in the *Lutheran Forum,* written by its editor, who had himself left Missouri to join up with the ill-fated dissident group. Leonard Klein disagreed with Preus on particulars but gave him the credit he deserved for insisting on gospel integrity. I wished that James Adams, the Roman Catholic author of the hastily-put-together *Preus of Missouri* (1977), had written something; Adams was a journalist rather than a theologian, didn't really understand Lutheran theology, but did amazingly well in getting at the paradoxical personality that made J. A. O. Preus a unique church leader.

In no event did Preus have any artist to portray him with even half-justice.

As I read the varied articles I thought to myself of J. P. Koehler. Koehler was, to use the biological term, a genuine "sport." That means to exhibit a sudden and unexpected deviation from type beyond the normal limits of variation, or put another way, a surprise on the scene — in that sense not unlike Luther. In his *History of the Wisconsin Synod* Koehler managed in few lines to sketch vignettes of such varied actors as John Muelhaeuser, C. F. W. Walther, Adolph Hoenecke, and August Ernst, and to sum up as a master artist the tragic impasse represented by the Election Controversy. Setting things in their time and place and in light of the forces that created them, Koehler, with clarity and charity but no sentimentality, painted, as a good artist must, pictures that allowed the reader to "see" rather than just compile information, and furthermore, to see in such a way as to learn for our own edification. In no event did Preus have any artist to portray him with even half-justice.

Scion of a distinguished Norwegian gentry family, Preus's great-grandfather ("orthodox to his fingertips" and nothing of a populist) was one of several gentry pastors who settled in the Upper Midwest in the mid-nineteenth century. Unlike the Saxons who settled in Missouri, the Norwegian immigrants came not for religious reasons, but to experience economic upward mobility. Neither did their pastors come as protesters against the state church of Norway. Their names are well known in American Norwegian church history: Koren, Ottesen, Hjort, Brandt, Muus, Larsen, and, though not from a gentry background, Ylvisaker. Educated in the University of Christiania (now Oslo), and mostly married to well-educated gentry-class women, they had been strongly influenced by the nineteenth-century confessional revival. Many of their lay members had been influenced by the Haugean pietistic movement. Important to realize, they were not "Old Lutherans" in the sense that the founders of the Missouri or Buffalo synods were. In no sense were they schismatic, and their ties with the somewhat latitudinarian Norwegian state church were cordial though increasingly remote. Missouri lived in the world of the Formula of Concord and cultivated the polemical thesis-antithesis style. The Norwegian Synod leaders admired the Formula too, but officially subscribed only to the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism. Given their background, the Norwegians developed what has been called a combination of "orthodoxy-pietism." Their favorite hymnody was not so much the sixteenth-century chorale as it was the more subjective Norwegian hymns.

Adolph Hoenecke once said of the Missourians, "There is something sectarian about them." As interpreted by his vicar, J. P. Koehler, he didn't mean to criticize their doctrine so much as "a peculiarity of demeanor . . . that inclines one to give others the cold shoulder and never rises above one's parochial view, speech and manners" (*History of the Wisconsin Synod*, 153). He meant, I think, what I have referred to as "triumphalism" even when it moves in the direction of liberalism. Put into pastoral practice, it thrived on such things as points of unionism so fine as to take on, unintentionally, to be sure, the character of pagan taboos.

The Norwegian leaders, orthodox to the core but less aggressive, quickly developed an affection for the St. Louis-based Missourians. For years they trained their ministerial candidates at Concordia Seminary. Yet Norwegian orthodoxy, certainly on the level of parish practice, never really worked successfully. Attempts to establish parish schools were a failure. On the subject of slavery, Norwegians found Missouri's position offensive. The numerous academies founded by the Norwegians were coeducational general schools and employed teachers of both sexes. They died a natural death as the public schools developed high schools. Even the premier Luther College was never strictly a worker-training school as were the Missourian Concordias. Ladies' aids flourished and ingeniously developed schemes to raise money. Many a congregation would have been in serious trouble were it not for the proceeds from ladies' aid groups. Even in the orthodox Little Synod (formed in 1917 to protest the Norwegian merger) its premier Minneapolis church continued for years to run a food stand at the Minnesota State Fair. As Norwegian middle-class congregations developed in the cities, few were those where it wasn't known that the pastor disliked the Masonic organization; few were the city parishes that were free of Masonic members. So also even the more conservative pastors allowed a fraternization, say, at weddings and funerals, that would have been branded unionism by Missouri standards. Briefly put, the Norwegians adjusted relatively easily to the American democratic ethos. I expect the congregations that achieved anything like the tight ship sponsored by Missouri were almost nonexistent. Orthodoxy it was, but coupled with a streak of pietism and pastoral pragmatism: "When in doubt, err on the side of generosity." On the other hand, pietistic strictures about card playing, dancing, and alcoholic consumption were deeply rooted and in such contrast to Missouri that Norwegians felt little at home with Missouri.

Jack Preus came from a highly prestigious family that admired Missourian doctrine, but, given the crisis of the 1917 merger, had reluctantly gone along with it. He bore a name that implied leadership of meritocracy, and there was, in fact, a kind of mystique about both the Preus and Ylvisaker names. Jack's father, contrary to family tradition, went into law and politics, became two-term governor of Minnesota, a founder of Lutheran Brotherhood Insurance, and along the way prospered financially. Somewhat aloof and dignified in manner (his son was just the opposite —

something of a combination of William Jennings Bryan's populism and Ronald Reagan's "cozy" affability), Preus senior had little patience with organized synods and betrayed a strain of anti-clericalism. Yet he never doubted the straightforward Lutheran orthodoxy on which he had been reared. Neither was there any trace of pietism in his makeup. However orthodox he was, he was not much of a churchman. He attended church where he felt comfortable, whether ELC, Missouri, or ELS. When in Chicago, he frequented the ELS St. Mark's, of which his cousin was pastor, and in the 1950s I saw him quite regularly at the Hiawatha Church of the ELS in Minneapolis, where he regularly communed. His orthodox sympathies were demonstrated when he sent both his sons to the Missourian Redeemer Church in Chicago for confirmation. A freewheeling, old-fashioned Lutheran was what he was, who didn't much trust any organized synod.

As might have been predicted, given the Preus loyalty to Luther College, Jack entered as a freshman in 1937. Having gone to the elite Lake Forest Academy, Jack found Luther College not very demanding. With a small faculty, it tried to offer a full range of majors. The faculty had its share of mediocre teachers, but three or four stars. Its top star was O. W. Qualley, for more than half a century its aggressively demanding and enthusiastic professor of Latin and Greek. Jack, building on a good background in Latin, chose to major in the classics (as did also his very serious classmate and future wife). Jack breezed through college with honor grades and a minimum of hard work. Years later, Qualley remembered Jack as one of his three truly exceptional students. "Bright, quick, relaxed," he said. Also, he added that it was sometimes irritating that Jack sight-read what other students had to spend hours preparing. With an amused smile, since Qualley liked his bright student, he also termed him "something of a rascal." By Jack's own admission he never felt at home Saturday nights with either the small prayer-meeting groups or the numerous drinking groups. Yet he had friends in both groups.

In any event, Jack had lots of fun at college, and there was not even a trace of "Preusian elitism" about him. Jack became a combination of sharp student and fun-loving "regular guy." A female classmate recently recalled that already after the first week of classes, everyone on campus knew Jack and everyone liked him. President of his senior class, his fellow students expected him to do well. They also knew his special gift was as a people charmer, but, it is important to realize, not as one who worked at his gift. His brother, Robert, on the other hand, was very different and already in college demonstrated gifts in a more scholarly direction and already then was articulately orthodox.

The ELC's Luther Seminary in St. Paul served Jack Preus poorly. Its professor of dogmatics neither appreciated nor knew classical Lutheran theology. In reaction to a teacher for whom he had no respect, Jack took up the old Lutheran dogmaticians with a vengeance and became bitterly critical of the theological leadership of his adopted denomination. As the leader of a small reform movement at Luther Seminary, he hoped to reverse trends in a church he believed had a lot of spirituality but no sound theological footings. From a pastoral point of view, Jack was far less doctrinaire. As a vicar in a busy, go-getting, middle class parish whose pastor ran a loose ship in matters of church discipline and was blithely unaware of what Missourians meant by "unionism," Jack was enormously popular even though somewhat uncomfortable. Had he been scolded, I suspect he might have lifted St. Paul up as an example of "being all things to all men." Later, and with some irony, his more orthodox brother also vicared successfully in the same parish.

Soon after, as a pastor in a genuine blue-collar church in South St. Paul, Preus was as popular as he had been at Luther College. That is not surprising since, like an old fashioned populist, Jack always felt at home with common people, and even as a church president he would as soon stay at a farm house as at a fancy motel. He had an unstudied knack for adjusting to any host's style of life. I once went to hear Jack at his first parish. The sermon was artlessly folksy, down-to-earth, but enthusiastically evangelical. I didn't think he had spent much time on it. Liturgically, things were on the casual side, with hymns sung of the decently "old-favorite" variety (the only one I remember is "Beautiful Savior"). Meanwhile, Jack watched a block down the street where Winfred Schaller, newly called from Saginaw, determinedly and with speed and dispatch "cleaned house" at Wisconsin's previously lax Grace Church. Jack was intrigued by something he had never encountered before, and watched with half-admiration and half-shock. Years later he reacted similarly when he watched Gervasius Fischer even more energetically tear to pieces the large Immanuel Church in Mankato in the interest of a unionism-pure pastoral orthodoxy.

Jack had lots of fun at college, and there was not even a trace of "Preusian elitism" about him.

I mention those things because even at his most conservative, Preus was no purist but something of a pragmatist. Furthermore, and to his weakness, he was, as it were, restless, easily bored, not much given to slow, painstaking study (though his magnificent work in translating the difficult Martin Chemnitz is an exception). Neither did he plow any new ground. For years I tried to get him to read J. P. Koehler, whose intention was never to find a middle way but rather a "new" way that would transcend the deadlock of liberal versus conservative. As far as I know, he never read more than Koehler's "Gesetzlich Wesen unter uns." He liked that and thought he fit Koehler's model pretty well!

By the late 1940s, both the Preus brothers gave up on the ELC. Their father admired some of his college friends who had paid the hard price for their conscience scruples in 1917 and formed the "Little Norwegian Synod," now the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. He especially admired the cultured, scholarly, and very dignified S. C. Ylvisaker, who gave up a good professorship to join up with the tiny, despised protesting group centered at Bethany College in Mankato. Their congregations were mostly small remnant groups, and their junior college-academy just barely, thanks to the sacrificial leadership of Ylvisaker, managed to recruit enough students to keep going. Missourians constituted about half its student body.

Jack Preus severed ties with the ELC, joined the ELS, and immediately was called in 1947 to assume a professorship of Latin, Greek, and, as needed, other subjects. The teaching load was heavy, his family was growing at the rate of almost a baby a year (he was a new-style husband who pitched into the work at home), and he was in demand as a preacher. As one would have expected, he was instantly popular with the students. Almost but not quite chummy, Jack's classes were informal, sometimes randomly organized, and he was ubiquitously visible. He greeted everyone with a "Hi, how are you?" Yet a former student, now a professor of Latin at a state university, remembers him, as Preus remembered Qualley, as the best teacher he ever had.

In parish practice, he was middle-of-the-road if contrasted with ELC laxism and the Wisconsin rigorism he had observed in Mankato.

With all the zeal of a new convert, Jack took to the synod with enthusiasm, but related best to the older pastors who had personally paid the price for their convictions. He was less impressed with the second generation Missouri-trained pastors: some of them struck him as "organization types," and others, notably the local pastor to whose church the faculty went, appeared to have taken on the complete baggage of old-Missouri. The latter group he respected but knew he would not pattern himself accordingly; the former group he regarded as eager to run things. At Bethany, Jack felt closest to Ylvisaker and Norman Madson, the fiery but passionate gospel preacher. While he never openly criticized his pastor, C. M. Gullerud, or Gullerud's buddy Egbert Schaller, he did say privately that both were something like canon lawyers who interpreted rules as sharply as possible — "When in doubt, come down hard." Some years later, after the ELS fellowship break with Missouri, it was Gullerud, supported by Bethany's very able choir director, Alfred Fremder, who, interpreting unionism in its most rigoristic manner, maintained that Missouri students at Bethany should not sing in the choir. Neither could they commune at the local church. Jack, knowing that in the long catholic tradition both "rigorism" and "laxism" were heresies, regarded that position as shockingly sectarian (aside from being foreign to Jack's natural instincts).

In 1950 a schism occurred in the ELC church at Luverne. A group wanted to form an ELS parish, and Jack, encouraged by synodical advisers, accepted the call. The situation was touchy. For five years he labored with remarkable success and built a strong congregation. In parish practice, he was middle-of-the-road if contrasted with ELC laxism and the Wisconsin rigorism he had observed in Mankato. He won the lasting affection and deep respect of his Luverne lay people. During those same years, the battle was heating up with Missouri. For reasons I have never fully understood (I was a complete outsider to the ELS by then, and in company with my wife's Gullerud family, we kept off theological issues), both Preus brothers led the push to suspend fellowship with Missouri. Yet Jack was never infatuated with Wisconsin "canon-law" orthodoxy. He found it contradictory that Wisconsin Synod pastors listened to readings of Koehler's "Gesetzlich Wesen," but didn't catch its critique of just their tendencies. I can only explain the Preus push for suspension as the zeal of a not-yet-disillusioned new convert, influenced also by his admiration for Norman Madson, himself an impressive but impulsive man who had come to loathe Missouri "double-talk."

By 1957 the Preus love affair with the synod was over; the leaders they had admired were no longer at the helm. A vacancy occurred in the faculty of the Bethany Seminary. Robert was the obvious and only real candidate. He was passed over, and Robert, never personally ambitious, knew exactly that the turn-down couldn't be explained in terms other than repudiation. Soon Concordia Seminary, on a crusade to add doctorates to its faculty, offered a call to St. Louis. Looking back at his experiences in the "Little Synod," he wrote, "Gossip and envy are the bane at a small synod." Meanwhile, Jack was back at Bethany as fund raiser and student recruiter. Bethany needed Missouri students, yet its practices made it impossible to recruit such students with a good conscience. Jack knew as well that within the "old-boy network" he was as much *persona non grata* as Robert had become.

Only once in my life did I see Jack really depressed. Knowing the handwriting on the wall, he came to visit me at St. Olaf College. After briefly apologizing that he had not spoken up more strongly in my defense when I had had my own troubles with the synod, he poured out his heart about his own problems. He knew Missouri would use him, given his doctorate and prestigious name (even old Missouri had been infatuated with degrees). He wasn't sure his conscience would allow that. He knew he wouldn't fit into what he termed "the unimaginative, inbred Wisconsin Synod." The University of Minnesota classics department had recommended him for a couple of good secular colleges. He was in obvious anguish and, he said, his wife was as well. My guess was that he would leave the ministry and become, like his father, a faithful Lutheran bound to no organized synod.

The rest of the story as to outward details is well known. Jack Preus went to Concordia Seminary in Springfield and soon became its president. By 1969, with a presidential election coming up, Missouri was in such trouble that some sort of show-down was inevitable. The St. Louis faculty, all protests to the contrary notwithstanding, was clearly tolerating the much-feared higher biblical criticism, which inevitably, as the entire history of contemporary biblical scholarship demonstrates, destroys the old doctrine (inherited from the Jews and simply assumed by all parties to the sixteenth-century controversies) of verbal inspiration. For mainstream Missouri this compromised the *Sola Scriptura*. All attempts by the so-called liberal party to insist that its theology had not really changed rang hollow. As it turned out, two crucial elections took place in 1969. John Tietjen, like Jack Preus pretty much a Missouri outsider, became president of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. In a surprise election, Preus became synodical president. I have no reason to believe that either election was free of political maneuvering. Nor do I believe that "bad

faith" was more characteristic of one side than the other. I do know that the differences were irreconcilable.

Sometime in late 1970 or 1971 (I don't recall the date) I met C. S. Meyer at the Chicago air terminal. Both of us had time on our hands and sat down to visit. My wife had once been a baby-sitter for the Meyers in Mankato, so we visited about the Gullerud family and old days at Bethany. At my initiation, the conversation moved over to the intra-Missouri issues. Of Preus and Tietjen, Meyer said, "They live in two such different worlds that there is no way they can even communicate. Besides that, they don't like each other." I thought of Winston Churchill's famous comment, "Identify the enemy and exaggerate the danger."

To the overwhelmingly liberal press, Preus became the scoundrel.

The story that followed unfolded like a Greek tragedy. Jack, supported from the sidelines by the ultra-conservative *Christian News* crowd, became for a time their hero. Tietjen, supported by a loyal faculty, didn't compromise and neither did his faculty when, for instance, confronted by a "fact-finding" committee. Tietjen became the star figure of a faculty exodus. To the overwhelmingly liberal press, Preus became the scoundrel; Tietjen and coterie were hailed as martyrs (did any martyrs ever receive the public glory and fame that they did?). In time the exodus group became the AELC, influenced the formation of the ELCA, and seemed happy to have freed themselves of every remnant of their Missourian past. The ELCA itself became a mainline liberal Protestant denomination.

Jack Preus, on the other hand, failed to live up to the rigoristic standards his erstwhile supporters had laid on him. Viewed in retrospect, it appears that Preus himself was more the genuine moderate than were those who styled themselves by that name. In no event did Preus succeed in rebuilding "old Missouri." Neither, however, did he manage, as J. P. Koehler had so valiantly attempted, to discover a "new way" to reorient theology. The time for that had passed, and even the "evangelical catholicism" now so eloquently being promoted by a small wing of disillusioned ELCA Lutherans is almost surely not going to succeed. For all that, and over against a characterless ELCA, a Missouri flirting around with such novelties as Church Growth, or a Wisconsin happily unaware of its once-pioneering "historical-exegetical" evangelical witness, the evangelical catholics are at least serious. To that extent they intrigued Jack Preus during my last long visit with him (which is not to suggest for a moment that he might have joined their crowd). But the point here is not to discuss the possible futures. It is rather to say my last word about a baffling Jack Preus.

My wife died in spring 1993. When I called Jack, he said he would be at the funeral if Delpha was up to the trip. At the last moment she wasn't, so Jack was an absent pallbearer (some thirty years earlier I had been a pallbearer at his father's funeral). I sent the funeral bulletin to him and he almost immediately called back to say that the readings and hymns were "just wonderful." As he put it, he had never before realized what a magnificent hymn Martin Schalling's "Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart" was. Maybe, he said, he should list that for his own and Delpha's funerals in addition to their already chosen, more subjective favorite, "Behold a Host Arrayed in White." I don't know if the hymn was used, but what Jack said he loved in the Schalling hymn were the lines "Lord Jesus Christ, my God and Lord, / Forsake me not! I trust thy word," and "I will praise thee without end."

Schalling himself in the sixteenth century found himself caught between two irreconcilable parties: the Flacian-led Gnesio-Lutherans and the "compromising" Melanchthonians. He paid his price and ended up as a hero to neither side. Refusing to compromise with the government-led Reformed-Lutheran liturgy, he lost his parish. Refusing to accept what he regarded as the excessive condemnations of Melanchthon set forth by the writers of the Formula of Concord, he also lost a ministry. Yet his great hymn is a witness to his deep faith. About Jack Preus it can also be said, when everything else has been said, that it was the Lord Jesus he meant to extol, and it is for that he would want to be remembered.

Preus was not the theologian or church leader who was needed to forge a new way to overcome the delinquencies already apparent in the Lutheran controversies of the nineteenth century. Still less could he rescue Lutheranism from the twentieth-century crisis that was only a logical consequence of earlier wrong turns. Only a miracle, on which one never dare count, can lead to a reawakened Lutheran vitality and integrity. What can be said is that Preus loved his Savior, and did his best, given his personal make-up and theological tools, to be a faithful steward. I think of the last line of John Bunyan's once-popular hymn:

> He who would valiant be 'gainst all disaster,
> Let him in constancy follow the Master.
> There's no discouragement shall make him once relent,
> His first avowed intent to be a pilgrim" (*SBH,* 563: 1).

Conversation between Two Lutherans Concerning Church Organization

Herman Fick[1]

It was in the early days of May this year. The woods and prairies were already clad in their finest delicate greens, and the sky displayed a dark blue as a steamship made its way down one of those beautiful rivers that grace America's west. Along with other travelers it also carried a delegate who had attended the first convention of the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States in Chicago.[2] He was now on his way home, but first he wanted to visit his friend Erich.

Not long after there appeared on the left bank a friendly settlement that had been established within a short time by German industriousness. The helmsman sounded his bell, the wheels fell silent, and the boat came slowly to shore. Gangplanks were laid and several people came ashore, among them our delegate. He made his way to a house that stood at the top of a hill.

His friend welcomed him: "Greetings, Siegfried!" And both of them celebrated this moment of reunion, one of the most beautiful moments in this life.

"Where have you been, old friend?" asked Erich afterward as both of them made themselves comfortable on the summer porch of the little farmhouse.

Siegfried: At our synod, which held its first meeting in Chicago.

Erich: (Surprised) At a synod?

S: Yes. Why not?

E: I would never have expected that from you.

S: Why? What's wrong with a synod?

E: Is it any different from what they call a consistory in Germany?

S: Well, no, not really.

E: Good grief! That I have to see a friend of mine help rob our Lutheran congregations of their precious rights and freedoms.

S: Erich!

E: What fun the enemies of Christ and the anti-clerics are going to have with that when they find it out. Now already they are making fun of this bag called a "synod" into which congregations would be stuck and which pastors would open up only when they want to let them see something. I would never have expected that from you!

S: Let me . . .

