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Second Annual Symposium on the Lutheran Confessions
"The 450th Anniversary of Luther's Small and Large Catechisms"

Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Indiana

January 3-5, 1979

Wednesday, January 3

Dr. William Weinrich	"Early Church and Reformation Catechetics: A Comparison Between the Didache and the Small Catechism."
Prof. E. C. Fredrich	"The Evangelical Character of Luther's Cathechisms."
Dr. James Voelz	"Luther's Use of the Scriptures in the Small Catechism."

Thursday, January 4

Dr. James Schaff	"The Pastoral Perspective as Evidence in the Large Catechism."
Dr. Ulrich Asendorf	"Luther's Small Catechism and the Heidelberg Catechism—the Continuing Stuggle: The Catechism's Role as A Confessional Document in Lutheranism."
Dr. David P. Scaer	"The New English Translation of Luther's Small Catechism." Is It Faithful to Luther's Spirit?
Dr. N. S. Tjernagel	"Forerunners of the Catechism: A View of Catechetical Instruction at the Dawn of the Reformation."
Dr. Daniel G. Reuning	"Luther's Small Catechism in Word and Song."

Friday, January 5

Dr. Robert Kolb	"Later 16th Century Attitudes to the Small Catechism: The Development from Theology to Devotion."
Dr. Uuras Saarnivaara	"Baptism and Fiath in their Relationship to other Means of Grace."

Liturgical Commonplaces

Kurt Marquart

It is no secret that Lutheranism in America is in the throes of a profound crisis. But times of crisis must be seen as times of opportunity. When a tired old order breaks up, there results a state of flux which encourages a brisk competition of ideas. Decisions taken at such times, before the concrete hardens as it were, can set future courses for decades, perhaps centuries. These generalities find ready application in the whole liturgical sphere, and particularly in our Missouri Synod. On the one hand, deviations from past norms, embodied in *The Lutheran Hymnal,* of 1941, have assumed epidemic proportions and constitute what may well be described as a state of chaos. On the other hand, the rejection of the current inter-Lutheran efforts at liturgical consensus leaves Missouri quite free to consider the whole thing afresh. It seems obvious that something must and will be done. But what? Much depends on the answer, which should, therefore, not be given lightly or hastily. If the outcome is to be worthwhile, it must be solidly grounded in a careful clarification and re-appropriation of first principles. The observations which follow are respectfully offered simply as one small contribution in this direction. They are meant, moreover, to focus not on technical details—though these can be important—but on meat-and-potato issues. The choice between cranberries and horse-radish can always be made later.

I. Liturgical Substance

Most churches in the Western world are facing a decline in church-attendance. The trend may gallop here and creep there, but its direction seems relentlessly downward. It is our duty as churchmen to ponder deeply the reasons for this trend. Otherwise we may be tempted to respond with the absurd superstition of believing, in C. S. Lewis' words, that "people can be lured to go to church by incessant brightenings, lightenings, lengthenings, abridgments, simplifications, and complications of the service."[1] Let us take the bull by the horns and listen to a rather representative "Memo to a Parson, from a Wistful Young Man": [2]

> Let me tell you the main reason I don't attend anymore, or at least not regularly. Since leaving home to go out on my own, I've visited all kinds of churches, but they all seem just about the same. All of them

> strike me as being about as enervating as a cup of lukewarm postum. When I go to church, what do I hear? From the pulpit, a semi-religious version of what Kenneth Galbraith calls "the conventional wisdom." From the choir loft, incredible Victorian anthems—"the kind that Grandma used to love." From the pew, the attitude you discover at alumni reunions—"Where there's not a single dry eye, but nobody believes a word of it." And from the boutonniered ushers, the kind of mechanical handshake which makes me suspect that they would greet Jesus at the Second Coming by saying: "It was nice of you to come." In short. . .the average church stands as a perfect symbol of nearly everything I despise—false gentility, empty sentiment, emotional impoverishment, intellectual mediocrity, and spiritual tepidity. Maybe it's my pride speaking, but I just don't want to be identified with an institution like that.

We could of course comfort ourselves by saying that the Lutheran church is surely different, that the caricature is overdrawn, and that the young man in question was being not simply wistful but even silly in discarding gems of great price on account of shabby packaging. But that would only keep us from trying to understand the situation. Few experienced pastors will deny that in general, the young man's perception of church services is widely held, also in Lutheran circles, although it is not often consciously articulated. For many, services are uncomfortable formalities to be endured with Stoic resignation.

It is tempting at this point to rail against modern materialism and hedonism, golf, the media, Sunday outings, and fishing trips. No doubt these weighty matters offer not a few occasions for penitence, although we cannot pursue them here. Rather more relevant to our topic is a problem which is not often discussed: our Wistful Young Man probably has no clear idea at all of what a proper church service *ought* to be like. Nor, it seems, do the churches he visits have any compelling theory of what they are about on Sunday mornings. He and they may, indeed, cherish some misty vision of what ideal worship would be like, but they are not very clear in the head about it. This fuzzy-contoured vision, moreover, afflicts not only so-called "fringe-members." How else can one explain the fact that practising, otherwise well-instructed Lutherans seem to feel free to miss church for perfectly frivolous reasons, e. g., Sunday dinner guests—not to speak of pastors who do not attend church while on holidays because they are "resting"? In an age like ours, when weekends are full of the clamour of

secular trivia, and material delights beckon on every side, Christians require an unusually clear and compelling "theory" of congregational worship. "Hearing the Word of God" was once a weighty phrase, corresponding to an awesome reality. Today, in the thinking of many, the whole thing can be taken care of without inconvenience or loss of time, if need be, by tuning in to the "Lutheran Hour" while devoutly chewing Kentucky Fried Chicken on the way to Six Flags!

The notion of "worship" in popular Protestantism does not seem to suggest anything so formal as a church service. It is more likely to be associated with rousing choruses of "How Great Thou Art," either at a Billy Graham rally or in a rugged setting out of doors, preferably round a campfire, holding hands. Mawkish gimmickry of various kinds is marketed as making for "effective" worship. Church services themselves, however, are seen as rather drab and dreary on the whole. They tend to be viewed not as banquets but as menu-reading sessions. (This impression, by the way, is reinforced by the lavish distribution of printed matter.) How many people would bother to go to a restaurant just to read the menu? Here, it seems to me, lies the heart of the difficulty. It is not as if people thought they should have dinners but grumblingly accepted menus instead. They expect only menus—with flowers, candles, and musical settings perhaps—but still only menus! Richard Wurmbrand, having noted the frequent refrain in church-bulletins that refreshments will be served after the service, asks pointedly: "Why do you not provide refreshment *in* the service?" On this point at least those outside and many inside the churches are agreed. It is just that the insiders have learned to derive a sense of satisfaction and mutual approval from uncomplaining performance of the menu-reading duty. Repelled by this bloodless, Law-oriented, moralizing religiosity, multitudes seek solace in the murkiest mumbo-jumbo and readily fall prey even to celluloid absurdities like "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," of which a recent reviewer wrote:

> The thoroughness of the film's surrogate spirituality is revealed in the final scene, depicting the appearance and "landing" of the UFO's. The huge "mother ship" looks less like a space vehicle than a vast city of light descending from the heavens. Whether the parallel is deliberate or not, Spielberg's offer of this ersatz New Jerusalem (cf. Revelation 21) as the answer to Mankind's spiritual longings is a slick con-job indeed. Roy Neary's "conversion" under a beam of bright light while on the road to Crystal Lake is said to have been consciously modeled after St. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus.[8]

As Chesterton observed: If people don't believe in God, they will not believe in nothing—they will believe in anything!

Advancing now from menus to soups, let us consider C. S. Lewis' pertinent argument:

> We may *salva reverentia* divide religions, as we do soups, into "thick" and "clear". By Thick I mean those which have orgies and ecstasies and mysteries and local attachments: Africa is full of Thick religions. By Clear I mean those which are philosophical, ethical, and universalising: Stoicism, Buddhism and the Ethical Church are Clear religions. Now if there is a true religion it must be both Thick and Clear : for the true God must have made both the child and the man, both the savage and the citizen, both the head and the belly. And the only two religions that fulfil this condition are Hinduism and Christianity. But Hinduism fulfils it imperfectly. The Clear religion of the Brahmin hermit in the jungle and the Thick religion of the neighbouring temple go on *side by side*. The Brahmin hermit doesn't bother about the temple prostitution nor the worshiper in the temple about the hermit's metaphysic. But Christianity really breaks down the middle wall of the partition. It takes a convert from central Africa and tells him to obey an enlightened universalist ethic: it takes a twentieth century academic prig like me and tells me to go fasting to a Mystery, to drink the blood of the Lord. The savage convert has to be Clear: I have to be Thick. That is how one knows one has come to the real religion.[4]

Christianity is "Thick" in Lewis' sense in two closely related respects. First of all, there is the redemptive mystery of the Incarnation itself: God made Man for our salvation. Or, in J. B. Phillips' memorable phrase, God has "come into focus" for us in Jesus Christ. Holy Scripture sets before us not vague wafflings about an anonymous cosmic Blur—the great Mush-God, as he has been called, for born-again politicians of all world-religions—but the concrete, historical, yet eternal Person in Whom "the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily" (Col. 2:9). So much so that, as Luther comments on this text, whoever will not find God there in Christ, will never find Him anywhere else, even if he were to go above Heaven, under Hell, or into space!

Secondly, just as God is "focused" for us in Christ, so Christ in turn is effectively "focused" in His life-giving Gospel, including Holy Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar. These blessed Means of Grace are not mere pictures, symbols, or reminders—as our whole Reformed environment suggests—but

real and powerful communicators of all the redemptive riches of Christ. This life-giving, faith-creating, "dynamic of God for salvation," as St. Paul calls the Gospel in Romans 1:16, can never be reduced to a mere menu; it is the Messianic Feast itself. Indeed, one might distinguish within the Gospel yet two further modes of "Thickness": the washing of regeneration in Baptism and the Real Presence of Christ's Body and Blood in the Holy Supper. Of the latter Charles Porterfield Krauth has written:

> The principles of interpretation which relieve us of the Eucharistic mystery take from us the mystery of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement. . . .Christ is the Centre of the system, and in the Supper is the centre of Christ's revelation of Himself. The glory and mystery of the incarnation combine there as they combine nowhere else. Communion with Christ is that by which we live, and the Supper is "*the* Communion."[5]

Both the God-in-Christ and the Christ-in-the-Gospel themes are united in the profound simplicity of the words of St. John: "This is He Who *came* by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. . . .And there *are* three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one" (I Jn. 5:6,8). These great and mysterious realities define, constitute and shape the whole nature of Christian worship. That worship is concrete and sacramental, not vague and spiritualizing. It is not a pseudo-occult mysticism seeking by means of devotional techniques and exertions to penetrate and conquer the barrier between heaven and earth. All such man-made attempts, with all their impressive psychic fireworks, cannot escape from the gravitational field of sinful creatureliness. They deal only with human projections and demonic mirages. The whole point of the Incarnation and of the Means of Grace is that fellowship with God takes place on His terms alone, and that means for the present here on earth, on our level. It is He Who has broken through the Great Divide from His side, in order to give Himself to us graciously on ours.

Even at this point, however, the Lutheran understanding of worship can still be aborted by means of a facile doctrinaire schematism which thinks abstractly of "Means of Grace" or "Word and Sacraments," rather than concretely of Baptism, preaching, absolution, and Eucharist. It is a Calvinistic doctrine that all sacraments must be alike. This idea is developed by the *Admonitio Neostadiensis*, for example, in its attempt to refute the Formula of Concord's confession of the Real Presence in the Eucharist. Replying to this Calvinistic attack, the Lutherans Chemnitz, Selnecker, and Kirchner point out with

almost tedious repetitiousness in their *Apology or Defence of the Christian Book of Concord* (see especially Chapter V) that the unique nature of each Sacrament must be determined not by appealing to theoretical generalizations, but by paying attention to the actual biblical texts, particularly the respective words of institution. If the Means of Grace were mechanically interchangeable, rather than organically ordered, it would make sense to say: "Today we have Baptism and, therefore, we do not need Communion." Such an argument, however, is quite impossible. It should be equally impossible to argue: "As long as we have preaching regularly, and the Lord's Supper occasionally, the Means of Grace are in action, and all the rest is adiaphora." What must be seen is that in the Lutheran Confessions as in the New Testament the Eucharist is not an occasional extra, an exceptional additive for especially pious occasions, but a regular, central and constitutive feature of Christian worship. Preaching and the Sacrament belong together not anyhow, or helter-skelter, by statistical coincidence, but as mutually corresponding elements within one integrated whole.

Of the practice in apostolic and sub-apostolic times Oscar Cullmann has written in his book, *Early Christian Worship*, as follows:

> The Lord's Supper is thus the basis and goal of every gathering. This corresponds to all that we have already determined about the place and time and basic character of the primitive Christian gathering. . . .Accordingly, it is not as though early Christianity had known three kinds of service, as we are in the habit of imagining, following the modern example: service of the Word and, alongside of it, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. It is rather so: in the early Church there are only these two celebrations or services—the common meal, within the framework of which proclamation of the Word has always a place, and Baptism . . . The *Lord's Supper* is the natural climax towards which the service thus understood moves and without which it is unthinkable, since here Christ unites himself with his community as crucified and risen and makes it in this way one with himself, actually builds it up as his body (Cor. 10:17).[6]

In respect of the Lutheran Confessions an extraordinary development seems to have taken place. Even those sections of world Lutheranism which have cultivated a strong consciousness of Article X of the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, are hardly aware of its practical implementation and ramifications in Article XXIV. The tendency has been to maintain the Sacramental Presence as a matter of doctrine, but

to let the practice of the Sacrament drift from its central position in the church to a more peripheral, supplementary status, as in the Reformed pattern. The strong corporate, communal implications (I Cor. 10:17) have been largely lost. This is not the view of the Lutheran Confessions. Article XXIV of the Augsburg Confession and of the Apology sees the Mass or Liturgy as consisting of preaching and the Sacrament, and as something to be done every Sunday and holy day. Nor is this merely a temporary accommodation. Luther himself, for instance, in his Latin Mass of 1523, defined the mass as consisting, "properly speaking," of "using the Gospel and communing at the Table of the Lord." In fact, he rejects, in the same work, the Roman custom of omitting the Consecration on Good Friday, and says that this is "to mock and ridicule Christ with half of a mass and the one part of the Sacrament."[7] To the city of Nuremberg he recommended, upon request, under date of August 15, 1528,

> that one or two masses be held in the two parish churches on Sundays or holy days, depending on whether there are many or few communicants. . . . During the week, let mass be held on whatever days it would be necessary, that is, if several communicants were there, and would ask and desire it. Thereby no one would be forced to the Sacrament, and yet everyone would be sufficiently served therein.[8]

Significant for the corporate understanding of the Sacrament is this paragraph of the Apology (XXIV,35):

> We are perfectly willing for the Mass to be understood as a daily sacrifice, provided this means the whole Mass, the ceremony and also the proclamation of the Gospel, faith, prayer, and thanksgiving. Taken together, these are the daily sacrifice of the New Testament; the ceremony was instituted because of them and ought not be separated from them. Therefore Paul says (I Cor. 11:26), "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death."

This, too, was the understanding of the classical Lutheran theologians. Gerhard, for instance, is quoted in Dr. C. F. W. Walther's expanded edition of Baier's *Compendium* to the effect that one of the "less principal purposes" of the Sacrament is "that we might preserve the public assemblies of the Christians, the strength and bond of which is the celebration of the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:20)."[9] Elsewhere Gerhard wrote:

> Because it has been accepted as a practice in the Christian church that in the public assemblies of the church after the preaching and hearing of the Word this Sacrament is celebrated, therefore, this custom must not be departed from without urgent necessity . . . it

> is . . . clear from Acts 20:7; I Cor. 11:20,33, that when the Christians did gather at one place, they were accustomed to celebrate the Eucharist.[10]

This deeply sacramental understanding of worship is also expressed quite explicitly in the literature of the early Missouri Synod, e.g., F. Lochner's *Hauptgottesdienst.* Eckhardt's *Reallexicon* (1907-1917), an ambitious topical summary of the Synod's published theology, makes the following points under "*Abendmahl*"(Lord's Supper):

> The Lord's Supper ought to be administered publicly and corporately, because
> (a) Christ and the apostles did it that way;
> (b) The Lord's Supper is a public confession, proclaiming the Lord's death (I Cor. 11), but a proclamation does not usually happen in a corner;
> (c) It is a tie of fellowship. Communion. I Cor. 10,17: One Body.
>
> Note (a) The place of the celebration is therefore the Church, the corporate worship (*Versammlungsgottesdienst*) of the Christians.
>
> Note (b) It is just in the celebration of the Lord's Supper that the Main Service finds its culmination point (*Gipfelpunkt*).

The same source says under "*Gottesdienst*" (Divine Worship) that for the Lutheran Reformation there were

> various services: Preaching services, Catechism services, Vesper services.—A Main Service (*Hauptgottesdienst*) was a service with the Lord's Supper. All others were minor services (*Nebengottesdienste*) . . . Minor services were: Matins, early on Sundays before the Main Service; Vespers on Saturday afternoon (Catechism sermon). . .

There follows a separate section on "The Lutheran Order of Service," enumerating the various parts, beginning with the Introit and ending with the Lord's Supper, which "is the seal of the Word and therefore follows the sermon." Of this specific order it is stated: "The Lutheran Order of Service is a unit with a fine integration of its parts" (*ein Ganzes in feiner Gliederung*). This Service was "corrupted. . . (1.) by the Thirty Years War; (2.) by those of Spener's persuasion [Pietists] . . .; (3.) by Rationalism."

The foregoing clearly suggests that the most urgent liturgical need is not for this or that ceremonial detail; what is needed is the restoration of the Lutheran understanding of the close bond between sermon and sacrament. "The sacrament and the sermon belong together," wrote Sasse, "and it is always a sign of the decay of the church if one is emphasised at the expense

of the other."[11] This is clearly not a question of tinkering with fussy bits and pieces of the liturgical machinery, but one of regaining a sense of the organic whole. Where the Service is understood not as a central sermon-core surrounded by fluffy festoons of trivia, but as the church's awesomely objective participation in the very life-giving Mystery of Salvation, there not only will penitent sinners gladly throng the courts of the Lord, but pastors themselves will understand their sacred office more clearly and will be less tempted either to abandon that office altogether or else to escape into all sorts of secondary roles and functions in search of identity and "fulfilment."

It is not, of course, to be expected that simply publishing a new liturgy and hymnbook will achieve all this. But it could certainly help. A new hymnbook could, for instance, follow the example of the Missouri Synod's official *Kirchen-Agende* published by Concordia Publishing House in 1902, in offering only one main Sunday service, the Order of Holy Communion, which then ends after the Sermon with prayers, blessing, and hymn, in case the Communion is not celebrated. At least this would avoid the false impression created by the "Page Five" form, that the main service of the church is complete without the Sacrament. If such a denatured form, a Communion Order without Communion, must be given independent status, then let it, at the very least, appear last, not first. Also, the close and indissoluble connections between liturgy and dogma make it highly desirable that the Small Catechism and the Augsburg Confession be printed in full in any future hymnal.

II. Liturgical Form

One hesitates to enter the whole field of external forms, where tastes and habits are so easily roused to furious combat. Yet the following four sets of "commonplaces" suggest themselves as particularly relevant to our modern Lutheran situation:

(1) On the one hand, in the matter of genuine adiaphora one must cultivate a truly evangelical and ecumenical breadth of perspective (FC SD X, 31). If the Lutheran Church is serious about representing, not sectarian whims, but the pure Gospel of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ, then she cannot in principle wish to squeeze the devotion of Zulus and Spaniards, Chinese and Americans, Brazilians and New Zealanders, all into one narrow sixteenth century Saxon groove! In this sense, there cannot be such a thing as "*the* Lutheran Liturgy." The unchanging content must be the Gospel of God, but the form must of necessity be colored by the Christian history of each of the world's nations, tongues, cultures, and continents. Here and now we must concentrate not on liturgies

in general, or on some pseudo-cosmopolitan hotchpotch, but on a form or forms suitable to an English-speaking specifically North American, environment.

Granted the substance, then, form is relatively indifferent. But only relatively. "Surely," asks C. S. Lewis, "the more fully one believes that a strictly supernatural event takes place, the less one can attach any great importance to the dress, gestures, and position of the priest?"[12] The argument holds only for a choice among equally acceptable alternatives. For surely nobody would care to complete C. S. Lewis' sentence like this: "The more fully one believes that a strictly supernatural event takes place, the less one can attach any great importance to whether the celebrant is dressed in jeans or smokes cigarettes at the altar." Obviously it does matter a great deal whether the words and actions of celebrant and people are in harmony with the sacred transactions which they must express and convey. It is, indeed, an adiaphoron whether the Introit is spoken or chanted. It does not follow, however, that the Introit may, therefore, be spoken or chanted indifferently, negligently, or perfunctorily. *That* can never be an adiaphoron.

The trouble is that actions do often speak louder than words. If either words or actions do not express the sense of the Liturgy, the Service of Word and Sacrament, or even run counter to it, then they are no longer adiaphora. A traditionalist Roman Catholic observed very perceptively of the post-VaticanII liturgical changes that a doctrine like the Real Presence can be materially altered and even surrendered without any explicit pronouncement, simply by a more permissive ceremonial (e.g., heedlessly dropping particles of consecrated bread to the ground). Even in daily life words, actions, and situations are perceived as jarring or even grotesque if they are not in keeping with one another. To plead for mercy before a human court, for instance, while remaining seated, hands in pockets, and chewing gum, would be insufferable. It seems even more incongruous for a clergyman to sit down comfortably during the Kyrie or the Gloria in Excelsis, legs crossed so as to give maximum exposure to canary-coloured socks, and gaze into the congregation to see who is there. Or consider the disruptive effect of hackneyed "traffic-directions" being given every few minutes: "We now continue our so-and-so with this or that found on page such-and-such, in the front, middle, back, etc., of your hymnbook!" Imagine what a total disaster it would be if a stage manager were constantly to interrupt a gripping drama by appearing on stage to make announcements like these: "Ladies and gentlemen, will you now please turn to page 285 of your paperback edition of *Four Great Plays by Henrik Ibsen*. . ." "As it is very hot

today, please skip pages 158 to 176. We continue with Act III of 'An Enemy of the People,' line three, at the top of page 177." If even the presentation of mere fiction and make-believe forbids all sorts of disruptive rehearsal chatter, how much more the very embodiment of the living, eternal truth? Verily there is here One greater than Shakespeare or Ibsen! His minister, therefore, who leads the People of God in the celebration of the mysteries of His New Covenant (I Cor. 4:1), has no right to sound as if he were announcing Walt Disney mummeries to tired tourists for the twenty-millionth time!

In the choice of equally suitable forms, then, let mutual tolerance and accomodation prevail. We must, indeed, beware of the misguided zeal with which St. Augustine of Canterbury forced his Roman rite on the representatives of a more ancient form of British Christianity. But once a fitting form has been chosen, it needs to be filled not with casual indifference, but with awe and reverence, with that fear and trembling which befit the presence not only of angels and archangels and of all the company of Heaven, but of the Adorable Divine Majesty Himself. It is in this sense that we must understand the Augsburg Confession's paradoxical admonition about adiaphora: "Nothing contributes so much to the maintenance of dignity in public worship and the cultivation of reverence and devotion among the people as the proper observance of ceremonies in the churches" ("Of Abuses," Introduction, 6).

(2) The worship of God is not a means to an end (e. g., "evangelism"), but is an end in itself. It is in fact *the* ultimate purpose of the church (Eph. 1:12,14; Phil. 1:11; 2:10,11; I Peter 2:5), and must give meaning, direction, and impetus to all particular functions and activities of the church, including the great missionary task (Matt. 28:19,20). This means that the church's public liturgy, that is, the Service of Word and Sacrament, dare not be treated as a public relations exercise, as these words are usually understood. The idea, for instance, that the Service should be "meaningful," that is, clear and obvious to any casual visitor who might pop in from the street, is short-sightedly pragmatic. A "service" tailored to such a misguided ideal would comprise a *melange* of threadbare banalities, which even the casual visitor is likely fo find unbearable after the third time—not to speak of the faithful who attend regularly for threescore years and ten. People who come to the church seeking divine truth do not expect it to be huckstered like soap or soft drinks, with mindless jingles. Indeed, they respect the church's uncompromising celebration of mysteries which are not at once transparent to the uninstructed. A few years ago, for instance, an American lady walked into a Russian Orthodox monastery in New York State,

and was so impressed by the service in church Slavonic, of which she did not understand a word, that she promptly willed all her wealth to that monastery, saying that here alone had she found people who really prayed!

By far the greatest missionary magnetism in the Service, however, has always been exerted by good evangelical preaching. This dare never be forgotten, least of all in that church which confesses in the *Apology* (XV, 42,43):

> . . . the chief worship of God is the preaching of the Gospel. When our opponents do preach, they talk about human traditions, the worship of the saints, and similar trifles. This the people rightly despise and walk out on them after the reading of the Gospel. . . In our churches, on the other hand, all sermons deal with topics like these: penitence, the fear of God, faith in Christ, the righteousness of faith, prayer and our assurance that it is efficacious and is heard, the cross, respect for rulers and for all civil ordinances, the distinction between the kingdom of Christ (or the spiritual kingdom) and political affairs, marriage, the education and instruction of children, chastity, and all the works of love.

And again we assert (XXIV,50,51):

> Practical and clear sermons hold an audience, but neither the people nor the clergy have ever understood our opponents' teaching. The real adornment of the churches is godly, practical, and clear teaching, the godly use of the sacraments, ardent prayer, and the like. Candles, golden vessels, and ornaments like that are fitting, but they are not the peculiar adornment of the church.