E: My dear brother, don't you remember anymore that lovely time when we got free from the pressures in Germany and here in our new homeland came by God's grace to know the church and true religious freedom? Every day we read God's Word together and in it we found clear witness to a fellowship more genuine, more brotherly and free than anything we had ever imagined and for which we had only longed in the depths of our hearts. How happy we were then! No matter what our present home lacked at first in learning and art and all the niceties of life, it now seemed rich to us. We saw its mountains and forests and prairies shining in the light of freedom, and our breasts were filled with a holy eagerness to build the free church of the Lord. Filled with joy then, you sang about how much free brotherly fellowship meant:

> Here are not priests or laymen,
> Here are no clerics grand.
> No! Brothers here and freemen,
> A dear and lovely band. etc.[3]

And now — I have to be frank with you, no matter how it hurts me — you are getting yourself right back into the hands of the clergy.[4]

S: Well, I thank God in heaven that he brought me here to you so that we can really talk out this matter of forming a church organization. I only ask you to keep an open mind and to express your reservations freely, and I have no doubt that we will understand one another and come to agreement. Just as before, I want to continue to fight for the freedom of the church, and, if necessary, even die for it, God helping me.

You called our synod a German consistory?

E: That's why I hate them both, because they are tyrants. German consistories take away from the congregations the right to choose and call their own pastors and to govern themselves. Instead, they often bring outright unbelievers, rationalists, and other false teachers to be their preachers, and, armed with temporal authority, they even forbid them to dismiss such godless pastors.

German consistories have robbed our people of the beautiful old Lutheran hymns by watering them down with rationalistic nonsense, and they have introduced catechisms, doctrinal books, and agendas with false beliefs.

And how shabbily they have generally treated the preachers and congregations who believe correctly! I even know of a consistory that had a policy that whenever a congregation requested someone as its preacher, the request would be rejected as a matter of course so that no one would get the idea that the congregation itself had the right to call its pastor. The consistory permitted ene-

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mies of Christ and people who ridiculed his holy gospel to be its officials. And when these were finally denounced because of their infamous actions, it said they had the right to do such things.

In short, the only rights our Lutheran congregations in Germany have are the right to pay and the right to obey. And as a Lutheran am I not supposed to hate such an abomination to the death?

S: It is true that many of the consistories in Germany today are like that, but they were not always that way, nor are all of them like that now.

E: Did God get us free from the pope's tyranny by Luther's labors only to sell us into slavery to a worldly consistory? Christ has called us to freedom.

S: As much as I recognize with you the abuses of our church in Germany and feel the pain of that, still, it seems to me an outrage if so many German people, as soon as they land on American soil, shower our old fatherland with poisonous ridicule and can find nothing good about it at all.

E: That is indeed a shame, because whatever good we have here has come to us from God and from Germany.

S: You know how faithfully and wonderfully our brothers in the faith in Germany are concerned about forsaken Lutherans in America.

E: God bless them for it!

S: So when we disclose the defects of the church in Germany, let us do it with a kind of love that feels the pain of our brothers who suffer under it as if it were our own pain. The Lutheran church in America and in Germany is all one church, because there is only one body of the Lord in the whole world, and if one member suffers the others suffer along with him.

E: May God set things right for them! No matter how fervently we decry the slavery of the congregations in Germany, we still are not the only ones who do so. There are many devout Christians over there who continually beseech God to redeem his captive people. And God listens to prayer.

Tell me, how was it possible for consistories to get started?

S: You know how clearly and strongly our confessions and Luther himself proclaimed the freedom of the church on the basis of God's Word. For example, in the writing titled "That a Christian Gathering or Congregation Has the Right and Authority to Judge All Doctrine, to Call, Install and Depose Teachers"[5] or in a "Circular Letter Concerning How Church Servants Should Be Chosen and Installed, to the Council and Congregation of the City of Prague."[6]

E: And yet that freedom was lost.

S: Congregations at the time of the Reformation lacked too much in the Christian knowledge that is necessary to be able to govern themselves everywhere and in every way.

E: That, undoubtedly, is what the papist priests brought about.

S: Since there were God-fearing princes and devout rulers at that time who lovingly guided the affairs of the congregation, the congregations trustingly handed over their rights to the consistories, especially since these consisted of laymen as well as clergy, and they shared the church's faith and genuinely tried to do what was best for it.

E: So the consistorial type of organization was well suited for the needs of that time?

S: Certainly. In the Lord's hand it has been a tool by which he has blessed his people. But the congregations did not keep watch, and so in time power in the church came to be increasingly in the hands of secular rulers, even though several Lutherans protested as earnestly as they could that Christ had not rescued his people from papal slavery only to make them servants of political lords.[7]

E: Ah, that sounds grand! If only all of them had borne witness like that.

S: Then the church would have remained free. But since they didn't do it, the church regulations finally even proposed the awful teaching that civil rulers were the "highest bishops" of the church.[8]

E: No, that's impossible. The same justification is used by the pope and bishops to call themselves the bridegroom of the church.

S: So now the "royal, archducal, and ducal consistories" rule the Lutheran church of Germany in the name of the princes.

E: So that's how the rulers took the control and honor from Christ and assumed it for themselves.

S: You have surely heard of his highness, the king of Bavaria.[9] His life is well known. He is a papist, and, as such, the highest bishop of the Lutheran church in his country. His Lutheran pastors also are actually called "royal pastors"!

E: You're kidding!

S: Unfortunately that is the bitter truth. In fact, that is not the only example. It is even worse in Prussia. There the last king[10] ruled the church himself, dictating his own articles of faith and even establishing his own church, the Evangelical Church, when he as the supreme bishop united the Lutheran and Reformed Churches.

E: Oh, yes, isn't that the same church that here is called "United" or Reformed-Lutheran" or "Lutheran-Reformed"?

S: It is the same conglomeration, and it arose out of the mistaken idea that it makes no difference what we receive in the Lord's Supper. This indifference is the chief article of faith upon which the union rests, its real foundation.

E: But it doesn't seem to me that that would last too long. Did the Prussian Lutherans understand this profound doctrine of their king?

S: He tried to explain it through both his spiritual and his temporal soldiers, but all for nothing.

E: What do you mean?

S: Well, first of all his underlings in the church, that is, his high royal consistorial councils, professors, and pastors, sought to prove the union's articles of faith to the Lutherans; and when the Lutherans refused to be convinced, he sent his royal soldiers.

E: And did they preach more convincingly about the union?

S: Yes, with bayonets. The king's spiritual soldiers had maintained that brotherly love was really the inner basis of the union, and the military soldiers now had to give outward evidence of this by using force to introduce the king's agenda and by proving it to those who resisted by imprisoning and fining them and putting them under house arrest.[11]

E: That sounds like the way the Roman pope formerly used to prove to our fathers the articles of faith that he himself had made up.

S: This too is obviously caesaropapism, that is, worldly papism.

E: What did our brothers in Prussia do about it?

S: Many suffered as martyrs and made their protests like men.

E: And what reply did the Prussian pope-king give to that?

S: As "supreme bishop" he allowed the Lutherans to have their church taken away. His whole papal-royal church yelled bloody murder over those bad Lutherans because they didn't want to burn incense to his image and enjoy his Lord's Supper. Unspeakable misery, trouble, and suffering for conscience' sake overtook them, and they left the country by the thousands to look in North America and South Australia for the freedom to follow conscience which their homeland had denied them.

E: Is it any better over there now?

S: The present Prussian king[12] has designated the Lutheran church a sect; they have as much freedom as the Jews.

E: Is that what it has come to for the church of the Lord that in the course of the centuries has had the name "Lutheran," which according to its confession is one with the holy Christian church? Has it now come to this, that the children must flee to the mountains? For the abomination stands once again in the holy place.[13] God drove it out through Luther, but the kings with their servants have dragged it back in again.

Yes, the end draws near. The last times are here. The last and most difficult battle is at hand. The kings used to be guardians and the princes were the nurses of the church, but what are they now? Robbers and tyrants who have robbed the Lord of his honor, his church of her royal crown, her privilege, and her freedom. She, the noble queen, must now serve those who should serve her, for the scepter of the godless rules over her. Her jewels and her joy are left behind. Rejected and banished she cries day and night in clothes of mourning and there is no one to lead her, and her enemy boasts loudly. Oh, Lord Jesus Christ, our only heavenly King, you, the only Overshepherd and Bishop of our souls, look upon this vineyard! The wild pigs have rooted it up and the wild beasts have destroyed it.[14] Look upon your church in the east, languishing in her Babylonian captivity.[15]

S: Be comforted, Erich. She is founded upon the holy hill.[16]

E: The Roman papacy is growing,[17] a hellish monster with deceitful powers; it grows stronger again and comes forth into the open and stretches out its bloody claws over Europe and America while many are deceived and long for its wanton beauty.[18] The Greek Catholic emperor-pope of Russia persecutes the church with slavish, despotic severity. German pope-kings have bound them with bonds of worldly power. False teaching, unbelief, and empty philosophy take over in the world. Indeed, Gog and Magog are already surrounding the beloved city.[19] Oh, I see nothing but night!

S: And I see only sunshine. Did not Christ have to enter his glory through suffering?

E: That is true. And so also the church had to win its victory through martyrdom. And so now also it must fight through martyrdom for its freedom and its rights.

S: That's the way it has to be. We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God.[20] There must be suffering, but there is also victory, for the victory is our faith which overcomes the world.[21]

E: That is the ancient rule.

S: And, in addition, take the old but always new promise: "The Lord said to my lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.' The Lord will send the scepter of your kingdom from Zion. Rule among your enemies. The Lord at your right hand will smash the kings at the time of his wrath."[22]

E: The Scripture must be fulfilled in our time also.

S: In that we want to take comfort, Erich. Let us never forget the land of our fathers, for God's grace and its blessing have given us a true and genuine freedom of religion here. May God also rescue our brothers from the yoke of tyranny.

E: Yes, let us pray, hope, and wait for that until our final breath.

The sun sank in the clear western sky. The endless prairies filled with a white mist, while the stream at the foot of the hill flowed darker in the shadow of the lofty woods that bordered its banks. A profound stillness fell over everything, and the two friends sat quietly with hands folded and watched as the light of day took its leave from them, its red rays bidding them a last friendly greeting.

"Let us go, Siegfried," said Erich, standing up. "Night has fallen on our conversation, and soon the dew will fall and the cold wind will blow." LOGIA

NOTES

1. The name Herman Fick followed the final installment. Carl Johann Hermann Fick (February 2, 1822–April 29, 1885) was born in Doenhausen, Hanover, Germany, the son of an army lieutenant and grandson of a Lutheran pastor. He studied theology at the University of Goettingen. In 1845 he read F. C. D. Wyneken's tract "Die Noth der deutschen Lutheraner in Nord-Amerika" and decided to go to America. He prepared briefly at Neuendettelsau and sailed for America in September of 1846. After a stay in Fort Wayne he arrived in St. Louis in January 1847. An article by him appeared in the February 9, 1847, issue of *Der Lutheraner,* the first of many. He applied for the position of pastor in the Lutheran congregation of New Melle, Missouri, and was called to that position. He asked, however, that his installation be delayed until after the organization of a new synod. He was present in Chicago at the organizational meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States and was colloquized there the evening of Monday, April 26. He served in New Melle, Missouri (1847–1850), Bremen, Missouri (1850–1854), Detroit, Michigan (1854–1859), Collinsville, Illinois (1859–1872), and Boston, Massachussetts (1872–1885). He served on the first Mission Board of the synod and later gave service as visitor, district vice-president of the Northern District, and synodical vice-president for the eastern area. He was a prolific writer, his special interests being church history and poetry. C. F. W. Walther regarded him a close friend and after Fick's death wrote a biography of him entitled "Zur Erinnerung an unseren unvergesslichen Fick," which appeared in *Der Lutheraner* 42 (July 15, 1886): 105–107; (August 1, 1886): 113–114; (August 15, 1886): 121–123; (September 1, 1886): 129–130; (September 15, 1886): 137–139. See also Walter D. Uhlig, "Our Unforgettable Fick," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* [Hereafter, *CHIQ*] 36 (January 1964): 101–114; and Carl S. Meyer, "Walther's Biographies of Buenger and Fick," *CHIQ,* 45 (August, 1972): 193–207. A translation of *Der Lutheraner*'s report on Fick's ordination on May 29, 1847, is found in Carl S. Meyer, ed., *Moving Frontiers* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), 200–201.

2. This meeting in Chicago was held from Monday, April 26, to Thursday, May 6, 1847, at the church served by the Reverend C. August Selle. [W. F. Hufmann], "Erster Synodalbericht der deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten vom Jahre 1847," *Der Lutheraner* 3 (July 27, 1847): 132–133.

3. Hier gibt's nicht Pfaff' noch Laie / Und keinen Priesterstand, / Nein! Brueder nur und Freie, / Und nur der liebe Band uc.

4. This was a concern before and during the organizing convention of the Missouri Synod. The consistories of Germany and the ministeriums in the United States at the time put direction of church life into the hands of the clergy. Carl S. Mundinger observes, "In the constitution of the Missouri Synod, on the other hand, the balance of power between laymen and pastors was the most carefully guarded provision in the entire document. This provision must be credited in large part to the energetic participation in constitution making on the part of the laymen of St. Louis." *Government in the Missouri Synod* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), 194–195.

5. Martin Luther, "Dass eine christliche Versammlung oder Gemeinde Recht und Macht habe, all Lehre zu urteilen und Lehrer zu berufen, ein- und abzusetzen, Grund und Ursach aus der Schrift," 1523; WA 2: 408–416. W2 10: 1538–1549.

6. Luther, "De instutuendis ministris ecclesiae ad senatum Pragensem Bohemiae," 1523; WA, 12, 169–196. W2 10: 1548–1603.

7. Fick refers here in a footnote to "Guericke, Kirchengeschichte II, 343." This is certainly a reference to Heinrich Ernst Ferdinand Guericke, *Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte,* 5th expanded and revised ed. (Halle: Gebaursche Buchhandlung, 1843). A copy of volume 1 of this edition in the library of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, is inscribed with Pastor Fick's name. On the page cited, a footnote explains that after the Reformation authority gradually went over to civil rather than ecclesiastical authorities, and they exercised this through the already established consistories with only occasional protests.

8. Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia appealed to this in 1798. Kenneth Scott Latourette, *History of Christianity,* rev. ed., 2 vols. (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), 2: 81.

9. King Ludwig I, who ruled Bavaria from 1825 until his abdication in 1848.

10. Friedrich Wilhelm III reigned from 1797 until 1840. In 1798 he used his authority as civil bishop to appoint commissions to study liturgical conditions. In 1808 he placed ecclesiastical affairs under the minister of the interior and in 1817 he declared the union of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in his realm. In 1815 he restored the consistory and created bishops in 1816 and 1817. In 1829 he made one of them archbishop and created general superintendents, each of whom was placed over several provinces. Latourette, 2: 81–82.

11. Latourette notes that while Friedrich Wilhelm III hoped at first for voluntary conformity with his decrees, his government did use force to make so-called Old Lutherans conform, imprisoning and removing pastors, and even putting one congregation out of its church building. Latourette, 2: 82–83. Karl Heussi, *Kompendium der Kirchengeschichte* (Tuebingen, 1960), 459; James Hastings Nichols, *History of Christianity 1650–1950* (New York, 1956), 156.

12. Friedrich Wilhelm IV reigned from 1840 till 1861. He was more tolerant than his father, releasing pastors from prison and in 1845 recognizing the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Prussia, which had been formed by Old Lutherans in 1841. Latourette, 2: 83; Heussi, 459–460.

13. Matthew 24:15–16.

14. Psalm 80:13. The phrase was used by Pope Leo X in 1520 in *Exsurge Domine.*

15. A picture taken from Luther's writing of 1520, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church.*

16. Perhaps from Isaiah 11:9.

17. The pontificate of Pope Pius IX (1846–1878) had just begun, but the influence of the papacy was on the rise during the first part of the nineteenth century and would continue to grow. Latourette, 1: 237–268 passim.

18. Revelation 17.

19. Revelation 20:8.

20. Acts 14:22.

21. 1 John 5:4.

22. Psalm 110:1, 2, 5.

The Strict Lutherans

W. J. Mann

We speak now of those Lutherans who occupy a position more in direct opposition to American Lutheranism, namely, the Brethren belonging respectively to the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States, and that composed of Rev. Grabau and his associates, and often called, but not properly, the Synod of Buffalo.

It is well known that the Lutheran Church in Germany has, from the middle of the last century, till lately, suffered greatly from rationalistic tendencies, which had crept into her theology. A reaction against these encroachments of an infidel philosophy upon the sanctuary of the Church, which it is true, had still retained a hold on some of her members, commenced soon after the conclusion of that terrible war, that had, at the beginning of the present century, shaken both Church and State to their very foundations. . . .

In some of the other German States too, as in Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, Mecklenburg, love for the Lutheran Confession is fast returning, and this orthodox tendency is defended by the most distinguished theologians, such as Rudelbach, Harless, Sartorius, Thomasius, Delitzsch, Hoffmann, Kliefoth, Kanis, and others with the most decided success.

Those Lutherans, driven out of Prussia by persecution, found in the United States, where many of them had emigrated, other strict Old Lutherans, who, in 1838, misled by the fanaticism of the Saxon preacher Stephan, had seceded from the Lutheran Church in Saxony and emigrated to America. But becoming convinced of Stephan's perverseness, they expelled him from their communion and returned again to sounder Church views.

In addition to these Prussians and Saxons, others have since arrived, partly sent out by that well-known Bavarian minister and Christian writer, W. Loehe, and partly by the Missionary Society of Saxony. Some came in consequence of the oppressed condition of things at home, whilst, in 1840, others from Bavaria, Saxony, and Hanover, came from free choice, and for the express purpose of breaking the bread of life to their brethren in a distant land. . . .

It might have been expected and desired, that these Brethren would at once unite with the Lutheran Church in this country, or with existing Synods, or with the General Synod, and in connection with it organize new Synods. That they, however, did not do this, seems very natural. The cause of their standing aloof from the General Synod is not so much to be sought for in the difference of languages, as in other circumstances. Most of them settled in the far West [Ohio and Missouri]. They had left Germany because the Evangelical Union Church was not enough for them.

And when they arrived here, what did they find? A General Synod, the most important representative of the Lutheran Church in this country which did not stand on the basis of the Lutheran Church, nay, which did not even unequivocally acknowledge the Augsburg Confession as the principal confessional document of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and whose opposition were, in their theological views, decidedly Zwinglian, in their practice generally Puritanic, and withal unable to offer a vigorous opposition by means of sound religious principles to the delusions of Methodism.

Thus it happened that these Brethren felt the necessity of forming themselves into a separate Synod. . . . The acknowledged organ of this tendency, "*The Lutheraner,*" [*sic*] has been in existence since 1843. It is edited by the Rev. Prof. C. F. W. Walther, a man of a most thorough theological education. He is a decided Lutheran, and there are few in our day more intimately acquainted with the Old Lutheran doctrines and divines than he. He has lately rendered very important service to the department of science by his work on the Lutheran doctrine concerning the church and the ministerial office.

He has also edited, for several years, a religious periodical, under the title of *Lehre und Wehre* (Doctrine and Defense), which is designed to meet the wants of the scientific, as the *Lutheraner* endeavors to meet those of the popular art of that community.

These periodicals afford already in themselves an evidence of the energetic spirit of these Lutheran brethren, who have, in a measure, made a new beginning with the Lutheran Church in America. They were also unwearied in their exertions to organize new congregations, build new churches, and especially to promote religious instruction, and erect parochial schools. They justly regard these as the most effectual means to ground the young in the doctrines of the mother Church, and thus preserve the Church itself from final dissolution. . . .

THEIR DOCTRINAL POSITION

In doctrinal views, these brethren stand on the Confession of that faith which is contained in the *Symbolical Books* of the Lutheran Church, as far as they are comprehended as a whole, the several parts of which are explanatory and supplementary to each other. They regard the dogmatical system of Christianity, as contained in these books, as being the *true interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures.* They do not esteem these writings because they emanated from Luther or from some of the other Fathers of the Lutheran Church or because they had once obtained authority in the

This article is an excerpt from W J. Mann's "Lutheranism in America," an essay on the condition of Lutheranism in America published in 1857.

Lutheran Church, or are of importance in connection with its history, but because they cherish the conviction that a better and more correct comprehension of the principal doctrines of the sacred Scriptures has never been produced, nor can be.

They regard a Confession of Faith of absolute necessity to the Church, for the Bible is equally in the hands of the Catholic, the Baptist, the Unitarian, and the Quaker. But they read it, each one with his own eyes. Each finds his own peculiar tenets in it. A Church destitute of a fixed interpretation of the sacred Scriptures which she regards as the true one and adopts as her own would be nothing but a confused mass of dogmatical and religious views of mere individuals. . . .

It is a well-known fact that during the last century, in Germany, the decline of the authority of the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church, and the rise of rationalistic tendency were simultaneous. At present, we find that in the same country, respect for the Symbolical Books is returning and with it faith and piety.

Symbols are nothing else than what the original meaning of this word of Greek derivation signifies, namely, a compilation of the principal doctrines of the Creed; they either pronounce the true orthodox Faith, like, as for instance, the Apostles' Creed, or they give a clear explanation of it, in accordance with the sacred Scriptures, refuting and rejecting the views of heretics, whenever they teach doctrines at variance with the Word of God. This is done with peculiar skill especially by the larger among the writings of the Symbolical Books.

It is easy to perceive what an anomaly it would be to call any modern religious society the *Lutheran Church,* except it, at the same time, regards that as the Confession of its Faith, which was regarded as such by the Lutheran Church from the beginning. The Lutheran Church certainly holds many doctrines in common with other denominations. But this by no means constitutes her the *Lutheran* Church; just as little as, on the other hand, a Unitarian can be called a Lutheran, because his ancestors may at one time have been Lutherans.

The Lutheran Church is Lutheran by virtue of its peculiar Lutheran Creed, and not without it. As soon as it relinquishes this or any part of it, it forfeits the claim to the name. The members of the Lutheran Church possess, at all times, the right to subject the faith of their Church to the most rigorous examination by the Word of God; and in case they should not find it in perfect agreement with it, they have the privilege to leave a Church whose Confession seems to them at variance with the Word of God. But to change this ancient Confession, and in this altered condition pass it off as the Lutheran Confession, is as far from being just and honest as it would be to take one of Raphael's original paintings and after having altered its nose, mouth, and ears, persist in calling Raphael the father of such a mutilated production.

No one has ever contended that the Symbolical books are of equal importance with the Scriptures, or that they make the Scriptures needless. No! They only claim to be a compilation of the principal doctrines of salvation, and a plain Scriptural exposition of the points especially in dispute among the different religious parties existing at the time of the Reformation.

It is true that our salvation does not exactly depend equally on all of those points, as, for instance, on that of the Holy Sacraments, yet it cannot be denied that not one of them in the entire doctrinal system was accidentally this or that way determined, but they constitute a whole, in which the several parts are to agree with, and necessarily affect, each other.

Thus, for instance, the dogma concerning the Holy Sacraments will not be made a condition of salvation; but my comprehension of this doctrine stands connected with the meaning which I attach to the declaration of the sacred Scriptures, and also with my entire view concerning the relation sustained by Christ to his redeemed. Therefore, it is possible for me to be in error in regard to one point, without thereby overthrowing the entire foundation of the Creed, i.e., I may remain ignorant of the consequences which may result to the whole Christian system of doctrines from my error. But the more clearly I understand the intimate connection of all the different parts, the less shall I feel inclined to regard it as a matter of indifference whether I believe so and so in reference to any single doctrinal point.

If therefore, these Lutheran brethren of a stricter symbolical tendency require the members, and among these especially the ministers of the Lutheran Church, to maintain its ancient Creed, they are not only justified by the formal universal custom of the Lutheran Church, but they do it to make the Word of God, and not, as some will have it, the word of man, binding on their consciences, the true interpretation of which they confidently believe to be contained in the confessional documents of the Lutheran Church. They challenge to a most open examination of the sacred Scriptures, and to the severest trial of the Symbolical Books by them. Should anyone find that these books teach anything contrary to these Scriptures, he should at once give up all desire of remaining any longer a member or minister of the Lutheran Church.

No one should receive the Lutheran Confession on the authority of another, but find it again and again, as the result of his own investigations in the sacred Scriptures. He will then not be in danger of lifeless orthodoxy, but heartily rejoice at the enlightened understanding with which his Church has been favored and gladly proclaim her doctrines. But to make the Symbolical Books of our Church so closely interwoven as they are with her entire history, not even a subject of study, or even condemn and reject them, before having carefully compared them with the Word of God is unworthy of every honest and noble-minded Christian, to say nothing of his being Lutheran. These are, in the main, the principles hitherto maintained by all the adherents of the Old Lutheran faith.

This may suffice to show why the brethren of a stricter symbolical tendency maintain the principle that the Lutheran Creed, as contained in the Symbolical books, must have authority in the Lutheran Church. They cannot convince themselves that these documents, as a whole, contain anything contradictory to the Scriptures, and therefore retain them, nay, they would lay themselves open to the charge of acting most unconscionably if, with these convictions, they would not retain them. To them they must adhere under all circumstances which everywhere exert their influence on men, even in cases where by a change of the principles of the Lutheran Church the greatest external advantages should offer. For truth possesses a value above all prize; this we must hold fast, teach, and believe, order our lives in strict conformity to it, and leave the rest to the all-controlling Providence of God.

As regards the *forms* employed in the Divine worship of strict Lutherans, we have but little to say. They, of course, maintain with the Symbolical Books, the principle to which repeated reference has already been made, namely, that in regard to this subject liberty is to be granted, and nothing is to be rejected, except what is contrary to the Word of God, and does not tend to the edification of evangelical Christians. But that uniformity in these things, though not absolutely necessary, is nevertheless desirable throughout the Church in general is a point concerning which they are also agreed. They have, however, hitherto been unsuccessful in their endeavors to bring about such a uniformity and are far from making any law in reference thereto, lest what would be acceptable to some might prove obnoxious to others.

In the meantime, however, they are endeavoring to preserve in the main the regulations as they obtained in the Lutheran Church during the sixteenth century. They consequently observe in their public worship the same order which we introduced above, as that followed by Luther himself. They read every Sunday the Old Epistles and Gospels, sing antiphonies and chorals, and celebrate the Lord's Supper, if not every week, yet much more frequently than other Lutheran Churches in this country are accustomed to celebrate it.

They published, about fifteen years ago, a Hymn-book for the use of their congregations. In this are contained the old church-hymns; we say the *old,* because what the German Lutheran Church has since the middle of the last century added to her hymnological treasury is of no account, not even the productions of such men as Hiller, Bengel, Spitta, Knapp, &c. In an appendix to the Hymn-book are found prayers for private use, formulas for private baptisms *(Nothtaufen),* a collection of Antiphonies (Intonations and Responses), the prefations on Sundays and festivals, Luther's Smaller Catechism, the Ecumenical Symbols, the Augsburg Confession, the Epistles and Gospels of the ecclesiastical year, and the history of Christ's sufferings, according to the four evangelists. This Hymn-book has accordingly been prepared with a view to liturgical worship and may in many respects be regarded similar to the *Book of Common Prayer* of the Episcopal Church.

Preaching is always joined with extemporaneous prayer. Their choral singing is quicker and livelier than in most places in Germany and this country. A common Church prayer book has not yet been published by these brethren. We have, however, been informed that they are about having reprinted for their use, with probably a few unavoidable alterations, the order of services formerly in use in Wittenberg, Saxony.

The liturgy, published about two years since by the Synod of Pennsylvania and adjacent States, they do not deem satisfactory. They also adhere very strictly to the Old Lutheran custom of catechizing the children on every Sunday. As regards external forms of worship, no fixed rules have been established. The *sign of the Cross* as far as we know by many a general custom whether the minister makes it with his hand or whether a crucifix stands on the altar, [is made] in commemoration of the sacrifice rendered by Christ on Golgotha. Of any superstitions being connected therewith, there are no traces whatsoever. In some congregations, lights are also on special occasions kept burning upon the altar. Of the existence of any other strange or unusual customs among them we have no knowledge. Moreover, neither of these things is looked upon as being essential. They are merely regarded as ancient customs, retained out of consideration for many of their members who have emigrated from the northern part of Germany where they are in use throughout the entire Lutheran Church.

We refer the reader, in regard to this subject to the Minutes of the Eastern District of the Synod of Missouri, &c., of 1855, p. 14. The Minutes of the Western District Synod of 1855, p. 33 ff. are equally explicit. They urge the *doctrine of Christian liberty* in the introduction or exclusion of ceremonies, but press at the same time the view that ceremonies which have once become identified with a Confession such as the breaking of bread in the Lord's Supper, as a confessional mark of the Reformed, are to be regarded in a different light than other general religious ceremonies. This they regard as manifestly unsuitable to be introduced into the Lutheran Church, because this has always been a distinguishing feature of the Reformed Church. As to using bread or wafers, it is immaterial, only caution in all such matters should be observed. As an appropriate ceremony was named the use of the Old Testament blessing as most proper for dismissal, &c. The sign of the Cross used in Baptism, in the Lord's Supper, confirmation, absolution, and blessing, is called "the most lovely Christian ceremony" because it "continually reminds us of Him who, for our redemption, died upon the Cross, and through whom all heavenly blessings are received."

But what is the *character of religious life* of these Lutheran brethren of a stricter tendency? If active zeal in the promotion of the kingdom of God, in the spirit of the Lutheran Church may be regarded as an evidence of living piety, they are not surpassed by any part of that Church. They manifest the most lively interest in the cause of missions, having erected stations even among some of the Indian tribes of the northwestern part of this country. They are indefatigable in the building up of colleges, seminaries, churches, parochial schools, and congregations. These congregations are often very small in numbers, but always ready to do their utmost in sustaining their churches, schools, and public worship. Many of our German congregations especially would do well to imitate these brethren in their voluntary, self-denying labors for the kingdom of God.

Most of the ministers, it is true, command the respect and love of their people, but their outward circumstances are often those of poverty and hardship. Many of them are obliged to act during the week as teachers of parochial schools. The religious education of children is another point upon which they earnestly insist. The profession of a school-teacher is most justly regarded by them as being closely allied to that of the minister, and it is worthy of note, that well-tried and pious school-teachers are received as advisory members at their Synodical meetings.

They also aim especially at having, as far as possible, divine service in every congregation on every Sunday, so that ministers are not at liberty to take charge of as many congregations as they may think proper. New congregations in the West, which are not too distant from each other, and wish to be associated, often build their churches at the most central point where all may easily assemble every Sunday for worship; but each congregation has nevertheless its own school and teacher. Within congregations themselves a very strict Church discipline is maintained. These brethren who, in a

measure, commenced the Lutheran Church here anew, have most wisely profited by the sad experience of many of the older congregations of this country, whose constitutions were, in this particular, exceedingly deficient — a circumstance which has, in many instances been productive of the most lamentable results. In their Church discipline we regard *private confession* as one of the main points, it being made part of a minister's official duty to acquaint himself as far as lays in his power, with the spiritual condition of each individual member of his flock.

Equally important is the fact that no individual can, as long as he is a member of any secret society be admitted as a regular member of the congregation. He may indeed be received for one year on probation, but when that has expired, he must come to a decision whether he will dissolve his connection with the secret society or the congregation; a measure, it will easily be perceived, eminently calculated to exclude from a congregation all foreign and disorganizing elements. Members are of course required to subscribe to the doctrines and constitution of the Church and congregation. [f.n. To those ministers and laymen who have not fully made up their minds about the tendency of secret societies and who have hitherto not been able to discover any difference between the moral standard set up by the Church and that set up by secret societies we would earnestly recommend a highly instructive work by the Rev. Jas. T. Cooper, Pastor of the Second Assoc. Presbyterian Church, Philada., 1853, on Odd-Fellowship.] Members are of course required to subscribe to the doctrines and constitution of the Church and congregation.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Against these brethren, who have only lately commenced their labors in the United States, and who have, consequently, only but a short time been known amongst us, various complaints have been urged. Some have even converted the term Old Lutheranism into an expression of terror. That this has unfortunately been done under the influence of prejudice and without first instituting a minute and dispassionate inquiry, cannot be denied. Many of us may have become acquainted with the weak side and repulsive features of Old Lutheranism whilst we have remained almost entirely ignorant of its strong points, as well as of the character, doctrines, forms, and constitution of the primitive Lutheran Church. One party is continually finding fault with the Creed of these Old Lutherans, whilst, on the other hand, some of the best theological talent is employed to defend with all the weapons of Scripture and learning the faith of the fathers as genuine, Christian, and evangelical. Or has belief in the Lutheran doctrines and fidelity to the Confession of the fathers and the Church become a fault in a Lutheran? Or is the bare assertion that the peculiar doctrines of the Lutheran Church are not the doctrines of the Scriptures, sufficient proof that they are not?

We are far from approving everything belonging to these Old Lutheran brethren. Yet it must be borne in mind that their cause met with persecution in Germany and persecution easily engenders bitterness. They have, moreover, experienced some very severe trials amongst themselves, in consequence of which they have become somewhat irritable. Their earnestness, therefore, frequently manifests itself in a somewhat harsh, repulsive, and inclement manner. And who does not know that a persecuted Church has hardly ever recognized any good in those at whose hand it has suffered oppression?

These facts account for that immoderate, really foolish, hatred displayed by some Old Lutherans against the German Evangelical Union, and against whatever is even remotely connected with it. This hatred often borders on the ridiculous as if the Union was responsible for all the misfortunes that have befallen the German Church. Just as ridiculous is it when some designate the difference between Lutheran and not Lutheran as identical with the difference between Christian and not Christian, as if only the Lutheran Church was entitled to the appellation of *Church*— a name which they seem to apply in a sense intended to convey the idea that the difference between their own and other ecclesiastical bodies is not one of different degrees of Christian knowledge and faith, but a difference of *genus*.

That among these brethren differences of opinion on minor points should exist is easily conceivable and quite natural; but that both parties should have exhibited in their controversies as for instance in the discussions above alluded to as having been carried on between the Synod of Missouri and that of Buffalo, so much bitterness of feeling is deeply to be regretted. Its effect cannot be other than unfavorable. Surely, no one can be induced to believe that all this severity of language was indulged in out of sincere love to God and man and that no carnal earthly passions rankled in the hearts of those who used it.

Equally exceptionable is that frigid exclusiveness which they manifest, especially towards all who on that account often, without even first giving them a fair trial and endeavoring to become better acquainted with them, are treated and denounced as enemies of the truth. In like manner do we regard it as a mistake that their just and commendable attachment to the good old ways and customs should incline some of these brethren to deal somewhat unjustly with whatever is new. As an instance of this, we refer to the Hymn-book above alluded to.

Highly as we value the old and unadulterated treasures of the hymnal of our Lutheran Church, we yet believe that the gracious gifts which the Lord has bestowed upon our Church in our own time are also deserving of notice. But in this too we only regard the *ultra* opinion as a mistake, and an act of injustice against the Church and her members and a misapprehension of the blessings of God.

Wise moderation and the utmost precaution in the application of whatever is new is proper, yea, even a duty. That, however, these brethren lay too much stress upon the principle of sound doctrine, on mere orthodoxy, on the letter, does not appear from the actual condition, order, activity, and self-denying labors of their congregations. Of the fact that they have at times been somewhat unguarded in their expressions, especially when speaking of the relation of the Symbolical Books to the Scriptures, these brethren have long since been informed by well-disposed friends from without. It will be to their own interest to avoid misapprehension. And it is after all nothing else but this for the Scriptures, according to their own Creed, give importance to the Symbolical Books, and not the Symbolical Books to the Scriptures.

These brethren do not, on the whole, regard the condition of the Lutheran Church during the seventeenth century as their ideal, that time when Symbolical orthodoxy had certainly degen-

erated with thousands into lifeless formality. Some few, indeed, may have fallen into this error, but of the whole it can by no means be alleged. They possess far too much spiritual vivacity to be easily brought into subjection to the mere letter, to fall into another sort of legitimacy. It is with them a peculiar feature that their Synods and Conferences are not merely engaged with questions to which the constitution, the external relation of Church and congregation, may give rise; but they discuss questions from a theologico-scientific point of view in discourses, and in their subsequent deliberations, which may be of importance either to the minister or to the congregation, or to schools, or missions, &c. In this way, much spiritual incitement is produced and one leaves the convention enriched with knowledge.

This Lutheranism of the old unaltered Confession of ancient forms has sprouted like a green bough from the old oak, and has been thriving during the last few years in our midst. It stands by itself, but it also grows by itself. It will yet be subjected to some severe trials among which the transition of the younger generation from the German mother Church to the English will not be the least. We hope that these brethren will be the less disposed to oppose any obstacles to a transition of the young, the more these will carry with them the old spirit and faith into the new language. The history of the future alone will solve the problem of what degree of vitality there is in this old Lutheran seedling, transplanted into the fertile soil of the New World. LOGIA

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Ephesians 4:11–12 Reconsidered

Philip J. Secker

Precis: Omitting the comma after the phrase "to equip the saints" (πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων) in Ephesians 4:12 has become standard practice ever since the publication of the New English Bible in 1961. When the comma is omitted, however, none of the possible translations for the following phrase, "for the work of *diakonia*" (εἰς ἔργον διακονίας), make sense in the context. If, on the other hand, a comma is placed after "to equip the saints," then the phrase "for the work of *diakonia*" can be translated as a reference to the fulfilling of the office that Christ has given to apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers.

The practical application of the passage in the post-apostolic church, therefore, is not that "everyone is a minister," or that "every Christian is a priest," but that prophets are to prophesy, evangelists are to evangelize, pastor-teachers are to pastor and teach, and so on, with all the offices given to the church by Christ through the Holy Spirit. When this is done the result will be "the building up of the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (4:12–13).

When I returned to Concordia Seminary in Clayton, Missouri, in the fall of 1962 for my fourth year, there was a great deal of excitement in the exegetical and practical theology departments about the New English Bible, which had been published in 1961. In the practical theology department, much of the excitement was about the "new" translation of Ephesians 4:11–12. The King James Version, followed by the Revised Standard Version of 1946, had placed commas between the prepositional phrases of verse 12, translating the passage as follows:

> 11 And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

The New English Bible, however, by placing a comma only between the second and third prepositional phrases of verse 12, changed the meaning of the passage entirely:

> 11 And these were his gifts: some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, 12 to equip God's people for work in his service, to the building up of the body of Christ.

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The autographs of the New Testament, of course, contained no punctuation, and so this "new" translation did not involve a tampering with the original text. Beginning with the publication of the New English Bible, however, this "new" translation rapidly became the standard translation and has been so ever since.

NEW AND YET NOT NEW

Omitting the comma was not, in fact, new. Although the Lutheran Symbols chose not to follow Martin Luther's translation of this verse, Luther had not used a comma in his translation of 1534.[1] J. Armitage Robinson had also omitted the comma in his classic commentary on Ephesians.[2] But whether new or old, the New English Bible translation found a very receptive audience at the seminary in the fall of 1962. I am sure that I was only one of many seminarians who could hardly wait to get out into the ministry to explain — using the New English Bible translation of Ephesians 4:11–12 — that our role as "pastor-teachers"[3] was not to do the work of service in the world, but to train and equip the lay people to do it.

I am sure that I was also not the only young pastor to find that this interpretation of Ephesians 4:11–12 was not received with the same enthusiasm by the lay people. They already knew that all Christians are called to serve in the world in imitation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who had come "not to be served, but to serve" (Mk 10:45). They also knew that pastor-teachers are to feed and equip them with the word and the sacraments for that service in the world. They didn't need a "new" interpretation of Ephesians 4:11–12 to prove this to them. Maybe they feared that we young pastors would attempt to "train and equip" them for that service in ways other than primarily through the power of the word and sacraments.[4]

When asked to write this article,[5] I quickly discovered that there are also strong exegetical reasons to question the omission of the comma from Ephesians 4:12. To show why this is so, I have quoted below the translations of the Revised Standard Version of 1946 (RSV), the New English Bible (NEB), J. Armitage Robinson (JAR), the Revised Standard Version second edition of 1971 (RSV-71), the New International Version (NIV), and the New Revised Standard Version of 1989 (NRSV).

> RSV: "for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ"
>
> JAR: "for the perfecting of the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ"
>
> NEB: "to equip God's people for work in his service, to the building up of the body of Christ"

RSV-71 (= NRSV): "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ"

NIV: "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up"

In Greek[6] the verse consists of three prepositional phrases. In the first phrase, the preposition (πρὸς) is followed by the definite article. In both the second and the third phrases, a different preposition (εἰς) is used, in both cases without a definite article following. The second and third phrases, therefore, are parallel constructions in Greek.

DIFFERENT PRONOUNS, ANARTHROUS NOUNS AND COMPACT PHRASES

Robinson gives three arguments for his translation: First, that the phrase *for the work of ministry* is "most naturally taken as dependent" on *perfecting.* Second, that the change of preposition (from πρὸς before *perfecting* to εἰς before both *work of ministry* and *building up the body of Christ*) also "points in this direction, but is in itself not conclusive." Third, that "the absence of the definite articles" preceding the Greek words for *work* and for *ministry* and the resulting "compactness of the phrase, is strongly confirmatory" for omitting the comma.[7]

Since even Robinson admits that the change in preposition is not in itself conclusive, I will address only his first and third arguments. Taking the latter first, we note that the two nouns in the second phrase are indeed anarthrous, but so is the noun in the third phrase, making that phrase also characterized by "compactness." Since the second and third phrases are parallel constructions in Greek, one would expect Robinson to take both phrases as dependent on *perfecting.* His translation leaves that interpretation possible, but his comment on the third phrase does not: The third phrase "gives the general result of all that has hitherto been spoken of."[8] If the absence of the definite article and the resulting compactness of phrase were as important as Robinson contends, one would expect that more of the translations would have preserved the parallelism.[9]

WHY "WORKS OF SERVICE" WON'T WORK

Robinson's first argument is that the phrase *for the work of ministry* is "most naturally taken as dependent" on the noun that Robinson translates as *perfecting.* When this translation is followed, no comma is placed after *saints.* The alternative is to take the phrase as dependent on *gave* in verse 11,[10] and to place a comma after *saints.*

The first problem with Robinson's interpretation is that the translation *perfecting* is too strong; a better translation is *training* or *equipping.*[11] The second problem with Robinson's interpretation involves his understanding of the Greek word διακονία. This word, which has come into English in the word *deacon,* is usually translated as either *ministry* or *service.* Like our words ministry and service, the word διακονία can refer either to a service that is performed, or to the office by which or through which the service is performed. If the first meaning is applied here, then the reference must be to service in the general sense of "works of service" (NEB).

But there are three difficulties with this interpretation. The first is that the word διακονία is rarely — if ever — used this way in the New Testament.[12] Second, if general works of service is the intended meaning, the passage says too little, for its meaning would be that Christ gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastor-teachers, to prepare the saints to do practical service. Third, if the phrase is translated as a reference to practical service, the following phrase, *for the building up of the body of Christ,* becomes inexplicable. It certainly cannot, on the one hand, be taken as parallel to *for doing practical service.* On the other hand, if it is taken as dependent on *gave,* then *for doing practical service* intrudes on the thought of the passage.[13] Practical service or works of service, therefore, will simply not do as the meaning of διακονία in verse 11 regardless of whether or not a comma is placed after *saints.*

WHAT DOES WORK

The other meaning of διακονία that is possible here is that of *office.* This meaning will work only if a comma is inserted after *saints,* for if a comma is not inserted, the passage states that Christ gave offices to the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers, in order to prepare the saints to fulfill their offices, including, presumably, the ones just mentioned — which does not make sense.

When διακονία is understood as referring to an office and a comma is inserted after *saints,* the difficulties enumerated above disappear. In addition, the word translated as *training* or *equipping* can now be understood in a general sense rather than in the limited sense of training or equipping the saints for practical service. If *equipping* is the sense Paul has in mind, it may even be that Paul is anticipating here what he will say about the whole armor of God in chapter 6.

A REMAINING DIFFICULTY

One difficulty that remains is that of translating the second phrase, "for the work of διακονία," into idiomatic English. The difficulty is caused by the fact that the Greek word for *work* (ἔργον) has a much more active sense than the English word. This difference can readily be seen from the different meanings given for the Greek word in a Greek lexicon: "deed," "action," "manifestation," "practical proof," "accomplishment," "occupation," "task," and "that which is brought into being by work."[14]

The sense of the full phrase, then, is: for the carrying out or fulfilling of the functions or responsibilities of one's office. The meaning of the sentence is that Christ gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, so that they might carry out the offices bestowed upon them. This is how the Lutheran Symbols understand the passage in the only reference they make to it:

> Paul [in Ephesians 4:11–12] enumerates pastors and teachers among the gifts belonging exclusively to the church, and he adds that they are given for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ.[15]

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMA FOR VERSES 13–16

Finally, it is not only the phrase "building up the body of Christ" that is inexplicable if διακονία is understood as practical service and no comma is inserted after *equipping.* Verses 13–16 also become inexplicable:

> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work (NIV).