Liturgy is the worship and distribution of Christ in Word and Sacrament. Using outward forms and aesthetic appeal as excuse or cosmetic for vapid, incompetent, dogmatically wobbly preaching is an empty parody; it is mere ritualism. Good, sound, solid preaching is by far the most important and the most demanding task of the ministerial office. It is in fact *the* apostolic work *par excellence* (Acts 6:2,4; II Cor. 3; I Tim. 5:17). Who indeed is sufficient for these things? Only God can make able ministers of the New Covenant (II Cor. 2:16; 3:6). Pastoral competence, however, requires spiritual and theological exercise, growth, and progress (I Tim. 4:7,15). Proper pastors' conferences (not insipid "church-workers" and families kaffeeklatsches) are vital in this process, and growth in the quality of preaching ought to have top priority on the agenda. This means continuous concentration not primarily on techniques but on content. The electronic media particularly

are so effective in shaping a secular mentality, even among church-people, that Christian preachers must labour strenuously to counter and exorcise these demons. They must constantly build and reinforce a soundly, uncompromisingly Christian perspective. Preaching is this sort of spiritual battle for men's minds and souls. It is not an anaemic recitation of pat formulas and cliches. That is merely sermonizing. Preaching is the ever-fresh exposition and application of God's living Word for today. The point, as someone has well said, is not to illuminate the obscure biblical text with the light of clever scholarship, but to let the light of the text (Ps. 119:105) illuminate our lives!

People do hunger and thirst for authentic proclamation. When the Soviet priest Dimitri Dudko included a question and answer session in his celebration of the Liturgy, the church could scarcely hold the crowds that gathered. These sessions proved so popular that the KGB arranged an automobile "accident" which, fortunately, Father Dudko survived, though with broken legs. The craving for the Bread of Life is not limited to the Soviet Union. Westerners are more jaded, it is true. But the hunger is there nevertheless.

(3) A third set of commonplaces has to do with what C. S. Lewis called the "Liturgical Fidget." I can do no better than to quote Lewis directly:

> Novelty, simply as such, can have only an entertainment value. And they don't go to church to be entertained. They go to *use* the service, or, if you prefer, to *enact* it. Every service is a structure of acts and words through which we receive a sacrament, or repent, or supplicate, or adore. And it enables us to do these things best—if you like, it "works" best—when, through long familiarity, we don't have to think about it. As long as you notice, and have to count, the steps, you are not yet dancing, but only learning to dance. A good shoe is a shoe you don't notice. Good reading becomes possible when you need not consciously think about eyes, or light, or print, or spelling. The perfect church service would be one we were almost unaware of; our attention would have been on God. But every novelty prevents this. It fixes our attention on the service itself; and thinking about worship is a different thing from worshipping. . . . There is really some excuse for the man who said, "I wish they'd remember that the charge to Peter was, Feed my sheep, not, try experiments on my rats, or even teach my performing dogs new tricks."
>
> Thus my whole liturgiological position really boils down

> to an entreaty for permanence and uniformity. I can make do with almost any kind of service whatever if only it will stay put. But if each form is snatched away just when I am beginning to feel at home in it, then I can never make any progress in the art of worship. You give me no chance to acquire the trained habit—*habito dell'arte.* [13]

What then shall we make of the idea that "the youth" get bored with sameness and therefore require constant innovations to keep them interested? The sentiment is well-meaning enough but is essentially misguided. It is true that initially some silly youngsters (by no means all) may enjoy having the service turned into a variety show, especially one that is flattering to the inane Youth Cult images promoted by the media for profit. In the long term, however, such an approach is bound to produce conscious or subconscious contempt for the church. Who, after all, could respect an institution which is, after two thousand years' experience, so confused about its functions as to say, in effect: "Dear children, help us! We are no longer sure about what we ought to be doing. Perhaps you might have some good ideas?" Who could possibly take seriously the play-worship prefixed with that horrid word, "experimental"?

The fact is that no healthy, viable society lets its children arbitrate its values. It is for the elders of the tribe to guard its cultural heritage and to transmit it solemnly to the younger generation—never *vice versa.* Also in our society the problem is not with the youth but with their elders. If youth are confused about values, it is mainly because their parents are. If the liturgy is boring to children it is usually because the parents do not find it very interesting either. If children saw adults treating the Sunday Service as the most important activity of their lifes, they would respect it too, and would never dream of treating it as a pop-event, to be tinkered with by every Tom, Dick, and Harry. A church which has won the conscientious loyalty of parents—particularly fathers (Eph. 3:15; 6:4)!—will have the devotion of their children too. But a church which abjectly capitulates to the whims and tastes of adolescents will have, and deserve, neither.

Finally, there is a variety-principle built into the liturgy, and that is the rhythm of the church-year. The basic units of this gentle, natural rhythm are the week and the year. This cycle is virtually broken by forcing onto it the alien drum-beat of "monthly emphases" based on the activistic, organizational imperatives of the financial year. It is also broken by the false off-on or even off-off-off-on *staccato* of "Communion Sundays" and "non-Communion Sundays." The proper change from Sunday to Sunday should be in the specific meaning and application of the Sacrament, not in having or not having it. The

Eucharist is the whole Gospel in action. This one Gospel, like a precious diamond, has many facets or aspects, of which one or two are especially highlighted in each Sunday's or festival's Gospel pericope. And through whatever concrete facet the full Gospel is celebrated on a given day, that is the specific meaning, or the mode of application of the Sacrament on that day. The Sacrament is always the full Gospel-gift, of course. But on Christmas Day we receive it under the aspect of the Lord's Nativity, on Epiphany in celebration of His Baptism, on Laetare Sunday as the Divine Bread of Life revealed in the miraculous feeding of the multitude, and so on. In other words, the Sacrament, like the Gospel itself, must never be seen as some one narrow aspect or some unvarying "standard ration" in the feast that is Christianity. It is rather the whole reality, under many wonderful aspects, each especially observed and celebrated at various times. Each time it is as new and fresh as are the daily mercies of God. We have here the Kaleidoscope of God, which, at each weekly or seasonal tilt, exhibits the same divine generosity in ever new and exciting configurations.

(4) In conclusion, something should be said about the twofold requirement that liturgical and musical forms be (a) solemn and fitting and (b) congregationally singable. The early church studiously avoided the music characteristic of the ostentation and voluptuousness of pagan state religion and mystery cults. Sobriety, not frenzy, was the mark of Christian worship, I Cor. 12:2; Eph. 5:15-20. In our own time it is difficult to imagine a more appalling travesty than a "service" or "hymns" reeking of the pagan debaucheries and obscenities of the "rock"-cult. It is sheer mockery to turn the Christian mysteries into raucous night-club acts. What has Light to do with Darkness, Christ with Belial, or the Agnus Dei with the Beatles, Monkees, and their ilk? The solemn celebrations of the church (I Cor. 5:8; Heb. 13:10) must not be defiled with the modes and manners of Canaanite fertility religions (I Cor. 10:7,8) and of their modern counterparts.

A fitting reverence, however, is one thing; a snobbish stuffiness is quite another. Good church music must be singable. And what was singable once is not necessarily singable today. Moreover, what sounds majestic when sung by thousands in a Gothic cathedral, may sound merely ludicrous when attempted by seventeen people to the funereal wailings of an electronic organ-simulator. The church must cultivate living devotion, not exquisite museum-pieces to delight sophisticated musical palates. It is better, therefore, to sing "My Faith Looks Up To Thee" with zest and gusto, than to devastate a great hymn like "Isaiah Mighty Seer" by stumbling painfully

and clumsily about its craggy grandeur. This is not to suggest by any means that the old treasures should now be abandoned. The question must, however, be handled with some discretion. Congregations can and should learn to sing the great Christian classics of the past. But the Sunday Service is not the time or the place for practice and rehearsal. It is discouraging for a congregation to be compelled to sing five unfamiliar hymns in a row. Most of the hymns sung on a given Sunday should be sufficiently well-known to be sung truly corporately and with fervour. It is sufficient to cope with one or two unfamiliar hymns per service. This allows for the necessary training without destroying the congregation's joy in worship. It should also be borne in mind that, given a fitting and stable liturgical framework, there is considerable scope within it for popularly expressive hymns (CA XXIV,2). One would be hard put to suggest a more perfect embodiment of these principles than the practice of the great Bishop St. Ambrose of Milan. During Holy Week of the year 386, a year before the conversion of St. Augustine, the dowager empress Justina, who was a fanatical Arian, tried to compel Ambrose to surrender one of his churches to the Arians. This the bishop refused steadfastly to do. Various pressures were brought to bear, including the dramatic encirclement of Ambrose's church by Arian soldiers, who had orders to allow people in but not out. Thus Ambrose and many of his people were forced to spend several days in the church buildings under virtual siege. To encourage his congregation in the true faith, Ambrose composed beautiful hymns exalting the Blessed Trinity and the true Divinity of Our Lord. These hymns were then chanted antiphonally by clergy and people. Augustine reports that this chanting was so compelling that it was taken up even by Arian soldiers outside! In the sixteenth century, likewise, the Reformation was often sung into people's hearts and minds. Ought not the celebration in our churches today be similarly contagious?

FOOTNOTES

1. C. S. Lewis, *Letters To Malcolm: Chiefly On Prayer* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1964), p. 4.
2. Roy Larson, "Memo to a Parson, from a Wistful Young Man," *Religion in Life*, XXXI (1961), p. 356, cited in E. W. Janetzki, "Where Is The Church?" *Basic Studies in Christianity* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, n. d.), p. 71.
3. *Spiritual Counterfeits Project Newsletter*, Berkeley, California, January-February 1978.
4. C. S. Lewis, *Undeceptions* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1971), p. 76.
5. Charles Porterfield Krauth, *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1963), pp. 650,655.
6. Oscar Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship* (London: SCM Press, 1966), pp. 30,31,34.
7. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann, eds. *Luther's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955-1976), 53, p. 24.

8. J. G. Walch, ed., *Dr. Martin Luther's Saemmtliche Schriften* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), 10, cols. 2256-2258.
9. C. F. W. Walther, ed., *Johanni Gülielmi Baieri Compendium Theologiae Positivae* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1879), p. 529.
10. Martin Chemnitz, Polycarp Leyser, and John Gerhard, *Harmoniae Quatuor Evangelistarum* (Frankfort and Hamburg, 1652), II, p. 1085.
11. H. Sasse, *This Is My Body* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1959), p. 2.
12. C. S. Lewis, *Letters To Malcolm*, p. 9.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

Worship and Sacrifice

Charles J. Evanson

> . . . if you want to engage in a marvelous, great worship of God and honor Christ's passion rightly, then remember and participate in the sacrament; in it, as you hear, there is a remembrance of him, that is, he is praised and glorified. If you practice or assist in practicing this same remembrance with diligence, then you will assuredly forget about the self-chosen forms of worship, for as has been said, you cannot praise and thank God too often or too much for his grace revealed in Christ.[1]

It is with this matter of the right remembrance of our Lord in the public worship of the Christian congregation that we mean to concern ourselves in this study. It will be our principal interest to consider *cultus,* the activity of the gathered people of God, the context in which we celebrate the sufferings and triumph of our Lord and receive the fruit of His merits. What we do in public worship has been variously understood in Christian history, not only among people of widely divergent theological schools and ecclesiastical communities, but even within those schools and groupings. With regard to our own Lutheran community, for example, significant criticisms against what are widely regarded as unjustified liturgical innovations in our parishes—in many cases sponsored and approved by the liturgical commission so synods and national church-bodies—have surfaced with increased frequency. Many of these criticisms have focused on the increased use of various eucharistic prayers and *formulae* incorporating with them a specific act of commemoration of the acts of God (the *Anamnesis*), one or another construction of the Words of Institution (the *Verba*), and a solemn prayer of blessing which calls upon the Holy Spirit to bless the people, or the elements, or both (the *Epiclesis*).

The literature of criticism regarding these prayers has mounted steadily, especially with reference to the proposals of the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship and the fruit of its labours, the *Lutheran Book of Worship.* Those who read Lutheran periodicals or attended the first "Symposium on the Theology of Worship" held at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, in 1977 will have little difficulty recalling many heated discussions in which the eucharistic prayer has been singled out for an especially critical examination. The

published essays of Oliver K. Olson, the critical survey of the situation in Germany of Wilhelm Oesch, the *tour de force* levelled against the ILCW's *The Great Thanksgiving* by Gottfried Krodel, and numerous other monographs have made it abundantly clear that many theological questions remain unresolved.[2]

Hermann Sasse's Letter #23, written in 1952 to Lutheran Pastors under the title *Der Schriftgrund der lutherischen Abendmahlslehre*, may serve as a short summary statement of some of the objections to modern liturgical developments in Lutheran Churches around the globe. According to Sasse, the introduction of a eucharistic prayer - indeed, *any* eucharistic prayer - including either an *Anamnesis* or *Epiclesis*, in connection with the Words of Institution, represents the development within world Lutheranism of a theological crisis of the first order. According to Sasse:

> Many have not realized that the use of an *epiclesis* is evidence of a completely different understanding of the presence of Christ from that which obtains in Lutheranism. The purpose of the Berneuchen Movement in Germany - and parallel movements in other Lutheran territories - to renew the thought of the sacrifice of the Mass indicate that the place of the Eucharist in the Lutheran Reformation is no longer understood. It has come to be understood as something that one does, rather than something that one recives. The central aspect of 'for the forgiveness of sins' retreats into the background.[3]

One does find that the primary Reformation emphasis on the Sacrament as *beneficium*[4] appears to be in a state of eclipse in some modern studies, but it may still be questioned whether Sasse's characterization adequately covers the "High-Church" phenomenon. What is being done in many parishes - with the encouragement of official commissions - is for many both alien and upsetting. If for no other reason than this, the *caveat* of theologians of the stature of Sasse and Elert appear to them entirely valid, and the decision is both direct and simple: the only course which confessing Lutherans may legitimately follow is to continue in the familiar pattern of praying the Our Father, followed by the recital of the "simple words of our Lord."

It must be considered, however, that Lutheran theologians have long remarked about the gradual impoverishment of our Lutheran worship, and were doing so long before latter-day liturgical experts fell under the influence of Gregory Dix and the charm of things Anglican. Werner Elert (in his *Morphologie des Luthertums*) and Paul Graff (in *Geschichte der Aufloesung der Alten Gottesdienstlichen Formen in der*

Evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands) have long since provided particular documentation to the inexorable impoverishment of Lutheran worship since the Reformation era.

It was the appearance of Archbishop Brilioth's *Eucharistic Faith and Practice: Evangelical and Catholic* (with its analysis of basic eucharistic motifs of the various ecclesiastical traditions and the dominant moods of thanksgiving, communion, commemoration, sacrifice, and mystery which appear to predominate in the different traditions) which first brought the Lutheran Eucharist to the direct attention of non-Lutherans, and at the same time whetted the appetite of many Lutherans for what they now came to regard as a more complete, balanced, adequate, and even catholic form of eucharistic worship. Brilioth's work has been pivotal, of more significance even than the major labours of Dom Gregory Dix.[5] Unfortunately, the work of neither of these "giants" is without serious faults. In the case of Brilioth, it must be noted that he fell heir to the destructive critical work of Spitta, Schweitzer, *et al.* As heir to a methodology which made it impossible for him to make any authoritative statement about what the congregation *ought* to believe and how it *ought* to worship, Brilioth had instead to be content with an empirical examination of the extant forms of the Eucharist and its place in the life of the churches. He was from the outset forced to face two important critical questions:

> (i) Can the eucharist of the church still be derived from the action of Jesus in the night that he was betrayed?
>
> (ii) Can any particular view of the rite be established on the basis of the New Testament evidence as the norm and standard by which all subsequent developments are to be judged[6] ?

Unfortunately, on the basis of his methodology, Brilioth is not equipped to answer either of these important questions satisfactorily. For him the New Testament has dissolved into independent and perhaps even conflicting "theologies." Accordingly, only one answer can be given to the question of the relationship of the Eucharist to the Lord:

> For our faith it must be sufficient to be certain, as we can be certain, that this holy rite stood from the very beginning at the centre of the stream of spiritual life which had its source in the Master himself, and which is itself the chief witness to the power which was in him.[7]

This answer is, of course, no answer at all: it simply begs the question. In the same way, it is impossible for Brilioth to answer the second question in any positive way. Since the Gospels are themselves witnesses to a variety of theological emphases, one can posit only that there can be no real norm

whatever outside the consensus of the extant liturgies themselves. Far from seeing the Scriptures as norm and standard, it appears that these writings themselves will admit to no norm. Brilioth draws this conclusion:

> It follows that we ought to abstain from the attempt to find in the Scriptures one normative liturgical type. In this sphere as in others we ought to seek in the scripture less a system of doctrine than a life; life in its apparently inconsistent variety, rather than a standard form. We must take pains to appreciate the richness and manifoldness in the New Testament evidence; otherwise we shall miss the fullness of the Divine revelation, and take as a substitute some one-sided expression of fragmentary aspects of it.[8]

Much modern liturgical scholarship which seeks to determine the place of the Supper in the life of the Church appears to have been built upon the suppositions of just such a phenomenological understanding of the Eucharist. One finds the fruits of it, for example, in *Meaning and Practice of the Lord's Supper*, edited by Helmut T. Lehmann (1961), a work which is a valuable study of the "state of the art" of liturgics—but absolutely inconclusive from the standpoint of theology.[9]

In so far as modern liturgical scholarship stands in the tradition of a dogmatically inconclusive phenomenology, or seeks to correct an overly "Pauline" emphasis on communion with a dash of the "Johannine" aspects of mystery (which may exist in other models), one can see a fundamental justification for fears and mortification. Such fears have been borne out in some of the more recent liturgical productions. For example, Karl Berhard Ritter included in *Das Eucharistische Feier* of the German Michaelsbruederschaft, a complete eucharistic prayer which is sufficiently vague to be regarded as papist in tone. To pray, " . . . Cleansed and reconciled by His Blood, we enter with joy into the Holy Place and draw near to the Throne of Thy Grace in the power of this pure, holy, and all-sufficient sacrifice" is surely to invite misunderstanding, at least.[10]

One may, however, question whether the critics have put the real problem into proper focus. Is the problem so intimately connected with the so-called Eucharistic Prayer that it must of necessity appear wherever such prayers are introduced? Is it always decisively avoided where such prayers are not found? The best answer to both questions is a resounding no! The appearance of such prayers is by no means a strictly modern phenomenon, nor is it universally indicative of theological defection. In the last century, Friedrich Lochner, in *Der Hauptgottesdienst der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche. Zur Erhaltung des liturgischen Erbteils und zur Befoederung des*

liturgischen Studiums in der americanisch-lutherischen Kirche erlaeutert und mit alkirchlichen Singweisen versehen, which appeared in 1895 under the *imprimatur* and *nihil obstat* of Concordia Publishing House, wrote approvingly of the *Epiclesis.* He includes in a footnote the form of such an invocation of the Holy Spirit, taken from the *Church Order* of Ottheirich (1543):

> Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Only True Son of the Living God . . . we bring before Thy Divine Majesty these Thine own gifts of bread and wine, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst, by the Divine Grace, Goodness, and Power sanctify, bless, and make this bread to be Thy Body and this wine to be Thy Blood. Bless also all those who eat and drink thereof, that they be granted Eternal Life . . ."

Lochner notes that the proper position of this prayer is after the Our Father (before the *Verba*). He notes further that the ancient Church, up to the fifth century, regarded the *Our Father* itself, the *ipsissima verba Christi,* as the true prayer of consecration. He quotes Pope Gregory the Great:

> To me it appears unseemly that we speak over the Oblation a prayer that has originated with a theologian (*Scholasticus*) and pass over in silence, over the Body and Blood of the Redeemer, the prayer which He Himself authored.[12]

One should note also the specific approval which Melanchthon, in Apology XXIV, gives to the Eucharistic Prayers of the Eastern Church. He regards them as an especially strong testimony against the contemporary papist understanding of the significance of the Mass. We shall examine his words in greater detail in another connection. Further evidences of the use of some form of Eucharistic Prayer within the Lutheran tradition are found in the *Agenda* of the Bavarian Church (1879), Pfalz-Neubrug (1543), and Kassel (1896).[13]

The 1942 *Svenska Kyrko-Handboken* of the Church of Sweden includes such a prayer, after the *Sanctus*:

> Praise be to Thee, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that Thou hast had mercy upon the children of men and sent Thine Only-Begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. We thank Thee for the salvation which Thou hast prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send forth Thy Spirit into our hearts, that He may enkindle in us a living faith and prepare us rightly to make this commemoration of our Saviour, and receive Him as He comes to us in His Holy Supper.[14]

The Norwegian *Alterbok for den Norske Kirke* (Fifth Edition,

1966), includes a similar prayer at the same place, but in this case, addressed directly to our Lord Himself:

> We give Thee thanks, Lord Jesus Christ; we bless Thy Name, Thou Only-Begotten Son of the Father, our Saviour. To Thee be glory for the love which endured even death. We beseech Thee, grant that we who come to Thy Table to partake of Thy Body and Blood, that we may come before Thy presence with humble and confident hearts. Unite us to Thyself as branches to the Vine; teach us to love one another, even as Thou hast loved us, and grant to us, with all Thy Holy Church, that we may find consolation and rejoicing in Thee! O, Thou Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O, Thou Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace.[15]

Mention should also be made of the post-war work of the German Lutheran territorial churches which culminated in the authorization of a common form for the celebration of the Holy Supper, in which congregations have been given the alternative of the traditional pattern of Preface-*Sanctus*-*Verba*-Our Father, *etc.*, or the addition of a short Eucharistic Prayer after the *Sanctus* and before the *Verba*:

> Praise be to Thee, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that Thou hast had mercy upon Thy creation, and sent Thine Only-Begotten Son into our flesh. We thank Thee for the redemption which Thou hast prepared for us through the holy sacrifice of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Tree of the Cross. We praise His victorious resurrection from the dead and exult in His ascension into Thy heavenly sanctuary, where He, our High Priest, ever interceeds before Thee on our behalf. In His Name, we beseech Thee, Lord: Send Thy Holy Spirit into our hearts; sanctify and renew us in body and soul, and grant to us that in this Holy Supper we may receive the true Body and Blood of Thy Son in true faith, with thanksgiving. Gather Thou Thine elect from the ends of the earth into Thy Kingdom, and grant that with sure confidence we may wait for the Coming-Again of Thy Son. To Thee be glory in eternity.[16]

The author does not know to what extent German congregations have actually availed themselves of this option. The appearance of the prayer has excited some negative comment, as mentioned above. It is interesting to note that the recent *Lutheran Hymnal* of the Lutheran Church in Australia, which in so many details draws heavily on the German *Agende*, does not offer the option of this prayer.[17]

The propriety of such prayers as have been introduced in various Lutheran churches cannot be adequately treated simply on the basis of statements about Reformation era models. The real question arises in a different connection. It has to do with the whole relationship between the Sacrament of the Altar and the cultic context in which it is found. As long as the Supper is the occasion of prayers, songs, preaching, and other pious exercises, the question must be faced: what, exactly, is happening as the congregation gathers with her pastor around the Table of the Lord?