Consequently, although the "new" translation was very appealing in the egalitarian age of Aquarius in the early sixties, it does not stand up to careful scrutiny.

APPLICATION TO THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

In closing, perhaps the best way to compare the two different interpretations of Ephesians 4:11–12 is to compare their practical application to the church.

First, if the comma is omitted from Ephesians 4:12, the application in the post-apostolic age is that prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers are to prepare the saints to do works of practical service. If that is one of their primary functions, the prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers may appropriately be called "community organizers," "enablers," "facilitators," or *X*s and *L*s and *C*s,[16] or whatever the current rage is. If the phrase "everyone a minister" is used, it should be changed to "everyone a servant." If the claim is made that "all of the members" of a congregation are the "ministers" of the congregation, the word *ministers* should be replaced by *servants*.[17]

If the comma is retained, the application of Ephesians 4:11–12 to the modern church is more complex. Paul's concern in Ephesians is to say how "the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" along with Jewish Christians (3:6). In chapter 4 Paul exhorts his Gentile readers "to lead a life worthy of the calling to which [they] have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (4:1). This appeal is followed by the classic Pauline statement of the unity of all believers in the church: "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all" (4:4–5).

This is the unity that we have in Christ. This unity, however, does not mean that we are carbon copies of each other or that we all have similar functions within the body of Christ. Rather, "grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift" (4:7). After a quotation from Psalm 68 in support of this exalted Christology, 4:11–16 follows.

The practical implications of verses 11–16 for the church are these: apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers are the gift of the exalted Christ to the church. Christ gave these gifts to the church not merely to equip the people of God to do practical service, but to equip them in every appropriate sense. They are to do this by carrying out the functions appropriate to the offices that Christ has bestowed upon them. Prophets, for example, are to prophesy, evangelists are to evangelize, pastor-teachers are to pastor and teach. When these offices are carried out, the body of Christ will be built up "through the due activity of each part" (4:16 NEB). LOGIA

NOTES

1. "Und er hat etliche zu Apostel gesetzt / etliche aber zu Propheten / etliche zu Euangelisten / etliche zu Hirten und Lerer / das die Heiligen geschickt sein zum werck des ampts / da durch der leib Christi erbawet werde." The 1545 Wittenberg edition is identical except that the first phrase of verse 12 is translated "das die Heiligen zugerichetet werden." I am indebted to Robert E. Lange for alerting me to Luther's translation and to Kenneth B. Block for the references cited. For the Lutheran Symbols' use of Ephesians 4:11–12 see note 15 below.

2. *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians,* 2d ed. (London: James Clarke & Co., n.d.), 98. After I had done most of the work on this article, Kenneth B. Block sent me a copy of an article by H. P. Hamann that Ronald R. Feuerhahn had called to his attention. Since my arguments parallel Hamann's, I have incorporated his in the notes rather than in the text. In his article, Hamann cites the NEB translation and Harry Wendt's exposition of it in *Doctrine in Outline* (215): "In short, Christ did not appoint pastors to do the work of the church by themselves, but to equip God's people to be servants, and to do his work for him." Hamann then states: "I have been doubtful about this translation and this exposition of the verse of St. Paul for a long time." In his article Hamann also quotes Marcus Barth's statement in the latter's *Anchor Bible* commentary (note p. 470) that the exegesis popularized by the NEB "has been promoted since about 1940 by D. T. Niles and the World Council of Churches." "Ephesians 4:1–16," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 16, vol. 3, 124, 127. James W. Voelz, in his recent book, discusses the question of whether or not to place a comma after the first prepositional phrase of Ephesians 4:12, but does not take a position on the matter. *What Does This Mean? Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-Modern World,* Concordia Scholarship Today Series (St. Louis: CPH, 1995), 132–133, 136–137.

3. "Pastors and teachers" in verse 11 is a hendiadys for a single office. In "Paul, Seminary Professors and the Pastoral Office," an unpublished essay sent to me by Ronald Feuerhahn, James W. Voelz has argued against this interpretation of Ephesians 4:11 as follows:

> The standard analysis of this passage interprets the final two categories (ποιμένας and διδασκάλους) as a unit, noting that no article is in evidence before the last noun, neither does a μὲν or δὲ separate it from the ποιμένας which precedes. But I have long been unimpressed by this assertion, from the point of view of stylistics. It is true that in this passage διδασκάλους is anarthrous and the parallelism of the previous structures is broken. But—and here is the critical point—to change the specific expression relating to the last item in a chain or series of items is a common stylistic technique in Greek—especially in Paul, as can be seen quite clearly in many examples.

Voelz then cites: (1) four second-person singular verbs each preceded by a καὶ in Romans 2:17, 18, followed by a second singular verb followed by a τε in verse 19; (2) four predicate nouns (ὁδηγόν, φῶς, παιδευτήν, διδάσκαλον) in Romans 2:19, 20, followed by a participle (ἔχοντα) in verse 20; (3) four participles (ὁ διδάσκων, ὁ κηρύσσων, ὁ λέγων, ὁ βδελυσσόμενος) in Romans 2:21–22, followed by a relative pronouns (ὅς) in verse 23; and (4) Galatians 3:28. In a footnote, Voelz adds that in Luke 12:4–7 "a present command concludes a section of aorists."

It appears to me, however, that the last item in each of the series of items in the Romans and Luke passages makes a significant progression in thought beyond the preceding items in each series. If that is correct, the stylistic changes accompanying those final items may be intended to signal that the last item in each series is not to be taken as strictly parallel to the preceding items, but as progressing beyond them. Whether or not progression is present must, of course, be decided by an examination of the content of the series. But other structural differences between the last items and the preceding ones may be

a clue to the presence of such a progression. Thus in Romans 2:17–19, the first item in the series is not simply a verb, but a verb with a dependent clause that extends all the way through verse 20. Similarly, the accusative participle following the four predicate accusative nouns in Romans 2:19–20 is followed by a dependent clause that extends through the rest of verse 20. (The NIV translation of this participle as causal ["*because* you have"] expresses the progression here.) Likewise, the last item in the series in Romans 2:21–23 is more than twice as long as any of the preceding items. The progression in content is perhaps most clearly visible in that last passage, which culminates in a contrast between boasting (in a positive sense; see 5:3 and 5:11) in the law, and dishonoring God by breaking the law. Finally in Luke 12:4–7, the two aorists have objects ("do not fear those," "fear him"), while the present imperative in the last item in the series has none ("do not fear"), the implication being that we are *no longer* to fear anyone or nothing *at all,* except "him who has power. . . ."

The last example cited by Voelz is Galatians 3:28. Yet even here, is it possible that Paul intends the οὐκ . . . καὶ to signal a progression from "neither Jew nor Greek"—a racial and religious distinction—to "neither male nor female"—which cuts across all racial, religious, and social-economic distinctions? If so, it appears to me that all five of Voelz's examples support the standard translation of the Ephesians 4:12 phrase as "pastors and teachers." In *What Does This Mean,* Voelz translates the Ephesians 4:11 phrase with "the pastors, and the teachers," but does not defend his translation (132).

4. See Hamann's statement about "teachers of method and bureaucrats" in note 13 below.

5. I was originally asked to write this article for a publication whose sponsors are supportive of the meta-church movement. The specific request was for "an exegetical treatment of Ephesians 4 and its application to leadership training." Given my comments about the meta-church in notes 16 and 17, it is not surprising that my article was never published.

6. πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

7. Robinson, 182.

8. Robinson, 182.

9. The second edition of the Revised Standard Version and the New Revised Standard Version have—like Robinson—translated the second and third phrases in a way that makes it possible to interpret them as parallel constructions, but the New English Bible and New International Version translations have left no traces of parallelism. Referring to the three phrases, Hamann asserts: "If there is to be linking of the phrases, the linking of the second with the third is the most logical thing to do, for then you are linking two phrases which both begin with the preposition *eis.* To link the first two is to link a *pros* phrase with an *eis* phrase and leave the third phrase, an *eis* phrase, independent" (124–125).

10. The literal translation of verse 11 is "He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers." It is clear from a comparison with 1 Corinthians 12:27–28 and Romans 12:6–8 that the list of office-holders in verse 11 is not intended to be complete.

11. In 1 Thessalonians 3:10 the verb has the meaning of "to supply." In Hebrews 11:3 it is used of the world being "fashioned" (NEB) or "created" (RSV) or "formed" (NIV) or "brought into being" or "brought into order" by the Word of God. In 1 Peter 5:10 it has the meaning "restore." In 2 Corinthians 13:9 the meaning is "improvement." See also Mark 1:19 (of putting nets in order), Galatians 6:1, 1 Thessalonians 3:10, 2 Corinthians 13:11, and 1 Corinthians 1:10. Even "equipping" may be putting too fine a point on the word. Hamann argues that the now-standard interpretation of καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων "makes the noun carry its meaning through the dependent genitive to the following prepositional phrase." This interpretation, he states, "is just possible, but the probabilities are all the other way, to take the phrase καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων as complete in itself, the 'training' or 'completion' or 'discipline of the saints'" (125).

12. Hamann writes that, with the possible exception of 2 Corinthians 11:8 and Hebrews 1:14, διακονία is never used in the New Testament of service in the general sense, but "is always restricted to some special kind of service, or special ministry." In Ephesians 4:12, he contends, the wider sense is "just possible, no more." Hamann, therefore, does not understand διακονία as "office" but as a specific service, in this case, "the edification of the body of Christ" (125). See the next note for a more complete statement of his interpretation. Should my suggestion that διακονία means "office" in verse 12 not hold up, I would have no difficulty accepting Hamann's interpretation. Both interpretations require a comma after "saints."

13. Robinson's assertion that *building up the body of Christ* "gives the general result of all that has hitherto been spoken of" is simply a lame attempt to get out of the dilemma he has gotten himself into (182).

Here and below I am arguing from the context. Hamann's words in this connection are worth quoting at length: "Finally, the context itself—and this is always the most important argument—favours the view that v. 12 is the purpose of the gift of the four (five) classes of men (offices) mentioned. One expects to hear in v. 12 (the purpose of the gifts) what apostles, etc. are to be and what their task is to be, not what they are to lead others to do or to be: apostles, prophets, etc., are there to perfect the saints and to work in the service, that is, in the edification of the body of Christ. I can't see these officers as teachers of method and bureaucrats telling everybody else what to do so that the great purpose of God may be attained" (125).

14. In v. 16 the NEB translates the word with "activity." The active sense of the Greek word has survived in the English cognate "energy."

15. "Paulus . . . numerat inter dona propria ecclesiae pastores et doctores et addit dari tales ad ministerium ad aedificationem corporis Christi." De potestate et primatur papae tractatus, 67, *BSLK,* 491, lines 13–18. My translation is identical to that of Theodore G. Tappert except that Tappert has added the word "and" between "for the work of ministry" and "for building up the body of Christ." For this translation see Tr, 67, Tappert, 331.

16. For those who have not been initiated into the mysteries of meta-church, which is a transfer to the church of the pyramidal structures of military organizations and businesses such as Amway, the Roman numerals *X, L, C,* and so on are the only titles used in the movement for leaders of 10, 50, 100, etc. We can at least be grateful that the movement has disclosed its departure from the historic church by using a hyphenated name for itself and by using titles for its leaders that have no precedent in Scripture or tradition.

17. There is, of course, no support at all in Scripture for the claim that "every Christian is a priest," since the word *priest* is always used in the plural in the New Testament when it is applied to Christians and is a corporate concept that cannot be individualized without destroying it.

The concept of "the priesthood of all believers" must also be used cautiously because (1) "bodies of priests" is a more accurate translation of the 1 Peter phrase, (2) "the priesthood of all believers" declines markedly in importance in Martin Luther's works after the beginning of the controversy with the "enthusiasts," and (3) the phrase appears only once in the Lutheran Symbols, and then as part of an incomplete syllogism used to argue that since the church alone possesses the priesthood, it has "the right of electing and ordaining ministers." De potestate et primatur papae tractatus, 69 (BSLK 491, lines 36–40). For an English translation see Tr, 69 (Tappert, 331). On the translation "bodies of priests," see John Elliot, "Death of a Slogan: From Royal Priests to Celebrating Community," *Una Sancta,* Michaelmas, 1968; and Elliot's review of Oscar Feucht's *Everyone a Minister* (Concordia Publishing House, 1974), which appeared in the November 1975 issue of *Lutheran Forum.*

Reviews

"It is not many books that make men learned . . . but it is a good book frequently read."
Martin Luther

Review Essay

Doing Well and Doing Good. By Richard John Neuhaus. New York: Doubleday, 1992. 312 pages. $22.00.

■ The subtitle of this volume is "The Challenge to the Christian Capitalist." For the reader who doesn't give a hoot about who Richard John Neuhaus is, this will suit well. But a different, more subtle subtitle for the reader who knows, or rather thinks he knows, who the author is might be "Why I Am Now a Roman Catholic, and Why You Should Be As Well." And that makes this a very provocative book for the Lutheran reader, especially for one who is a Lutheran pastor.

Not that this is a book of personal testimony. In fact, there is in it not a hint of Neuhaus's Lutheran past. References to Lutherans are made from a distance, and even when speaking briefly of his seventeen years as parish pastor at St. John the Evangelist in Brooklyn, Neuhaus omits the significant detail that he was the whole time a Lutheran pastor of a Lutheran parish. Unless one knew something of the author, one would never guess that this book was written by someone who just two years previously was editing a partisan Lutheran publication. The entire book reads as one from the pen of a lifelong, obedient son of Rome.

But all this is a good thing, and makes *Doing Well* just that much more useful for any reader, whether Roman Catholic or Lutheran, whether believer in Christ or not. For finally this book is about humanity, authority, and why the reader — any reader — should listen to Pope John Paul II, to wit: he is a very smart man who knows a thing or two about humanity and authority.

Doing Well and Doing Good is Neuhaus's commentary on and interpretation of *Centesimus Annus* (Hundredth Year), John Paul's 1991 encyclical marking the centenary of another encyclical, Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* (*New Things*). The latter document was a stern warning to the world to reject the socialistic tendencies that were swiftly moving from the realm of idea to the arena of practice; the former warns with equal sternness that the passing of socialism does not *ipso facto* vindicate any existing structure of politics and economics (read "capitalism as it is generally practiced"), but rather presents an opportunity to set in place a truly just and inclusive form of political and economic democracy that respects and uplifts the greatest resource of all: humanity. Neuhaus, in this book, takes the brief statements of John Paul and unpacks them with startling clarity and ease. The familiarity with which Neuhaus engages the pope perhaps discloses an important reason for Neuhaus's move to Rome — in John Paul there is one who speaks with an invitation to conversation and disciplined thought.

Part One recounts briefly the postwar history of politics, economics, and culture that culminated in the crushing but seemingly whisper-like overthrow of Marxism. John Paul (the former Karol Wojtyla, archbishop of Krakow in Poland until 1979 — born under, raised in, but never broken by the thumb of communism's brutality) speaks pungently but without a hint of gloating about the events of 1989:

> The events of 1989 are a warning to those who, in the name of political realism, wish to banish law and morality from the political arena. Only by trust in the Lord of history is man able to accomplish the miracle of peace and to discern the often narrow path between the cowardice that gives in to evil and the violence that, under the illusion of fighting evil, only makes it worse. [We can see] that not only is it ethically wrong to disregard human nature, which is made for freedom, but in practice it is impossible to do so (¶25, 293).

But John Paul by no means sees consumeristic capitalism as the ready replacement for the broken machinery of Marxism:

> the consumer society [seeks] to defeat Marxism on the level of pure materialism by showing how a free-market society can [better satisfy] material needs. Insofar as [such a society] denies morality, law, culture, and religion, it agrees with Marxism by reducing man to the sphere of economics and the satisfaction of material needs (¶19, 291).

Here is a man Richard John Neuhaus can talk with, and does:

> Socialism did present itself, in the words of John Paul, as such a "simple and radical" solution. It was powerfully attractive to the utopian impulse in the human heart, an impulse that has hardly been extinguished by virtue of the Revolution of 1989 . . . Christianity, however, is the opposite of utopian; it is eschatological. Faith is fixed on that which God will do, according to his promise in Christ. Utopianism, says John Paul, turns politics into a "secular religion." "By presuming to anticipate judgment here and now, man puts himself in the place of God and sets himself against the patience of God" (41).

Likewise, in John Paul II Neuhaus has found a man of *magisterial* authority with whom he can banter: "Wags in the Vatican have been heard to observe that the last Marxist in the world will be an American nun in Latin America. Those who say that have probably never been to Harvard" (47).

Part Two is Neuhaus's exhortation to his reader to think with and banter with the pope as the self-evident head of the church, though he suspects that this will be a difficult thing for nearly everyone: "Among Catholics and non-Catholics alike, there is today widespread puzzlement about teaching authority in the Church, and especially about papal teaching authority" (75). Neuhaus proceeds then to assist his reader in engaging the papal utterances:

> A papal encyclical carries more weight of authority than a pastoral letter or apostolic exhortation, but not as much weight as, say, an apostolic constitution. Encyclicals are intended to be taken seriously by anyone who takes the Pope seriously. . . . An encyclical is by no means an "infallible" pronouncement (76).

"[T]his Pope, more than his predecessors, has employed encyclicals not so much to set forth authoritative teaching as to invite reflection" (83). But the reader, particularly one of the Catholic Church, cannot presume simply to disagree with the pope and choose his own course and own truth, for the truth in the Catholic tradition is associated with the papacy: "The teaching authority of pope and bishops is understood to be ordered in continuity with, and accountability to, the apostolic tradition" (87).

Non-Catholics, especially Lutherans, cannot seize upon this last statement and accuse Neuhaus of embracing the antichrist. It is not, as Neuhaus points out, as simple as all that:

> Despite the absence of an effective teaching authority, most Protestant churches have retained a remarkably large measure of what is historically defined as orthodox Christianity. In theory decisions are made by a democratic process that tries to accommodate private judgments, each appealing to scriptural authority. In reality most churches draw upon the reservoir of tradition even when they insist that they reject the authority of tradition (86).

And so there is for Neuhaus in the Roman communion the ability to know the full range of freedom, right out to its limits, and to be in conversation with the ones who delineate the boundaries of that freedom — the pope and the bishops, speaking through the apostolic tradition:

> It strikes both Catholics and non-Catholics as odd when it is claimed that there is more authentic freedom in the Catholic Church than in communions organized along more democratic lines. Yet that is the claim frequently made by Protestants who have become Catholics. There is more freedom, they say, because, as John Paul also repeatedly insists in *Centesimus*, "freedom is ordered to truth." There is authentic freedom for deliberation and debate because the appeal is to more than private judgment, or to the politically determined position of a religious institution, or to confessional documents of the Reformation era. The appeal, it is asserted, is to the Great Tradition of the Church through time, centered in God's self-revelation in Christ according to the apostolic witness. The *magisterium* understands itself to be not the master but the servant of the Great Tradition (87).

This ringing defense of papal authority is not used explicitly in this book as a call to Catholicism (though surely that is implicit), but rather as a foundation upon which to say, "Listen to what this man, this pope, has to say about morality and marketplace; he is not, and has not been, a fringe player in all these things." Does it follow that Neuhaus would say, "Listen to what *any* pope has to say about these things?" More on this below. For the purposes of this book, Richard John Neuhaus, who has become so prominent in the effort to keep religion within the public square, wants the reader to believe that the papal *magisterium* can rightly include social teaching, addressed to the public at large, within its sphere of activity:

> In *Centesimus*, the Pope is not only developing the Church's doctrine, he is also developing the very idea of social doctrine. He notes that with *Rerum Novarum* something new was started. Leo XIII created a "lasting paradigm" for what John Paul calls "social teaching" or "social *magisterium*" in which the Church "formulates a genuine doctrine" in response to social problems (110).

Neuhaus notes the usual objections to this notion — these are fields in which the church has no competence; politics and religion do not mix; religion should not provide cover for a partisan agenda. But he proposes now as a Catholic, as he proposed in one way or another all the years he was a Lutheran, that the gospel intends to make the church, the company of the redeemed, terribly interested in the way things are in the world — that is, that the gospel is, but is not merely "personal"; it is also very "social":

> When the Church seems to be against the world, it is only against the world for the world. When the Church criticizes the way of humanity, it is not because humanity is being "all too human" but because it is not being human enough. The Church understands itself to be not something apart from humanity but the part of humanity that has found the authentically human way in Christ (115).

So the church, through the way of Christ, must speak to the way the world is going along, because the world is the place where the objects of God's love are: "'As such, [the gospel] proclaims God and his mystery of salvation in Christ to every human being and for that reason reveals man to himself. In this light, *and only in this light,* does it concern itself with everything else' — such as economics, family, the duties of the state, war and peace and respect for life" (¶54, 121, emphasis added). "Social teaching is derived from Christian anthropology, which is a 'chapter of theology.' How we are to conduct ourselves in the world . . . 'belongs to the field of theology and particularly of moral theology'" (¶55, 121).

Having made the point that the church must speak to the situations of public life precisely because it is the church, Neuhaus spends the remainder of this book interpreting John Paul's admonitions to the whole of humanity in the wake of Marxism's collapse. He does the job well. If the reader is inclined to cynical prejudgments that assume all Catholic pronouncements to be post-Vatican II propaganda, Neuhaus will make the reader read again. *Centesimus* has been interpreted by Marxists as Marxist, by primitive capitalists as a pro-capitalist call-to-arms, and by some politicians and columnists as gross meddling. Neuhaus begs to differ, and relentlessly rubs the reader's nose in the encyclical's text to make his point.

John Paul's vision of a better economic order is a capitalism that purposefully attends to the people from which it draws its life, a capitalism that understands itself to be under a moral requirement to provide as many people as possible with real hope for a secure future. Neuhaus tells why the pope, and *Centesimus*, even dare to think such an order can be imagined:

> That goal presupposes a number of understandings about human beings and the way they behave. The Pope rejects a Hobbesian world view in which it is assumed that society is a war of all against all. This vision of humanity as *homo lupus,* as little better than a wolf, defies both Christian anthropology and our experience of the human potential for collaboration, he says (179).

In place of Hobbes, the pope proposes a "creative subjectivity of the citizen," an ordering of every institution to the good of the persons to whom it must understand itself to be in service. This view proposes a capitalism that exists not as something that might lift up the life of the people, but instead exists as something intending so to lift the people — a capitalism that sees profit precisely as the means for creating social goods, and not as a goal itself apart from a contingent potential to advance or create those goods.

Can this be done, and if it can be done, will it be done? Does this moment in history contain the seeds of a new economic order that sees no zero-sums, and that sees the creation of wealth necessarily married to its distribution? This is an enormous question, so difficult to answer when, for example, nearly all the toys I buy for my children are made in unknown factories in China, but are distributed by a company in Arkansas. To whom am I to speak if I want those producers and distributors to act in concert, as if human beings and their welfare are the most important things in the production of toys? How does one communicate with a market of players which actually girdles the globe for the production and distribution of something as routine as MagnaDoodles?

But the pope seems to think it is worth a try to so speak:

> It would appear that the free market is the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs. But there are many human needs which find no place on the market. It is a strict duty of justice and truth not to allow fundamental human needs to remain unsatisfied. It is also necessary to help needy people acquire expertise, to enter the circle of exchange, and to develop their skills to make the best use of their capacities and resources. Prior to the logic of a fair exchange of goods, there exists something that is due to man because he is man, by reason of his lofty dignity (¶34, 296).

Richard Neuhaus believes that now is precisely the time to speak, when the old regimes and regimens of economics are momentarily reassessing, looking at themselves, and questioning their gathered inertia. The violent underclasses cannot be ignored, the poorest countries will not go away, and the pool of cheap labor cannot shift forever from one continent to the next. People must sooner or later be seen not as the raw material of economics, but as the intended beneficiaries of economics. Humane economics, he suggests, are something we have to strive for, not according to Rockefeller or Lenin, not according to Adam Smith or Karl Marx, but as John Paul directs. Lazarus, after all, was not commended for being poor, but Dives was condemned for keeping him poor.

This is a very good book for several reasons. First, John Paul II has some very good things to say in his encyclical. It is thoroughly pastoral, not theologically polemic, and sincerely tendered to the world from one who has love for that world and concern for its condition. The worth of the encyclical is drawn out well by John Paul's new American interpreter. Second, by this book we are assured that Richard Neuhaus did not leave Lutheranism in a huff. He is now where he has wanted to be, in a church (or as he would say, The Church) where he is really happy, and it's high time that Richard Neuhaus was happy in a church. Third, this is the best treatment of the notion of ecclesiastical authority that we Lutherans are going to be able to read for some time. We Lutherans are quickly approaching the moment when we will have to fish or cut bait on the issue of *magisterium*, and *Doing Well and Doing Good* gives us, in the moments remaining, some searching questions to answer — such as: Who is it, after all, who tells me whether I am orthodox or not? Who speaks such that I hear the apostles speaking? Just who is it, with Bible in hand, who norms me on the issues upon which the Confessions have no word? Who leads me to the correct exegetical conclusion and its contemporary application?

Richard Neuhaus has his answer — the pope — and a rejoinder — "Who does these things for you?" Ask that question in your next winkel and see if there are even two identical answers. Again, the subtitle of this book could well be "Why I Am Now a Roman Catholic (because in this church I know who I must listen to, and who will listen to me), and Why You Should Be As Well (because you don't have that in your church!)." One might disagree with the road Neuhaus chose to get what he wanted, but one cannot deny that he has found what he wanted. And one also cannot deny that he was not getting, nor was he likely to get, what he wanted in any house of American Lutheranism.

In a recent editorial, an ELCA editor of our local newspaper suggested that Lutherans could use a pope, someone who could command the attention of the whole church when he spoke, someone who had to be reckoned with because of his office in the church. What Lutheran leader, he wrote, taking a hike in the Rock-

ies, would find 20,000 teenagers walking along with him by their own choice? It might be a good thing, he continued, if Lutherans had to sit still and think with someone like a pope.

Because of the particular comments this editorial elicited in our parish, I had to remind the members in writing that popes, at least Roman popes, are not the answer, because they still have the explicit power to bind consciences and withhold forgiveness in arbitrary ways. I had to trot out the anti-papal truths of the Confessions.

But at the same time, I could not fully answer the editor's complaint. Truly, the members of our parish are accountable to me, their pastor. They are to listen to me, they are to talk to me — not only about matters beyond the grave, but also all sorts of matters on this side of the grave. I am the *magisterium* in their midst. "But," they could fairly ask, "who is your *magister,* Pastor? Who ensures the quality and the integrity of your *magisterium* among us?" Good question, but only if one has an answer to it. Richard John Neuhaus the Lutheran got tired, it seems, of drawing a blank, and went to a place where there is an answer.

At least for now. Neuhaus likes John Paul — a lot. But John Paul is ten years older than Richard John. His recent health problems notwithstanding, Richard Neuhaus has a good chance of being forced to "talk with" the next pope. We can only hope that will be as bracing for Neuhaus as has been his conversation, up to now, with John Paul II.

Neuhaus, who of course checked none of his savvy and wit at the door of Rome, knows this and admits it: "We are attentive [to the pope] not, or not first of all, because of our respect for the person and office of the pope, but because of our devotion to the church that he serves. Of course it helps considerably when the pope is as impressive a teacher as is John Paul II" (130). A certain Augustinian friar once uttered something like that in a hall at Leipzig, and got *Exsurge domine* for his trouble. For Richard Neuhaus's sake, we must pray that neither this pope nor the next reads Leo X as closely as he reads Leo XIII.

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Biblical Interpretation: The Only Right Way. By David Kuske. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1995.

■ David Kuske's new book on hermeneutics, or biblical interpretation, was a pleasure to read, not because he advances and pursues startling new theories about the Bible and its interpretation, but because he offers the reader a clear and winsome résumé of the old and established Lutheran approach to Scripture and interpretation of it. Such an approach is welcome when Lutheran pastors and laymen are faced with so many diverse approaches to the Bible today: demythologization, existential interpretation, the "new hermeneutic," modernism, post-modernism, and, of course, the historical-critical method. Professor Kuske pretty much ignores all these new ways of reading Scripture and presents to the reader the Lutheran presuppositions for interpreting Scripture: divine origin, authority, inerrancy, clarity, and christocentricity, as well as the basic hermeneutical rules for reading the Scriptures: the meaning of words, syntax, genre, figures of speech, types, application, and more.

The book also commends itself to pastors and laymen by offering a helpful discussion on the matters of canonicity, textual criticism and transmission, as well as a brief history of exegesis. One wishes that Professor Kuske had offered a more detailed history of Lutheran hermeneutics, since he identifies squarely with the exegesis of Luther and the Lutheran Confessions. Professor Kuske's brief synopses of demythologization, the historical-critical method, and "gospel reductionism" will prove very helpful to the Lutheran pastor and laymen.

Since the book is written principally for both pastors and laymen and not for the academician, it will be very useful to a wide range of readers and can be used in all kinds of settings. The reviewer heartily recommends this book to pastors and laymen alike.

Robert Preus †

Commentary on Song of Songs. By John F. Brug. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1995. Hardcover. 96 pages. $16.95.

■ Over the years, Northwestern Publishing House has provided the church with several Bible commentaries intended for parish pastors and seminary use (in addition to the *People's Bible* commentary series for lay Christians). These include expositions of Isaiah 40–66 by August Pieper, Ephesians by Irwin Habeck, and Revelation by Siegbert Becker. Now joining these fine volumes is *Commentary on Song of Songs* by Professor John Brug, who appears to be the most prolific writer among the current Old Testament exegetes at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon. Like the other NPH commentaries, this one is printed in a format that is easy on the eyes, with sections of the text in the original language followed by exegetical notes and theological exposition, bound in a sturdy hard cover, all at a modest price.

Professor Brug both begins and concludes his commentary by observing that the Song of Songs is the most difficult book of the Bible to interpret. The present reviewer, and probably most pastors who have preached and taught the Song, will concur. Prof. Brug outlines four possible hermeneutical approaches to the Song, involving two fundamental questions: first, is the Song about God and man, or about man and woman? And second, in either case, is the Song a description of real historical persons, or a literary creation about values and ideals?

Regarding the first question, which Prof. Brug rightly identifies as the most important, his position is that the Song is about *both* the relationship between God and his people *and* the relationship between man and woman. He argues convincingly that in the 2000 years of interpretation by the church, the false exaltation of celibacy and asceticism led to the dominance of the allegorical interpretation at the expense of including a natural, human dimension. The proper interpretation does not reject either the divine or the human dimension, but instead includes both in proper balance. Passages such as Ezekiel 16 and 23, Psalm 45, Proverbs 1–9, and Ephesians 5 suggest that the love of Yahweh for Israel and of Christ for the church is the "original point of refer-

ence" of the Song (19), and also is the "model" (17) and "the pattern for human love" (19). Viewing this dynamic from the other direction, "the Song declares that human sexual love is good" and that it is "a type of divine love" (19), although Prof. Brug is quick to add that "even the best marriages are poor copies of a perfect original, Christ's love for his bride" (19).

Unless one is familiar with recent commentaries on the Song, the reader may not appreciate how rare this Christological perspective is in current scholarship. Recent conservative Reformed commentaries have minimized the love of Christ for his bride, the church, as a part of the Song's message, and instead have emphasized the relationship between believing husband and wife. Liberal critical commentaries range from overtly pagan (Marvin Pope's cultic funerary interpretation in the *Anchor Bible*) to feminist and liberation views. In the best recent commentary, Roman Catholic scholar Roland Murphy (*The Song of Songs*, Hermeneia [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990]) refers to the church's older interpretations sympathetically, but does not advocate a Christological interpretation for modern readers. In contrast to the dismal collection of recent studies, Prof. Brug's work sparkles with the clear light of the gospel.

The present reviewer, who admittedly holds many pointed opinions about the Song, is in close agreement with Prof. Brug's general approach as well as his exegetical treatments of individual verses. The valuable insights throughout the book are too numerous to mention here.

The only hermeneutical issue that this reviewer might resolve in a different way is the question of the Song's historical character. Prof. Brug's position is that "the characters in the Song are literary characters" (13) and "the events are ideal events, not real incidents in the life of Solomon" (14). The reason he adopts this view is that the polygamous Solomon "does not provide a very suitable model for either ideal marriage or the love of God for his people" (13).

Solomon's polygamy does indeed present a major problem for a Christological interpretation of the Song. Several possible avenues could deal with it without compromising the Song's historical reference. The Song itself mentions Solomon's polygamy in 6:8, but immediately follows it by portraying Solomon as singly devoted to his only true love, the one Shulammite (6:9). That does not excuse polygamy, but it does show that the Song exalts the marriage of one wife to one husband who, at least in his heart of hearts, is "forsaking all others" (the marriage liturgy). A second possible avenue is suggested by Delitzsch (in the Keil-Delitzsch series, 112–113), who implies that the reason Solomon is in awe and afraid of his bride (6:4–5, 10) is that he is ashamed of his own polygamy (6:8), which contrasts with her faithfulness and purity. Delitzsch admits that Solomon's sin "brings a cloud over the typical representation" (112), but reminds the reader that unlike the sinless Christ, the human types of Christ in Scripture are always imperfect. "In the Song, the bride is purer than the bridegroom; but in the fulfilling of the Song . . . the bridegroom [Christ] is purer than the bride [the church]" (113). Prof. Brug himself suggests a third possibility (65–66): the harem mentioned in 6:8 may belong not to Solomon, who would remain monogamous, but to another man, so that even here Solomon may continue to represent Christ, and "the comparison of the woman to the heavenly bodies [in 6:10] reminds us of the similar description of the church in Revelation 12" (66).

This reviewer agrees with Prof. Brug that the Son is indeed a poetic melody of divine love that sparks human love too (Song 8:6). We would stress, though, that this love becomes incarnate in history. God's love for man began in Eden (Genesis 1–2), then after the fall into sin was manifest in Yahweh's redemption of Israel, and culminated in the salvation won for all mankind by the incarnate Christ on the cross. By God's grace his divine love in Christ is reflected, imitated, and in a sense "incarnated" — imperfectly, to be sure — in the marriage of Solomon and the Shulammite, and in Christian marriages today (Ephesians 5). The historical character of salvation and the incarnational nature of divine love would be affirmed in an interpretation that considers the Song to be a real description of historical persons and events — even as the incarnate Christ was a real historical person, and husbands and wives in Christ are too. Prof. Brug, however, can and does marshal biblical parallels to the Song that contain literary characters, most notably Lady Wisdom and Lady Folly in Proverbs 1–9, as well as Jesus' parables, so his approach is in harmony with the hermeneutics of other portions of Scripture.

The confessional Lutheran tradition contains plenty of room to accommodate various ways of handling these kinds of exegetical issues. In fact, the Lutheran interpreters on the Song differ widely. Luther himself attacked the idea that the Song is only about historical Solomon and a daughter of Pharaoh, and not about Christ and the church (AE 15: 194). Most of Luther's lectures on the Song compared the history of Solomon's government to the condition of God's people (church and state!) under the theology of the cross. Delitzsch, like Luther, condemned the allegorical hermeneutic. Delitzsch's most valuable work on the Song was his first exposition of it: *Das Hohelied untersucht und ausgelegt* (Leipzig: Dörffling und Franke, 1851), especially the chapter "Das Mysterium des Hohenlieds" (186–236). Unfortunately this book is quite rare, and much of its material was not included in Delitzsch's second Song commentary (1875), which was the one translated into English in the Keil-Delitzsch series. Also unfortunate is that in his 1851 book, Delitzsch (47, 55, 661–663) criticized the Song interpretations of Luther and Keil. Two years later, Hengstenberg, in his Song commentary, *Das Hohelied Salomonis ausgelegt* (Berlin: Ludwig Dehmigke, 1853), related the Song to Christ and the church by means of the "*allegorische*" hermeneutic without worrying about an original historical context, as also Karl F. Keil did later in *Manual of Historico-Critical Introduction* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1869, 503–504). Hengstenberg (v) sharply criticized the basic hermeneutical view of Delitzsch's 1851 Song commentary, prompting Delitzsch to return fire in his 1875 Song commentary (Keil-Delitzsch series, 4).

These disagreements among champions of Lutheran orthodoxy show just how perplexing the Song is. While it is difficult to speak of a firm consensus among conservative Lutheran commentators on the Song, all of the above works are Christological, and therefore radically different from most contemporary treatments. Prof. Brug's commentary too is solidly Christological and well within the Lutheran mainstream. He also avoids some of the more tenuous interpretations one can find in the other Lutheran works.

In summary, Prof. Brug is to be thanked for his hard work on this most challenging book of Holy Scripture. His commentary undoubtedly will encourage many pastors to preach and teach the Song even though it never appears in the Lutheran lectionary. *Commentary on Song of Songs* provides an ample supply of philological helps that encourage the ambitious pastor to work through the Hebrew. The theological exposition wrestles with the tough interpretive issues and often mentions different possibilities and the views of others before offering a balanced conclusion. Above all else, this commentary proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ from the text. Commentaries like this do not come along very often, so you had better add it to your library!

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The Gnostic Empire Strikes Back. By Peter Jones. Phillipsburg, Pennsylvania: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing House, 1992. 112 pages.

■ *The Empire Strikes Back*— the second installment in the *Star Wars* trilogy — is a particularly somber movie. The original movie ended with the defeat of the evil empire, yet the sequel reveals that the victory celebration was premature. The empire was merely in hiding, waiting for the appropriate moment to strike back at the rebels with a vengeance.

As the title of the book under review suggests, author Peter Jones seeks to show that what we call the New Age movement is not new but in reality a re-emergence of an ancient religion/heresy called Gnosticism. Although it was seemingly defeated in the fourth century, the author argues that Gnosticism has been revived and is now the root of a stronger, more dangerous threat against the Christian faith.

Ancient Gnosticism, according to the author, was a "kaleidoscopic mixture of many varied traditions." The gnostic writings that have been preserved for us, especially the library discovered in 1948 near Nag Hammadi, bear this out. In spite of a seeming wide diversity, these writings show an underlying doctrinal unity among the gnostic groups. Jones provides a clear summary of the core gnostic beliefs and reveals for the reader how Gnosticism presents a worldview and plan of salvation that are opposed to the Christian faith.

At the center of the gnostic religion is the belief that within all (or some) people resides a spark of the true God, who is not the Creator God revealed in the Old Testament. The goal is that these divine sparks be returned to the true God. This can only be done by the possession of certain secret knowledge. The Creator God of the Bible is rejected because he keeps the people ignorant of their having this divine spark. The serpent, who tempts Eve to eat from the tree of knowledge, is viewed as the true Christ. Jesus' death is viewed as a sham perpetuating the ignorance. Of this diabolical religion Jones says, "Christ becomes a symbol of every gnostic believer, and redemption is the fruit of one's own efforts to gain transforming knowledge that one is God" (35).

Jones next analyzes the slippery eel called the New Age. The New Age appears to be a jumble of unrelated groups and movements. The author peers beneath the surface of such movements as homosexual rights, militant feminism, political correctness, nature worship, and the sexual revolution. He reveals an underlying unity and ideological coherence that is fundamentally anti-Christian in spirit and goal. In this unity and coherence Jones discovers the gnostic foundation for the New Age.

As with Gnosticism, the New Age worldview has no room for the Creator God of the Bible; there is the goddess-savior Gaia. Jesus is no longer God incarnate but is viewed as merely a receptacle for the Christ consciousness. Salvation is effected by discovering oneself to be God, that is, by seeking the female nature within. The author's great lament is that this religion is being promoted and accepted within Christian churches. Even some Lutheran publishing houses are printing and distributing books promoting New Age beliefs.

The author points out that the New Age does have some differences from Gnosticism. Jones writes: "In its planetary vision and one-world philosophy the New Age has gone far beyond Gnosticism. Mark Satin's vision of the New Age society . . . is much more extensive and programmatic than anything the Gnostics wrote" (71). Yet in spite of the differences one finds oneself agreeing with the author that the New Age reflects the beliefs and worldview held by the ancient gnostics.

As a matter of fact, one need not know about Gnosticism in order to discern the dangers of the New Age. This book, however, provides a valuable insight into this "reincarnated" enemy of the church. The author freely admits that his work was not written to provide a complete understanding of the New Age, yet it is a good starting point for someone wishing to explore this topic in more depth.

Throughout this work the reader can sense the author's urgency in revealing the true nature of the New Age. His goal is to warn the church so that she may prepare herself for battle against this ancient enemy retooled for the twenty-first century. Other Christian books on the New Age often leave the reader with a sense of despair. Jones, on the other hand, keeps a very positive mood throughout. His message is one of warning, yet his hope and prayer is that like the church fathers before us we will "[use] the weapons of faith, particularly the sword of God's Word, by which pagan Gnosticism was once already put to flight, and by which it will be put to flight again" (x).

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Gnosticism and the New Testament. By Pheme Perkins. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. 258 pages. $17.00.

■ "Since the publication of the full corpus of gnostic writings from the discovery at Nag Hammadi, scholarly work on Gnosticism has been a growth industry," writes Pheme Perkins in the preface to her book under review. The popularization by Elaine Pagels in *The Gnostic Gospels* (1979), as well as New Age fascina-

tion with this ancient religion, has fueled a seemingly endless stream of books, articles, and symposia on Gnosticism.

Much has been written about Gnosticism over the past twenty-five years, but not since Robert McL. Wilson's work *Gnosis and the New Testament* (1968) has any writer undertaken the monumental task of summarizing current scholarly thought on this subject. The past quarter century of intense study and debate has fostered the need for such a summary work, a need that Perkins intends to fill. Her goal is not only to report the findings and conclusions of recent scholarship, but do it in a way that, according to her, "frames new questions for future research" (x).

As with any book of this nature, the reader must keep in mind that Perkins is only presenting one area of gnostic research. Scholarly opinion regarding Gnosticism is not as unified as one might infer from Perkins's book. There are other schools of thought, some of which merit serious attention on the part of scholars. Perkins is not attempting to cover the full spectrum. (Such an attempt would require many more books.) By keeping it narrowly focused, the author is able to present a concise overview of majority opinion with regard to Gnosticism.

The general framework of her book clusters topics into three areas of study. The first is an examination of the arguments in favor of the existence of a non-Christian Gnosticism. The second concerns itself with a comparison of the similar themes and images found in the New Testament and gnostic writings. The concluding section discusses some of the differences and conflicts that exist between orthodox Christian and gnostic practices. This structure is one of the main strengths of this book, allowing the scholar quick access to topics of a personal interest.

The extensive bibliography compiled by the author is an additional strength. From the plethora of books and articles on Gnosticism Perkins provides a representative sampling of scholarly works on the subject. This bibliography will benefit both the casual and serious student of Gnosticism.

A third strength of Perkins's book is that she provides insight into the foundations of modern gnostic scholarship. It is not the purpose of her book to explore those foundations, yet the reader is made aware of the higher-critical underpinnings of current research into Gnosticism (for instance, late dating of the New Testament, identifying the Gospel of Thomas with Q, the New Testament being a product of the community not of divine revelation). The reader should not be surprised that much of modern gnostic research is antithetical to orthodox Christianity.

This book is for the scholar, not merely a casual reader. This is not an introduction; the reader must approach this book with some previous knowledge of Gnosticism. For the scholar who wishes to be informed of the latest in critical gnostic research, Perkins's book is a good addition to the library.

Daryl D. Gehlbach

The Land and the Book: An Introduction to the World of the Bible. By Charles R. Page II and Carl A. Volz. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993. 270 pages plus index.