Luther concerned himself with this question to an important extent. Already by 1520, he was writing against the notion that the Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice offered by the Church to obtain the benefits of the passion of our Lord. The Scriptures do not speak of it as such (*W A* 8, p. 421), nor is it possible for us by any sacrifice to appease the wrath of God (*W A* 6, p. 367), nor is it even necessary for us to do so (*W A* 8, p. 441f.). We should rather offer to God nothing but prayers, thanksgivings, and praise (*W A* 6, p. 368), together with the faith that Christ, our High Priest in Heaven, offers Himself for us without ceasing, presents us, and makes us and our prayers and our praises acceptable to His Father. Luther speaks as follows:

> To be sure this sacrifice of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, and of ourselves as well, we are not to present before God in our own person. But we are to lay it upon Christ and let Him present it for us . . . From these words we learn that we do not offer Christ as a sacrifice, but that Christ offers us. And in this way it is permissible, yes, profitable, to call the mass a sacrifice; not on its own account, but because we offer ourselves as a sacrifice along with Christ. That is, we lay ourselves on Christ by a firm faith in His testament and do not otherwise appear before God with our prayer, praise, and sacrifice except through Christ and His mediation. Nor do we doubt that Christ is our priest or minister in heaven before God. Such faith truly brings it to pass that Christ takes up our cause, presents us and our prayer and praise, and also offers himself for us in heaven. If the mass were so understood and for this reason called a sacrifice, it would be well. Not that we offer the sacrifice, but that by our praise, prayer, and sacrifice we move Him and give Him occasion to offer Himself for us in heaven and ourselves with Him . . . Few, however, understand the mass in this way. For they suppose that only the priest offers the mass as a sacrifice before God. Actually, this is done and should be done by everyone who receives the

> sacrament—yes, also by those who are present at mass but do not receive the sacrament. Furthermore such an offering of sacrifice every Christian may make wherever he is and at all times . . . If He is a priest for ever, then He is at all times a priest and is offering sacrifices without ceasing before God. But we cannot be continually the same; therefore the mass has been instituted that we may there come together and offer such sacrifice in common . . . Thus it becomes clear that it is not the priest alone who offers the sacrifice of the mass; it is this faith which each one has for himself. This is the true priestly office, through which Christ is offered as a sacrifice to God, an office which the priest, with the outward ceremonies of the mass, simply represents. Each and all are, therefore, equally spiritual priests before God.[18]

Here Luther retains some of the traditional terminology which he has inherited, but the development gives evidence of a stark discontinuity with the medieval developments in the theology of sacrifice. One may, for example, speak in terms of the offering of Christ, but *only* in the sense of desiring the salvation which He has accomplished and believing that He has, in fact, accomplished it on our behalf. When one firmly desires and believes that Christ has died on his behalf and wishes to be heard and received by the Father on the basis of the Person and Work of Christ, then one may be said to be "offering Christ":

> It is just as if I wished to offer the physical, earthly priest as a sacrifice in the mass and to appoint him to present my need and my praise of God, and he were to give me a token that he would do it. Just as in this case I would be offering the priest as a sacrifice, so it is that I also offer Christ, in that I desire and believe that He accepts me and my prayer and praise and presents it to God in His own person.[19]

In the Confessional writings, Luther speaks little about the sacrificial aspects of the Mass - excepting to condemn flatly the papist doctrine of sacrifice as ". . . a work of man, by which one attempts to reconcile himself and others to God, and to obtain and merit the remission of sins and grace."[20] His primary struggle is rather on a wholly different front—against those who have spiritualized the sacrament out of existence. "The fanatical spirits," he says in the Large Catechism, "regard the sacrament aside from the Word of God, as something that we do."[21] The sacrament stands as the divinely appointed and ordained means by which the fruits of the saving person and work of Christ come to us: "For although the work

is accomplished and the forgiveness of sins acquired on the cross, yet it cannot come to us in any other way than through the Word."[22] The same thought appears in the *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper* (1528):

> In the same way I carefully wrote against the heavenly prophets that the fact of Christ's suffering and the use of it are not the same thing: *factum et applicatio facti: seu factum et usus facti.* The passion of Christ occurred but once on the cross. But whom would it benefit if it were not distributed, applied, and put to use? And how could it be put to use and distributed except through Word and sacrament? But why should such great saints read my treatise? They know far better. Well, they have their reward, that they consider the fact and the application to be one and the same, and thereby reduce themselves to folly and shame. They fail to see that in the Supper the application of the passion, and not the fact of it, is concerned.[23]

This point answers the problems of the fanatics, and at the same time underscores the Lutheran polemic against the papist notion of sacrifice. It would not be correct, however, to think that the "later Luther" drops the subject of eucharistic sacrifice. It is in the *Admonition Concerning the Sacrament* (1530) that Luther spells out in some detail the proper, evangelical understanding of the eucharistic sacrifice. The papists call their Mass a *misteriale* or *memoriale sacrificium,* he says, by which the sacrifice of Christ on the cross is recalled and interpreted as a form of contemplation. Luther continues:

> However, they should not suppose that I want to argue about words. For where everything else is in order, the words are not as important (although such an attitude is dangerous in regard to Scripture). Very well, we are ready to concede and to permit not the sacrament itself but the reception or use of the sacrament to be called a sacrifice, with this difference and understanding: first, that it is not called an interpretative sacrifice or sacrifice of works but a sacrifice of thanksgiving; this means that whoever receives the sacrament is supposed to do it as a sign of thanksgiving by which he shows that he, as far as his own person is concerned, is thankful in his heart to Christ for his suffering and grace. Second, that the priests cannot make it into another sacrifice at the altar, but that they, too, receive it in no other way nor with any other significance than as a sign by which they indicate that they are in their own persons giving thanks to Christ in their hearts, in the same way that the other Christians to whom they offer

it from the altar also give thanks. So there will be one and the same sacrament both of the priests and of the laity, and the priests will have nothing better or different or more in the sacrament than that which one receives from them. Third, that henceforth they do not sell to anyone the sacrament or mass as a sacrament for others, either for the dead or for the living, in order to obtain grace. Rather, every priest should perfer it for himself, like every other Christian, to demonstrate his thankfulness to God. Fourth (Dare I also touch on this?): If the use of the mass or sacrament has become a sacrifice of thanksgiving, they should repent and return all goods, seals, and letters, in addition to all cloisters and income from foundations, all of which they have received and possess through (their proclamation of) the mass as a sacrifice of works; for such possessions have been won with lies and deceptions, yes, with blasphemy of God and betrayal of Christ. If kings and princes had that a priest could do no more with the sacrament on the altar than a layman who receives it, namely, that he solely gives thanks to God in his own person, do you think they would have been so senseless and would have given so many possessions to someone who does not offer a sacrifice for them nor reconciles them to God but gives thanks only for himself? Tut, tut, tut, how it sets my teeth on edge! I do not believe that I can get this point across to them; I am quite sure of that. . . The sacrament is one matter, the remembrance is another matter. He (Christ) says that we should use and practice the sacrament and, in addition, remember him, that is, teach, believe, and give thanks. The remembrance is indeed supposed to be a sacrifice of thanksgiving; but the sacrament itself should not be a sacrifice but a gift of God which he has given to us and which we should take and receive with thanks. For this reason I think that the ancients called this office *eucharistia* or *sacramentum eucharistia*, that is, a thanksgiving. For in this sacrament we should thank God according to the command of Christ, and we should use and receive the sacrament with thanks. In the course of time, however, through misunderstanding, this word came to be applied only to the sacrament. Even that would not have been a bad way of saying it if people had said, when going to mass or to the service, "I want to go to the thanksgiving," namely, to that office at which one thanks and praises God in his sacrament, as it appears the ancients intended that it should be done.[24]

We turn to Melanchthon, who addressed himself to the

question of the cultic context of the Sacrament in Article XXIV of the Apology of the Augsburg Confession (1531). In the Augsburg Confession (1530) itself, he had directed his attention to the fact that the Mass itself and its accustomed ceremonies had not been cast aside in the churches adhering to the Confession, but that all these things had been retained, so that on every Sunday and holy day, they were used and held in high reverence. In addition, he stated, the people of our churches are accustomed to actually receive the Sacrament of the Altar; their pastors preach frequently concerning the great value of the Sacrament and its proper use, and none are admitted to the altar unless first they have been examined and absolved. "Such worship is pleasing to God."[25] The major thrust of the article is the correction of the abuses of private masses and unworthy communions, the notion that the Mass is a work performed by man which can be performed for the benefit of non-communicants (living or dead). At the same time, a most significant and positive emphasis is placed on the fact that what is important is that it is Christ whom we receive and whose benefits we remember.

In the eyes of the Roman Confutors, and later Roman Catholic critics, this article is clearly unsatisfactory.[26] In the *Confutation* the Romanists state that the Eucharist is offered in memory of the passion of Christ. Melanchthon understands that there is something of real importance at stake here: it is the question of the orientation, the prior and over-riding emphasis in all Christian worship. Here one must carefully distinguish between the Sacrament itself and the service of worship in which the Sacrament is offered to us. They are not one and the same: the one is wholly *beneficium*; the other has within it legitimate elements of *sacrificium*, properly understood.

The fundamental observation of paragraph nine of the *apology* is a reminder that the most essential question is not whether the Eucharist is a sacrifice, but precisely in what sense it is to be understood as a sacrifice. In Melanchthon's understanding, it is clearly not a propitiatory sacrifice which offers and confers grace *ex opere operato* to those for in whose benefit mass is said.[27] The primary intention of the original formulation of the *ex opere operato* concept was, it should be noted, to safeguard the objectivity of the operation of the sacrament. This formulation was initiated first among the theologians of the Franciscan School - particularly Alexander of Hales and Bonaventura. "The sacraments of the New Testament justify and confer grace of themselves *ex opere operato*," was Bonaventura's dictum.[28] The Franciscans regarded the relationship between the substance of the sacrament and the grace conferred by the sacrament to be primarily moral (i.e., the substance or element is arbitrary; the

grace of God is independent of the substance and is communicated alongside the substance),[29] whereas for Thomas of Acquino, the substance is itself the real cause of the communication of the grace of God. For the Franciscans, the efficacy of the sacrament stems not from the value of the material and form employed, nor from the personal power of the minister, but from the will of God in Christ who has instituted the sacrament, and the Holy Spirit who works in and through the sacrament. For Thomas and the Dominican School, the emphasis is placed on the effectiveness of the sacramental action, without regard to whether or not the recipient has faith in the empowering word of Christ. The results of a valid celebration are inevitably and invariably efficacious, but the effects will vary, according to the conditions under which the sacrament is administered.[30] What results is a new meaning to the *ex opere operato* formula. The accent moves from the command and promise of Christ and the faith of the participant to the validity of the action itself, without regard for the spiritual condition or motive of the recipient.[31]

Thus, this is the point at issue: whether the emphasis is to be placed on the word and action of the Institutor (Christ), or on the action of the individual or community which celebrates and offers. Medieval theologians put the emphasis on the latter, regarding the Mass as a sacrificial action which provides a point of connection between Christ, His person and works, and those who carry out the action in time and place. Such an action of sacrifice must, of necessity, be regarded as a propitiatory sacrifice, which seeks to placate God's wrath, take hold of the merits of Christ, win forgiveness, and make one right with God - on the basis of the human act of sacrificing. In this context it makes no significant difference whether one labours to prove that the sacrifice of the Mass is none other than the repetition, reappropriation, or representation of the one sacrifice of Christ Himself. In any case, the underlying misapprehension remains: it is by his own labours or by what he himself does in the celebration (under whatever terminology) that one seeks to appropriate, concretize, or realize the sacrifice of Christ and receive the fruits of His redemptive work.

Melanchthon is not willing on this account to disregard further consideration of sacrifice from his understanding of the chief service of the church. The problem is not indigenous to the concept of sacrifice itself, but rather represents the wholesale confusion of the necessary distinction, first, between *sacramentum* and *sacrificium*, and then between the two vastly different sorts of *sacrificii* of which the Scriptures speak. Some later historians have faulted Melanchthon for concentrating at all upon the ceremonial aspects of *sacramentum* and

sacrificium,[32] but to him this is the reasonable starting point, for both are actions involving ceremonies. A *sacramentum* is a ceremony or work in which "God presents to us that which the attached promise offer,"[33] for there are ceremonies involved: bread and wine are placed upon the altar, God consecrates and blesses them, and communicants come forward, etc.

Sacrificium, on the other hand, denotes a ceremony or work which is rendered to God in order to show Him that honour which is due Him. All sacrifices fall into one of two categories: the *sacrificium propitiatorium* - "id est, opus satisfactorium pro culpa et poena"—which makes satisfaction and expiation for guilt and punishment.[34] Within this category are included only the one truly propitious sacrifice which Christ Himself has offered and the acknowledged antitypes of that sacrifice which were offered under the provisions of the Law.[35] There are and can be no other expiatory sacrifice than that of Christ.[36] Now on the basis of Christ's propitiatory sacrifice, His people offer the *sacrificium eucharistikon*—the so-called eucharistic sacrifice, which is not restricted to the celebration of the Sacrament of the Altar,[37] but encompasses and gives character to the whole life of the Christian. This new life is itself a sacrifice of praise, including the proclamation of the Gospel, faith, prayer, thanksgiving, confession, the afflictions of the saints, all the good works of God's people, the righteousness of faith (which believes that by the sufferings and death of our Lord we have been reconciled with God).[38] This is the worship brought by those who have already been reconciled by the sacrifice of Christ; it is the worship of the "holy priesthood" of which St. Peter speaks in I Peter 2, and the "living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, your reasonable worship" of which St. Paul speaks in Romans 12:1.[39]

This eucharistic sacrifice is the worship which faith alone can offer: it is the *cultus novi testamenti,* "worship of the New Testament" (as distinguished from the Levitical sacrifices of the Old Covenant),[40] which consists in the righteousness of faith in the heart and the fruits of faith (*iustitia fidei in corde et fructus fidei*. This is what was meant by Malachi (1:11) when he spoke of the offering of incense and a pure sacrifice, for the name of the Lord is magnified ". . . through the proclamation of the Gospel, which makes known the name of Christ and the Father's mercy promised in Christ. The proclamation of the Gospel produces faith in those who accept it. They call upon God, they give thanks to God, they bear afflictions in confession, they do good works for the glory of Christ."[41] All this must be included in the "daily sacrifice," and not just the celebration of the Mass understood as a ceremony validly performed:

> Our opponents always apply the term "sacrifice" only to the ceremony. They omit the proclamation of the Gospel, faith, prayer, and things like that, though it was for these that the ceremony was instituted . . .[42] We are perfectly willing for the Mass to be understood as a daily sacrifice, provided this means the whole Mass, the ceremony and also the proclamation of the Gospel, faith, prayer, and thanksgiving.[43]

It is these together - and not simply the outward ceremonies - which represent the true *anamnesis*:

> . . . the commemoration is the real daily sacrifice, the proclamation and the faith which truly believes that by the death of Christ God has been reconciled. There must be a drink offering, namely, the effect of the proclamation, as we are sanctified, put to death, and made alive when the Gospel sprinkles us with the blood. There must also be an offering in thanksgiving, confession, and affliction.[44]

Melanchthon sees strong evidence for the evangelical understanding of sacrifice in the writings of the ancient Fathers. There is, of course, no mention of merit *ex opere operato* in the Western Church before the Franciscan Schoolmen, and the concept does not appear in the Eastern Church at all - until the development of the "theology of convergence" by which some post-Reformation Eastern theologians came to understand their own theology in Western, quite alien terms.[45] Melanchthon finds further evidence in the name by which the Mass is known in the East, *leiturgia*, "liturgy"—that is, a public service of and for the whole community.[46] Reference is made as well to the eucharistic liturgy of the Eastern Church, that of Chrysostomos.

> The Greek canon also says much about an offering; but it clearly shows that it is not talking about the body and blood of the Lord in particular, but about the whole service, about the prayers and thanksgivings. This is what it says: "And make us worthy to come to offer Thee entreaties and supplications and bloodless sacrifices for all the people." Properly understood, this is not offensive. It prays that we might be worthy to offer prayers and supplications and bloodless sacrifices for the people. It calls even prayers "bloodless sacrifices." So it says a little later: "We offer Thee this reasonable and bloodless sacrifice." It is a misinterpretation to translate this as "reasonable victim" and apply it to the body of Christ itself. For the canon is talking about the whole service; and by "reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1) Paul meant the service of the

> mind, fear, faith, prayer, thanksgiving, and the like, in opposition to a theory of *ex opere operato*.[47]

In a subsequent passage, Malanchthon notes that the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom offers thanksgivings for the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles long dead, but only in the form of a thanksgiving, and not as a satisfactionary sacrifice.[48] The commemoration of the departed in the form of a thanksgiving is not in itself objectionable. What is forbidden is the notion that the Eucharist can or should be offered on behalf of the dead as an *ex opere operato* performance.

We must admit that we face difficulties when we attempt to determine whether Melanchthon was right, or even entirely fair, in his understanding of the concept of sacrifice in the Eastern Church. Few of us have ever taken in hand the Greek text of the *anaphorae* of Chrysostomos and Basileus. Modern translations and interpretations are often coloured by the theological stance of those who produce them. In addition, the flowery and symbolic language and images of the Easterners is sometimes rather inexact, and stands in sharp contrast to the terse directness of the Western tradition.[49] The language of Chrysostomos on sacrifice and priesthood is itself colourful and varies. One may quote first from his *Treatise on the Priesthood* (II,4):

> But if any one should examine the things which belong to the dispensation of grace, he will find that, small as they are, yet are they fearful and full of awe, and that what was spoken concerning the law is true in this case also, that "what has been made glorious hath no glory in this respect by reason of that glory which excelleth" (2 Cor. 3:10). For when you see the Lord sacrificed, and laid upon the altar, and the priest standing and praying over the victim, and all the worshippers empurpled with that precious blood, can you then think that you are still among men, and standing on the earth? Are you not, on the contrary, immediately translated to Heaven, where, casting out every fleshly thought, you contemplate with disembodied spirit and pure reason the things which are in Heaven?[50]

But one must balance this statement with the following passage from *Homily XVII* (on Hebrews):

> What then? Do we make sacrifice every day? We certainly do, but be making a memorial of His death. And this memorial is one, not many. Why? Because the sacrifice was offered once, for all, as that great sacrifice was in the Holy of Holies. This is a figure of that great sacrifice, as that was of this: for we do not offer one victim today and another tomorrow, but always the

same: wherefore the sacrifice if one. Well, then, as He is offered in many places, are there not many Christs? Not at all. Everywhere there is one Christ, complete both in this world and in the other, one body. As then, though offered in many places, He is but one body, so is there but one sacrifice. Our High Priest is He who offers the sacrifice which cleanses us. We offer that now which was offered then: which is indeed inconsumable. This takes place now, for a memorial of what took place then. "Do this," said He, "for My memorial." We do not then offer a different sacrifice, as the high priest formerly did, but always the same, or *rather we celebrate a memorial of a sacrifice.*

Again, Chrysostomos says in *Homily LXXXII* (on Matthew):

The works set before us are not of man's power. He that then did things at that supper, this same now also works them. We occupy the place of servants. He who sanctified and changed them is the same. . .This table is the same as that, and has nothing less. For it is not so that Christ wrought that, and man this, but he does this too. This is that upper chamber, where they were then; and hence they went forth unto the Mount of Olives. Let us also go out unto the hands of the poor, for this spot is the Mount of Olives. For the multitude of the poor are olive-trees planted in the house of God, dropping the oil, which is profitable for us, there, which the five virgins had, and the others that had not received perished thereby. Having received this, let us enter in, that with bright lamps we may meet the bridegroom; having received this, let us go forth hence.

In *Homily XLVI* (on John) Chrysostomos speaks as follows:

. . . In order that we may become of His body, not in desire only, but also in very fact, let us become commingled with that body. This, in truth, takes place by means of the food which He has given us as a gift, because He desired to prove the love which He had for us. It is for this reason that He has shared Himself with us and has brought His body down to our level, namely, that we might be one with Him as the body is joined with the dead, This, in truth, is characteristic of those who greatly love . . . The blood which we receive by way of food is not immediately a source of nourishment, but goes through some other stage first; this is not so with this blood, for it at once refreshes the soul and instills a certain great power in it. This blood, when worthily received, drives away demons and puts them at a distance from us, and even summons to us angels

> and the Lord of angels. Where they see the blood of the Lord, demons flee, while angels gather. This blood, poured out in abundance, has washed the whole world clean. The blessed Paul has uttered many truths about this blood in the Epistle to the Hebrews. This blood has purified the sanctuary and the holy of holies.[51]

George Guenter Blum notes: "Christ is not simply the Institutor of the first Holy Supper, but He is as well the author and minister of every single Supper which the Church celebrates. We find countless witnesses to this point of view in Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Athanasius. In most cases the sacrificial character of the Eucharist is taken for granted by them."[52] Characteristic is the statement of Theophilos of Antioch: "Christ Himself remains both priest and offering, bringer of the gift and content of the gift, distributor and distributed."[53] The words of Chrysostomos, which we have quoted from *Homily LXXXII* represent perhaps the highpoint of this Christocentric tradition which is evident also in the homilies of Aphrahat and Ephraem the Syrian, and the Antiochean School.

What is clear in all this is that the sacrificial character is shaped and determined by the larger concept of the gift of communion, whereas the medieval development against which Melanchthon argues does not concentrate upon the gift of communion at all. Actually, to this medieval mindset, the act of communion is simply a pious, optional exercise. The words of Albertus Magnus set the tone of this development: "There is not only a representative (*repraesentativa*), but a real immolation."[54] Where this is the primary purpose for the celebration of the Mass, communion must of necessity recede into the background.[55] But where and to the extent that the Eastern Churches have retained or returned to the primary emphasis which we have seen in Chrysostomos himself - at least with regard to the centrality of the gift of communion - we find an emphasis which is congruent with the conception of which Melanchthon speaks.[56]

One must now ask whether and to what extent the Melanchthonian motif of eucharistic sacrifice has influenced Lutheran thought. Leaders of American Lutheranism, meeting a decade ago with representatives of the Roman church, seem to have given the impression that there was little done to develop the concept of *sacrificium eucharistikon,* outside of the ill-starred *Liber Ratisbonesis* of 1541:

> (i) [the eucharistic sacrifice] . . . is the church's ever-renewed presentation, (*repraesentativa*) *nomine,* of the one sacrifice, which can never be repeated, but has an

eternal efficacy, and still avails for those who in faith show it forth before God.

(ii) It is the church's self-oblation to God, as Christ's mystical body; in thankfulness for the sacrifice of the cross, whereby alone man is saved from perdition, the church dedicates herself to God. "And since she reaches out her branches to the past, the present, and the future, and includes among her members not only those who now live by faith, but also those who have passed away in the sign of faith; therefore, when the church, in this supreme oblation which she makes through the outward ministry, calls to mind how Christ once died that he might be the Lord of dead and living, then she does not divide herself, but rather gathers herself, as it were, into one, and remembers not only those there present, but also other brethren and sisters who are fallen asleep in the Lord, but not yet fully purified; and she testifies that in this oblation she intends the unity of Christ's mystical body."

(iii) It is a sacrifice of praise.

(iv) It includes the material offerings of bread and wine and other gifts to the poor; "For it is fitting that the people should not only in word dedicate themselves to God, but also testify by some external token that they wholly give themselves to God."[57]

This irenic document was doomed to be regarded as unacceptable to either Lutheran or papist, particularly because of the total lack of precision in article ii. Here Melanchthon's terms of the evangelical understanding of eucharistic sacrifice are clearly violated. More important, however, are two works produced in the second generation of Lutheran theologians: the treatise *De Sacrificiis* by David Chytraeus (1569), which treats worship at least in passing, and Part II of Martin Chemnitz' *Examen Concilii Tridentini* (1578). Chemnitz examines and criticizes the chapters and canons of the Council of Trent concerning the sacrifice of the Mass and the concept of sacrifice in particular.

Concerning the word *sacrificium*, Chemnitz notes that in the Old Testament there were external and visible sacrifices of various kinds, differing according to the material offered: animal sacrifices were termed "victims;" sacrifices of foods (bread, wheat, salt, etc.) were "immolations;" liquids (wine and oil) were "libations." A further distinction concerned the manner and purpose of the particular sacrifice: sacrifices relating to the sabbath, propitiation (for sins), peace, profession of faith, *et al.* Following Augustine, Chemnitz differentiates

also on the basis of significance; most significant is the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. Also of great importance are the spiritual sacrifices offered by the faithful. Further, following the apostolic example, one may classify separately (1) the sufferings of Christ (Eph. 5 and Hebrews), (2) the Gospel ministry (Rom. 15), (3) the conversion of the heathen and spread of the Gospel (Rom. 15; Phil. 2), (4) prayer (Hebrews 5; Rev. 5,8), (5) the sacrifice of praise or the action of giving thanks to God (Heb. 13), (6) alms-giving for the poor and the support of the ministry (Heb. 13; Phil. 4), (7) mortification of the old, evil flesh and consecration of oneself to God, in order to die to the world and live to God (Rom. 12), and (8) the whole worship of Christians in proclaiming the goodness of God, turning away from sin, and rendering the new obedience. "A true sacrifice is every work by which a holy fellowship cleaves to God and for His sake seeks the welfare of the neighbour" (*cf.* Augustine, *Civitas Dei*, X,5,6). "The true sacrifices consist in the love of God and the neighbour" (*Civitas Dei*, X, 5).[58]

Under the title "In what sense, in accordance with Scripture, one may correctly use the term sacrifice of worship" (*Quo sensu actio liturgiae, juxta scripturam, recte possit sacrificium appellari*), Chemnitz notes the valid senses in which one may speak of sacrifices in connection with Christian worship. Seven senses are adduced: (1) Because in the *synaxis* the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures are read and explained, so that the death of Christ is proclaimed and the plan from the Word of God concerning the causes and benefits of the sufferings of Christ, the Mass may in this sense be called a sacrifice (Rom. 15; Phil. 2; I Peter 2). This is distinguished from the papist sacrifice which is murmurred in secret, inarticulately, or in a foreign language. (2) In the administration of the Lord's Supper, the praises of God are celebrated, spoken, and chanted. Scriptures themselves bear witness to the sacrifice of praises in Hebrews 13 and Psalms 50. This concept stands over against the papist notions set down in Canon II of the Council. (3) On account of public prayers and the giving of thanks in common, it is possible, in accordance with the Scriptures, to call the Mass a sacrifice. The Tridentine Council does not admit such a sense. (4) Because in the celebration of the Lord's Supper it was always customary to contribute alms to the poor, it is possible for this reason to term the whole action a sacrifice. Again, this is not the sense in which the papists use the term. (5) In the *synaxis*, the whole man (*totus homo*) consecrates himself to God and puts this consecration into practice, so that the people form a holy fellowship which cleaves to God. Where the Lord's Supper is properly celebrated, repentance and faith are put to work and love for God and one's neighbour are enkindled. If, for

this cause, the Mass is called a sacrifice, and the matter is properly explained, then there is nothing alien to the Scriptures in such a designation. It is not for such an understanding of the term that the papists contend. (6) The blessing or consecration of the Eucharist is the work of the ministers of the Gospel. In Romans 15, Paul calls the whole of the Gospel ministry (*totum ministerium Evangelii*) a sacrifice. In this sense, the term can be admitted. (7) The distribution and participation, or communion of the Eucharist, which is in commemoration of the one sacrifice of Christ. Where the Victim who was once offered upon the cross for our sins is given and received, this too may be called a sacrifice, although the Scriptures do not use the term in this sense. The papists, however, expressly distinguish the sacrifice from the distribution and participation in the Eucharist. Groppius was ill received when, in the session of the Council, he asserted that the communion is of the susbtance of the sacrifice of the Mass.[59]

Under Article VIII, Chemnitz enumerates at length the use of the term "sacrifice" by the Ancient Fathers, stating that it is clearly false to say that the Fathers used the term as the papists use it now. (1) In the early Church it was customary that at the celebration of the Eucharist bread and wine and other gifts should be offered for the use of the ministers and the poor, and from this some bread and wine was taken to be consecrated in the Supper. (2) The public fellowship and solemn prayers of the whole assembly (as prescribed in I Timothy 2) were also customarily regarded as a part of the action of the Supper. Such prayers of the faithful were called sacrifices. (3) The term "sacrifice" was used to speak of praises and thanksgivings for the benefactions of God. (4) Because in the Supper the death of the Lord is proclaimed (as Paul says), there was always public preaching in the Eucharist. Such is termed sacrifice. (5) The pious exercises which surround the celebration, which Peter calls spiritual sacrifices (including repentance, faith, hope, patience, love, and good works) were called sacrifices. Faith, which is, of course, the principal thing in the celebration of the Lord's Supper (*in usus coena Dominae*) is expressly called a sacrifice in Philippians 2. Irenaeus lists pure thoughts, faith without hypocrisy, firm hope, fervent love mercy, obedience, righteousness, good works, and thanksgiving as sacrifices. (6) The whole Church and individual believers dedicate themselves, in the proper use of the Lord's Supper, in body and soul. They consecrate and dedicate themselves to the Lord, and for His sake to their neighbour as well (Augustine, *Civitas Dei*, X). All these the Fathers properly called sacrifices and oblations.[60]

Chemnitz allows, indeed, that even the administration or celebration of the Eucharist (i.e., its sanctification, con-

secration, and distribution) was called *sacrificium* by the Fathers. Dionysius called it *hierourgian* ("priestly service"), because it is a sacred action. The word *hierourgein* was applied to the celebrant, because he does what Christ did at the first Supper. But here *hierourgia* is not understood in the papist sense. Quotations follow from Cyprian, Cyril, Augustine, Chrysostomos, and Theophylactos.

Finally, insists Chemnitz, the term *sacrificium* must never be allowed to obscure the correct doctorine and use of the Supper, for whereas a sacrifice is something we offer or give to God, the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ in order that, as a sacrament, it should be offered to us and granted to us, applying and sealing the pledge of Christ's Body and Blood and the merits of His passion, and that what He offers and gives us should be accepted by us in faith.[61]

Chemnitz' treatment of the term *sacrificium* as used in connention with the Eucharist is surely the most exhausive in the history of Lutheran theology. It is not correct, however, to imagine that the later dogmaticians avoided the use of the term and concept. Quensted writes as follows:

> The Eucharist is not an external, visible, and propitiatory sacrifice in the proper sense. Nor is it a procurer of all kinds of benefits, in which the Body and Blood of Christ are truly and literally offered to God under the visible form of bread and wine; but it is only a comemoration of the propitiatory sacrifice once offered by Christ upon the altar of the cross.

Hollazius makes these observations:

> The word sacrifice may be used either literally or figuratively. Figuratively, it is used 1) for every act which is done that we may cleave to God in holy fellowship, having in view the end that we may be truly happy. 2) For the worship of the New Testament and the preaching of the Gospel (Rom. 15:16; Phil. 2:17). 3) For kindness and the works of charity toward our neighbour (Phil. 4:8; Heb. 13:16). 4) For prayers and giving of thanks to God (Heb. 13:15; Rev. 5:8).
>
> . . . We do not deny that the Mass, or the celebration of the Eucharist may be figuratively called a sacrifice, because 1) it is a work which is done that we may cleave to God in holy fellowship. 2) It is not the least part of the worship of the New Testament. 3) Formerly, when the Eucharist was celebrated, gifts were usually offered which fell to the use of the ministers of the Church and of the poor. 4) The administration of the Holy Supper was joined with prayers and the giving of thanks. 5) It was instituted in memory of the sacrifice of Christ . . . offered upon the altar of the cross.

> materially and considered formally. It we view it *materially,* in the Eucharist the sacrifice is the same in number as that which was upon the cross; or, in other words, the object and the substance are just the same; that is, the victim is the same as that offered on the cross. But if we consider the sacrifice *formally,* of as the act of sacrificing, then, although the victim if one and the same, yet the act or the immolation which takes place in the Eucharist, is not the same as that which took place upon the cross. For upon the cross the oblation was made through the true suffering and death of an immolated living subject, without which there could not in any way be a sacrifice, properly speaking; in the Eucharist, however the oblation is made through prayers and through the commemoration of the death or of the sacrifice which was offered on the cross.[62]

The development of the argument—first by Martin Chemnitz and then, after more than a century, by David Hollazius—is not incongruent, but clearly supplementary, to the position of Melanchthon in Article XXIV of the Apology.

To move abruptly to the present day, two contemporary Lutheran scholars command our attention. The first is Peter Brunner, professor at Heidelberg, whose lengthy and detailed essay, *Zur Lehre vom Gottesdienst der im Name Jesu versammelten Gemeinde* (published in the English as *Worship in the Name of Jesus*), appeared in 1954 in the series *Leiturgia. Handbuch des evangelischen Gottesdienstes.* This essay represents perhaps the first attempt at a comprehensive theological study of the place of worship in the life of the church. Brunner's earlier monograph, *Das Wesen des kirchlichen Gottesdienstes* (1952),[63] seeks to explicate what Brunner regards as two interrelated aspects of the liturgy. First God speaks to us through His Holy Word, and then we reciprocally speak to Him through prayers and hymns and other acts of worship. Christ abides in the midst of His people as the Servant who gives Himself to us in His Word and Supper. And, in turn, we are enabled to serve Him as Lord of all Lords and King of all Kings. First God serves us - the worship service is *sacramentum.* But now we are enabled to serve Him - by His good pleasure the worship service is also *sacrificium.* These two aspects interpenetrate. The sermon stands as sacrament (the giving of the Word) and also as sacrifice (the giving of praise). The Gospel is prayerfully proclaimed and prayerfully received. The Supper is prayerfully celebrated and received. Prayer is "the total dimension of the liturgy" (Doerne). The great acts of God are proclaimed in hymns of praise. Thus, the Supper is not only a Means of

Grace, but at the same time becomes a thankful proclamation of the death of the Lord until He comes. The service of God to us (*sacramentum*) establishes the foundation of our service to God (*sacrificium*). His Word calls forth our response; His gift initiates our devotion. First we must hear and receive—as God serves us through the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Supper—and then we must consider how we should serve Him through prayer, confession of faith, and hymns of praise.

Brunner should not be understood to mean that sacrament and sacrifice become interpenetrated in the sense that they become intermixed and indistinguishable. Nor is a new "third force" - a combination of sacrament and sacrifice - created. The sacramental motif and element clearly predominates, but it initiates and perpetuates a reciprocal relationship with our response. The concept is spelled out in some detail in the later essay, *Zur Lehre vom Gottesdienst,* where Brunner indicates that the distinction of which he speaks is built upon the differentiation which Melanchthon made between *sacramentum* and *sacrificium*, and Luther's concept of worship (as enunciated in the Sermon on the occasion of the dedication of the castle church at Torgau): ". . . that nothing else be done in it than that our dear Lord Himself talk to us through His Holy Word and that we, in turn, talk to Him in prayer and song of praise."[64] Brunner argues as follows:

> Melanchthon's elaborations have also shown us that one dare not divorce these two sides of worship activity and mechanically assign them to individual parts of worship. Rather, the two sides pervade each other in the individual acts of worship, as the examples of sermon and Holy Communion illustrated.

The reason for this pervasion will be seen in the following facts. In worship, the Lord becomes present to His congregation only by man's proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of Holy Communion in obedience to the command of institution. Proclamation of the gospel and celebration of the Holy Communion vouchsafe the congregation the presence of the Lord and of His gift of salvation, because they are carried out in conformity with Christ's divine mandate of institution. Therefore the people who proclaim the Gospel and administer Holy Communion must place their human acts into the institution context implicit in Christ's mandate. And in large measure this is done also by the invocation of the mighty name of Jesus. . . . It is particularly in the Lord's Supper that we find God's gift and the congregation's devotion united into an indissoluble union. This mutual pervasion of the two sides of the worship activity does not eliminate the right to differentiate between the acts whose principal function it is to convey God's

gift of salvation and such as pertain principally to the congregation's devotion. It may have become clear now why the sacramental side of worship never appears without the sacrificial side, and, conversely, how the sacrificial side may always include the sacramental element.[65]

Brunner accepts the confessional concept of the total celebration of the sacrament as the *anamnesis* in the proper sense, but asks whether in the "total dimension" of worship, it might not be proper to include, in the form of a eucharistic prayer, an express *anamnesis* which would declare before God just what the congregation is faithfully remembering. Such would not be necessary, answer Brunner's critics, as long as it is remembered that the real *anamnesis* is the receiving of the Supper.[66] Brunner does not agree. Where public worship is offered by the assembly, the interpenetration of sacramental and sacrificial elements is such that the *anamnesis* serves as a specifier - not as an act of unbelief, but as a confession of faith in which, in Brunner's words, ". . . the congregation, standing before God's throne, hides itself, as it were, in the Christ-event. With these words of prayer it appears before God's throne as a congregation which has been received into Christ's cross, resurrection, and ascent into heaven . . ."[67] Brunner wishes at the same time to avoid any notion of the congregation's self-offering to God or the imprecise notion that in some sense the congregation is offering God the sacrifice of the cross:

> Here we must behold the memorial of Christ's sacrifice in its character of immeasurable grace, free from any alloy. The presentation of our offering must not be intermingled with the anamnesis of Christ's offering. Where Christ's presentation of His sacrifice eventuates, it surely behooves us to silence any declaration of sacrifice on our part.[68]

With reference to the *epiclesis*, theologies which posit the work of the Holy Spirit, following an express invocation, as the completion of the work of Christ in the consecration, indicate an incorrect understanding of the consecratory power of the Word of Christ in the institution and a misunderstanding of the relationship between the Son and the Holy Spirit. Early Egyptian liturgies show that the original position of the invocation of the Holy Spirit was *before* the words of institution. If such a prayer is to be included in a Lutheran formula at all, it must come in this place, so as not to foster the erroneous views prevalent among Eastern theologians and in Anglican circles.[69]

Finally, Brunner offers guidelines by which a proper Eucharistic Prayer might be formulated with some degree of theological precision. (1) It is proper that the Words of Institution be spoken in the context of a prayer of thanksgiving

and praise. The proper eulogia, which begins at the Preface, ought to be continued following the *Sanctus*. (2) The Words of Institution represent the absolutely essential and divinely-enjoined element of the consecration of the bread and wine. They must predominate. They ought properly to be chanted. (3) A Prayer of Consecration before the *Verba* is both possible and appropriate. Patterns have come down to us from various Lutheran *Agenda*. (4) A spoken *anamnesis* may appropriately be joined to the *Verba*. (5) A prayer for proper reception ought to be expressed in the public prayer of the congregation. (6) The up-building of the Body of Christ and His return are fitting matter, in keeping with the tone of the prayer of thanksgiving. (7) The act of thanksgiving which begins with the Preface is best concluded with the Our Father, and followed by the *Pax* and *Agnus Dei*. The essay then concludes with a prayer patterned after Theodosius Harnack.[70]

The second writer to be mentioned is Regin Prenter, formerly of the theological faculty of the University of Aarhus, and now a parish pastor in Denmark. In the last decade Dr. Prenter was a leader in the gatherings of pastors and theologians which led up to the important meeting of several conservative, confessional, and pietist theologians at Sittensen, Germany. Previous to that he was known to Lutheran readers for his study of the place of the Holy Spirit in the theology of Martin Luther (*Spiritus Creator, Studier i Luthers Theologi* (1946; English translation, 1953) and related topics. In his book *Skabelse og Genlosnung* 1955; published in English as *Creation and Redemption*, 1966), Prenter presents an understanding of the Real Presence and the eucharistic sacrifice which is built principally upon Augustine's understanding of sacrifice as expressed in chapter 10 of his *City of God*. This concept Prenter believes to be quite in line with Luther's *Treatise on the New Testament, That is, the Holy Mass* (1520).

The Supper of the Lord, for Prenter, is the commemoration of Christ's own sacrifice of love on our behalf. It is the "constant presence in the church of the sacrifice of Calvary . . . in the Lord's Supper we bring not only communion elements and prayers as a sacrificial gift, but the memorial (*amanesis*) of His one sacrifice, which is the only gift of love we can bring."[71] The identity between the Body of Christ on the cross and the bread and wine on the altar cannot be explicated in terms of metaphysics. There is no physical transformation involved, and yet there is at the same time a real identity between the Body and Blood of Jesus and the bread and wine which are distributed as sacrificial gifts.[72] Thus, to participate in this Supper as a spiritual sacrifice of praise is the encounter of faith with Christ's perfect love, the source of all works of love.[73] Prenter draws this conclusion:

> The unity between our "spiritual" worship and the Lord's Supper means, then, that it is only in the sign of praise, where everything that we do dies with Christ on the cross, that our deeds and our death become true worship, the fruits of faith. Otherwise they will only be our performance, possibily our heroic suffering and death. In this sense, the Lord's Supper is the indispensable nourishment for our journey through death to life. And in this sense it is nourishment also for our resurrection body.[74]

Prenter views the confessional polemic against the papist sacrifice of the Mass as now out-dated. The confessors, he believes, spoke against the separation of the sacrifice of the Mass from the sacrifice of the cross, a separation which turns the Mass into a work which stands alongside Calvary as an act of atonement:

> The official Roman Catholic documents do not say that the sacrifice of Calvary is actually *repeated*. The sacrifice of the mass *represents* the once completed sacrifice. But when the sacrifice of the mass is spoken of as having a special atoning effect (for actual sins) alongside the sacrifice of Calvary, the sacrifice of the mass to a certain extent competes with the sacrifice of Calvary. However, the main point of the Reformation polemic is directed against the separation of the sacrifice of the mass from the act of communing, whereby the character of the mass as a work done by us is accentuated . . . the Reformation repudiated the notion that the sacrifice of the mass is an atoning sacrifice alongside the sacrifice at Calvary, a sacrifice for others besides those who actually commune, and which can thus bestow its benefits even upon others than those who in faith receive it.[75]

There is much of value in Prenter's work, but it cannot stand by itself as an adequate presentation of the Reformation position. Luther's 1520 *Treatise on the New Testament* provides a valid emphasis, but it does not stand in splendid isolation from Luther's own confessional statements and the other documents already mentioned. The primary note there was that ". . . we go to the sacrament for there we receive a great treasure, through and in which we obtain the forgiveness of sins."[76] Here Prenter's development finds its proper correction. One needs the Sacrament in order that the spiritual sacrifice might follow. "As in other matters pertaining to faith, love, and patience, it is not enough simply to teach and instruct, but there must also be daily exhortation, so on this subject we must be persistent in preaching, lest people become indifferent and bored."[77]

Like many Scandanavian and American Lutheran theologians, Prenter is impressed by, and has problems in coming to terms with, the persistent Anglican assertion that through the Supper, the Church presents Christ to the Father as the one, perfect sacrifice:

> The special and the general priesthoods meet in the high priestly office of Jesus Christ himself, and in the sacrificial prayers of the mass it is the congregation which is the presenting subject. Of special importance, furthermore, is the clear acknowledgement of the worthlessness of all sacrifices apart from the sacrifice of Jesus Christ himself.
>
> Even Lutheran dogmatics must therefore agree with Oliver C. Quick's view that the central idea of the original doctrine concerning the eucharistic sacrifice, namely, that through the remembrance (*anamnesis*) in the Lord's Supper the people present Christ as a prayer that he will incorporate them into his sacrifice, is neither unbiblical nor unevangelical. Only theories which make the sacrifice of the mass vicarious instead of representative, that is, theories which exempt man from sacrificing himself and which separate the sacrifice from communion, can be charged with being unbiblical and unevangelical.[7 8]

But here Prenter has, in fact, moved far beyond the position of the Reformers and dogmaticians. It is neither necessary nor even possible that the *sacrifice* of the cross be represented in any sense. What is necessary is that the fruits of Christ's redemptive work be *sacramentally* offered to the people in the Supper. Prenter has truncated the Lutheran polemic against the papist Mass. It is not a question of a supplicatory, derivative, representative, or applicatory sacrifice at all. There is and can be only one sacrifice: that which has already been offered upon the Cross. That offering cannot be re-presented in our own sacrificial action. The merit of Christ won for us in His passion and death need to be applied to us sacramentally, not sacrificially. This strongly sacramental emphasis obtains throughout the Reformation period.

Where, then, has this short study led us? The author hopes that it has led us, first, back to the altar where as pastors and communicants we will have a renewed appreciation of the treasure of the sacrament and the tradition of worship and praise which through the centuries has grown up around it. What the Lord gives is at all times the living center of everything. But what we do in response to His gift is not a matter without consequence. The heritage of our fathers gives us no grounds for such an indifference. "You can do nothing" is a description of how the Lord finds us, not of how He leaves us.

Such a study as this ought also to worship better; that is, to

exalt the sacramental gifts which are imparted to us by Word and Sacraments; to draw attention to these gifts and make them more and more the center of our life in Christ. "We should so preach that, of their own accord and without any law, the people will desire the sacrament and, as it were, compel us pastors to administer it to them," is as sound a piece of advice today as when Luther first gave it.[79] We ought further to develop the understanding of the new obedience, the priesthood of believers, and the spiritual sacrifice—theological areas which are occasionally picked over and served up half-baked on "Stewardship Sunday," but which are otherwise untouched. It is precisely here that the true understanding of eucharistic sacrifice surfaces. Here we must realize that there are really two quite different odours involved in the well-known "*Stink vom Opfern*": one is the putrid smell of our own self-righteousness, and the other is the savoury fragrance of the incense of our prayers and the giving of ourselves to God.

FOOTNOTES

1. Martin Luther, *Admonition Concerning the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord,* in *Luther's Works,* 38, p. 106.
2. Oliver K. Olson, "Contemporary Trends in Liturgy Viewed From the Perspective of Classical Lutheran Theology," *Lutheran Quarterly* 26 (May 1974), pp. 110-117. Olson provides a critique of the "phenomenological methodology" of modern liturgics, the pervading influence of Gregory Dix, and the predominating influence of Melanchthonianism-Calvinism in the productions of the I. L. C. W.
   Gottfried G. Krodel, "The Great Thanksgiving of the Inter-Lutheran Commision on Worship: It is the Christians' Supper and not the Lord's Supper," *The Cresset. Occasional Papers: I* (1976). Krodel submits the proposals of the I. L. C. W. to a minute examination and finds underlying them a strange mixture of Zwingli, Calvin, and Rome.
   See also Wilhelm Oesch, "Zur Krise des Opferbegriffs beim Abendmanl," in *Lutherischer Rundblick* 6 (1958) pp. 143-161; an overview of the work of Odo Casel, Peter Brunner, *et al.*
3. Hermann Sasse, *Der Schriftgrund der lutherischen Abendmahlslehre,* reprinted in *In Statu Confessionis. Gesammelte Aufsaetze von Hermann Sasse,* edited by Fr. W. Hopf (1975), pp. 101-114.
4. Vilmos Vajta, *Luther on Worship. An Interpretation* (E.T., 1958), chapter 2.
5. Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy,* has long represented the "norm" of modern liturgical studies, and sets down the so-called "classical four-action shape" of the liturgy (Offertory-Prayer-Fraction-Communion).
6. Yngve Brilioth, *Eucharistic Faith and Practice: Evangelical and Catholic,* p. 2
7. Brilioth, p. 13.
8. Brilioth, p. 15.
9. Helmut T. Lehmann, ed., *Meaning and Practice of the Lord's Supper;* a resume of contemporary thought, with essays by Robert P. Roth, Arthur Voobus, Theodore G. Tappert, Reginald W. Deitz, and Martin J. Heinecken.
10. Karl Berhard Ritter, *Die Eucharistische Feier. Die Liturgie der evangelischen Messe und des Predigtgottesdienstes. Herausgegeben in Verbindung mit der Evangelischen Michaelsbruederschaft* (1961). A very

complete liturgical document for Sunday and daily worship. Complete propers for all services, with new Introits, Collects, Graduals, Closing Pulpit Prayers, Closing Collects, proper Votums, four forms of the Eucharist, special services, and several essays are included.

11. Friedrich Lochner, *Der Hauptgottesdienst der evangelisch=lutherischen Kirche . . .* (1895), p. 235.
12. Lochner, p. 235, *vide* pp. 234-241.
13. Peter Brunner, *Worship in the Name of Jesus* (E.T., 1968), pp. 300 ff.
14. *Den Svenska Kyrko-Handboken* (Stadfaest av Konungen aar, 1942), p. 37.
15. *Alterbok for Den Norske Kirke* (Femte Opplag, 1966), p. 18.
16. Quoted from edition of *Agende fuer die evangelische Kirche der Union,* 1, pp. 126 f.
17. *Lutheran Hymnal, Authorized by the Lutheran Church of Australia* (1975).
18. *Luther's Words,* 35, pp. 99 f.
19. *L. W.,* 35, p. 100.
20. SMALCALD ARTICLES, II, 7.
21. LARGE CATECHISM, V, 7.
22. L. C., V, 30.
23. L. W., 37, p. 193.
24. L.W., 38, pp. 120-123.
25. AUGSBURG CONFESSION, XXIV, 8 (Latin Text).
26. See critique in Carl Fr. Wisloff, *Abendmahl und Messe. Die Kritik Luthers am Messopfer,* (G.T., 1969), pp. 54 ff.
27. APOLOGY OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION, XXIV, 9.
28. Reinhold Seeberg, *Text-book of the History of Doctrines,* 2, p. 129.
29. Bengt Haegglund, *History of Doctrine,* p. 193.
30. Francis J. Hall, *Dogmatic Theology,* 9: *The Sacraments,* pp. 321 ff. Hall presents the classical Anglo-Catholic position from the early days of the present century.
31. Seeberg, p. 129.
32. Wisloff, 1, p. 4.
33. Apol., XXIV, 18.
34. Apol., XXIV, 19.
35. Apol., XXIV, 24.
36. Apol., XXIV, 22
37. Apol., XXIV, 33
38. Apol., XXIV, 25, 30.
39. Apol., XXIV, 26.
40. Apol., XXIV, 27
41. Apol., XXIV, 32
42. Apol., XXIV, 34.
43. Apol., XXIV, 35.
44. Apol., XXIV, 38.
45. Alexander Schmemann, *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy,* pp. 320-333.
46. Apol., XXIV, 79f.
47. Apol., XXIV, 88.
48. Apol., XXIV, 93.
49. N. V. Gogol, *The Divine Liturgy of the Russian Orthdox Chruch,* tr. Rosemary Edmonds, provides an example of the symbolic interpretation of the Eastern Rite.
50. John Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood,* in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* First Series, 9, p. 46.
51. Quoted from *The Mass. Ancient Liturgies and Patristic Texts,* ed. Adalbert Hamman, pp. 93-114.
52. Georg Guenter Blum, "Eucharistie, Amt, und Opfer in der Alten Kirche. Eine Problemskizze" in *Oecumenica* (1966), p. 42.
53. Blum, p. 43.

54. Seeberg, p. 135.

55. "In reality, the importance of this change cannot be exaggerated. It shifted the centre of gravity of the service to the consecration, and produced the new ceremony of the Elevation, and in time the new practices of Exposition of the Sacrament and Benediction. It made the laity no longer in the old sense participants in the mystery, but spectators of a ritual performed in the sanctuary by the clergy and ministers. Thereby the sacramental principle itself was in large measure lost, though its external forms remained. The eucharist was no longer exhibited as the common offering of the members of the Body in union with the Head, but was perforce interpreted as the act of the priest celebrating Christ's sacrifice. In Augustine the Communion had been the consummation of the sacrifice; but in Acquinas the sacrifice is identified with the priestly action, and the communion of the people becomes an optional addition to it. Their part is no longer to share in the sacrifice, but to engage in acts of individual piety, while the priest performs his part. The worship of the early Church had been the common act of the Church of God, as of a Body with an organic structure, hierarchically graded; the congregation now become more and more an aggregation of unrelated individuals, met together for a religious service." A. J. Hebert, *Liturgy and Society*, p. 82.

56. Perhaps we find such a congruence in the words of a modern Russian Orthodox theologian, writing about the elevation of the gifts before the consecration: "It is the Eucharist of Christ that has brought us to heaven, for we have followed Him in His perfect love and ascension to His Father. But now, as we stand in the joyful Presence of God, we have nothing to offer Him but Christ, the Offering of all offerings, the Eucharist of all thanksgivings. He made it possible for us to recover the Eucharist as the one *essential* relationship with God, and He also filled it with its absolute content; with Himself, the Perfect and Divine man, the Perfect and Absolute Sacrifice. The Eucharist of Christ is thus fulfilled in Christ as Eucharist. HE IS THE ONE WHO OFFERS, AND THE ONE WHO IS BEING OFFERED . . . The Eucharistic Prayer, after it has resounded with the glorious sound of the *Sanctus*, becomes now *remembrance* (*anamnesis*) of Christ—of His Coming to us (. . . *who when He had* come . . .) and of the fulfillment in Him of the whole purpose of salvation (. . . *and fulfilled all the dispensation for us* . . .). His Life, His Death, His Resurrection: one movement of sacrifice, of love, of dedication to His Father and to men—this is the inexhaustible content of our Remembrance. All this is our Eucharist which we 'show forth' before God, which we 'remember' before Him. . . . Until now, the movement of the Eucharist was directed *from us to God.* It was the movement of our sacrifice. In the elements of bread and wine we were offering *ourselves* to God, sacrificing *our* life to Him. Yet from the beginning this offering was the Eucharist of Christ, the Priest and the Head of the new humanity, and thus Christ was our oblation. The bread and wine - symbols of our life and therefore of our spiritual sacrifice of ourselves to God - were also symbols of His oblation, of His Eucharist to God. We were uniting ourselves to Christ in His unique Ascension to Heaven, we were partakers of his Eucharist, being His Church, His Body, and His People. Now, because of Him and in Him, our sacrifice is *accepted.* Him Whom we have offered—Christ—we now receive—Christ. We put our life in Him and we receive His Life as gift. We have united ourselves to Christ, and now He unites Himself to us. The movement of the Eucharist is *reversed*; the sign of our love for God becomes the reality of His love for us. God in Christ gives Himself to us, making us partakers of His Kingdom." Alexander Schmemann, *Liturgy and Life: Christian Development through Liturgical Experience.* This statement appears to breath the same air that Augustine of Hippo was *breathing when he wrote City of God,* which has been influential in Lutheran thinking, as we shall see below.