■ This well-organized volume is an excellent preparatory guide for anyone planning to travel to the Holy Land (Palestine, Egypt, and Syria). It can serve equally well as a resource for the faithful reader of the Scriptures who has a desire to learn more about the peoples of Bible times and the lands in which they lived. The book is divided into three major sections. Part 1 presents an overview of the geography and general history of the region as a whole. Part 2 comprises the major portion of the book (97–228), introducing the reader to various biblical sites of Israel (outside of Jerusalem), then Jerusalem itself, as well as Jordan and a number of other sites, including some that have no reference in the Scriptures. Also included is a fine description of Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. Photographs, maps, and diagrams are judiciously used to illustrate the descriptions of the various sites.

The third and final portion of the volume is really an appendix of brief subjects, including Archeological Method, Chronological Charts, Glossary of Terms, Notes, and Suggestions for Further Reading. This is followed by a complete topical index, designed to make this book a handy reference tool.

Charles R. Page II is Academic Dean of the Jerusalem Center for Biblical Studies in Israel. Carl A. Volz is Professor of Church History at Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. Their work is based on good scholarly research. In most instances the authors are careful in their judgments, particularly with reference to determining whether certain revered sites are authentic, for example, the exact location in Sinai of the mount where God spoke to Moses, or the precise location of the tomb of King David, or the Holy Sepulcher. One may not always agree with some of their conclusions with reference to certain statements in Scripture. For example, they state: "nor can one be certain that the story found in Luke 2 is historically reliable" (114). In addition, for the believer who accepts the inspiration of the whole Scripture as the Word of God, it is disturbing to find seemingly neutral statements such as "Jesus is said to have calmed the sea (Mark 4:35–41)" (73); "where He is said to have healed a Gentile woman's daughter" (74); "He is reported to have made his entry into Jerusalem riding on a donkey" (75). Yet in other places throughout the book the biblical record appears to be acknowledged with straightforward acceptance.

Even though the reader will question some of the statements here and there in the book, by and large it is evident that the authors of this work, in accord with their purpose, have done an excellent job of providing scholarly yet lucidly written material for enriching the reader's appreciation for the geographical and historical backgrounds of the setting in which the God of the Bible revealed himself and his eternal plan of salvation to the inspired writers of the Old and New Testaments and in the fullness of time through his only begotten Son (Gal 4:4).

Beyond the specific purpose and scope of this particular work, the serious student of the Scriptures would do well to supplement his/her study with two other works: Horace D. Hummel's *The Word Becoming Flesh* (for the Old Testament) and Martin H. Franzmann's *The Word of the Lord Grows* (for the New Testament). But for walking "where the saints have trod" (whether on an actual tour or in one's easy chair), *The Land and the Book* deserves an accessible place on the shelf for frequent perusal.

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Union with Christ: John Calvin and the Mysticism of St. Bernard. By Dennis Tamburello. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994. Hardcover. 161 pages.

■ This work started out as the author's doctoral dissertation submitted to the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. It has now been reworked and presented as the first title in the Columbia Series in Reformed Theology, a joint project of Columbia Theological Seminary and Westminster/John Knox Press. The author offers it as a continuation of the trend to examine the relationship between the theology of the leaders of the Reformation to the many late medieval movements to which they were exposed. Works that examine Luther for remnants of and connections to the German mystics such as Tauler are relatively numerous. Less common has been the attempt to find strands of "mystic" thought in Calvin.

Because a certain amount of ambiguity inheres in the term "mysticism," the author turns to the late medieval theologian Jean Gerson for a working definition: "Mystical theology is experiential knowledge of God attained through the union of spiritual affection with Him. Through this union the words of the Apostle are fulfilled, 'He who comes to God is one spirit with Him'." The author makes several points about this definition that help to establish the categories for his comparison between Calvin and St. Bernard. First, Gerson's union with God is a union of the will; Gerson rejects (as do Calvin and Bernard) all types of essential union in which the soul loses itself in the divine being. Second, there is a cognitive component in this type of mysticism. Third, Gerson's kind of mysticism is not elitist. It is available to all the faithful, not only the monk. Finally, Gerson insists on the ecclesial context for mystical union and the necessity of the sacraments in attaining it. This definition provides the basis for finding a surprising amount of common ground between the Cistercian abbot in his monastic setting and the great Genevan theologian.

Dr. Tamburello spends two chapters in providing a background for his comparison between the mysticism of Bernard and Calvin by establishing some commonality in their understandings of anthropology and of justification. It is one of the special virtues of this work and others like it that it wades through medieval categories such as "merit," the emphasis on love over faith, or the subsumption of sanctification under justification, to establish bridges between Bernard's thought and that of Calvin. Real differences remain, of course, such as on the issue of whether the Christian can have certitude of salvation. But, as the author demonstrates, there is also real agreement; for both Bernard and Calvin, salvation (and thus also union with Christ) is entirely the work of God.

The terms under which the comparison between Bernard's and Calvin's conceptions of mystical union with Christ is carried out are the nature of that union, its scope (whether it is available to all or only to the spiritual aristocrat such as the monk), and the relationship between this mystic union and the theologian's ecclesiology. One major difference between the two can be ascribed to the different eras and different theological categories in which they worked and thought. For Bernard, it is charity that is primary and that provides the direct basis for union with Christ, while for Calvin, writing as a theologian of the Reformation, faith is paramount. While the author defends both Bernard and Calvin against various attacks against their versions of the union of wills between the Christian and God, he must nevertheless admit that there is merit to the charge of elitism against Bernard, since for the abbot of Clairveaux it is the monastery that provides the ideal context for promoting the highest type of union to which he aspires. For Calvin, union with Christ belongs to all Christians.

In comparing the ecclesial dimensions of union with Christ, the author treats also the extent to which Bernard and Calvin connect their ideas of that union to the sacraments. It came as something of a surprise to this reviewer to learn that, of the two, it is Calvin who more frequently mentions the sacraments and promotes them as the *sine qua non* for attaining to true union of affection with God. But it is also in connection with this point that the work reveals its most serious deficiency, at least from a Lutheran standpoint. As a measure of the connection between mystical union and the sacraments, Dr. Tamburello attaches a great deal of importance to the number of times that Bernard and Calvin mention the two together. He does not, however, pursue the qualitative difference in eucharistic theology constituted by their different understandings concerning what is on the altar after consecration and what is then eaten and drunk in the sacred meal. The miracle of the presence of Christ's body and blood on the altar is central to Bernard's understanding of the mass, while for Calvin (all the recent attempts to find some kind of "Real Presence" in his doctrine notwithstanding) this is not the case. When Bernard writes about the necessity in this life of being "fed with the flesh of Christ" he is illustrating his understanding of Christ's sacramental presence that exemplifies as well as promotes the *magnum mysterium,* the sacrament of the marriage between Christ and the church. Thus, while it may be true that he does not center his piety on the Eucharist to the extent that later medieval mystics did (and the author cites Bernard McGinn to this effect), nevertheless it also is true that for St. Bernard the mystical union takes place in a sacramental context unlike that of Calvin, and the difference cannot simply be measured in the number of times these authors mention the sacraments. The difference between Bernard's understanding of the miracle of Christ's presence in the mass and that of Calvin bespeaks differences — in Christology and the role of the sacrament — that need to be explored. This reviewer would have liked to see more analysis of just those "relatively infrequent" times mentioned in passing by the author in which Bernard refers to the sacraments and a comparison of them to the several citations from Calvin.

On the whole, however, there is a great deal in this book to make it worthwhile reading. Dr. Tamburello's work is well executed and thorough. He makes frequent and fair use of his sources to establish his points. One particular benefit for the average Lutheran reader will be the way Calvin is represented, not according to the polemical stereotype as a cold systematician, but as a theologian promoting a warm spirituality. Likewise, while it may require effort to adjust oneself to the medieval categories of merit, free choice, and the priority of love over faith, it can be worth it — as, in the opinion of this reviewer, it is in the case of Bernard of Clairveaux— to see the ways in which shared scriptural content is expressed in different ways.

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God and Caesar Revisited. Edited by John R. Stephenson. Luther Academy Conference Papers No. 1, 1995. 91 pages. Paper. $5.00.

■ This book is a compilation of papers presented at a congress on the Lutheran Confessions in April 1994.

Ulrich Asendorf surveys "The Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms in Modern German Lutheran Theology," mainly since World War II, devoting the greatest space to Hermann Diem, Gustaf Tornvall, Johannes Heckel, and Ulrich Duchrow, with appropriate repeated mentions of Gerhard Ebeling and Paul Althaus. These modern interpretations have proven largely unsuccessful in capturing Luther's thought on the two kingdoms, Asendorf reports, by minimizing it (Diem), under-researching it (Duchrow), or not distinguishing sufficiently between it and Augustine's two cities (Heckel). (On the last point, Asendorf shrewdly observes that "there are nearly no quotations from Augustine's *De civitate Dei* in [Luther's] treatment of the kingdoms, whereas he quotes from him extensively when dealing with the doctrines of justification and grace" [9].) An interesting digression suggests that the Barmen Declaration was not as one-sidedly Reformed as Barth and others portrayed it (10–11).

In "Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms," Kenneth Hagen leaves mainly to one side the secondary literature where "All too often the doctrine is discussed in reference to some issue extraneous to Luther" (16). Hagen wants to listen to Luther himself. He finds the reformer consistent, but in a way more complex than usually depicted: Luther painted *two* different and complementary pictures of two kingdoms, and a significant addendum should be made to each. Hagen proposes that we "think of Luther who lived in both of the horizontal kingdoms: in the visible earthly kingdom as a citizen of Wittenberg and in the invisible heavenly kingdom as a Christian in the company of all the saints and angels. Furthermore, Luther was an instrument of God's left hand as professor, father, and civil judge, and an instrument of God's right hand as priest and preacher. Furthermore, Luther's doctrine of *Anfechtung* meant that he was in daily struggle with Satan and his kingdom" (18). Hagen adds, from the 1527 Zechariah commentary, Luther's "government of the angels" (26). This scheme, while not simple (the terms "vertical" and "horizontal" do not clarify matters, I fear), does a remarkable job of accounting for the data in Luther's writings. Hagen's contribution stands out as significant for this reason alone. It proceeds from an important methodological principle: "all of Luther's theology forms a coherent whole; but to use one distinction as a key to unlock some other theme, I do not find helpful" (19). Of all these papers I applaud Hagen's most, though I wonder what it means by a quick reference to "both uses of the Gospel, alien and proper" (19).

John Johnson offers a "modest background essay" on "Augustine, Aquinas, and Ockham: The Two Kingdoms Doctrine in Medieval Theology." Key points of this survey are summarized in the conclusion: "the formulation of Augustine is essentially one-dimensional (the fundamental relationship between the spiritual and the temporal) and those of Aquinas and Ockham are, at best, two-dimensional (the question of the relationship between church and state is, as for Luther, as paradigmatic instance of the relationship of the two kingdoms)." None of the three, however, applied two-kingdoms thinking to "the activity of the individual Christian" (36). Medieval theology did not understand the doctrine of justification.

Kurt Marquart takes up "The Two Realms ('Kingdoms') in the Lutheran Confessions" with five penetrating theses: the two-realms distinction is basic Christian (not Jewish or Muslim) teaching; it distinguishes "evangelical" from "legal" institutions, not inward and outward elements; gospel, not law, governs the church; a "legal-contractual fringe of church life" is in and accountable to left-hand rule; and the church should make due distinctions in proclaiming God's law. Unfortunately, the last and longest thesis is least-treated. This essay tantalizes most, perhaps, in interpreting the Augsburg Confession, Article V (*Confessio Augustana* V) (41–42). I agree with its exegesis. Yet I wonder whether the alternative is overdrawn: "If CA V (of the preaching office) is not really about that, but about a generic 'ministry' which really everyone has . . . then our Confessions have in fact no relevant resources for us today" (40). An article by Robert Preus, "The Confessions and the Mission of the Church" (*Springfielder*, June, 1975), for example, mines many relevant ecclesiological resources from the Symbols, although it does not find divine institution of the "gospel office" (Marquart's term) in CA V.

"Law and Due Process in the Kingdom of the Left and the Kingdom of the Right" by Martin Noland vigorously appeals to Missouri Synod people "to restore our church government and its judiciary to its Scriptural and Confessional order" (47). Noland's *tour de force* calls for (1) "return [of] legislative powers to the convention, where it [*sic*] belongs"; (2) modifying current powers to suspend and expel Synod members, as held by district presidents and the synodical *praesidium*; and (3) revising Synod's judicial process bylaws (50). Two of the most salient changes proposed are that "floor committee members for the following convention should be elected by the delegates at each regular convention" (50) and, in disputed matters, to "permit advisory opinions . . . but . . . retain finality of decision with the Dispute Resolution Panel hearing the case" (55). The essay is under-documented in places, for example, composition of various boards as described in note 7, page 48. But it has a contribution to make in a discussion that should be important within Missouri Synod circles, though of limited interest elsewhere.

John Stephenson analyzes "The Two Kingdoms Doctrine in the Reformed Tradition" via a few notable exponents. Abraham Kuyper differentiated law from gospel no more than Karl Barth did. Both ended up distinguishing "between varying modes of the law," and therefore, they said in effect, "In place of a two-handed rule of God steps the government of one hand, using now the thumb and now the little finger" (62, 63). Modern Christian reconstructionism bears an uncanny resemblance to Martin Bucer's sixteenth-century *De Regno Christi*. Stephenson finds more similarity to Luther in John Calvin's views than in those of the foregoing theologians, but even here he indicates two notable differences from Luther. First, Calvin thought civil rulers should punish public blasphemy (Luther did too, I might add) as well as "defend sound doctrine and the position of the church" (quoted on 67). Second, Calvin was ultimately more interested in distinguishing *inward* from *outward* and *now* from *then* than in dividing law and gospel. The essay closes with a roundabout encouragement for Lutherans to do their appropri-

ate service in the civil sphere, not allowing "law-gospel theology" to become "a caricature of itself" (68).

August Suelflow tells two stories of wartime loyalty in America. His article "The Two Kingdom Concept in 18th and 19th-century Lutheranism in America with Special Reference to Muhlenberg and Walther" is a narrative about these two towering figures in American Lutheranism who strove to uphold the "two kingdom doctrine" during very hard times. Both had "difficulty . . . when the states' rights had not been clarified in America's history . . . determining who exercised the power of the state" (86). For Muhlenberg, was it the British king or the Continental Congress? For Walther, was it the federal government or the state of Missouri? Walther seems to have been more outspoken in expressing his wartime sympathies than Muhlenberg was, but both pastors courageously determined to keep their politically divided flocks together.

The book's last piece, a banquet speech by Richard Muller, takes a whimsical look at the kingdoms of the left and the right from the standpoint of "metadoxy."

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Augustine Today. Edited by Richard John Neuhaus. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993. 158 pages. Paper.

■ *Augustine Today* is the last of sixteen volumes in the Eerdmans Encounter Series. These books originated as scholarly papers delivered at conferences concerned with issues under the general theme of religion in American public life.

As American culture is engaged in a *kulturkampf,* one would expect that Augustine's *The City of God* (a guiding text for Western Christians grappling with the tension of being *in* but not *of* the world), would be the central theme of the essays. But not until one reaches the final essay on justice, love, and peace is this expectation met. Although the "religion in public life" theme is not central to these essays, if one is willing to tackle the sheer density of the arguments, there are many jewels to be mined.

The following reflection on William Babcock's "*Cupiditas* and *Caritas:* The Early Augustine on Love and Fulfillment" serves to accent one such jewel. According to Babcock, Augustine readily accepted antiquity's fundamental concern for the problem of human happiness. Roughly stated, Augustine's initial premise was that "all persons want to be happy; and no persons are happy who do not have what they want" (*De beata vita* 2:10). Of course, the issue is considerably more complex, from the child whose happiness is focused on handling fire to the person who mistakenly perceives herself to be happy because she has attained the external trappings of happiness. Babcock says, "Suddenly, then, the issues connected with the question of happiness multiply" (2).

Not the least of these connected issues is the problem of fear rooted in the chances and changes effecting life's fortunes. Insofar as happiness is contingent upon possessing what we want, the reality of moths, thieves, and rust means that all possessing is qualified and provisional. All happiness derived from possessing the transitory is as illusory as it is temporary. And a happiness enslaved to fear is so precarious that it is hardly worthy of the name. Thus Augustine's distinction between and discussion of the affection for the temporary *(cupiditas)* and affection for the eternal *(caritas)* provides the verbal resources whereby the pastor is able to make an incisive diagnosis of the problem of human discontentment that supports the prognosis for human fulfillment.

The problem is not that we desire happiness or that we derive happiness from the temporal world. The problem is that the soul has turned toward transitory objects to satisfy the eternal hunger. This inordinate love of temporary goods *(cupiditas)* is not merely a problem in theory, it is *the root of all sorts of evil,* because *cupiditas* carries a "hidden penalty." Though the inordinate affection of the transitory may, for a time, lead one to believe this world is an abiding place of human happiness, the illusion cannot withstand the hidden penalty of *cupiditas.* Eventually and inevitably, the hidden penalty will subvert *cupiditas*-centered happiness with the diminishing returns of transitory pleasure and the slavery to fear experienced by hearts tethered to the "things that are uncertain and changeable" (17).

This is where Augustine's "hidden penalty" has rich currency for our preaching. The "hidden penalty" names one of the modes by which the law always accuses *(lex semper accusat).* Those who inordinately love the transitory will never find contentment because the law never rests from the accusation that security centered in "things that are uncertain and changeable" is insecure. Though this observation is unremarkable, it may help us consider why too much of our preaching of the law has the force of threadbare clichés or tired moralism. Granted, the "hidden penalty" of *cupiditas* means that the law, regardless of our preaching, will always accuse, condemn, and subvert every effort to find happiness apart from God. Still, it is the task of preaching that we imaginatively spell out the diminishing returns of illicit pleasure and forcefully assert the slavery to fear, so that the work of the law is publicly named. The pastoral work that aims to subvert the security of the secure and prepare the broken to consider the possibility of hope can hardly be content with recitation of platitudes. In considering the depth of Augustine's theological reflection on *cupiditas,* it becomes apparent that the work of proclaiming the failure of *cupiditas* is an arduous and demanding craft.

The expectation that the lucid discussion of the failure of *cupiditas* would carry over into the possibilities of *caritas* was mostly dampened by ambiguities too numerous to mention. This ambiguity was reflected in the conclusion drawn by these recognized Augustine scholars, who were quite sure of the importance of Augustine's legacy, though uncertain "about what constituted Augustine's legacy." In one unambiguous moment, Babcock, quoting Yeats, warned that without an understanding of *caritas* as both the alternative to *cupiditas* and the fulfillment of what *cupiditas* longs for, we might find that among our congregations "the best lacks all conviction and the worst is full of passionate intensity." The pastor in search of ways of proclaiming the best to a *cupiditas*-saturated culture may do well to return to Augustine. But, given the restraints of time and money, he may also wish to find other guides who can, with more certainty, lead one in Augustine's legacy and the importance of that legacy for the church today.

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Logia Forum

Short Studies and Commentary

The Laymen's Movement

The following paper was read at a convention of the Southern Illinois District in 1913 by Francis Pieper, who is known to many of us as the author of the three-volume Christian Dogmatics. *He served as seminary professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, from 1878 to 1931. He held the position of seminary president from 1887 to 1931, during which time he also served as the president of the Missouri Synod from 1899 to 1911. This essay was translated by J. T. Mueller and published by Concordia Publishing House in 1933 in a collection entitled* What Is Christianity? *This excerpt comes from pages 100–101. If any of our readers knows more about the historical context of this "Laymen's Movement," please write us! Doesn't this all sound remarkably like another men's movement in our own day?*

In the course of the last decade, much has been written on the so-called Laymen's Movement within the Protestant denominations of America, especially in view of the fact that in 1906 there was effected an organization under the name of Laymen's Missionary Movement, which aroused wide-spread attention both in the church-papers and in the secular periodicals of our country.

The object of this movement was to interest the Christian laity of all the church-bodies in a more general and extensive campaign for the promulgation of the Gospel throughout all the world and to gain through their hearty support the enormous funds necessary to extend the kingdom of Christ all over the earth. During the winters of 1909 and 1910, Laymen's Missionary Conventions were held in seventy-five cities of the United States, and owing to the influence of enthusiastic missionary addresses, huge sums were gathered. A certain Mr. John Kennedy alone contributed ten million dollars toward the cause of Foreign and Home Missions.

How shall we regard this Laymen's Movement? In our own circles it is quite commonly looked at askance, especially since many of the representatives of this movement by their speeches betrayed the fact that they have no inkling whatever of the true nature of Christianity. As a matter of fact, very often Christianity and educational or cultural progress are practically identified. The task of the Christian Church is said to consist, not in the saving of sinners, but rather in the ethical transformation of the non-Christian world by proper educational training. We have always voiced our dissent from this supposed purpose of Christianity, and rightly so.

The Wittenberg Society

For those wondering about outreach to the wider evangelical community, we offer the following news from Santa Barbara, California:

A group from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (LCMS) in Santa Barbara wanted to create a forum where the teachings of the Reformation could be discussed in a setting that did not require people to leave their Sunday church home.

The result? The Wittenberg Society, a quarterly Friday night educational forum committed to bringing the insights of the sixteenth-century Reformation to the twentieth-century church.

The Society's inaugural meeting was on November 10— the 512th anniversary of Luther's birth. The meeting was held at Good Shepherd and all expenses were underwritten by that church, including air fare and honorarium for the speaker. As Craig Parton, a founding member of the Society, told us, the goals were (1) to seize the theological high ground, (2) to be a place where serious, thinking Christians can come to hear solid, orthodox presentations by experienced speakers, and (3) to associate Good Shepherd with goals 1 and 2. Here is Parton's report:

Since all the founding members of the Society have intimate experience with non-denominational Bible churches, we are painfully aware of the resistance that many have to entering a Lutheran church. Thus we had a non-Lutheran speaker address a very controversial topic that all churches are struggling with — contemporary Christian music and seeker-sensitive worship. Even though the title ("Seeker Sensitive Worship and The Loss of Theological Literacy") would have tipped off people to where we

were coming from, over one hundred people from over ten churches attended. It was very clear that just about all Protestant churches are in a world of hurt over this topic.