57. Kent S. Knutson, Contemporary Lutheran Theology and the Eucharistic Sacrifice, in *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue, III. The Eucharist as Sacrifice,* p. 171. The quotation is from Brilioth, p. 139.
58. *Examen Concilii Tridentini per Martinum Chemnicium,* ed. F.R.E. Preuss (Berlin: Schlawitz, 1861), p. 383.
59. *Ibid.,* pp. 383f.
60. *Ibid.,* pp. 399f.
61. *Ibid.,* p. 403.
62. Heinrich Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church,* pp. 578f.
63. Peter Brunner, *Das Wesen des kirchlichen Gottesdienstes* (reprinted in *Pro Ecclesia,* 1: *Gesammelte Aufsaetze zur dogmatischen Theologie,* pp. 129-137).
64. Peter Brunner, *Worship in the Name of Jesus,* p. 123.
65. *Ibid.,* pp. 123f.
66. *Ibid.,* p. 125.
67. *Ibid.,* p. 308.
68. *Ibid.,* p. 308.
69. *Ibid.,* pp. 304-307.
70. *Ibid.,* pp. 309ff.
71. Regin Prenter, *Creation and Redemption,* p. 496.
72. *Ibid.,* p. 491.
73. *Ibid.,* p. 497.
74. *Ibid.,* p. 498.
75. *Ibid.,* pp. 503f.
76. L.C., V, 22.
77. L.C., V, 44.
78. Prenter, p. 504.
79. Small Catechism, Preface, 22.

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The Church in the New Testament

Bjarne W. Teigen

It is with a great deal of trepidation and humility that one approaches a discussion of the doctrine of the church in our midst. This is not only in view of all the study and discussion that has occurred over the past four centuries just in the Lutheran church, but also because it is a burning issue in the Lutheran church today. Besides, the topic is so vast and fraught with so many pitfalls that may cause misunderstanding that one is very sympathetic to Melanchton's exclamation in the Apology regarding what had been said about the church of God in the Augsburg Confession, "Nothing can be said so carefully that it can avoid misrepresentation."[1]

Perhaps I can begin by echoing the words of Martin Luther in his "Against Hanswurst," since the more I study the doctrine of the church the more apparent it is that the Reformer once again has revealed those profound exegetical insights which are characteristic of his writings. He says, "The church is a high, deep, hidden thing which one may neither perceive nor see, but must grasp only by faith, through baptism, sacrament, and work. Human doctrine, ceremonies, tonsures, long robes, miters, and all the pomp of propery only lead far away from it into hell — still less are the signs of the church. Naked children, men, women, farmers, citzens who possess no tonsures, miters, or priestly vestments also belong to the church."[2]

I

In the New Testament *ekklesia* is used three times in its secular sense, once as an assembly regularly called together (Acts 19:39) and twice in a more general way as an assemblage or a general gathering (Acts 19:32,41). But our Savior took this word and used it with a specifically new meaning as *His* church. It is the assembly that God Himself has created because flesh and blood cannot do it. Those who believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, are apart of this church, and this church will endure into eternity (Matt. 16:18).

St. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians sets forth the hidden honor, worth, and glory of this church. God has blessed His church with every possible spiritual blessing. He has even made known to us His hidden purpose, that according to His good

pleasure and grace He would in the fullness of time collect and bring together in Christ all the elect so that He would have one single, united family in Christ, both in heaven and on earth (Eph. 1:10). Jesus Christ, who was raised from the dead and whom God has seated at His own right hand far above all principalities and powers, has become the head of the church. This church is His body of which He is the head and which He fills with the full measure of His gifts and power (Eph. 1:17-23).

Hence the *ekklesia tou theou* refers to the totality of all the elect in heaven and earth, the assembly of holy people justified by faith in Christ, chosen by God from eternity, the true Israel of God which has heard the voice of the Shepherd (Eph. 3:14-21; Eph. 5:25-27,32). This is the essential nature of the church. It is a *reality* composed of individual people who are one body in Christ. In I Cor. 1:2 the church is on the one hand described as the single body of Christ, and on the other, it is described as being made up of individual persons, so that Hort rightly observes, "In I Cor. 1:2, the two aspects are coupled together by a bold disregard of grammar."[3] The synonyms which the New Testament employs for the concept of the church of God reveals this same double aspect of Christ's church. Paul says that we are fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, a family in which all members are equal, an holy temple in the Lord (Eph. 2:21,22). He further says to the Corinthians that they are the body of Christ, and members in particular (ICor. 12:27). Peter writes to the scattered Christians of Asia Minor that they are lively stones, a holy priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people (1 Peter 2:5-9). Although nowhere in the epistle has he addressed them as the *ekklesia tou theou,* yet by the use of these synonyms he has conveyed the concept to them. It is important to note this fact, for, as we shall see later, it carried great comfort for Luther, and it is an essential part of his doctrine of the church.

So then the *ekklesia tou theou* stands for the New Testament Israel, and this is the remarkable thing that the essence of the whole is in every part. Wherever two or three are gathered together in Jesus' name, there the *ekklesia tou theou* is with all its power, privileges, and blessings (Matt. 18:20).

Given this core of meaning of "God's people," i.e., those who have been grafted into Christ the Head through faith, the New Testament demonstrates a freedon of use of *ekklesia* and applies it in various ways. The Scriptures speak of the "churches of God," but it is still the one church of Jesus Christ, part of which is found in this place and part in that place. *Ekklesiá* refers to the believers here on earth which the dogmaticians called the church militant, *stricte dicta,* to distinguish it from the church triumphant (Acts 20:28; Rom. 16:4; I Cor. 10:32; I

Cor. 12:28; I Cor. 14:4,5; I Cor. 16:19; II Cor. 8:1). There is no essential difference between the church triumphant and the church militant since they are both the one church grafted into Christ the Head through faith. But Scripture sometimes focuses attention on believers here on earth who find themselves in various places and under various circumstances.

It is helpful to see how Scripture does this. At times Scripture refers to a part of the church militant in as narrow a sphere as a house gathering (Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philemon 2), which might come closest to what we today call "congregations" or "local congregations." At times the church of God is thought of as the community of Christians living in one city, possibly one congregation, or several congregations (Jersusalem, Acts 5:11; 8:1; 8:3, etc.; Cenchrea, Rom. 16:1; Corinth, I Cor. 1:1,2; Thessalonica, I Thess. 1:1). Sometimes Scripture is thinking of apart of the church militant in as wide a sphere as a region of three provinces (Acts 9:31). Similar to this usage of *ekklesia,* the Apostle Paul (Gal. 1:13, I Cor. 15:8, Phil. 3:6) asserts that he persecuted the church of God. Galatians 1:22,23 and Acts 26:9-11 inform us that Paul persecuted the *ekklesia* from Jerusalem throughout Judea and even to foreign cities. It is evident that Paul is referring to the Christian community which he persecuted before conversion. It is also evident that Paul uses the singular and plural of *ekklesia* interchangeably without any change in the essential meaning when he on the one hand speaks of the churches of Judea which he persecuted, and on the other hand he says of these churches that he persecuted the church of God. In 1 Corinthians 10:32, Paul uses the term *ekklesia tou theou* as equivalent to Christians in general, without any reference to their specific locality. And, finally, there are those "*ekklesia*" passages (1 Cor. 11:18; 14:19,28,35) which indicate that Paul here does not have reference to the entire community of believers in a city but to a portion of them, that is, only to those who are in actual attendance in a worship service.

One more fact remains to be noted from the New Tesatment, and that is that our Savior gathers His holy church through His Word, "My sheep hear my voice" (John 10:27). He promised to send His Holy Spirit to testify of Him, which He does through the word of the Gospel. The word is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16,17). The Gospel is with power and the Holy Ghost, and it is the Word which effectually works in us (I Thess. 1:5; 2:13). It is that incorruptible seed by which we are born again and become members of His body, which is the Church. Th Apostolic-Prophetic Word is the foundation of the church (Eph. 2:20). The only authority in the church is

Christ's Word and through this He creates, nourishes, and rules His church.

From this brief summary it is evident that the church is a high, deep, hidden thing that is grasped only by faith. The doctrine of the church is an article of faith. The kingdom of God does not come with observation (Luke 17:20). No human eye sees the church as the body of Christ, for only the Lord knows them that are His (II Tim. 2:19).

II

Before one jumps over fifteen centuries to see what Luther finds to be the Scriptural doctrine of the church of God, it might be helpful to see how the intervening centuries understood and confessed this doctrine. The doctrine of the church is confessed in both the Apostolic and Nicene Creeds. But just what was meant by these confessions? Briefly summarizing J. N. D. Kelly,[4] it is evident that there is considerable variance of opinions among the Early Church Fathers. But when the early Christians expressed their belief in the "Holy Church" (the "Old Roman Creed"), they meant to confess that they were the new Israel, the heirs of all the promised blessings of the Gospel. St. Justine says that the church is composed of all who believe in Jesus Christ and form a single soul, a single synagogue, a single church. The "Holy", of course, comes from Ephesians 5:27. Many of the Fathers emphasized that the church was founded before the world and embraces the elect in heaven as well as on earth. Others stressed its concrete character, that it was a world-wide society which accepted the doctrine of the prophets and the apostles. At first there did not seem to be much distinction between what has come to be called "the invisible church" and "the visible church." But there is no question that the term "Holy" originally had reference, not to its goodness of character or moral integrity, but rather to the fact that it was chosen by God and that He dwells in it in the person of the Holy Spirit. The church was the holy people of God, the redeemed of the Lord (Isaiah 62:11,12).

By the fifth century, Augustine in the West becomes absorbed in the relationship between the outward empirical society and the community of believers, while in the East there is not this concern, Chrysostom simply stating that the church is the bride which Christ has won for Himself at the price of His own blood.[5] The Donatist Controversy fought chiefly by Augustine, provoked deep thought and discussion over the problem of the external and the internal church. The Donatists, who were the rigorous pietists of the day, conceived of a church which is *de facto* holy, consisting exclusively of actually good men and women, which alone could be the *ecclesia catholica*, the im-

maculate bride of Christ. From this they drew the deduction that the validity of the sacraments depended upon the worthiness of those who administered them.

To counteract this idea, Augustine pointed out that the sacraments derive their validity from God, for no matter who plants and waters, God gives the increase. Further, for Augustine the church is the mystical body of Christ, the realm of Christ's bride. The life-principle of this mystical body is the Holy Spirit. Through faith in the incarnation and the cross men are brought into fellowship with the Mediator; love unites the members in a common hope that looks forward to the fullness of redemption. Also, to counteract the Donatists' point the Christ's bride must be without spot or wrinkle *now*, Augustine draws a careful distinction between the essential church composed of those who belong to Christ and the outward empirical church. And here is where the two terms "visible" and "invisible" come into play. For Augustine, the invisible church compasses those who belong to the "invisible fellowship of love," and it is to be found only in the historical Catholic Church, within whose boundaries there is a "mixed communion."

When Luther comes on the scene, the primary emphasis is on the visible character of the church. The church is so visible a society that one can find it in the bearers of the sacerdotal office under the one head, the vicar of Christ, the Pope at Rome. Luther scholars inform us that by about 1515 Luther had developed at least in embryo, his doctrine of the church in his first lectures on the Psalms, and that these ideas crystalized and clarified themselves by the time of the Leipzig Disputation.[6] Luther has given us several specific definitions of the church of God, which may well serve as a starting point for understanding all that he has written on this doctrine. In 1528, Luther appends to his "Great Confession Concerning Christ's Supper" his confession concerning all the Articles of Faith lest anyone should say after his death, "If Luther were living now, he would teach and hold this or that article differently" (LW 37,360). He declares, "I believe that there is one holy, Christian church on earth, i.e., the community or number or assembly of all Christians in all the world, the one bride of Christ, and His spiritual body of which He is the only head. . . . This Christian church exists not only in the realm of the Roman Church or Pope but in all the world, as the prophets foretold that the Gospel of Christ would spread through out the world, Psalm 2 [:8], Psalm 19 [:4]. Thus this Christian church is physically dispersed among Pope, Turks, Persians, Tartars, but spiritually gathered in one Gospel and faith under one head, i.e., Jesus Christ" (LW 37, 367). A more detailed examination of this

section will reveal that Luther puts under the Third Article, with the doctrine of the church, the doctrine that faith is created and sustained through the Word and the sacraments, "But because this grace would benefit no one if it remained so profoundly hidden and could not come to us, the Holy Spirit comes and gives Himself to us also wholly and completely. . . . He does this both inwardly and outwardly—inwardly by means of faith and other spiritual gifts, outwardly through the Gospel, baptism, and the sacrament of the altar, through which as through means or methods He comes to us and inculcates the sufferings of Christ for the benefit of our salvation" (LW 37, 366). Luther, by tying the Means of Grace to the doctrine of the church, has here set the pattern for all other definitions of the holy Christian church. In 1529 he follows the same pattern in the Small Catechism. Likewise, in the same year one sees this pattern in his Explanation in the Large Catechism. There he discusses the word "church" and "communion of saints," Luther explains that in the mother tongue *ekklesia* should be translated "a Christian congregation or assembly" (*Gemeine oder Sammlung*), or better still, "a holy Christian people" (*eine heilige Christenheit*; in Latin, *sancta Christianitas*). It is a community composed only of saints (LC II, 47-50). Luther summarizes by saying, "I believe that there is on earth a little holy flock or community of pure saints under one head, Christ. It is called together by the Holy Spirit in one faith, mind, and understanding. It possesses a variety of gifts, yet is united in love without sect or schism. Of this community I also am a part and member, a participant and co-partner in all the blessings it possesses. I was brought to it by the Holy Spirit and incorporated into it through the fact that I have heard and still hear God's Word which is the first step in entering it" (LC II,51,52).

Luther's more famous definition in the Smalcald Articles (1537) confesses the same truth, "Thank God, a seven-year-old child knows what the church is, namely, holy believers and sheep who hear the voice of the Shepherd" (SA III, XII, 2). Christ the Good Shepherd creates His church through His voice, the life-giving Gospel.

There are not two churches for Luther but only one, and it is always hidden (*occulta, abscondita*). While Luther may have said that the church is invisible, he apparently did not use the later terminology of the dogmaticians which speak of the invisible church and the visible church. Although this terminology may be understood correctly in line with Luther's teaching, it nevertheless has the tendency to cause one to think of two churches. But Luther's sentence, "The church is hidden away (*abscondita*); the saints are out of sight (*laten*), does not

mean for him that the church is only a platonic idea that cannot be grasped here on earth. Rather, it is a reality also here on earth, *but it is always hidden from sight.* It is under a mask, a shell, or form, and therefore the doctrine of the church is an article of faith. Even "the devil can cover it over with offences and divisions, so that you have to take offence at it. God, too, can conceal it behind faults and shortcomings of all kinds. . . . Christendom will not be known by sight but by faith. . . . A Christian is even hidden from himself; he does not see his holiness and virtue, but sees in himself nothing but unholiness and vice" (LW 35,410f).

The church is hidden under various forms but it dare not be identified with any specific empirical mode of appearance. The invisiblity of the church does not consist in this that it is not *in* the world, but rather that it is not part *of* the world, and hence it cannot be judged according to the criteria which the world employs. The church, indeed, is not without place and body; but, nevertheless, body and place are not the church, nor do they pertain to it. It is not necessary that it have a certain place and a certain form (*persona*)—although it does not exist without place and form, all things are indifferent and free; for the freedom of the spirit rules here.[8] The Church does indeed step forth in the world in a shell (*larva*), a mask (*persona*), and other clothing in which it can be heard, seen, and grasped; and these shells and masks are various but "none of them are the church."[9]

Luther could not give up this fundamental hiddeness of the church; one could not substitute sight for faith. and this was the fundamental error of the Roman view of the church. In his "On the Papacy of Rome" he declares, "There is not a single letter in Holy Scripture saying that such a church [i.e., "physical external Christendom"], where it is by itself, is instituted by God. . . . If they [i.e., Luther's opponents] can show me that a single letter of Scripture speaks of it, I will recant all my words. I know that they will not do me that favor" (LW 39, 70).

Now this church of God is created by His Word. Luther's faith in the church is part and parcel of his faith in the miraculous creative power of the Word of God. The Word is the "mark of the church." For Luther and the Reformers the term "mark (*nota*) denoted that which creates the church and then also that by which the church is recognized. The fundamental thesis of Luther is that the "church's only perpetual infallible mark has always been the Word."[10] To be sure, this Word which creates and nourishes faith is also connected with outward signs ("It is not the water that produces these effects but the Word of God connected with the water."), so that this

Word is administered in manifold ways; for "God is surpassingly rich in His grace" (SA III, IV). When Luther speaks of "the seven principal parts" by which the holy Christian people are recognized, he is only giving a more detailed explanation of how the *one* mark of the church, the *Word*, operates in real life (LW 41,148f). He is demonstrating in detail how the Word is used and what effects it produces in teaching, proclaiming, baptizing, consecrating, binding and loosing sinners, praying for others, judging doctrine. All this is teaching the Word of God.

From this it is evident that although Luther is intensely personal with regard to his conviction that a man is justified by *his* faith alone, he is never *private* in the sense that each individual can and should keep to himself without regard for the other members of the church of God. For him, too, the believer is to search out his fellow-believer because it is God's will. The believers use these marks of the church together in the manifold ways in which God has commanded them. We are reminded of how Luther prays in his great hymn, "O Holy Ghost, To Thee We Pray" (*Lutheran Hymnary* 39, 3):

Thou Fount of love, our hearts inspire
With the holy flame of Thy pure fire;
That in Christ united, One in all endeavor,
Loyal friendship plighted, We may walk together.
O have mercy Lord!

It would, however, be a distortion of Luther's doctrine of the church to hold that the office of the local pastor must be established before one could point to the church. Luther has the most high regard for the office of the public ministry and teaches that no one should preach publicly in the church or administer the sacraments without a regular call (AC XIV). But it is also evident with regard to the essential nature of the church and how it is constituted that Luther never included the ministry within the fundamental nature of the church.[11]

Organization and other sociological matters were secondary with Luther. In his Reformation sermon on the Pentecost Gospel at Leipzig (May 24, 1539), he demonstrates that the true church is created only through the Gospel, and it is there wherever any use is made by the individual of the Gospel in any form, "and it is also the true church, not cowls, tonsures, and long robes, of which the Word of God knows nothing, but rather where two or three are gathered together (Matt. 18:20), no matter whether it be on the ocean or the depths of the earth, if only they have before them the Word of God and believe and trust in the same, there is most certainly the real, ancient, true, apostolic church" (LW 51,303-312).[12]

Since it has sometimes been maintained that in view of

Matthew 18:16-17, "two or three" cannot be called a church, it should be noted that this would not be in harmony with Luther's understanding of the doctrine of the church of God. For Luther, even if the number is down to one or two, if they but have the Word which quickens and upholds them, they are the church. This is a common theme with Luther, and nowhere does he express this so clearly as in his commentary on Genesis 28:16-17 ("Surely the Lord is in this place. . . . This is none other than the house of God"): "It is sufficient for us to know that Jacob was strengthened here in his faith and promise, and that he saw the same Lord God, heard the same words, and in his dream saw the same church he had heard and seen at home. Yet he is alone here, and beside him there is no one else, in order that we may learn that God's church is where God's Word resounds, whether it is in the middle of Turkey, in the Papacy, or in Hell. For it is God's Word which establishes the church. He is the Lord over all places. Wherever the Word is heard, where Baptism, the Sacrament of the Altar, and Absolution are administered, there you must determine and conclude with certainty: 'Surely this is God's house; here heaven has been opened,' but just as the Word is not bound to any place, so the church is not bound to any place. One should not say: 'The chief Pontiff is at Rome. Therefore the church is there,' But where God speaks, where Jacob's ladder is, where the angels ascend and descend, there the church is. There the kingdom of heaven is opened. . . . Accordingly, this is what Jacob says: 'This place in which I am sleeping is the house and church of God.' Here God Himself has set up a pulpit and He Himself is the first to preach about the descendants and about the uninterrupted continuance of the church. But Jacob, together with the descendants in his loins, is the listener. Likewise the angels in heaven. For if there is even one person who hears the Word together with the angels who are present along with him, it is sufficient. . . . Jacob saw this, his descendants also saw it, we too and all who are now in the church or will be in the church after us see it, namely, that church is the house of God which leads from earth to heaven. The place of the church is in the temple, in the school, in the house, in the bedchamber. Wherever two or three gather in the name of Christ, there God dwells (Matt. 18:20). Indeed, if anyone speaks with himself and meditates on the Word, God is present there with the angels; and he works and speaks in such a way that the entrance into the kingdom of heaven is open." (LW 5, 244-251).[13]

But one more aspect of Luther's doctrine of the church must be examined before we move to a consideration of the Lutheran Confessions. The New Testament does apply *ekklesia* to

communities which are not composed only of those who have been grafted into Christ by faith. This raises the question as to whether there are two distinct churches or whether something purely external is an essential part of the church. Luther recognized from the very beginning that this posed a problem which in the course of centuries had led to views such as had been developed in the Roman church. In his commentary on Galatians he answers "an important question" which Jerome had raised a thousand years earlier, "Why does Paul call 'churches' those that were not churches?" Luther not only picks up the example of the Galatian church which had within it those who had been bewitched by the doctrines of men, but he uses also the notorious example of the Corinthians who, although they had been enriched in Christ, had among them many who "had been perverted by false prophets and did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, etc. So today, we still call the church of Rome holy and all its sees holy, even though they have been undermined and their ministers are ungodly." Luther's answer to this vexing question reveals his profound understanding of God's revealed will. "I reply: When Paul calls them the 'churches of Galatia,' he is employing synecdoche, a very common practice in the Scriptures. . . . Even if the Church is in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, as St. Paul says to the Philippians (2:15), and even if it is surrounded by wolves and robbers, that is, spiritual tyrants, it is still the church. . . . Therefore even though the Galatians had been led astray, Baptism, the Word, and even the name of Christ continued among them. . . . Wherever the substance of the Word and sacrements abides, therefore, the holy church is present even though the Anti-Christ may reign there" (LW 26, 24.25). By way of explanation, for Luther a synecdoche was found not only in Holy Scripture, but also in every common language; so we cannot do without it. At Marburg, when Oecolampadius wanted Luther to grant that the admission of the synecdoche in the word "cup" would mean that the words of institution are to be understood symbolically. Luther elaborates, "By synecdoche we speak of a containing vessel when we mean content, or the content when also including the vessel. But the content, or the content when also including the vessel. But the content is not done away with. The core is there, but it may be in a shell."[14] Such an understanding of the use of *ekklesia* is demanded by the text. Given its core meaning of the people of God, *ekklesia* has various applications in the New Testament. But it must again be noted that in the discussion of the doctrine of the church, Luther always gives priority to the creative power of the Word. The Word is the mother and the church is the daughter. To say that the church is over the Word is to say, "*puer est uber die muter.*"[15]

III

Three of Luther's definitions of *ekklesia tou theou* are included in the Book of Concord and are therefore confessionally binding on all Lutherans. But the Confessions also contain two other rather formal definitions of God's church. "Our churches also teach that one holy church is to continue forever. The church is the assembly of saints in which the Gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly" (AC VII,1). "In accordance with the Scriptures, therefore, we maintain that the church in the proper sense is the assembly of saints who truly believe the Gospel of Christ and who have the Holy Spirit" (Ap. VII,28). All these definitions agree with one another, so that it can be rightly said that Luther's doctrine of the church has been taken into the Book of Concord as the doctrine of Scripture.

The definitions in the Augsburg Confession and the Apology are similar to Luther's in that they assert that only the pure Gospel of Christ brings the church into existence and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. But there are two aspects of the church over which there is some dispute. Some hold that the church cannot be referred to as "invisible," since the terms "invisible" and "visible" are not found in the Confessions. Fagerberg, for example, says that "because of the Word and sacraments the church cannot be referred to as invisible. The Reformers were by no means ignorant of this term, and they were well aware of its many meanings. The fact that it is not used in the Confessions must be interpreted as a specific repudiation."[16] Another viewpoint, with a slightly different emphasis, asserts that in the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions *ekklesia* is used in a two-fold sense: (1) It denotes the *Una Sancta*, that is, the one Holy Christian Church consisting of the whole number of all true believers in Christ as their Savior; (2) Apart from this meaning, the Scriptures and the Confessions use *ekklesia* only to designate a local group, that is, Christians in a certain locality who regularly gather for public worship, for the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments, and to carry out other which a church is to do. The "Majority Report" of the 1948 Synodical Conference Interim Committee posed two questions, "1) What is a Christian congregation?; and 2) Is the local congregation a specific, divine institution, and is it the only divinely instituted unit in the church?" The authors of the report gave the answer that on the basis of Scripture and the Confessions they were compelled to the following conclusions, "a) That a congregation is a group of professing Christians who by God's command regularly assemble for worship (Col. 3:16) and are united for the

purpose of maintaining the ministry of the Word in their midst (Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:2; I Cor. 16:19; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5f; Matt. 18:17; I Cor. 11:20ff); and, b) That the congregation is the only divinely designated body or unit of the visible Church (I Cor. 16:19; Matt. 18:17; Acts 20:28).

To take up the first point, it may be quickly discerned that the terms "invisible" and "visible" are not used in the Book of Concord, but they are found among the later dogmaticians. It is the position of this paper that the dogmaticians, the Book of Concord, and the Luther are in doctrinal agreement on this point despite differing terminology. In this case, at least, that which we call a rose will smell as sweet as by any other name. But one wishes that especially the Latin dogmaticians had used more of the terminology that Luther used in presenting his doctrine of the church and not have confined themselves so completely to the terms "invisible" and "visible." We note, first, that in the Lutheran Confessions the true church is described as hidden under the cross (Ap. VII, 18) rather than being something external (SD XI, 50). But the key words for understanding that Luther's exegetical point regarding the synecdochical use was accepted into the Confessions is found in the two key phrases, *ecclesia proprie dicta* (Ap. VII,16,28), "precisely speaking" or "in the proper sense," and the term *ecclesia large dicta*, or *late dicta*, as also the Latin dogmaticians use the expression (Ap. VII, 10), that is, "broadly speaking." This is simply saying what Luther said when he answered Jerome's question by asserting that Paul is employing synecdoche when he calls the churches of Galatia "churches." Luther knew that the synecdochical use of a term is not as precise as it otherwise could be, but it still conveys the essential meaning, "that it is there, and is contained in it," as he said of the cup in the Lord's Supper. And in this use the Confessions agree with Luther that when it comes to defining the church precisely, "we must define that which is the living body of Christ and is the church in fact as well as in name" (Ap. VII,12).

Now it is, indeed, true that the Scriptures, Luther, and the Confessions must use *ekklesia* broadly-speaking because they are dealing with the church militant here on earth. The church is hidden under the *larvae* of specific people, as Luther writes to Amsdorf (1542), such as people in the marriage state, in political or domestic life, John, Peter, Luther, Amsdorf, etc., "but none of these are the church," which is neither Jew nor Greek but Christ alone.[18] Those in whom the Lord dwells by faith are neither ubiquitous nor illocal and, therefore, must be in a certain place. Hence, given its core meaning of "God's people," *ekklesia* has many applications in the New Testament

(see Part I). The term is likewise used in various broad ways in the Confessions. As previously noted, some have asserted that the Book of Concord knows only two meanings of *ekklesia,* the totality of the elect and the local congregation. Even, a cursory glance through the Confessions, however, will disprove this point of view. Hermann Sasse bluntly says, indeed, that local congregations did not exist at the time of the Reformation.[19] He means that self-contained, self-governing units as we know them did not exist at that time, since the division of the work of administering the Means of Grace, shepherding, exhorting, confessing, and condemning was administered through larger units. More recently Robert Preus has analyzed the use of *ekklesia* in the Confessions and has came to the conclusion that *ekklesia*, when used in the broad sense, refers to "territorial churches or groups of congregations."[20] The array of references to such phrases as "our churches teach with great unanimity" and "our churches condemn" which President Preus adduces it compelling evidence that *ekklesia* in a synecdochical sense is used most often of regional churches. This fact, of course, does not preclude the possibility that *ekklesia* may refer to other external units. For example, in the phrase appropriated by New Orleans Resolution 3-09, "the opinions of the erring party cannot be tolerated in the church of God" (SD, Rule and Norm, 9), it is evident that the "church" cannot refer to the church triumphant, which is beyond the travails of this life, nor even to the church militant *stricte dicta*, since that is also always without spot and wrinkle. The Confessions must be thinking of any and all external churches in the world that want to claim allegiance to Jesus Christ; never may they tolerate anything contrary to the Word of God. Similarly, in the summary of the Epitome the confessors speak of the "Ancient Church" (*primitiva ecclesia*) which formulated the first symbol, which "Church" included both the Eastern and the Western churches. When the confessors say that the "community of God" in every locality and every age has authority to change such ceremonies according to circumstances (Ep. X,4), they may be referring either to what we call a local congregation or to a regional church. The interesting thing here, however, is that the German has the singular (*die Gemein Gottes*) while the Latin has the plural (*ecclesiae Dei*), which would indicate that the singular and the plural are used interchangeable without any essential change in meaning, when *ekklesia* is used synecdochically. One cannot play off the singular against the plural as portraying an essential difference in meaning.

In the course of the history of Christianity, two theories regarding the church have developed; one we can conveniently call the macrocosmic theory and the other the microcosmic. The

first is the Roman Catholic and Anglican way of thinking, which holds that the Holy Catholic Church is a visible society with an unbroken line of institutionalized officers, regulations, and powers. The other theory, which we could term "Congregational-Baptist," asserts that the church is the local and visible congregation, united by a voluntary covenant and completely autonomous. Thinking big, or macrocosmically, as also the general ecumenical movement seems to do is to think of a great universal external church. Thinking small, or microcosmically, is to think of the church as a small external community, such as what we call a "local congregation."

But neither one of these theories is open to Lutherans, and this for two reasons. First, every definition of the *ekklesia tou theou* in the Confessions declares that the church is comprised of those who have been grafted into Christ by faith but are hidden from man's sight and are known only to the Lord. Secondly, since the presence of the church can be known only by its pure marks because the church is created only through the Gospel of God and not "any other gospel" (Gal. 1:8), it is recognized only by the "pure teaching of the teaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments in harmony with the Gospel of Christ" (Ap. VII,2). God gathers His eternal church out of the human race through His Holy Word (SD II, 50). We can see where the church is only by the use of and adherence to the "pure marks," and such adherence occurs both in what we call local congregations and in larger ecclesiastical bodies.

It is contrary to the Lutheran Confessions, therefore, to assert that a local congregation, or a regional church, or any other visible or external form, is the only divinely designated body or unit in the visible church. It is, of course, true that the temptation to do something like this is always strong. We all know how in Europe the territorial churches and the state churches with their consistories and their machinery tended to look upon themselves as divinely instituted external entities, when it was only *jure humano* that they existed to carry out the mutual work which, Christ had commanded in teaching and in applying the Law and the Gospel. But when the chips were down the Lutherans clearly confessed the truth of the Book of Concord. A famous example is the antithesis of Quenstedt against Bellarmine's Roman Catholic proposition that the church as the assembly of men is as visible and tangible as the assembly of Roman people, or the kingdom of Gaul, or the Republic of Venice.[21]

One also remembers that, in keeping straight the synecdochical use of *ekklesia*, the Latin dogmaticians not only operated with the terms *ecclesia stricte* and *late dicta*, but they

used such other terms as "particular church." With what we might call a pedantic meticulosity they define a "particular church" as "an assembly, not of all, but of some believers, called in a certain place to partake of salvation, and perserving in inner spiritual communion. A church is said to be particular in a two-fold sense, (a) with respect to time; (b) with respect to place. With respect to time, the church of the Old Testament is one, and the church of the New Testament another. With respect to place, one is collected by God throughout an entire kingdom; another, in a city, or even in a house."[22] The passages examined are in general those listed in Part I of this paper. But dogmaticians were careful not to say that any one kind of particular church is divinely instituted as the only designated body or unit of the visible church. And Lutherans will always have to let it go at that. As we get older and wiser we may hit on more effective ways to carry out the work of the church, but in every case we must remember that Christ alone rules His church, and He rules it through His Word alone. Whatever arrangements we make for administering the Means of Grace in all its aspects and under particular circumstances are *jure humano* in keeping with whatever rules the Lord has laid down for us in His Word. U. V. Koren, President of old Norwegian Synod, who was second to none in asserting the freedom of the general priesthood of believers and upholding the rights of the local congregation, said, "We must not make a mistake of what is God's institution. He has not directly instituted the local congregation. What God has instituted is what stands in the Third Article, that we believe 'a holy Christian church'. . . . It is of the highest importance that one recognizes the local congregation as a manifestation of the holy Christian church".[23] *To that surely we all can say "Amen."*

IV

This leads over to the doctrine of the Public Ministry, which is beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice it to say here that the author accepts without equivocation the statement of the Apology, "The church has the command to appoint ministers; to this we must subscribe wholeheartedly, for we know that God approves this ministry and is present in it" (Ap. XIII, 12). The Office of the Keys belongs to all Christians, and they are all to use this office as Christ's priests. But the Lord did set up an orderly way in which preaching and teaching was to take place. In other words, he set up the Office of the Public Ministry. Luther illustrates this truth in his sermon on the first Sunday after Easter (John 20:19-31): "Here the power of absolution is given to all Christians, although some, like the Pope, bishops, priests, and monks, have appropriated it to

themselves alone. They say publicly and shamelessly that this power is given to them alone and not to the laymen as well. But Christ is speaking here neither of priests nor monks. On the contrary, he says: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' This power is given to him who has the Holy Ghost, that is, to him who is a Christian. But who is a Christian? He who believes. He who believes has the Holy Ghost. Therefore every Christian has the power . . . . to retain or to remit sins. Now perhaps I shall hear the question: I may, then, hear confession, baptize, preach, administer the sacrament of the altar? No, St. Paul says: 'Let all things be done decently and in order' (I Cor. 14:40). If everybody wanted to hear confession, to baptize, to administer the sacraments, how unseemly that would be! Again, if everybody desired to preach, who would listen? If we were all to preach at the same time, what a confused chattering that would be, such as you now hear among the frogs. Therefore it should be thus: The congregation chooses a suitable person who administers the sacrament, preaches, hears confession, and baptizes. To be sure, all of us possess this power; but no one except him who was chosen by the congregation to do so should presume to practice it publicly. In private, I certainly may use this power. If, for instance, my neighbor comes and says: My friend, I am burdened in conscience, speak a word of absolution to me; then I am at liberty to do so. But *in private*, I say, this must be done. If he wanted to sit in the church, another man too, and we all wanted to hear confession, what rhyme or reason would there be in such conduct?"[24] I Corinthians 14:40 is evidently an important directive in Luther's thinking, although surely this passage is not the only one that treats of the doctrine of the public ministry.

Just as it is evident from the Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions that there is nowhere a special word of institution for the local congregation, so also there is nothing in Scripture to indicate that only the office of the local pastor is to be identified with the Office of the Public Ministry, and that other offices are merely "branchings off" from the local pastorate. It is, indeed, God's will that Christians jointly use the Means of Grace, spread the Gospel, and exhort and help one another by admonition from the Law and exhortation from the Gospel (Col. 3:16; Luke 11:28; Heb. 10:25; Matt. 28:18-20), but there is no divine command for any visible or external form of the *ekklesia tou theou*. Generally the most common way of carrying out most of the functions of the public ministry is through what we call the local congregation and its pastor. But it is clear that the Office of the Public Ministry can be carried out in various forms (Eph. 4:11f; I Cor. 12:28-30). There is the freedom here granted the church in I Corinthians 4:21-23.

But this is not to say that freedom can be turned to license, or that other divine mandates of the Lord can be disregarded. As a case in point, we may think of the celebration of the Lord's Supper at a pastoral conference. It is usually held in a local church, but it can take place in a college chapel or even at a summer camp. There surely is no dogmatic reason to say that the sacrament of the altar is being celebrated only by some power inherent in a local, visible congregation. What is demanded is that the work necessitated by the Office of the Public Ministry be not neglected; that there be true shepherding, true care of souls, and the ackowledgment that it is not our Supper but the Lord's Supper. The injunctions, especially of I Corinthians 10 and 11, dare not be set aside.

A standard Lutheran dogmatics book will summarize the Scriptural factors that need to be taken into consideration.[25] There is a double pastoral duty here to be exercised. "Timid, perturbed Christians, weak in faith, who are heartily terrified because of their many and great sins" (SD VII, 69), are to be encouraged and consoled. At the same time, there are those with whom one does not celebrate the Lord's Supper, since, unlike the preaching of the Gospel, which is intended for all men, the Lord's Supper is designated only for some people who have already come to faith. Here one thinks not primarily of those too young or mentally incapacitated to examine themselves, or those living in gross offensive sin; but rather of the fact that since altar fellowship is confession of unity of doctrine (I Cor. 10:16, 17), it is a fellowship in faith or church fellowship. Close communion must always be observed. One's confession is to be in harmony with the pure marks of the church. Luther is surely right when he speaks in his "Brief Confession Concerning the Holy Sacrament": "For it is certain that whoever does not rightly believe in one article of faith, or does not want to believe (after he has been admonished and instructed), he surely believes no article with an earnest and true faith. . . . For this reason we say that everything is to be believed completely and without exception, or nothing is to be believed. The Holy Spirit does not let Himself be divided or cut up so that He should let one point be taught and believed as trustworthy and another as false—except in the case where there are weak believers who are willing to let themselves be instructed and are not stubbornly opposing His truths. . . . It is characteristic of all heretics that they start by denying one article of the faith; after that, all the articles must suffer the same fate and they must all be denied, just as the ring, when it gets a crack or a chink, is totally worthless. And if a bell cracks at one place, it does not chime any more and is completely useless" (LW 38,307f.).

While there are surely evil men who bear the name of Lutheran and pious Roman Catholics who belong to Christ's church hidden under the outward forms, nevertheless the mandate for us in His Word is to administer the outward marks of the church in conformity with His holy will as we can best judge by adherence to and confession of these marks. Hence the Augsburg Confession mentions with approval Chrysostom's statement "that the priest stands daily at the altar inviting some to Communion and keeping others away" (AC XXIV, 36). Futhermore, the Augustana asserts that one function of the office of the public ministry is that of exclusion: "According to divine right, therefore, it is the office of the bishop to preach the Gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine and condemn doctrine that is contrary to the Gospel, and exclude from the Christian community the ungodly whose wicked conduct is manifest. All this is to be done not by human power but by God's Word alone. On this account parish ministers and churches are bound to be obedient to the bishops according to the saying of Christ in Luke 10:16, 'He who hears you hears me.'" (AC XXVIII, 21. 22).

These matters may seem onerous for a "now generation" who think that their freedom in Christ gives them liberty to do whatever they will and wherever and whenever they will. But not so for a confessional Lutheran. Luther surely must have been thinking of the Household of God in general, which includes all pastors and teachers, when he ended his Small Catechism with the words:

"Let each his lesson learn with care
And all the houselold well will fare."

FOOTNOTES

1. Ap. VII, 2, *The Book of Concord,* tr. by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959). Unless otherwise noted, all references to the Lutheran Confessions will be to this edition.
2. LW 41, p. 211. *Luther's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House). Unless otherwise noted, all references to Luther will be to this American edition.
3. F. J. A. Hort, *The Christian Ecclesia* (London: Macmillan, 1897), p. 113.
4. J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (New York: David McKay Co., 1973), pp. 155-160.
5. I am summarizing J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), pp. 400-417.
6. See Gordon Rupp, *The Righteousness of God, Luther Studies* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1953), p. 311.
7. Martin Luther, *Bondage of the Will,* trans. J. I. Packer and O. R. Johnson, (Westwood, New Jersey: Revell, 1958), p. 123.
8. WA 7, pp. 719, 720, "Quamquam Ecclesia in carne vivat, tamen non secundum vivat. Sicut enim Ecclesia sine esca et potu non est in hac vita, et tamen regum dei non est esca et potus. . . . Ita sine loco et corpore non

est Ecclesia, et tamen corpus et locus non sunt Ecclesia neque ad eam pertinent. . . . Non est necesse certum locum certamque personam habere, licet sine loco personaque esse non queat. Sed omnia sunt indifferentia et libera. . . . Libertas enim spiritus hic regnat."

9. Luther's letter to Amsdorf (1542), WA Br. 9 p. 610: " . . . in larva, persona, testa, putamine, et vestitu aliquo, in quo possit audiri, videri, comprehendi . . . larvae maritus, politicus, domesticus, Johannes, Petrus, Lutherus, Amsdorffius, etc., cum nihil horum sit Ecclesis, quae nec est Judeus nec Graecus. . . . Sed unus Christus." This feature of Luther's doctrine of the church is discussed in Rupp's, *The Righteousness*, etc., pp. 316-322; and in E. Thestrup Pedersen, *Luther Som Skriftfortolker—En Studie i Luther's Skriftsyn, Hermeneutik og Exegese* (Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag, Arnold Busck, 1959), pp. 29-44.
10. WA 25, P. 97, "Unica enim perpetua et infallibilis Ecclesiae nota semper fuit verbum." Cf. Ap. IV, 67, "One cannot deal with God or grasp Him except through the Word. Therefore justification takes place through the Word, as Paul says, Rom. 1:16 and Rom. 10:17."
11. Kostlin summarizes Luther correctly when he says, "And, however earnestly the constitution of the office by the congregation and the cherishing of the proper respect for it are insisted upon, it is still, according to Luther, possible for souls to be incorporated into Christ and the common body of His saints merely through the private use of the Word. Where the public preaching of the Gospel is entirely prohibited, as among the Turks and heathen and even under papal tyrants, there this *Private use of the Word is sufficient* for all essential purposes. Even in such places the Christian church truly exists. (Julius Kostlin, *The Theology of Luther* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1897), II, pp. 550-551).
12. Note Walther's use of this quotaion in his Pentecost sermon on John 14:23-31, "Die Wahre Kirche Jesus Christi Auf Erden, ein Werk des Heiligen Geistes, "*Festklange*" (Concordia Publishing House, 1892), pp. 288-301.
13. K. L. Schmidt arrives at the same conclusion that Luther did: "The decisive point is fellowship with Christ. Epigrammatically, a singl eindividual could be—and would have to be—the *ekklesia* if he has fellowship with Christ." Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. and trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1976), 3, p. 512.
14. See Hermann Sasse, *This Is My Body*, second ed. (Adelaide, Australia: Lutheran Publishing House, 1976), pp. 204 f., for Luther's explanation of synecdoche in the words of institution.
15. WA 17, I, p. 19.
16. Holsten Fagerberg, *A New Look At The Lutheran Confessions [1529-1537]*, tr. by Gene J. Lund (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House 1972), p. 258.
17. *Proceedings of the Fortieth Convention of the Ev. Luther. Synodical Conference of North America* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1949), p. 136 f. The Majority Report of the Synodical Conference Interim Committee seems to be following the paradigm of Dean J. H. C. Fritz (*Pastoral Theology*, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House: 1932, p. 24f.), who states that "the Christian congregation (*Ortsgemeinde*) by which and to which the pastor is called is a divine institution" (p. 24). By an *Ortsgemeinde* he has "in mind a body or an assembly or a congregation of Christians who have united for the purpose of having the Word of God preached and the Sacraments administered to them by a pastor, whom they have called" (p. 24). He assumes that it is a visible unit because he later speaks of it as "a body authorized to excummunicate" (p. 240). Dean Fritz then sets out to prove his position by asserting that the New

Testament *ekklesia* (exclusive of the classical usage, meaning an assembly of citizens) "refers either *to the invisible Church* [emphasis in the orginal text], consisting of all believers in Christ, 'the communion of saints' as the Creed says, . . .; or, *in the majority of cases* [emphasis in the original], to the visible local church (*Ortsgemeinde*)." For the latter meaning Matt. 18:17 is given, followed by an array of other passages (p.25). For Dean Fritz, Matt. 18:17 is the key text since he argues that "Tell it unto the church" must mean "the local church, of course, for it would be impossible either to tell all believers in the world or to get any action from them" (p. 25). What emerges from the general presentation of Dean Fritz is that on the basis of Matt. 18:17 an *Ortsgemeinde* is a divinely designated external unit which is the church's highest juridical authority, where the majority of the male members of the *Ortsgemeinde* have the final authority in the name of God to exercise God's rule and judgment.

Can Matt. 18:17 sustain such a heavy doctrinal burden? Fritz's argumentation here is specious for several reasons: (1) He overlooks the New Testament evidence the *ekklesia tou theou* here on earth has several applications, given its core meaning of God's people. (2) He overlooks the fact that when the New Testament refers to the *ekklesia tou theou* as an external visible unit or group, it always speaks synecdochically, so that the external *larvae* are never a part of God's church. (3) His seemingly plausible argument that *ekklesia* in Matt. 18:17 must mean a visible local church because it "would be impossible to tell all the believers in the world or get any action from them," needs to be closely scanned. He forgets that the entire body of Christ is represented in the part so that one Christian, two, three, or a thousand can be called the body of Christ. Besides this, Dean Fritz does not pretend to think that he is telling all the believers in a local congregation but rather that he is expecting action only from its "authorized representatives" (p. 240). What is wrong with assuming that some believers (or one believer) represent the *Una Santa*, who speak the Word of the Law and the Gospel in the name and person of Christ, the Head of the Church? (4) An examination of Matt. 18:17 in its context of the entire chapter reveals that a position such as the one propounded by Dean Fritz turns away from the context, and thereby the essential message of the text. The parable of the Unmerciful Servant, Which follows Matt. 18:17, is directed to the individual, who is to forgive everyone his brother their trespasses (v. 35). Further, such an interpretation as Dean Fritz's also avoids the whole tenor of Matt. 18:15-20, which speaks of the individual, "thy brother," "thee," "him," and "let him be unto thee as a heather man and a publican." Further, there is Peter's question, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" (v. 21). Luther deals with this text in the Large Catechism (LC II, 276-284), and he says that "all this refers to secret sins." In other places, too, Luther, the perceptive expositor, explains the text very precisely. But he does not find any divine institution of the local congregation in this text. He says, "But this office of the keys belongs to all of us who are Christians, as I have so often proved and shown in my books against the Pope. For the Word of Christ in Matt. 18 is addressed not only to the Apostles but certainly to all the brethren. . . . Christ gives the power and use of the keys to each Christian, when He says, 'Let him be to you as a Gentile' [Matt. 18:17]. For who is this 'you' to whom Christ refers when he says, 'Let him be to you'? . . . The keys belong to the whole church and to each of its members, both as regards their authority and their various uses. Otherwise we do violence to the Words of Christ, in which He speaks to all without qualification or limitation: 'Let him be to you,' and 'You will have gained your brother,' and 'Whatever you,' etc." (LW 40, p. 26,27). Compare also what Luther says in "Against Hanswurst": "We have been unable up to now to get the

Papists to willingly prove why they are the true church. But they insist that according to Matt. 18[:17] one must listen to the church or be lost. Yet Christ does not say there who, where, or what the church is; only that where it is it ought to be listened to. We confess and say that as well, but we ask where the church of Christ is, and who it is. We are concerned *non de nomine,* 'not with name of the church' but with its essence" (LIV 41, 194).

18. See note 9.
19. *This Is My Body*, p. 242, note 4.
20. Robert Preus, "The Basis For Concord, in Samuel Nafzger, ed., *Theologians Convocation: Formula of Concord Essays* (St. Louis: LC-MS Commission on Theology and Church Relations, 1977), p. 14.
21. C. R. W. Walther, ed., *Johanni Gulielmi Baieri Compendium Theologiae Positivae* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1879), 3, p. 651.
22. Heinrich Schmid, *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, third ed., tr. by Charles A. Hay and Henry E. Jacobs (1899; reprint, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), p. 591.
23. U. V. Koren, *Norwegian Synod Report, Minnesota District, 1904*, p. 41.
24. J. N. Lenker, tr., *The Precious and Sacred Writings of Martin Luther* (Minneapolis, 1904-1909) XI, pp. 375f.
25. See F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), III, pp. 381-391, "Who is to be admitted to the Lord's Supper?" For a history of Early Church practices see Werner Elert, *Eucharist and Church Fellowship in the First Four Centuries*, tr. by Norman E. Nagel (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), esp. pp. 75-124. See also Hans-Werner Gensichen, *We Condemn* tr. by H. J. A. Bouman (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1967), esp. pp. 189-211, "The Formula of Concord and the Damnamus."

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Theological Observer

REACTIONS TO THE OFFICIAL RESULTS OF INTER-LUTHERAN (LCUSA) THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSIONS SINCE 1972

Mere Lutheran union in America or even globally is small change in the lofty perspectives of Pastor Richard Neuhaus' *Forum Letter,* fervently heralding the ecumenical millenium Right Now if not sooner. Still, Neuhaus has generally been benignly tolerant of LCUSA, so long at least as that body seemed destined to herd the maverick LC-MS safely into the ecumenical corral. But now something has gone very wrong, and *Forum Letter* does not like it a bit. "Lutheran Differences Reinforced," grumbled its leading caption for June 30. The reference was to a report issued by LCUSA's Theological Studies Division on official inter-synodical discussions held between 1972 and 1977. The report is entitled, "The Function of Doctrine and Theology in Light of the Unity of the Church" (FODT for short). It is worthy of very careful study. Every pastor in the ALC, the LCA, and the LC-MS should have received a copy.

The reason for Neuhaus' displeasure is curious. He does not challenge the veracity of the report. What offends him, it appears, is not that differences between the churches are misstated, but the verv fact that they are stated at all. To paraphrase a famous epigram: "How odd of FODT to vent dissent"! Such is Neuhaus' confidence in the theology of the ALC and the LCA that he seems to take it for granted that a public ventilation of that theology by its own practitioners will tend to reinforce "the suspicions and arguments against ALC and LCA that Preus' party has always nurtured . . . . In terms of rehabilitating stereotypes, the present document is an unquestionable success."

Anyone rushing headlong into the FODT document itself, however, his appetite whetted by Neuhaus' piquant suggestions, may soon find himself yawning. That would be a mistake. Bureaucratic committee reports simply are a *genre* very different from the racy readability of *Forum Letter.* One must make due allowances for the difference if one is to gauge the true import of the calm surface prose. One will look in vain in such documents for vulgar excitement, e.g., "The place is on fire; everbody out!" To catch such a message one needs to keep one's eyes open for judicious understatements like, "General evacuation may indeed be indicated, should responsible efforts to control the present combustion prove only marginally effective."

Given the limitations of the accepted dialogical idiom—and without a certain disciplined restraint fruitful controversial discussions would not be possible at all—the FODT report is extraordinarily candid and revealing. It frankly admits, for instance, that unlike the Missouri Synod's spokesmen, ALC and LCA representatives generally favoured the historical-critical approach to Scripture. This is explicitly acknowledged to involve the issue of "*the legitimacy of affirming the existence of discrepancies, contradictions, mistaken notions, or diverse theologies within the Scriptures*" (pp. 7-8; emphases added). Yes, "diverse theologies"! In other words, there is no such thing as *Christian doctrine*—only Pauline, Johannine, Lucan, etc. "theologies"! Neuhaus of course has known this all along: "Basically, there are no surprises," he says, "and that is not surprising." Why then begrudge Lutheranism a "full public disclosure," as we say nowadays, of such non-surprises?