The speaker was Dr. Leonard Payton, Director of Music at a Presbyterian church in northern California. Dr. Payton brought solid evangelical credentials (he studied at John MacArthur's Master's College) along with a Master of Arts and Doctorate in music from the University of Southern California and the University of California at San Diego. Dr. Payton's articles in *Modern Reformation Magazine* on contemporary Christian music have generated national debate. For a non-Lutheran, Dr. Payton is impressively familiar with the Divine Service (I first met him at the Real Life Worship Conference in San Mateo, California, in April of 1994), with *TLH* and *LW*, as well as with confessional Lutheran orthodoxy as represented in the *Book of Concord.*

The lecture (complete with Dr. Payton's hilarious paralleling of the musical style of John Wimber's "Spirit Song" with Neil Diamond's "Sweet Caroline") and questioning went almost two and one half hours. The audience included a number of Westmont College faculty (a major private evangelical liberal arts college in town) and students.

The content of the lecture powerfully, yet implicitly, supported the Christ-centeredness of the Divine Service and Lutheran hymnody. In honor of Luther's birthday, we made available the Small Catechism as well as a cassette recording of Luther's catechetical hymns sung by a children's choir and made available by the Concordia Catechetical Academy in Sussex, Wisconsin (Rev. Peter Bender, PO Box 123, Sussex WI 53089-0123).

The next speaker for The Wittenberg Society is Dr. Rod Rosenbladt, professor of theology and apologetics at Concordia University in Irvine, California. Dr. Rosenbladt will speak on "The Loss of the Evangel in Evangelicalism." While Dr. Payton addressed what is going on in the choir loft, Dr. Rosenbladt will address the foul status of law and gospel preaching in American pulpits.

Good Shepherd has now put the Wittenberg Society in its evangelism budget, thanks to the encouragement and support of pastor Jim Johnson. Those interested in discussing this concept further can call Craig Parton at (805) 882-9822 or write him at 33 Langlo Terrace in Santa Barbara, CA 93105.

Pieper on Holy Communion

The October 1995 issue of Concord *featured this piece by the editor, Rev. Glenn Huebel. Those interested in making a freewill donation to subscribe to this newsletter may write:* Concord, *PO Box 192, Keller, TX 76248.*

On the question of who is to be admitted to the Lord's Supper, Pieper gives the following instructions to pastors and congregations (*Christian Dogmatics*, 3: 381):

> On the one hand, they are not permitted to introduce "open communion"; on the other hand, they must guard against denying the Sacrament to those Christians for whom Christ appointed it.

This quote has appeared in various periodicals, both official and unofficial, and was also read to the 1995 Synodical Convention. In almost every case it is quoted by someone who wishes to "loosen" the present synodical policy, which requires that we commune only those members of Lutheran churches that are in fellowship with the Missouri Synod (except in special cases of pastoral care). In other words, Pieper has become the [unwitting] champion of those who advocate what they call "close" as opposed to "closed" communion. Those who stress this supposed distinction are simply ignorant of our historical practice and the historical use of these terms. The terms are, in fact, synonyms, as the CTCR itself declared in 1985 (see *Theology and Practice of the Lord's Supper*, 20).

Did Pieper really sanction and teach a communion practice that allowed fellowship at the altar apart from agreement in the doctrine taught and confessed? Those who are at all familiar with the writing of Pieper know that this cannot be. In fact the above quote is being used out of context when it lends credence to the idea that we may commune all believers or all those who believe in the real presence regardless of their denominational affiliation. . . .

After stating the general principle above, Pieper goes on to explain himself. He affirms that the Lord's Supper is intended only for Christians, but not for all Christians. Only those Christians who have been baptized, who are able to examine themselves, believe the Real Presence of Christ's body and blood, and have removed any public offense are to be admitted to the table (3: 383–384). He then makes one more important stipulation, one that is extremely relevant for our discussions today. He writes:

> Furthermore, since Christians are forbidden to adhere to teachers who deviate from the Apostolic doctrine (Romans 16:17, "Avoid them"), it is self evident that members of heterodox churches must have severed their connection with the heterodox body and have declared their acceptance of the true doctrine before they may commune with the congregation.

It should be obvious that Pieper was definitely not one to allow to the table anyone who could agree to three or four points in a vaguely-worded communion statement, nor was he one who was likely to commune "Aunt Sally" who was a practicing Methodist or Roman Catholic. According to the above quote, Pieper would not even have communed someone who privately confessed all points of Lutheran doctrine if he refused to sever his membership in a heterodox church. Pieper is not the friend of those who want to lower the standards of admission to the Lutheran altar.

What, then, does Pieper mean by his warning not to deny the Sacrament to those for whom Christ appointed it? Pieper speaks of Christians who misunderstand "worthiness" to be a special degree of sanctity and faith (387). He is concerned that Christians understand that the Sacrament is a gospel invitation to sinners. Though Pieper endorsed the concept of communion registration and interview with the pastor (386), he was concerned that the pastor not be too rigorous with his flock so that he turn away from the table poor, sinful sheep who needed the sacrament. He writes:

> Both pastor and congregation must most carefully guard against denying the Lord's Supper to anyone to whom Christ wants it to be given. In his day Luther had to warn not only against laxity in practice, but also against legalism and unnecessary rigor. He writes to Balth Thuering in Koburg: "I have written the pastor not to torture the ignorant with long examinations when they announce for Communion, but also not to refrain entirely from exploring and examining them."

Thus we can see that Pieper's concern is that the Sacrament not be denied to a pastor's own members because of rigorous examination practices. Does anyone today really think that the rigorous examination of members is a significant problem in our synod? Are there congregations left that still require members to register for communion? We should use Pieper together with all the other orthodox theological giants of our history, but let's quote them in context!

Glenn Huebel
Messiah Lutheran Church
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Real Presence in the Liturgy

On September 16, 1995, the Rev. William R. Kilps presented a paper on theology and liturgy at the Workshop for Pastors and Church Musicians held at Our Savior Lutheran Church, Springfield, IL. Included below are some samples of that presentation, the full text of which can be acquired by contacting Rev. Kilps, 17628 Hubbard Rd., East Moline, IL 61244. The author wishes to acknowledge with thankfulness Dr. Arthur Just's initial exposition on the matter of presence as it pertains to worship.

The topic of *theology* (the study of God) as it impacts upon *liturgy* (the place where God offers his word and sacraments) is, most basically, an issue of *presence*— specifically, *God's* presence with us. How we view the presence of God directly impacts upon how the divine service is approached.

In Lutheran circles, we describe this presence of God as being a "real presence." It is not an ethereal presence as if God is far up in heaven and we're way down here. Nor is his a generic presence in the liturgy, as we might casually speak about God being with us wherever we go — whether we are in the car, beside the lake, or at the ball game. Rather, in the liturgy God's presence is a concrete one. In fact, we can be so specific as to say that the Lord is present there with us according to His fleshly, bodily mode, what our Lutheran Confessions refer to as the *corporeal* mode of his presence (cf. Tappert, 586:99). It is impossible to talk about Christ being present with us without acknowledging his incarnate, fleshly being.

The counterpart to this is, of course, held by those of the Reformed persuasion. They can speak of Christ's "real" presence any way they care to. On the one hand, there is the Savior who "walks with me, and He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own," "In the Garden" (wherever that is). On the other hand, there is the Christ who, according to their mistranslation of Acts 3:21, must *remain* in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything (Note the NIV translation of this verse as well as Tappert, 590:119). *That* "Christ," they argue, cannot be present here among us corporeally, and is most certainly not to be found in the meal of the Holy Eucharist.

On that intangible level, the issue of presence has a profound impact upon the way in which Reformed worship is conducted. It is a style that I would like to refer to as the "parade approach." In a parade, the celebrity who sits atop the float is admired from a distance. The observer of that parade is just one of the crowd. As such, he may conduct himself with relative anonymity. But if that same individual is granted a personal audience with the celebrity, then the ground rules change dramatically. Suddenly, one is keenly aware of his own demeanor, conduct, words, gestures, and even appearance. There are certain things one does and does not do when one is actually in the presence of greatness, as opposed to simply gawking at that greatness from afar.

If God is only "watching us from a distance" (as the renowned theologian Bette Midler intoned), then one can relax a little. One can approach worship in a more casual manner, because there is a safe buffer between God and the worshiper — a buffer created not by the cross of Christ, but by the indefinable expanse that separates the heavenly realm from the earthly one. In which case, the worshiper is accountable only to those other worshipers whose existence qualifies as the "real presence."

A great deal, then, is riding upon the strength of the gathering. Is everyone doing his or her part? Are emotions being stirred? Is the enthusiasm catching? When God is not immediately present, it becomes necessary to rely upon those who are a bit closer to the action — those who have been blessed with extraordinary talents in leadership, music, and the like — to convey the spirit to those who are watching from the outer reaches. And one can only hope to be caught up in the excitement or, as some have called it, "the worship experience."

William R. Kilps
Zion Lutheran Church
East Moline, Illinois

Neo-Baalism

If you haven't been introduced to the writings of Eugene Peterson, here is a good sample of his work with which you should be pleased to make his acquaintance. It comes from pages 145–146 of his 1980 John Knox Press publication entitled Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work. *Logia readers are certain to enjoy his writings even though we recognize the occasional Protestant overtures of worship as something we do for God and prayer as a means of grace.*

Pastors are subjected to two recurrent phrases from the people to whom they give spiritual leadership. Both are reminiscent of Baalism, enough so as to earn the label "neo-Baalism." The phrases are: "Let's have a worship experience" and "I don't get anything out of it."

The phrase "let's have a worship experience" is Baalism's substitute for "let us worship God." The difference is between cultivating something that makes sense to an individual and acting in response to what makes sense to God. In a "worship experience," a person sees something which excites interest and tries to put religious wrappings around it. A person experiences something in the realm of dependency, anxiety, love, and a connection is made with the ultimate. Worship is a movement from what a person sees (or experiences or hears) to prayer or celebration or discussion in a religious atmosphere. Subjectivity is encouraged.

The other phrase of "neo-Baalism" is "I don't get anything out of it." When it refers to participation in the Christian community it is accepted as a serious criticism and a valid excuse from further engagement in something which personal experience testifies is irrelevant and uninteresting.

The assumption that supposedly validates the phrase is that worship must be attractive and personally gratifying. But that is simply Baalism *redivivus* [renewed; reincarnated], worship trimmed to the emotional and spiritual specifications of the worshiper. The divine will which declares something beyond or other than what is already a part of the emotional-mental construct of the worshiper is spurned. That worship might call for something *beyond* us is shrugged off as obscurantist.

And so the one indispensable presupposition of Christian worship, the God of the covenant who reveals himself in his word, is deleted. A Freudian pleasure principle is substituted and worship is misused to harness God to human requirements. Worship is falsified into being a protective cover for self-seeking. That the self-seeking is in the area of the psychic rather than the sexual does little to improve the results over old Baalism. We may be entertained, warmed, diverted, or excited in such worship; we will probably not be changed — and we will not be saved. Our feelings may be sensitized and our pleasures expanded, but our morals will be dulled and our God fantasized.

The Real Wiseacres

Luther's last sermon was preached on February 15, 1546. He begins by saying of the text, Matthew 11:25–30, "This is a fine Gospel and it has a lot in it. Let us talk about part of it now, covering as much as we can and as God gives us grace." Translated by John W. Doberstein, this sermon is found in volume 51 of the American Edition of Luther's Works, *the portion below coming from pages 383–384. The German text is found in WA 51: 187–194.*

To the world it is very foolish and offensive that God should be opposed to the wise and condemn them, when, after all, we have the idea that God could not reign if he did not have wise and understanding people to help him. But the meaning of the saying is this: the wise and understanding in the world so contrive things that God cannot be favorable and good to them. For they are always exerting themselves; they want to do things in the Christian church the way they want to themselves.

Everything that God does they must improve so that there is no poorer, more insignificant and despised disciple on earth than God; he must be everybody's pupil, everyone wants to be his teacher and preceptor. This may be seen in all heretics from the beginning of the world, in Arius and Pelagius, and now in our time the Anabaptists and antisacramentarians, and all fanatics and rebels; they are not satisfied with what God has done and instituted, they cannot let things be as they were ordained to be. They think they have to do something too, in order that they may be a bit better than other people and able to boast: This is what I have done. What God has done is too poor and insignificant, even childish and foolish; I must add something to it. This is the nature of the shameful wisdom of the world, especially in the Christian church, where one bishop and one pastor hacks and snaps at another and one obstructs and shoves the other, as we have seen at all times in the government of the church to its great detriment. These are the real wiseacres, of whom Christ is speaking here, who put the cart before the horse and will not stay on the road which God himself has shown us, but always have to have and do something special in order that people may say: Ah, our pastor or preacher is nothing; there's the real man! He'll get things done!

But is this behavior not a disgusting thing, and should not God grow impatient with it? Should he be so greatly pleased with these fellows who are all too smart and wise for him and are always wanting to send him back to school? As it says later in the same chapter, "Wisdom must be justified by her own children" [Lk 7:35]. Things are in a fine state, indeed, when the egg wants to be wiser than the hen. A fine governance it must be when the children want to rule their father and mother and the fools and simpletons [want to rule] the wise people. You see, this is the reason why the wise and understanding are condemned everywhere in the Scriptures.

The Gospel Isn't Fair

Our Lord concludes the parable of the workers in the vineyard with the words "The last will be first and the first will be last." Those who had borne the burden and the heat of the day grumbled. They were perturbed. Their hopes had been heightened when at first they saw the johnny-come-latelies getting paid a full day's wage. They thought that they would in turn get more than was promised to them. They didn't mind the landowner being generous to the others if only he would be commensurately more generous to them.

Could the point of this parable be that the gospel isn't fair? Perhaps one could venture to say that the gospel *can't* be fair. If the gospel were fair, it wouldn't be gospel.

Consider the following example: a father has several children. He loves each of them very much. One day, he gives a quarter to the second oldest — not because he is playing favorites, but simply because the occasion arose to be gracious in this way.

Now suppose that the other children get wind of it. What is likely to be their reaction? They will want to be treated "fairly." They will feel that their father practically owes each of them

a quarter. They may plead their case before their father with begging, stomping, crying. If they thus manage to get a quarter, it is for an entirely different reason from that given for the second oldest.

If something is owed in order to establish equality or fairness, then it no longer bears the qualities of "giftedness." The gospel is not bestowed in terms of equality or fairness. It is not given from a Lord who is an arbitration expert, trying to determine what would be fair among rancorous degenerates. He is not bound by law to heal every leper or perform the same number of miracles in every city.

Fairness comes under the rubric of the law. Fairness reasons that it ought to have an equality with everyone else, even if it has to be established with quotas or affirmative action. In its idealistic sense, communism was meant to be a very fair political and economic solution to the cares of the world, eradicating inequality by stamping out class distinctions. The lust for equality in terms of race, gender, and economics, however, is insatiable. The molten magma of discontent will continually boil and bubble beneath the crust, with occasional outbursts of sulfuric gas and the overflow of red-hot rock taffy. And wasn't it C. S. Lewis who described hell as the place where the denizens suffered the anguish of growing infinitely more angry with God, whose judgment they did not consider fair?

The gospel lives in an altogether different dimension. Fairness can see the gospel about as well as one looking for daisies through a welder's mask. Not so with repentance. It sees the gospel as something beyond equality, something better than fairness. It sees grace. It sees the one who would be first being the servant of all. It finds its life where first becomes last and last becomes first — in the one who is first and last, beginning and end, author and finisher, Alpha and Omega. He is the one who did not think equality with God as something to be grasped. Those who have this gift graciously, live in spite of fairness.

JAB

A Synod Worthy of the Name

C. F. W. Walther addressed the first Iowa District Convention at St. Paul's Church in Ft. Dodge, Iowa, beginning on August 20, 1879. His essay, "Duties of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod," is eminently practical and is translated for us in CPH's publication Essays for the Church. *This citation is found in volume* 2, *pages 45–46. The specific translator for this piece was not named, though the introduction by Dr. August Suelflow lists the following names as translators for the work: Herbert Richter, Fred Kramer, Alex Guebert, Robert Smith, Laurence White, Jim Ware, Reinhold Stallmann, and Everette W. Meier, who is said to have translated half of the essays. Call CPH to obtain your copies before they run out!*

There are many pastors in America who form a "union" of sorts so they can play the "game" of synod. They may be renegades from the discipline of a legitimate synod, are usually poorly educated, know nothing about the doctrine of the church whose name they bear, may have no preparation for the office of the ministry at all, are filled with errors of every kind, may also be conscienceless people who carry on "ministry" like any other trade, just in order to earn their daily bread and live a comfortable life.

When they come into an area, especially one that has no synod, they think, "This is nice; we'll form our own 'synod' here." So then they accept as members any Tom, Dick, or Harry who happens to come along so that they can play "synod."

They all want to be "president," and so they elect a large number of vice-presidents so that everyone holds an office, a title, a dignity. They have no doctrinal studies of any kind because their heads are empty and therefore they can't produce anything worthwhile. Neither do they have any interest in doctrine. They spend their time on "business," how they should proceed in proper parliamentary fashion. They appeal repeatedly for "proper procedure" in bringing matters up for consideration by the "right reverend synod" or the "venerable ministerium." And so they refer the matter from Caiaphas to Annas, etc. It is truly hair-raising and shocking to read the history of how certain "synods" came into being. The way they operate is nothing less than scandalous!

In contrast to that, a synod worthy of the name must above all else be formed so that the gifts which are distributed to the various servants of Christ may be best utilized for the benefit of all. And here again the number one priority must be the promotion of a better understanding of God's Word. And even if a synod proceeds in a free and easy manner, with no particular organized procedure, it is still a glorious synod so long as there is an intensive study of God's Word. The Lord is in the midst of His synodical members. For there we are gathered in His name and there His Word is taught in childlike faith. . . .

It is truly a sad situation when a synod has virtually nothing but "business items" on its convention agenda. Luther has a comment on this point when he says:

> It is a sin and a shame that Christendom should here and there be subjected to such an abominable pretense which implies that the Holy Spirit omitted many important doctrines which must now be *revealed and taught by councils that rarely deal with matters of doctrine*, with the exception of the first councils, which on the basis of Scripture defended the foremost articles on the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit against heretics. [Now councils propose] things that are nothing more than man-made arrangements and laws. (*Church Postil*, Second Sermon on the Gospel for the Holy Festival of Pentecost, XI, 1448 f.)

Luther's complaint is "that the councils have rarely dealt with doctrine." That he calls a "sin and a shame." Here in America we also use the arrangement of a synod [or council] to carry on the business of the church. God forbid that we ever get to the point where we merely put on a big show and then have a convention in which we discuss all sorts of peripheral piffle about ceremonies, rules, and insignificant trifles [*armselige Lappalien*]. Instead of that, may we always concentrate on the study of doctrine.

Reading Mania

Also found in another portion of the above-cited essay is this comment by Walther regarding the reading of pastors and laypersons in his day (op.cit., 51–52). Here he makes reference to Der Lutheraner, *a periodical he began editing in 1844 and that subsequently ran uninterrupted for 130 years until the lack of a German readership forced its discontinuation in 1974. It was influential in putting confessional Lutherans in touch with one another and helping to pave the way for the Missouri Synod in 1847.*

In addition to [good books, hymnals, catechisms, and readers] — especially at the present time when all the sects are, without exception, publishing magazines, by means of which they enter their homes on a weekly or biweekly basis to teach their people — it is essential that the church which has the one true faith also make use of these means. We are living in a time of "reading mania." For the most part, however, this reading-craze is being met with magazines that promote wicked partisan politics, poison the mind with wretched novels, and on top of that also slander Christ and His church, pastors, and congregations.

That is what people are reading, whereas they should be satisfying their craving to read with instructional material for everyone whom God has blessed with the urge to read. Then people would be informed about what is happening in the kingdom of God, as well as what is happening in other churches. And it is not enough that we have just any old kind of "church magazine." *We need a publication that promotes the true faith.* For example, the Methodist *Apologete* presents news about every conceivable kind of church activity and event. Unfortunately, they present everything in the light of their perverted Enthusiasm. Much less should a true Christian read a papistic publication! For then the Antichrist himself enters the home with his devilish smut. In place of that a Lutheran should be reading a good, doctrinally pure publication. . . .

One thing more. During our discussion of the first thesis, we spoke a great deal about the Confessions. The *Book of Concord* should be in every Lutheran home. For that reason, Synod should provide a good, inexpensive copy, and pastors should see to it that every home has one because, "What I'm not told, leaves me cold." If a person isn't familiar with this book, he'll think, "That old book is just for pastors. I don't have to preach. After plowing all day, I can't sit down and study in the evening. If I read my morning and evening devotions, that's enough." No, that is not enough! The Lord doesn't want us to remain children who are blown to and fro by every wind of doctrine; instead of that, He wants us to grow in knowledge so that we can teach others, contradict heretics, in short, become "capable of doing the work of the office through which the body of Christ will be edified and built up" (Eph 4:12–14).

When a pastor first arrives in a new congregation, one of the first questions he should ask in the course of his visits with the members is this, "Dear friends, what kind of religious books do you have?" They may have only a Bible, a hymnal, and a catechism. Then you ask, "What kind of Bible do you have?" They may answer, "Say, that's a good question; where is it anyway?" They may have to dig it out of a junk-room and blow the dust off it, since no one has used it for who knows how long. Then the pastor should say, "My, it sure it dusty! You know, it doesn't do any good just lying around, or using it only when you have a bad headache or something! You need to read it regularly. But in addition to that, you really need to get some more books. You don't just eat bread all the time, do you? No doubt you have all kinds of good food and drink in your kitchen, cellar, and the pantry *(Gewölbe)*. Why, then, would just one kind of food be enough for the soul?" You see, when our body needs something, we can readily feel that. The Holy Spirit has to create that feeling of need and hunger for different kinds of spiritual food. . . .

What we've said about recommending good books naturally also applies to magazines. In new congregations there frequently isn't any widespread appreciation as yet for good magazines. This despite the fact that through our *Lutheraner* many congregations have been gathered together and established. Therefore a pastor should not allow himself to be deterred from showing the people this and similar periodicals and from reading excerpts from them.