One can only describe as a total lapse from objectivity Neuhaus' interpretation-in-a-nutshell: "The [FODT] document makes explicit what it

admits everyone expected in advance, that Missouri dissents from the understanding of doctrine, theology, and the Church that prevails in two-thirds of American Lutheranism." This deft public relations projection defies the dogmatic, theological realities. It suggests the existence of a more or less stable and standard US Lutheran "understanding of doctrine, theology, and the Church," unfairly torpedoed, however, by a petulant Missouri Synod stubbornly pursuing its own eccentric ways. But what if the real facts are altogether different? What if it could be shown that the real problem is not Missouri's dissent from "two-thirds of American Lutheranism" but the latter's dissent from the recognised criteria or standards of Lutheranism? As it happens, one need not go beyond the FODT report itself to make this very point. Since the issue is one of great moment, the relevant wording of the Report should be carefully noted, with due realization that the formulation before us is not some partisan "Missourian" confection but was stipulated to by official representatives of all three church-bodies under the auspices of the Division of Theological Studies of LCUSA (p. 8):

> Representatives of the LCMS emphasize that the entire doctrinal content of the Lutheran confessional writings, including the implications of confessional statements dealing with the nature and interpretation of Holy Scripture, is accepted and remains valid today because it is drawn from the Word of God—that is, because it is a faithful exposition of Holy Scripture. On the other hand, some representatives of the other two church bodies, while affirming their continuing commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ as witnessed to in the Lutheran confessional writings, tend to emphasize the historical character of those writings and to maintain the possibility of dissent from confessional positions that do not deal directly with the gospel itself, such as some aspects of the confessional positions on the fall of humanity into sin and the nature and interpretation of Holy Scripture.

If "two-thirds of American Lutheranism" really do in principle defend dissent from the doctrinal content of the Lutheran Confessions on such issues as the very nature of Holy Scripture and the fall into sin (no doubt the historicity of Genesis in general and of Adam in particular is the main sticking point here), then surely this cannot simply be waved aside as "not surprising"! At the very least we should then hear no more of the glib propaganda untruth that while all parties accept and subscribe to "the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions," the problem is that Missouri insists on yet other documents in addition to these, and that it is these peculiarly Missourian specialities which are causing all the trouble.

Neuhaus notes that by no means all Missouri Synod pastors or people agree with their Synod's official stand. Sad to say, he is right on this score, although his numbers are inflated. Genuinely informed opponents of the Missouri Synod's official doctrinal position are difficult to find. In most cases Missourians who imagine themselves to be opposed to their Synod turn out to be simply well-meaning, conservative Lutherans whose normal human sympathies have been taken advantage of. But of the real doctrinal issues they are blissfully innocent. This deplorable spectacle attests the success of ELIMAELC'S well-nigh cynical strategy of avoiding and evading a thorough ventilation of the precise theological matters in dispute, and of concentrating instead on endless sob stories about alleged injustices with which to exploit Christian sentiments.

That *Forum Letter* should overestimate the dissent within Missouri is not really surprising. But why is there no suggestion at all of any internal dissent from the "prevail [ing]" direction of the other "two thirds of American Lutheranism," the ALC and LCA? Certainly anyone who knows enough about

the situation not to be surprised at the FODT report must realize that at any rate the radicalized theologians taking part in the LCUSA talks do not by any stretch of the imagination represent the rank and file clergy, not to mention the laity, of the ALC and the LCA. The tragic chasm between pulpit and lecture-hall, pastors and professors, church and seminary, is after all a characteristic curse bequeathed to theology in and through historical criticism. One cannot permanently cultivate the divine covenant of Christ in the parishes and the legacy of the Rationalist Enlightenment in the seminaries. Nor can such church-destroying schizophrenia be conjured away with "practical" trickeries, scholarly obscurities, or liturgical escapisms. Returning now to the FODT report, let us consider a paragraph like the one on page 6:

> The ALC and LCA representatives also affirm the reliability and truthfulness of the Scriptures, but they link those characteristics with the purpose of the Scriptures—their gospel-bearing function. This view sees the Scriptures as completely reliable in communicating all the promises of God to humankind, not to the exclusion of history but through it. The concern is that this central message of the Scriptures not be clouded, called into question, or confused in its application by creating false tests of faith.

There can be little doubt that this kind of language, standing by itself, would win overwhelming votes of confidence, and not only in the ALC and the LCA but also in the Missouri Synod. But now let us add a bit of context. The immediately preceding paragraph of FODT reads as follows (p. 5):

> The LCMS representatives argue that a less-than-complete commitment to the Scriptures, an uncertainty about their truthfulness, a hesitancy or disagreement with regard to some of their contents, will endanger the proclamation of the gospel. The question is not simply how far the Scriptures should be trusted in what they say about Christ, but really whether the Christ we confess is the Christ of Scripture or a Christ constructed according to some human standard.

If *this* is the context—more precisely: the alternative—then the ALC/LCA formulation becomes considerably more dubious. An affirmation of the "reliability and truthfulness of the Scriptures," which when decoded turns out to mean something more akin to "less-than-complete commitment to the Scriptures, an uncertainty about their truthfulness, a hesitancy or disagreement with regard to some of their contents," is bound to seem somehow fraudulent, and not only to Missourians. The broader ecclesiastical context moreover is distinctly ominous. LCA theologian Philip Hefner, for example, was able to state in a recent LWF-sponsored study that there is for his church "a certain authority in modern thought *per se*," hence a "dual authority of doctrine and modern thinking," with the "proper relation of the two . . . as yet an unresolved problem."[1]

The final sentence of the FODT paragraph under consideration states: "The concern is that this central message of the Scriptures not be clouded, called into question, or confused in its application by creating false tests of faith." (FODT, p. 6). A Christ-centered approach to Scripture is, to be sure, a deeply Lutheran attitude. But what are these "false tests of faith"? A wide variety of answers is possible here. For example, the official publication of the LCA's predecessor-body, the ULCA, at one time used to print, with full approval, statements by Reinhold Niebuhr like these: "The young men are accused, among other things, of not believing in the virgin birth of Jesus or in his 'physical resurrection' or ascension. Are these beliefs really *tests of the quality of faith*?" (emphases added).[2]

More recently LCA theologian John Reumann, in a glowing editorial commendation of the English translation of Hans Conzelmann's famous essay, *Jesus*, described Conzelmann's theological position as "an Evangelical (Lutheran Reformation) 'theology of the word.' Hence the emphasis on preaching (proclamation) as that which contemporizes Jesus for us today."[3]

Yet Reumann admits at the same time that Conzelmann represents the "Bultmann school" and assumes, for example, "the general non-historicity of the Fourth Gospel." Worse yet, in the essay itself Conzelmann describes the opening chapters of Matthew's and Luke's Gospels as "cycles of legends," treats even the Davidic descent of Jesus as doubtful, and regards the Baptismal accounts as legendary. Further, according to Conzelmann's essay, Jesus did not claim to be the Son of God—this title being originally understood "adoptionistically" in any case—and had no intention of establishing any church! The account of the Last Supper is a "cultic legend," and so on. How many pastors and members of the ALC and LCA would agree that this sort of thing is "an Evangelical (Lutheran Reformation) 'theology of the word'"? Certainly nowhere near Neuhaus's "two thirds of American Lutheranism," most of whom would surely be horrified if they thought that their seminary professors were even toying with such notions.

It is the great merit of the LCUSA discussions, as reflected in this significant FODT report, to have begun the daring process of facing up to the real issues posed for Lutherans by today's theological climate. And once one has gazed at the depth and enormity of the problems, one cannot simply shut the lid, as it were, and pretend that it is all a question of a few little interpretations of a few little Bible-texts. Some doctrinal differences may well prove to be irresolvable in the end. But surely no one has a right simply to give up without trying. Projected solutions are at this stage clearly premature; first the real nature of the problem needs to be traced with the utmost honesty and precision. If LCUSA's theological discussions can avoid church-political short-circuitings and can patiently lead the Lutheran churches of America into a clear understanding of today's theological options and their various implications and ramifications—and the FODT report is a promising token in this direction—they will have given the churches something of infinitely greater value than all those impressive ecumenical displays which still leave consciences uninformed and doubting. The outcome is beyond the control of men; it is up to the church's Head, who can give far more than we can ask or think.

NOTES

1. John Reumann, ed. *The Church Emerging: A U.S. Lutheran Case Study* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), p. 150.
2. *The Lutheran,* December, 1955, p. 18.
3. J. Raymond Lord, tr., *Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. x; Hans Conzelmann, "Jesus Christus," *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwoerterbuch fuer Theologie und Religionswissenschaft,* ed. Kurt Galling et al. (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr, III (1959), cols. 619-53.

K. Marquart

NEW INITIATIVES IN THE DANISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

Today there is much that is problematic in the State Church of Denmark. There would be no difficulty in finding public denials of the most central Christian doctrines, of open immorality among the clergy, of congregations suffering spiritual neglect by their pastors, and of nearly empty churches. Since 1948, indeed, the Church of Denmark has been burdened with women priests. Such a deplorable plight leaves the door wide open for other denominations to gain a foothold, although none have as yet been able to exploit this ripe situation. Some Danes have been attracted by the cults, but the overwhelming majority have followed the path of practical atheism with its

blatantly materialistic outlook. Alcoholism, not uncommon among people, is only symptomatic of the general spiritual impoverishment.

Committed Lutherans do have bright hopes for the future. Independent missionary movements working within the church have a wide following among the youth in whom a growing spiritual commitment and devotion are easily detected. Such missionary movements without any state support or control have been a much more significant factor in the actual spiritual life of the people than the state-controlled church. These movements with their own meeting-houses, preachers, and financial support, have alerted the people to the reality of their churches and have directed the people to a more conservative theological posture and to a greater interest in evangelism. The Danish Christian Association for Students (KFS), though only new, is already an influential factor in Danish church life. The KFS, theologically orthodox and confessionally Lutheran in its orientation, has been quite effective in awakening interest in the Bible and evangelism among high school and college youth. Along with the revival of interest in Biblical studies connected with the youth movement, there has been a vast production of literature on current subjects written from a conservative Lutheran viewpoint.

Quite naturally many young men attached to the KFS have been attracted to the ministry, but they have found the theological training at the state universities to be not only unsatisfactory, but downright dangerous. In Denmark no real connection exists between the university theological faculties by whom the pastors are trained and the church in which the pastors later serve. Theological professors are sometimes not Lutheran or even Christian.

In the late 1960's several conservative Lutheran pastors and laymen determined to counteract this situation by establishing a Lutheran seminary independent of state, church, and university control. A theological school has been established at Aarhus under the name of the *Menighedsfakultetet* literally the faculty of the congregations! The school, with a student body of more than one hundred, has an easier time recruiting students than faculty members. Students supplement their education by attending lectures at the state university in Aarhus. A similar institution, the Danish Bible Institute, has been established in Copenhagen. Though smaller than the Aarhus school, it is also theologically conservative and confessionally Lutheran.

The establishment and growth of these freely supported institutions shows a growing desire among Lutherans in Denmark for church work which is Biblically based. It also clearly shows the dissatisfaction with modern theology. The sincere hope of many Christian laymen is that the pastors being educated at these newly founded institutions will preach nothing more nor less than the word of God, and that through this preaching many of their countrymen may repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ. In Denmark the harvest is indeed great, but the laborers are few. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send forth many laborers.

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CHURCH LIFE IN NORWAY TODAY

About 95 percent of Norway's four million inhabitants are members of the Lutheran state church and have deep spiritual roots. The state church accepts the three ancient creeds, the unaltered Augsburg Confession, and the Small Catechism. As a state Lutheran church, the Norwegian church and government have official commitments to each other. The Norwegian constitution binds the state to the Lutheran Confessions and gives to the state the right to

appoint the church's ten bishops and the parish pastors. The clergy like other government officials receive their salaries from government taxes. This relationship has operated smoothly for centuries, but problems and tensions are now causing disruptions. Though the church is under governmental control, the state church has its own internal structure but without effective power. There are certain divisions in this internal structure. On the local level there is the congregational council. A council of bishops has a limited number of tasks. A newly created church council representing all aspects of the Norwegian church has created all sorts of problems. These intra-ecclesiastical councils have no real theological or financial power, but tensions between them and the state controlled system of bishops and pastors exist.

Here are a few hard statistical facts about the Church of Norway. In 1976 there were more than 1,500 pastors. One million of the four million members of the church were counted as communicants; 70,000 church services and 123,000 other gatherings at which a pastor preached were conducted; 250,000 pastoral visits were made; and twenty-eight million kroner were contributed for church work. Thirty percent of this sum was designated for missions.

Students for the ministry receive their education at either the University of Oslo where the faculty is strongly influenced by the liberal theology of the post-Bultmannian period or the independently supported *Menighetsfakultetet* with a more pronounced conservative direction. Atheism is not uncommon among theological students at the University of Oslo. The state university faculty has an enrollment of about 150 students, and the independent faculty has about 600. Started in 1908 as a protest against the liberal theology of the state faculty by Norwegian Lutherans connected with mission revival, the independent seminary has been eminently successful. Its founder, Professor S. Odland, was conservative and belonged to what was then known as the school of "positive theology." He was greatly influenced by Professor Theodore Zahn of Germany and was not entirely immune from the historical criticism of that day. Odland was, however, more concerned with textual criticism than with criticizing the content of Scripture. There might be errors of memory and history in the Bible, Odland claimed, but not errors in matters of salvation and ethics. For his day that was a very conservative position, and Odland gave a strongly confessional character to the independent faculty. Women pastors were an abomination to Odland. At one time the school's founder stated, "The Scripture says something about it, and that is enough for me."

The Norwegian Christian laity supported the independent faculty wholeheartedly. This confidence was upheld by Professor O. Hallesby, a dogmatician strongly influenced by the Erlangen school of experience theology, Haugeanism, and pietism. Hallesby, a gifted speaker, attracted large lay audiences. His influence among the laity helped contain the liberalism of the university-trained pastors.

Today the situation at the independent faculty is somewhat confusing. What the school has gained in size, it has lost in theological firmness. One wing of the faculty has taken a more open view to modernism. This is especially true of Old Testament studies. A majority of faculty is willing to accept women pastors. A new direction has set in and it is impossible to see where it will all end. But amidst the current theological instability, a conservative group within the faculty maintains the old faith.

The church life of the people focuses around two centers, the church buildings themselves, which are part of the church-state arrangement, and the prayer-houses. There are more than 2000 of these prayer-houses, which have their origin in the lay revival and mission movement of H. N. Hauge. Three things were distinctive aspects of this Haugean awakening: (1.) sorrow over sin and surrendering of one's life to Christ; (2) joyful experience of God's saving grace; and (3.) certainty about God's calling with a willingness to work for the salvation of souls. Hauge was charged by the clergy and suffered many

years in prison, but his movement is still alive as can easily be seen in the several national societies for the mission work at home and abroad. The state church plays no role, financially or administratively, in this mission work.

The 284 foreign missionaries that Norway had sent out in 1920 had more than doubled to 658 in 1938. World War II was a time of spiritual growth. By 1948 the number of missionaries had increased to 749. Twelve years later in 1960 the number stood at 850 and in 1971 at 1,277. Very few Lutheran churches in other countries could match this record. Twenty-seven thousand lay groups are organized to support various types of mission work. One thousand lay preachers preach in the meeting houses and churches. The clergy of the state church and the lay movement work together in a mutually beneficial relationship. In 1977 the church mission council applied to the Norwegian government to use one hundred million kroner outside the country. In the same year only thirty million kroner were contributed by the people to the official church. To me this indicates that the people find their real spiritual life and nourishment in their mission societies and not in the state-regulated churches.

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THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY: LUKE 2:41-52 (JANUARY 7, 1979)

In this unique glimpse into the family life of Jesus as a child we see His parents observing a continual pattern of travel to the temple in Jerusalem (v. 41). Reaching puberty (v. 42), Jesus was to become a "son of the Law," thereby obliged to learn and observe its provisions. Luke's reference to Jesus changes with v. 43 from child (*paidion*) to boy (*pais*). Note, in v. 46, Jesus is not teaching but listening and asking questions; although, in v. 47 He also gives answers of such depth the the hearers were literally "beside themselves." The parent's shock (v. 48) is two-fold: first, at His length of unexplained absence; and second, at His location when found. Verse 49 emphasizes "My Father's *matters*"; it is not a reference to the place where Mary and Joseph ought to have looked, but rather explains His behavior. Therefore, we translate *en tois tou patros* "in the matters of My Father," rather than with reference to place. Also, *dei* indicates Jesus' drive toward his ministry (cf. Luke 4:43; *9:22;* 13:14,*33; 17:25;* 19:5; *22:37; 24:7,26,44* - emphasis indicates redemptive references). Note that in v. 51 we see that Mary keeps in her heart even things which she does not understand (v. 50). Many see this verse as an indication that she was Luke's source for this incident. Luke makes no further reference in his Gospel to Joseph.

The central thought of the text focuses on the growing awareness of the ministry of Jesus; an awareness touching His parents and family, the people, Luke's readers, and Jesus Himself. The problem in the text is the need to gain this awareness. The goal of the sermon is to introduce this pre-public-ministry appearance of our Lord so that, even at 12, we may truly see Jesus as our Savior.

Introduction: These days we find ourselves, as a society, immersed in a flood of contemporary fountains of youth, all designed to help us in our futile attempt to regain an age that is lost. However, not every longing glimpse at the life of youth is futile! Today, in our text, we see a young life that truly can change ours. We see:

Jesus at Twelve

I. Jesus at 12: A Son of Mary and Joseph
   A. We see our Lord at the point of adolescense.
      1. Still under His parent's care.
      2. Growing and increasing in stature.
   B. We see Jesus as a "son of the Law."
      1. Continuing to live "under the Law" for us.
      2. Demonstrating a love of God's house.
      3. Giving us a picture of young manhood.

II. Jesus at 12: The Son of God
   A. Demonstrating God's Wisdom.
      1. The priority of God's Word in Jesus' life.
      2. The expression of God's Word in Jesus' answers.
   B. Continuing God's "Business."
      1. The desire to make us wise unto salvation.
      2. The desire to save us from our sins.

Youth seems a fleeting experience, wasted, as one has said, on the young.

However, Jesus redeems also our youth, and through the knowledge and salvation which He brings our lives are renewed.

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THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY: JOHN 2:1-11 (JANUARY 14, 1979)

It is probable that John is completing his description of the first week of Jesus' public ministry with the words "on the third day" (v. 1), followed by the first Passover of Jesus' ministry. Note that John goes into similar detail before the last Passover (John 12:1ff). Lenski draws a distinction between Mary's presence at the wedding as a part of the official party and Jesus' presence as an "invited" guest (v. 2); the RSV translation of *kai* as "also" suggests that both were guests, with the disciples appearing as "tag-a-longs." The manner in which Jesus addresses Mary does not carry the harshness of the English translation "woman" (v. 4). The "hour" for which our Lord has come, at which time all mankind "has to do" with him, is the hour of the atonement (cf: 7:30; 8:20; 12:23,27; 13:1; 17:1). The servants (v. 5) were volunteer helpers (*diakonoi*) at the wedding, not slaves. The stone jars were for the purpose of purification; Jesus uses them as a sign of His identity as the One who will truly purify men. The water-now-turned-into-wine was "drawn" from the stone jars, suggesting the large volume of wine now available (approximately 120 gallons in all). Verse 10 does not entail that drunkenness must necessarily ensue, either at this or any other wedding of the day; rather, it simply points to a "best-first" policy, one which Jesus reverses not only on this occasion but in the economy of salvation as well—the new covenant is better than the old. In verse 11 John introduces two devices which will assume predominant places in his Gospel: first, the concept of miracles as "signs" or evidence of the identity of Christ; and second, the response of people (here, the disciples) to see and believe!

The central thought of the pericope is that our Lord brings great blessings with His presence. The problem addressed in the text is the discovery of men that their earthly blessings are not sufficient to bring continual happiness and meaning to life. The goal of the sermon is to bring the vision of Christ's spiritual blessings to bear upon the life-situations of the hearers.

Introduction: Weddings are part of the normal affairs of everyday living, dispite the great interest which we have in them. Jesus, too, shows an interest in our daily lives by His presence at the Cana wedding. In fact, as we see Him through the "sign" of changing water into wine, we discover a wonderful truth:

Jesus Christ Blesses Our Daily Lives

I. He Blesses Us With His Presence.
   A. He came to Cana as an invited guest.
      1. Clearly a human being - true man.
      2. Also, a personal friend.
   B. The Presence of Christ today is where His Word is received.
      1. As the Cana wedding was the stage for Jesus' activity,
      2. So Christian worship, Christian meditation, Christian homes become that stage.

II. He Blesses Us with His Power.
   A. At Cana, the wine failed.
      1. Man's efforts to bring joy to himself ran out.

2. Our use of the creative gifts of God also will fail before we are satisfied.

B. Jesus gives new wine.
1. He shows the creative power of the Father.
2. He shows a love and concern for man's happiness.
a. First, for those at the feast.
b. But chiefly, for all mankind, through the continuing creation.

C. Christ has the power to bring life's best.
1. To give us good things from His hands.
2. And to give us the relationship with God so necessary for true happiness in this world.

III. He Blesses Us with His Purpose.
A. His purpose was not fully seen at Cana.
1. His "hour" had not yet come.
2. His hour arrived on Calvary.

B. His purpose is to perfect purification.
1. From the old rites of Jewish pruification.
2. To the "new wine" of the Atonement.

C. His purpose is to reveal His identity.
1. Seen in a sign of His glory;
2. But pointing forward to His greater glory on Calvary.

As the war is fought in the trenches, so our lives are lived in the "everyday grind." Into this grind our Lord has come, to be with us, to act for us, and to cause us to see His glory. May the brightness of His light be our cause for joy this day!

RWS

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY: MATTHEW 8:1-13 (JANUARY 21, 1979)

Here our Lord is faced with two critical illnesses, both of which were "hopeless" by prevailing medical standards. Leprosy was regarded both as an illness and as uncleanness, thus having special significance as a figure of sin. In v. 2, the leper expresses his request as a matter of Jesus' will, not His power. Opinion is divided as to whether Jesus instructs the cleansed man to present himself to the priests as a proof to the people that he is healed or to the priests as a testimony to Christ; given the special character of leprosy, both applications seem sound. The centurion approaches our Lord by means of intermediaries, according to Luke, to appeal on behalf of his servant, a young boy who suffers from painful paralysis. Note Jesus willingness to both *treat* and *heal* the boy (*therapeuso*). But the centurion believes that the mere word of Christ will heal (*iathesetai*), without the mediation of treatment. See Luke 9:11, where Jesus healed (*iato*) those who needed treatment (*therapeias*). Jesus' commendation of "great faith" is reserved for the centurion, along with the Canaanite woman (Mt. 15:28) and the unknown child (Mt. 18:4); these are among the "sons of the kingdom"! As an idiom of the day, that phrase referred to "Jews"; in point of fact, Jesus reminds us, it ought to refer to believers.

The central thought behind these two miracles is the fact that Jesus, as God's Son, reveals the great love and power which God brings into the lives of man, especially of His "sons of the kingdom" by faith.

Introduction: "I am the greatest", some are known to boast concerning themselves. But are they? What makes for greatness? Is it mere power? Is it cunning or well-developed skill? In our text for this Sunday, Jesus focuses our attention on greatness, as we learn

The Measure of Greatness

I. The Measure of Greatness Is to Face Great Need.
   A. The great needs in our text become the background for greatness
      1. The man with leprosy. vs 1-4.
      2. The boy (slave, Lk. 7:2) with painful paralysis.
   B. The great needs of our world and lives provides opportunities for greatness.
      1. We have an existence infected with spiritual leprosy; real leprosy was a symbol of sin in the Old Testament.
      2. We have a need to be freed of the enslaving and paralysing power of sin.

Great needs alone mean defeat—for greatness to come from great needs, there must be a "Valiant One" to fight for us. This means that

II. The Measure of Greatness Is to Have a Great God.
   A. God's greatness is shown in His purposes for men.
      1. The issue in our text is not God's power! That is assumed (v. 2,8).
      2. Rather, it is God's willingness and desire.
      3. We see God's greatness in Baptism, in His Word, in the Lord's Supper, where God's will is shown to us!
   B. God's greatness is shown in Christ.
      1. Jesus: the One who is God.
         a. He is recognized by the leper and the centurion.
         b. He is recognized by His people.
      2. Jesus: the One who saves.
         a. Not by ancestry, membership, or tradition (vs. 11,12).
         b. But by "faith" (v. 13).

But can this greatness avail for us? How does my believing in Christ bring greatness to my living? We see the answer in the discovery that

III. The Measure of Greatness Is to Express a Great Faith.
   A. Our faith is "great" because its object is great!
   B. Our faith is "great" because it *goes* to our Great God.
      1. The introduction to both miracles is the petitions of faithful people.
      2. Faith exercizes itself in prayer—going to God.
   C. Our faith is "great" because by it we are equipped by God to serve others.
      1. The leper served as a testimony of Jewish leaders.
      2. The centurion served both his servant and Jesus' disciples (as an object lesson).
      3. Great faith expresses itself in our obedient responses to God's grace in Christ.

True greatness is not measured by strength or cunning or finely tuned skills, for all of these things deteriorate and die. True greatness is measured by the responses of God's forgiven prople, trusting their Great and Good God, as they face the great challenges of daily living. And as Jesus reminds the disciples, the final expression of true greatness is the "victory banquet" to which many from the east and the west will be invited to celebrate eternally the greatness of God.