On the Public Reading of Scriptures

What follows may hardly be mistaken for scholarly, substantial, or even serious criticism of an article that appeared in Concordia Journal, *October 1995 (400–414) dealing with the topic of who may read the Scriptures publicly in the Divine Service. Readers who suffer this editorial indulgently may be encouraged (or provoked) to pen something more profound.*

Daniel Fienen's article "Lay Readers in Public Worship" attempted to do some exploratory surgery in the bowels of the church body called the LCMS. Sharp pains indicating a distended colon aroused the patient. Assumptions were made prior to the first incision, however, that served to cloud an accurate diagnosis and to inflate the costs of spiritual health care.

Case in point. In the opening paragraph, Fienen's use of words like "involvement" and "participation" appear to be benign, but in fact they are malignant. Before one even slips on the CTCR latex gloves or before an exegetical scalpel is slapped into the palm, one ought to have considered what is behind such terms. Don't "involvement" and "participation" seem to be significant terms worth investigating — like checking the patient's medical history for allergic reactions or pre-existent conditions?

Fienen does not appear to use "involvement" and "participation" in the *Gottesdienst* sense of a repentant heart receiving the Lord's gifts through his gracious means, echoing back in psalms, corporate hymns, and ecumenical creeds what the Lord has first proclaimed to us and done for us. Wasn't that all the "involvement" the faithful considered in previous centuries of the Christian church? They simply wanted to be given to according to the words of the Lord. Such a posture was not one of laziness, but of brokenhearted contrition.

Fienen clearly has something else in mind when he introduces these terms, something unique that certain individuals can do in the presence of the whole congregation during the course of a

"worship service" (such as the public reading of Scripture). Furthermore, implicitly construed is the idea that if you aren't doing one of these "special" things, then you aren't "involved" quite as much as someone who *is* doing those things — and if you aren't really involved in the way that you would prefer to be, then you are being inhibited. Worship is seen as something one is doing towards God or for the congregation. If one can't serve with the kind of involvement desired for oneself, then one's worship is painfully restricted. There is no outlet for one's spiritual zeal. That is what Fienen is diagnosing as the distention and blockage in the church's σπλάγχνα.

Thus it could be understood from Fienen's felicitous pre-surgical ambidexterity that individual members could come to church and "participate in this fashion" only if they wanted to get put into the schedule to do so from time to time. This is the kind of involvement that appears to be "growing" in our church. Anybody standing in the way of involvement is impeding "growth." Fienen never stopped to consider whether such "growth" is in fact a rapidly metastasizing cancer.

Fienen likewise treats the symptom rather than the disease when he calls for the exercise of great sensitivity and care lest we *offend* those who may have disparate views on "involvement" and "participation" (413). Giving offense these days is as serious an infection as prohibiting involvement.

The treatment? An *ex opere operato* view of the Word: "the efficacy of the Word rests on the power of the Holy Spirit, not who reads it." Fienen could have saved a lot of work if he had simply prescribed this take-two-aspirin-and-call-me-in-the-morning approach to theology in the first place. Perhaps this is a free sample of the medical advice we will hear in the future: "the efficacy of the Word and the Sacraments rests on the Holy Spirit, not on the man or woman who preaches or administers"—which brings us back to what really is ailing us. Is there a doctor in the house? JAB

You May Be a Meta-Growther If . . .

David Letterman popularized "Top Ten" lists. Another comedian, Jeff Foxworthy, is known for the humor reflected in his material, "You may be a redneck if . . . ." In this day of pan-meta-ism, it was only a matter of time before someone would pragmatically adapt, synthesize, and "Lutheranize" these two different approaches. Rev. Dale Dumperth of Indianapolis showed his genius in conceiving such a list, which was in turn "tweeked" by your Forum editor, and voilà*!*

Pastor, you may be a meta-growther if:

- On a Sunday morning you discover that you forgot to put the altar back in the sanctuary after you took it out to make room for the rock band in your Saturday evening service. (10)
- You think that Nestle-Aland is the new food conglomerate that produces and distributes chocolate Quik. (9)
- During the processional, the banner-bearer accidentally knocks down the overhead screen used to display your hymns. (8)
- You can immediately locate a citation in Carl F. George's *Prepare Your Church for the Future,* but say, "Martin Chemnitz? Yeah, I've heard of him. He teaches at Fuller, doesn't he?" (7)
- After the Lord's Supper, the service comes to a halt while you try to find the guitar pick that you just dropped as you were strapping on your guitar. (6)
- Your praise leader accidentally hits the pre-set cha-cha rhythm button on the drum synthesizer while you are walking from the lectern to the pulpit . . . and the congregation spontaneously breaks into a bunny-hop line, which lasts uninterrupted for thirty-three minutes. (5)
- Another pastor asks to borrow your copy of Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich, and you respond, "Sorry, I threw out my only copy of 'The Contract with America' months ago." (4)
- You can't remember which cell group borrowed the church's only coffee maker and you desperately need it within the hour for your Male-Survivors-of-Mid-Life-Crisis-Aerobics-and-Supper-Club Bible Study. (3)
- You think that "Amazing Grace" sounds much more lively and praiseworthy when sung to the tune of the Gilligan's Island theme song. (2)
- You spend more time broadcasting a vision than sowing the seed. (1)

The Crucified One Has Risen Indeed

A Sermon on Easter, Christus Victor, *and the Theology of the Cross by the Rev. Rick Stuckwisch, April 1994, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Decatur, IN.*

There is nothing quite so glorious for a Christian as the brilliance of Easter. I will never forget walking into the sanctuary on Holy Saturday 1990 to review with my pastor the liturgy of the Easter Vigil. The shimmering brilliance of the white paraments was startling in contrast to the utter and bitter simplicity of Good Friday. The fragrance of Easter lilies swept over me in waves, so that it will always be for me the smell of Easter and the resurrection of our Lord. And later that evening, as the Vigil progressed from darkness into light, from flickering candles to the brightness of a fully lighted church, all of my senses were enveloped by the life and vitality of the great Feast of Easter.

Certainly, as we gather on Easter morning — very early in the morning, on the first day of the week — we cannot help but marvel at the brilliance of the day. We are surrounded by the goodness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who has risen from the dead just as he said, who has risen indeed. Our hearts and lips cry out for joy; they join with all creation in praising him who has done such marvelous things, who has triumphed over death and the grave, who has trampled Satan underfoot, and who has won the victory for us! The victory of life.

And yet, in spite of the brilliance of Easter, the reality of suffering and death continues to press upon us from all sides. Who of us can forget for very long the grief and pain that each of us must face, practically on a daily basis? I always get nervous

when everything is going too well for too long at a time; invariably, it will prove to be the proverbial "calm before the storm." The white paraments of Easter, the powerful Easter anthems, and even the beautiful Easter lilies — all too quickly, they give way to the cold, white walls of intensive care, the hymns of funeral after funeral, and the flowers that we leave at the gravesides of our loved ones.

Perhaps you have seen the movie *Shadowlands,* a portrait of C. S. Lewis and his struggle with grief at the loss of his wife to cancer. In *A Grief Observed,* the book that Lewis wrote following the death of his wife, he wrestles with the doubts that plague his mind: How could God allow this to happen? What could such intense suffering mean? Is there any point to life and death, or is it just a cruel experiment, the hoax of a tyrant far removed from the struggle of mortality?

It is a struggle that none of us can escape, for in the words of Luther's hymn, "In the very midst of life, death has us surrounded." Even the brilliance of Easter and the joy of the resurrection cannot erase the painful realities of mortal life. The curse of Adam continues to haunt us: Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. We cannot hide from death; there's no pretending we don't suffer.

Where then is the answer to suffering? Why does the life that we live — and the death that all of us must die — stand in such contrast to the brilliance of Easter?

We will never know the answer to that troubling, difficult question, until we learn to look at Easter from the perspective of Good Friday. We cannot leave the crucifixion behind, as though the blood, sweat, and tears of the passion were now to be forgotten. Oh yes, the sacrifice is finished, the payment is complete. But we dare not be ashamed of the cross. We are not permitted to breathe a sigh of relief that Lent is finally over; if that ever truly was the case, then Easter would hold no comfort — not for us at any rate. We live our lives from start to finish in the shadowlands: the lands of Lent, the shadow of the cross. If we run with Peter and John to the tomb and find it empty, it still remains a tomb.

Mark it well, our Lord was *buried:* "crucified, dead, and buried." The Son of God was dead. The disciples had every reason to look for a body — the crucifixion was no joke. His pain was real. His death was real. His grave was just as real as the graves that you and I will enter. The one who rose on Easter morning rose *from the dead.* He rose precisely as the one who was crucified. There alone is the answer to our suffering. Those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, because the Son of God made His bed in that very same dust of the earth.

In the earliest days of the church, Good Friday and Easter were celebrated as a single service — a Christian Passover: the passage *through* death into life. We observe much the same in the Easter Vigil, in which the death of Christ and his resurrection are brought together, as they should be, even as they are united in our baptism. For the washing of water with the word is a participation in the death of Christ, whereby we also share His resurrection and his life.

We must learn from the Easter Vigil and from our baptism to recognize and celebrate Easter as the victory *of* Good Friday, the victory of the cross and crucifixion of Christ, the victory of his *death* . . . by which death and Satan were defeated. Easter is not the contradiction or reversal of Good Friday; it is the confirmation of the cross. It demonstrates to all the world that when the jaws of death laid hold of Christ, they were destroyed; when Satan bruised the heal of the woman's seed, the son of Mary crushed his vile head. Calvary was not a minor setback on the way to victory; *it is the victory.*

The one who rose triumphant on Easter *is* and *remains* the crucified one. He reveals himself to the twelve by showing them his wounds. His hands and side are marked by scars. In the Apocalypse of Saint John, He is the Lamb upon the throne as one who had been slain.

What then does all this mean for us as we encounter suffering in this life?

First of all, our suffering is sanctified and hallowed by the suffering of God himself. In fact, for Luther, suffering and the cross are a mark of the church and of the Christian life, since God has revealed himself to us most clearly in the suffering and cross of Christ. Do we ask why God allows us to suffer? Then we must also ask, how is it that he crucified his Son? He took our suffering upon himself; He bore it in his body on the cross. Like Saint Paul, we therefore give thanks to God if we are counted worthy to share the sufferings of his Son.

But what is more, as Christ has suffered *for* us, and has borne all manner of grief and sorrow and temptation in our place, so also does he now suffer *with* us. In those times of deepest suffering, when God seems farthest away, he is nearest of all to us. He is there in such a way that suffering produces not despair but endurance, endurance produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us. We do not suffer for ourselves, but for him — *and with him* — who for our sake died and was raised.

Saint Paul writes in Colossians that our life is hid with Christ in God because we have died with Christ in our baptism; but more important still, *Christ has died with us.* He took our flesh and blood to be his own, that he might by his death destroy the power that death had over us. He died as one of us that we might rise with him. His death on Good Friday was *our death.* And for that very reason, Easter is our resurrection.

The resurrection of Christ was not a rising above suffering and death, as though our Lord was leaving us poor mortals to grovel in the dust on our own. He is not like the guy who forgets about his friends as soon as he gets to the top. He is still the one who became man and suffered death. He is still the one who shed the tears of mourning at the death of his friend Lazarus. He is still the one who felt the pains of betrayal and rejection. He is still the one who was crucified for us.

Thus, in the resurrection of Christ *as the crucified one,* we see that our suffering too will have its end in life with God. For already in our suffering, we share the life of Christ, who by his death has conquered death and given us the victory. In his death for us is the evidence that his resurrection is also our resurrection! If we have died with Christ — or more to the point, if he has died with us — then we shall live with him as well.

Like Peter and John, we too must celebrate Easter by entering the tomb. The linen cloths and bandages we find inside are evidence, not only that Christ has risen, but also that he truly was crucified, dead, and buried. He has risen as the one who died,

who wrapped himself in our suffering and mortality, and who has therefore risen as one of us — the firstborn from the dead. In his tomb, therefore, we enter life — the life that he has won for us by his death.

It is nothing special for the Son of God to live, since he is life itself. But for the Son of God to live *as the one who died* means everything for us. He took our death to be his death, so that his life might be our life. You and I will shine with the brightness of his righteousness, because he passed through the valley of the shadow of death with us. He lived and died in the shadowlands of Lent, and as such, the light of his resurrection shines precisely *for us* and casts its beams across the shadows of our life and death.

Thus the brilliance of Easter stands in contrast to the reality of suffering and death, not as a contradiction, but as the confirmation and confession that though we die, yet shall we live. For Christ, who has taken not only our flesh and blood but also our suffering and death upon himself, has in turn bestowed on us his resurrection and his life. As we feast upon the sacrificial body and blood that hung for us upon the cross, we have indeed the foretaste of the feast to come. To turn a phrase on its head: In the very midst of death, life has us surrounded.

Death, where is thy victory? Grave, where is thy sting? Thanks be to God, who has given us the victory in our Lord Jesus Christ! For the crucified one has risen — he has risen indeed.

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O Lord, Help My Unbelief

The text of this sermon is Habakkuk 1:1–11; 2:1–4, preached by the Reverend Dr. Norman Nagel on Monday of Pentecost 20. It is a sermon that could address the peculiar plea of the father who tearfully cried out to Jesus, "O Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief!" for the rescue of his demon-possessed son (Mk 9:24). And when you are faced with such English as "utter utterest incredibility," you might attribute this to some sort of Hebraistic influence along the order of an infinitive absolute.

You won't believe it — "believe" in the secular sense. You couldn't imagine such a thing happening and with you involved in it. Or behind that: You shut out any thought of that happening as a defense against the precarious little piece of your space and time, your life, getting blown away. It's hard enough trying to hold that little bit of something together and keep it going without facing all the things that might happen to you any day that would wipe you out.

The message of the prophet Habakkuk is to deliver us out of the games we play in our pitiful attempts to protect ourselves and the little space we hang on to so tenaciously. That's enough to worry about. It's too scary to face up to what tomorrow may bring to destroy us.

There's more than enough out there to destroy you. They had the Chaldeans; we have had the bomb. Cold war is over; no more bomb. "Rational expectations," irrational expectations. We still ride trains, drive the highway, have tornadoes, earthquakes, killer germs, and random bullets. "Violence." Habakkuk certainly got that right — the lurking devastation you don't want to think about. You can't really imagine and don't want to imagine the overthrow of everything you've piled up to protect yourself with, and won't believe it even if you are told.

That, however, is only chicken-feed incredibility. What is utterly incredible is that it is the Lord who is using the Chaldeans for doing his work.

> They swept by like the wind and go on;
> Guilty men, whose own might is their god.

Guilty and godless men, for whom the exercise of power, bending others to their will, is the idolatry of their lives: these the Lord has raised up to do his terrifying alien work. "Dread and terrible." There is no escape. The Lord's people go under. How can he let this happen?

That is not a question we may put if we are just talking about God, and not to him. It is with the Lord we have to do. "The oracle of God which Habakkuk the prophet saw" does not ask why, but only "How long?" "O Lord, how long shall I cry for help?" There's nowhere else whence help or hope may come. Everything that might give some help or hope has been wiped out. There is nowhere else to look, but only to the Lord, and he has been acting in contradiction of himself.

The utter utterest incredibility is what is given to faith. All of the foregoing is the work of almighty God, who is in fact, and in contradiction of all of the evidence we can see, the God who is our Savior. He destroys every idol, every ground of confidence that would replace him (that will not hold), in order that into the nothing he has cleared, he may come, and come as nothing but life-engendering gift. Those thus given to are the faithful; those thus given to are thus the righteous. Their righteousness is as sure as God's own righteousness, and he cannot quit being God. The righteous by faith are in his hands; and so they pray, they pray to him.

> Art thou not from everlasting,
> O Lord my God, my Holy One?
> We shall not die.

> Though the fig tree does not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fall and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet (i.e., "nevertheless," *waw* disjunctive) I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like hinds' feet, he makes me tread upon my high places.

"These are they who have come out of the great tribulation, their robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb." "Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage." Amen.

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Building Marriage and Home

*Your Forum editor uses Luther's exposition on Psalm 127 (*For the Christians at Riga in Livonia, *AE 45: 322–324) as the opening devotion for the first session of premarital counseling. What do you use?*

> "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain."

First we must understand that "building the house" does not refer simply to the construction of walls and roof, rooms and chambers out of wood and stone. It refers rather to everything that goes on inside the house which we call "managing the household . . . ." Solomon's purpose is to describe a Christian marriage. . . .

Reason and the world think that married life and the making of a home ought to proceed as they intend. They try to determine things by their own decisions and actions, as if their work could take care of everything. To this Solomon says No! He points us instead to God, and teaches us with a firm faith to seek and expect all such things from God. We see this in experience too. Frequently two people will marry who have hardly a shirt to their name, and yet they support themselves so quietly and well that it is a pleasure to behold. On the other hand, some bring great wealth into their marriage; yet it slips out of their hands till they can barely get along.

Again, two people marry out of passionate love; their choice and desire are realized, yet their days together are not happy. Some are very eager and anxious to have children, but they do not conceive, while others who have given the matter little thought get a house full of children. Again, some try to run the house and its servants smoothly, but it turns out that they have nothing but misfortune. And so it goes in this world; the strangest things happen.

Who is it that so disrupts marriage and household management and turns them so strangely topsy-turvy? It is he of whom Solomon says: Unless the Lord keeps the house, household management there is a lost cause. He wishes to buttress this passage and confirm its truth. This is why he permits such situations to arise in this world, as an assault on unbelief, to bring to shame the arrogance of reason with all works and cleverness, and to constrain them to believe.

This passage alone should be enough to attract people to marriage, comfort all who are now married, and sap the strength of covetousness. Young people are scared away from marriage when they see how strangely it turns out. They say, "It takes a lot to make a home"; or, "You learn a lot living with a woman." This is because they fail to see who does this, and why he does it. And since human ingenuity and strength know no recourse and can provide no help, they hesitate to marry. As a result, they fall into unchastity if they do not marry, and into covetousness and worry if they do. But here is the needed consolation: Let the Lord build the house and keep it, and do not encroach upon his work. The concern for these matters is his, not yours. For whoever is the head of the house and maintains it should be allowed to bear the burden of care. Does it take a lot to make a house? So what! God is greater than any house. He who fills heaven and earth will surely also be able to supply a house, especially since he takes the responsibility upon himself and causes it to be sung to his praise.

Why should we think it strange that it takes so much to make a home where God is not the head of the house? Because you do not see him who is supposed to fill the house, naturally every corner must seem empty. But if you look upon him, you will never notice whether a corner is bare; everything will appear to you to be full, and will indeed be full. And if it is not full, it is your vision which is at fault, just as it is the blind man's fault if he fails to see the sun. For him who sees rightly, God turns the saying around and says not, "It takes a lot to make a home," but, "How much a home contributes!" So we see that the managing of a household should and must be done in faith — then there will be enough — so that men come to acknowledge that everything depends not on our doing, but on God's blessing and support.

Did You Get Your Convert Last Year?

A novel standard has been established by which we may righteously judge pastors and congregations. The authority who established this arbitrary and apodictic law has yet to be identified, but he (or she) is often cited for having mandated this single declaration: each church must have at least one new adult convert every year.

If your church has met its quota of at least one new convert this year, then you are okay. Reproaches must be softened against you if you have at least gotten one. But if November or December rolls around and you haven't gotten that one convert, you better get moving! Baptized babies of established members don't count. You have to get someone into the congregation from *outside.* It counts if you can simply woo a former Presbyterian, Methodist, or Baptist onto your membership rolls with a forty-five minute instruction class — you don't have to actually *convert* anybody from faithless atheism into communicant membership. Therefore, *woe* to those churches which are unable to convert a single soul in a year!

Ah, yes. Woe. What heartless and lazy pastors they are who fail to gain a single convert while working in the inner city that is falling into ruin and social upheaval. What horrible pastors they are who fail to gain a single convert while serving congregations in areas where the local economy has failed and everyone is moving away. What unconscionable sloths are those missionaries who work for over a year without a single convert. And we ought to defrock those pastors who fail to gain a single soul merely because the congregation to which they have been called is in turmoil between warring factions or lies broken and bruised from previous conflict. Yes, it is meet, right, and salutary that we should heap shame upon their heads because they fail to meet the quota of at least one new member per year.

If I could find my *Reporter,* I would certainly name the hero pastor who lamented that the LCMS annual statistics book

would no longer be printed. He chafed at the thought that now these irresponsible pastors and congregations exemplified above will no longer be identifiable, inhibiting us in our opportunities to reproach them with utter degradation. And implicitly, what a great pity that we will not be able to see what grand successes this same pastor has had in converting people for his congregation. The synod is certainly deprived now that its statistical yearbook is being discontinued.

Statistics. Are they the result of some kind of census? True statistics mongers know that every census is a good census and have moved for the redaction of such embarrassing Scriptures as: "Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel" (1 Chr 21:1). "Again the anger of the LORD burned against Israel and he incited David against them, saying, 'Go and take a census of Israel and Judah'" (2 Sm 24:1). And if these passages cannot be excised or proven historically dubious, then it must be declared a foregone conclusion that such things could never happen in our dear synod.

So if you know of anyone who has not gotten a single convert yet this year, illustrate how some have turned the Holy Spirit into a "Conversion God." That is to say, there are those who treat God as if he must be appeased by a certain quota of conversions. Thus they caricature God to be something that he is not, which is idolatry. If a single convert has not been achieved within a 365-day period, they are quick to level their condemnations. These are the very ones who ought to be praying that the God would not let them live in the Last Days when the great apostasy will occur, when the love of many will grow cold. Oh, how much more difficult it will be in those days to gain a single convert each year, and how much more likely it will be that one will have to bear the contempt of one's peers!

So, shame on the obviously lazy pastors and people who are not calling, gathering, enlightening, sanctifying, and keeping the whole Christian Church on earth! Shame on the undeniable slothfulness of those unconscionable pastors and people who have yet to gain one new member this year! Therefore, let no one fail to buy the last edition of the synod's statistical year book (for only $14.99), seek out the advice of those who have established by their growth methodologies a treasury of converts, works of supererogation. Then they may be able to get their quota and join the faithful throng of success stories — at least until the next year when the counters are reset at zero.