RWS

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY: MATTHEW 8:23-27 (JANUARY 28, 1979)

Matthew records this pericope in the midst of Jesus' early ministry. Here we find Him beginning a round-trip across the Sea of Gallilee (v. 23). The return portion of the trip is described in 9:1. The great storm (v.24) is of earthquake proportions (*seismos megas*); cf. Luke 8:23—"furious gusts." Meanwhile, Jesus "was sleeping" (*ekatheuden*), the imperfect indicating that He was "not disturbed" in sleep. The disciples' petition is brief and to the point: Save! (*soson* - at once); we are perishing (*apollumetha* - the present tense indicating an immediate tragedy). In v. 26, *ti* may well be translated "how" rather than "why," giving Jesus' observation an exclamatory character: "How fearful you are!" Note, following the word of the Lord, the great storm instantly becomes a great calm (*galēnē megalē*). Here we see Jesus working a miracle of nature, since the winds *and* the waves came to this abrupt stop; such an occurance brings the puzzled response from the disciples, "What manner of man is this?" The central thought of the text is that Jesus is revealed as the Lord of creation, in whom those of faith are encouraged to hope. The problem being addressed is the fearful response of Jesus' disciples in the face of danger. The goal of the sermon is to apply our vision of Christ to the realm of our daily anxieties.

Introduction: How easy it is for initial impressions to be mistakes! Almost every victim of unscrupulous salesmen has discovered the fatal flaw lurking in the inadequate investigation of a proposed purchase. It is in a thorough "test-ride" that people may come to a more realistic evaluation of a product. Likewise, the realistic character of our faith exhibits itself, not in the isolation of special "religious" occasions, but rather in the grind of daily living. Here, where all the world faces the struggles of life, the Christian matches these same struggles against his growing life in Christ. In our text, we take the pulse of the disciples' faith, as they face such a life-struggle. Let us ask the question which they raised:

"What Manner of Man Is This?"

I. What manner of men are the disciples?
  A. They were capable men of the sea.
    1. Trained as fishermen.
    2. Experienced in handling the Sea of Galilee.
    3. Cognizant of the threats which the sea holds.
  B. They were close followers of Jesus (men of faith).
    1. They had a growing awareness of His mission and power.
    2. They saw Him as a source of help in time of need.
    3. Yet, they are astonished at this miracle (men of little faith).
  C. What manner of men are we as disciples of Christ?
    1. We too must take on a world with skill.
    2. Yet, we too, know its perils.
    3. How is Christ our source of help in the face of peril?

II. What manner of man is Jesus?
  A. He is above the perils of life.
    1. He can sleep in the boat: the quiet Lord who sleeps.
    2. He can cause the storm to cease: the active Lord who speaks.
    3. He is ready to meet our temptations to fear (Heb. 4:15).
  B. He is active in conquering the effects of sin.
    1. The destructiveness of weather is an effect of sin (Romans 8:20).
    2. The destructiveness of doubt is an effect of sin; He rebukes the disciples.

3. The destructiveness of sin itself is conquered for us:
   a. The disciples' cry "Lord, save!" is ours, too.
   b. It speaks also our confession of sin.

Both the words and the actions of our Lord in this text are designed to bring peace to fearful hearts, to encourage us to see that God does act for us, His children by grace through faith. Indeed, the encouragement of our standing with Christ builds a love within us for our heavenly Father, together with a trust of Him, that casts out all fear. Thus, it is in Christ that we measure ourselves as the remedy to fear.

RWS

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD: MATTHEW 17:1-9 (FEBRUARY 4, 1979)

"After six days" (v. 1) calls our attention to the behavior of Peter during the previous week: first, "You are the Christ" (16:16); then, "This shall never happen to you" (16:22). Jesus was "transfigured" before them: *metemorphōthē* - from which we receive, metamorphosis, "change of form of being." Moses and Elijah (v. 3) speak with Jesus; Luke states that they were conversing about the death of Jesus in Jerusalem. "Shelters" (v. 4) harken back to the Old Testament practice of erecting an altar to God in the midst of a journey. The voice (v. 5) conveys the same message as at Jesus' baptism, the beginning of his ministry which is to be completed at Jerusalem. The vivid comment, "they saw no one except Jesus," testifies to the truth that Jesus' mission is to be the solely sufficient answer to man's need. That Jesus wants the disciples to remain silent about their experience until the resurrection is further testimony to the fact that this experience points from itself to the work of redemption on Calvary. The central thought in the text is that Jesus is the long-awaited Redeemer of mankind. The problem which is addressed in the text is the difficulty which men have in understanding the person and work of Christ for them. The goal of the sermon is to highlight Jesus' person and work as the lesson to be learned on the mountain.

Introduction: All life seems to be divided into two parts: the ordinary days and the important days. There are many important days for us which spice up our daily diet of life: anniversaries, graduations, birthdays, etc. Transfiguration Day is an important day for us. It marks the last Sunday of the Epiphany season, the season in which we are reminded of the true glory of our Lord. So, in this last week of Epiphany, we see with special clearness, the true glory of the Lord Jesus, as we learn

The Lesson of the Mountaintop

I. It Is a Lesson in Understanding Jesus.
   A. The disciples still did not understand Jesus.
      1. Peter (Mt. 16:16) - "You are the Christ."
      2. Peter (Mt. 16:23) - "You are not going to die."
   B. They learn of Jesus in this vision.
      1. Jesus was "transfigured" before them.
      2. Moses and Elijah appeared before them.
         a. A witness to the message of the Law and the Prophets.
         b. Luke adds: "They were speaking of His death at Jerusalem."
      3. The voice of the Father was heard by them.
   C. Thus, we with the disciples see a complete picture of God.
      1. Here is the Messiah, the Savior—true Man

2. Here is our Lord—true God.
3. Here is the meaning of Jesus ministry: God's gift, to which we listen.

II. It Is a Lesson in Understanding Ourselves.
A. People are in need of God's touch.
1. For life is confusing.
a. Peter said: "Let's stay; let's build."
b. God says: "Let's listen; let's go."
2. For life is full of fear.
a. Peter, James, and John were felled by it.
b. The touch of God in the presence of Jesus quells fear.
c. Jesus is Emmanuel: "God with us."
B. People are in need of the right mountain.
1. Not Mt. Sinai.
a. It is Moses' mountain.
b. It means the Law which men cannot fulfill.
2. Not Mr. Carmel.
a. It is Elijah's mountain.
b. It means the Prophets which men cannot heed.
3. Not even the Mount of Transfiguration.
a. Its location is unknown.
b. It means an "experience" which men cannot keep.
4. But Mt. Calvary.
a. It is Golgatha - the place of the skull.
b. Toward it Jesus heads as He leaves the Mount of Transfiguration.
c. It means the redemption to which men cannot add.

The lesson on the mountaintop is not only that we are to see Jesus as He is, and that we are to see Jesus only, but also that we see Him on the cross, where His true glory as God can best be seen.

RWS

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY: MATTHEW 20:1-16 (FEBRUARY 11, 1979)

Here we find yet another of our Lord's parables of the kingdom. As a parable we expect to find some point at which the abstract reality of the kingdom of God is concretely illustrated. In this parable, the act by which people are brought into the kingdom is the recruiting activity of the landowner (vs. 1, 2, 4, 5, 7). The function of those who are brought into the kingdom is service ("to work in his vineyard"). There is a blessing which falls to those in service in the kingdom (the denarius), yet this blessing is credited to the generosity (v. 15) of the landowner. The central point of the text is that it is the landowner whose actions make the kingdom of heaven available to men. The problem in the text is that men are tempted to regard their service, rather than the landowner's gracious activity, as the basis for their standing in God's kingdom. The goal of the sermon is to redirect our thinking from self to Christ as we consider our place in God's kingdom.

Introduction: Today our economic well-being is significantly influenced by the modern labor union. Hardly a day goes by without news of some contract negotiation reaching our ears which threatens to effect seriously our living standards. Undoubtedly many good benefits have come to workers through the union movement; however, one can sense an underlying belief within almost every union contract, a belief that one's value is best measured and rewarded by the paycheck. Actually this belief is part of the very nature of man; and it

is this thought which motivates some grumblers in the kingdom of God. We hear the grumbling in our text, and we hear it in our churches; perhaps, in an honest and perceptive moment, we hear the grumbling in our hearts. Today we need to learn

The Market Value of the Kingdom of God

I. We Learn How It Is Measured.
  A. Not with reference to one's self.
    1. The workers in the text measured by their labors.
    2. Workers in the congregation often measure by their contributions.
    3. The Christian in his heart often measures by his works.
  B. But with reference to God's gifts.
    1. In the text it is the graciousness of the landowner that is praised.
    2. In the church it is the Gospel that both calls and rewards us.
    3. Thus, we are pointed to the true nature of the value of God's kingdom.
II. We Learn How It Is Given or Created
  A. It is created by the free act of God.
    1. In our text the landowner continually offers the privilege of kingdom-service.
    2. In our lives God has "called me by the Gospel . . . ."
  B. It is given freely to all who will believe.
    1. In our text those who trusted the landowner received the privilege of kingdom service.
      a. Other than the earliest workers, all had only the promise, "I'll pay you what is right."
      b. Even those called at the eleventh hour trusted the owner's offer.
    2. In God's kingdom the blessing of eternal life is given to all who believe.
III. We Learn How It Pays Dividends of Blessings
  A. The service itself is a blessing.
    1. In the text men designed to work and desirous of work found the opportunity in the offer of the landowner.
    2. We, too, are designed as men and women to seek work, creative service to God.
  B. The results of our service is a blessing.
    1. For the workers in the text, a denarius, equally given, to those who were faithful as workers.
    2. For Christians, a crown of glory, equally given, to all who have been called into the kingdom of God.

There is only one effective way to prevent the cancer of self-centered thinking from eating its way into our soul as we serve in God's kingdom, and that is to remember daily how it is that we are servants and sons of God—by Christ's saving act, which God extends to us through the means of grace. This focus on Jesus as our Master and our reward will keep us in grace and peace as we serve in His kingdom.

RWS

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY: LUKE 8:4-15
(FEBRUARY 18, 1979)

It is clear that Jesus tells this parable to a large crowd (v. 4), although its meaning will be clear only to those who are "given the secrets of the kingdom

of God" (v. 10). Thus, this is another parable of the nature of the kingdom of God. It is important to note that the point of comparison centers around the various soils, and therefore it is more appropriate to speak of the "parable of the soils" than the "parable of the sower." Our Lord gives us clear indications of the realities which lie behind the images in the parable. Note that, whereas Matthew reports results of the seed in the good soil in terms of 30-, 60-, and 100-fold increases, Luke simply says that the seed "yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown." (v. 8). The central point of this parable and its explanation by our Lord is that our reception of and life in God's kingdom is affected by the way in which we receive the Word of God in our lives. The problem is that productive spiritual growth cannot occur in hearts which resist the power of the Word. The goal of the sermon is to lead the hearers to that repentance of heart which gives good ground for God's Word and its life-giving work.

Introduction: Are you spiritually healthy? If so, how do you know? If not, how do you know this to be the case? If you don't know whether or not you are spiritually healthy, shouldn't you? Just as we recognize the need for physical health, so too we should see the need to ascertain and possess spiritual health. In our text for today, God invites us to

Take Time for a Spiritual Check-up

I. Diseases Which Rob You of Spiritual Health.
  A. The disease of a stubborn heart.
    1. The picture: the soil that rejected the seed.
    2. The application: the pride-filled heart that simply says to God: "I will not." Note that this heart "hears the Word." Yet, there can be no life without change.
    3. The remedy: since this disease can touch us all, we need to humbly repent—"O God, come and change my heart."
  B. The disease of a shallow heart.
    1. The picture: the soil that allowed for no roots.
    2. The application: the faith that receives the Word on an emotional level. Yet there can be no life without depth, in the face of tribulations.
    3. The remedy: We need to ask our God to break away the undercrust from our hearts, that we may see the great value of having roots.
  C. The disease of an ungrateful heart.
    1. The picture: the soil which also grows thorns.
    2. The application: the divided heart that needs Christ and salvation, but also wants what the world offers. Yet, two masters mean a strangulation of the spirit.
    3. The remedy: We need to remember from whence we came and what we would be without God, and to confess our forgetfulness of all our blessings in Christ.

II. The Picture of Spiritual Health
  A. The nature of spiritual health.
    1. The textual picture: the good soil which receives the seed.
    2. Application: where by repentance one has broken down the objects of resistance and pride, the seed of the Word can accomplish its task.
  B. The way to spiritual health.
    1. Let us repent of all that robs God's Word of its place in our lives.
    2. Let us receive today what that Word of God offers our hearts:
      a. The Word of reconciliation—"You are forgiven, redeemed, blessed."

b. The Word of power—capable of bringing spiritual growth a 100-fold.

RWS

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY: LUKE 18:31-43
(FEBRUARY 25, 1979)

Note that this pericope does have an unifying theme—the need for perception. With the disciples the perception which is lacking (and remains so after our Lord's instruction) is spiritual; they failed to see that the Messiah was fulfilling all that had been written about him in the prophets. With the beggar, the perception which is lacking is physical, yet through his faith (spiritual perception of Christ) he receives his sight. Note Jesus' positive understanding and use of "Messianic prophesy" (cf. vs. 31-33). Note also the title which the beggar uses to address our Lord: "Son of David" (v. 38,39). Apparently this blind one also understood something of Messianic prophesy. From these two incidents we learn by way of the physician Luke which is the greater problem in perception. Thus, the central thought of this pericope is that Jesus offers to men the vision to see Him as He really is: God and Savior. The problem addressed in the text is that men are by nature spiritually blind. The goal of the sermon is to enlighten the hearer as to the person and work of Christ.

Introduction: On Wednesday we enter again into the season of Lent. Just what does this season hold for you? How well do you understand this season and its message as it applies to you? Our opportunity to receive spiritual benefits from Lent depends on how clearly we see Jesus and His work in the message of Lent. So today, in our Gospel, the Lord is operating on our spiritual eyes so that we might

See the Blessings of Lent

I. We Need to Be Given the Gift of Sight.
  A. In the text blindness was the problem.
    1. The beggar needed physical sight.
    2. More seriously, the disciples needed spiritual sight.
  B. As we approach Lent, blindness can be the problem.
    1. As to the purpose of this season.
      a. Not that we see a sacrifice in us.
      b. But that we see a sacrifice for us.
    2. As to the results of this season.
      a. With reference to Easter.
      b. With reference to daily living.
II. Lent Holds Out Blessings for Us to See and Possess.
  A. We see Jesus as God incarnate.
    1. The beggar saw this, though blind.
    2. The disciples were shown this by their Lord.
    3. In Lent, through the glory of the cross, we see God incarnate.
  B. We see Jesus as God's gift of Salvation.
    1. He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament.
    2. His life and death give us life and salvation.
    3. His gift of revelation gives us light and knowledge.

RWS

ASH WEDNESDAY: MATTHEW 6:16-21
(FEBRUARY 28, 1979)

Verse 16: Fasting was a part of the religious rites of the Jews. The Mosaic Law prescribed fasting only for the annual festival of the atonement (Lv 16:29; 23:27; Ac 27:9). The Jews fasted also after an appalling disaster (2 Kings 25:25; Jr 41:1ff.). The Pharisees fasted Monday and Thursday each week (Lv 18:12). "The hypocrites": Jesus has the Pharisees in view. They made their fasting another means of self-glorification. "Disfigure their faces": They put on a sad, gloomy, look. Tearing and marking the flesh was forbidden (Lv 19:28; Dt 14:1). The Pharisees disfigured their faces by covering them with ashes, by not washing, or by covering a part of the face or head. "Their reward": They received the praise of men. They could expect nothing from the Lord. Verse 17: Anointing was a sign of joy. Anointing and washing were everyday forms of cleanliness. A mere outward show of repentance without change of heart does not befit the followers of Christ. It is the heart which should feel sorrow and humility, not the face. Verse 18: Unseen by human eye, our God sees in secret; His eyes pass by nothing (Ps 139:1). "Reward them openly": Perhaps this refers to judgement day (Mt 5:12); but certainly the expression is not restricted to that day. God rewards with the gifts He alone can give, forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Verse 19: Jesus turns to the subject of hoarding. The Pharisees devoured widows' houses (Mt 23:14). "Moth and rust": Any power that eats or corrodes. "Thieves break through," literally, "dig through": It was comparatively easy where houses were made of mud and semi-dried brick. Verse 20: The treasures are to be of the right kind. The treasures of the Christian are even now safely included in God's Word, and their fulness will be realized in heaven (1 Pe 1:4; 2 Tm 1:12,14). The treasures are the kingdom and all its blessings: righteousness, peace, joy, sonship, heaven.

A God-Pleasing Preparation for Lent

I. Manifest genuine penitence.
  A. False penitence.
    1. The Pharisees fasted to be seen of men.
    2. They had their reward.
      a. They won the praise of men.
      b. They lost the praise of God.
  B. True penitence
    1. Recognizes one's sinfulness before God.
    2. Confesses one's sinfulness to God (Ps 32; 51).
    3. Pleads for God's mercy (Lk 18:13; Cf. Introit).
    4. Receives the gracious forgiveness of God (Is 1:18; Jn 8:11; 1 Jn 1:9).

    Application: The collect for Ash Wednesday.

II. Concentrate on the true riches.
  A. Not on the perishable riches of the world.
    1. Money is good, unless we make it a god.
    2. It is folly to make money a god.
      a. It can be taken from us.
      b. A heart set on money is not set on God (e.g., Solomon, the rich fool, Mt. 6:24).
  B. On the imperishable riches of heaven.
    1. Christ won the treasures of heaven for us.
      a. He kept God's Law in our stead (Ga 4:14).
      b. He paid the debt for our sin (Is 53; Jn 3:17; 2 Cor 5:19; He 9:12).
    2. Christ gives the treasures of heaven to us.
      a. Peace with God (Ro 5:1).
      b. Sonship (Eph 2:19; 1 Jn 3:1).

c. Eternal life (Jn 3:16; I Pe 1:3-4).
3. These treasures are ours by faith (Ro 4:5; Jn 11:25).

For a God-pleasing observance of Lent, let us keep one eye on ourselves to recognize our sinfulness; the other on Christ, to thank Him for winning for us the treasures of heaven.

HJE

INVOCAVIT. THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT: MATTHEW 4:1-11 (MARCH 4, 1979)

Verse 1: At His baptism, Jesus entered formally upon His work as our Prophet, Priest, and King. In His temptation he demonstrates that He is a faithful servant. At His baptism He was endowed with the power of the Holy Spirit; in His temptation He used that power. He, the second Adam, was tempted of the devil, but emerged as the Victor. The victory was a part of His mediatorial work, for He kept God's Law perfectly for us and in our stead. "Into the wilderness": He was to struggle alone. The temptation continued through the forty days; the three temptations specifically cited were the culmination (Mk 1:12-13). Verse 3: This was a cosmic struggle between the Prince of Light and the prince of darkness (He 5:8) for the souls of men. Verses 3-4: The first temptation was to doubt God's provident care. Jesus went to a clear word of Scripture for His reply, (Dt 8:3). He trusted the Word and promises of God. Verses 5-7: The second temptation was one to instant acclaim—without the cross. The devil garbled Ps 91:11-12, omitting "in all thy ways." Luke places this temptation last (Lk 4:1-13). Jesus' response indicates that the proposition was to tempt God (Dt 6:16). Verses 8-10: The third temptation was the offer of the world—without the cross. The devil was bargaining with stolen goods, for the earth is the Lord's (Ps 24:1; 50:12). The temptation was on to blatant apostasy. Jesus responded again with a clear Word of Scripture (Dt 6:13). Verse 11: The devil left Jesus, only to return again and again, for Christ was tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin (He 4:15). He kept God's Law perfectly for us and our salvation. The devil tempts us, too, to doubt God's care, rashly to presume on God's providence, and to gain the world at the price of apostasy. Our only but sure defense is the clear Word of God.

Introduction: Temptation is as old as man and as new as this very hour. Through the fall of man in the first temptation, the devil gained control over mankind. To break that death grip, God promised to send His Son to crush the serpent's head (Gn 3:15; Ga 4:4).

Christ's Victory over Temptation

I. He conquered the devil for us.
  A. The devil approached Jesus.
    1. Immediately after Christ formally entered upon His redemptive work.
    2. The purpose of the devil was to thwart Christ's Messianic work.
  B. There were three temptations.
    1. To distrust God.
    2. To presume on God and thus to tempt Him.
    3. To gain the world without the cross.
  C. Jesus responded with the weapon of the Word.
    1. He would trust the promises of God even though hungry.
    2. He would not tempt God by needlessly exposing Himself to danger.

3. He would worship only God and do His will.

D. Christ emerges the Victor over Satan.
1. Satan leaves defeated.
2. Christ's victory is His victory for us.
a. He remains sinless (He 7:26).
b. This is part of His redemptive work (Ga 4:4; He 4:15). Christ's victory is great comfort for us. When tempted to despair, we can point to Christ who has kept the Law for us.

II. Christ is our example.
A. We face the tempter every day (1 Pe 5:8; Eph 6:12).
B. The devil employs the same tactics.
1. He tempts us to distrust God (cf. the Children of Israel).
2. He tempts us to tempt God by toying with God's commands.
3. He tempts us to worship him (cf. Judas, Demas).
C. The Word, the weapon of our warfare.
1. To hurl the Word at Satan is our best defense (Eph 6:13-17).
2. The Word is also the source of spiritual strength (Jn 8:31-32; 1 Pe 2:2).

Let us take comfort in Christ's victory over the devil and follow His example in the temptations that beset us. (The collect may be used as a concluding prayer.)

HJE

REMINISCERE, THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT: MATTHEW 15:21-28 (MARCH 11, 1979)

Verse 21: Jesus leaves Capernaum for the borders of Tyre and Sidon. These cities were the capitals of Phoenicia. There the people worshipped Baal and Ashtoreth. Verse 22: It is significant that the woman should address Jesus in the way she does. "Lord" is a divine name; "Son of David" refers to the Messiah. "Have mercy on me": This woman identified with her daughter's illness. She did not dictate how Jesus should help. She asked only for mercy. Verse 23: The first rebuff was the silence of Jesus. The second was the request of the disciples, "Send her away." They asked Jesus to dismiss her by granting her petition. Verse 24: "The lost sheep of the house of Israel" were the people to whom Jesus confined His earthly ministry (Mt 10:5-6). Through the apostles the kingdom was to come also to the Gentiles. Luther says that Christ is nowhere painted as harsh as here. Verse 25: She grew bolder as a suppliant. She fell at His feet. Verse 26: The children to whom Jesus referred are the children of the kingdom (Mt 8:12). "Dogs": In the East dogs have access to the rooms and eat what drops or is thrown to them. The third rebuff was to compare this woman to a dog. Verse 27: The woman turns Christ's words against Him. She says: "Give the children the bread; I'll be content with the crumbs." Verse 28: At no one's faith did Jesus ever express surprise except at that of this woman and that of the centurion (Mt 8:10), both Gentiles. Luther: "When we firmly cling to the *yes*, then it must finally be *yes* and not *no*."

Introduction: Faith is not only a knowledge of God and His promises; it is also the firm confidence that prompts us to act on the promises of God.

The Marks of a Great Faith

I. Faith goes to Christ in time of need.
A. This woman had a great need.

B. She went to Jesus in faith, acknowledging Him to be the Lord and the Son of David, the promised Messiah.
C. She pleaded for mercy (cf. the introit).
D. How much more reason we have to go to Christ in time of need.
1. We have needs, temporal and spiritual, our own and the needs of others.
2. We know so much about God.
a. His love for us, manifested in the cross of Christ, Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn 4:9.
b. His power, manifested in creation and in the miracles of Christ, Mt 28:18; Lk 1:37 (cf. the gradual).
c. His wisdom, Ps 139:1.
3. He invites us to come to Him and promises to hear us, Mt 15:7; Jn 16:24.

What wings all this knowledge of God ought to give to our faith. Let us join the woman in her plea, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David" (cf. introit).

II. Faith persists in spite of rebuffs.
A. This woman persisted.
1. The rebuffs.
a. Jesus' silence.
b. "Send her away."
c. "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."
d. "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs."
2. Her undaunted persistence.
a. She continued to plead for help.
b. She was content with the crumbs of His mercy.
c. Having tested her faith, Jesus granted her request.
B. How much we need a faith which manifests itself in persistent prayer.
1. God tests our faith, too, by His apparent silence, 1 Pe 4:12.
2. At such times, we need to learn the lesson of persistence, Mt 4:7; 2 Cor 12:7-8; Lk 18:1-8.
3. God answers every proper prayer either by giving us what we ask or something better, Mt 7:7-11; Eph 3:20.

Therefore, let us always pray and not faint (cf. the collect).

HJE

OCULI, THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT: LUKE 11:14-28
(MARCH 18, 1979)

Verses 14-15: There were three reactions to the miracle: some wondered; others sought a sign, as though the miracle was not sign enough. Verse 17: Reading the hearts of the Pharisees, Jesus answered. If Jesus were in league with the devil and yet cast out our devils' he would be dividing the devil's kingdom. Verse 19: By condemning Jesus, the Pharisees were condemning their own sons. Cf. Acts 19:13-14. Verse 20: If Christ by the power of God cast out demons, Christ has come as Messiah to bring to people the grace of the Kingdom. Verse 21: The devil was secure until Christ came to destroy his power, Col. 2:15. Verse 23: Men are either for Christ or against Him. One cannot be neutral. Verses 24-16: These words were spoken against the Pharisees with their outward piety but inner wickedness. If a man resolves to rid himself of a bad habit but does not put Christ in his heart by faith, the bad habit soon returns with seven others. The devil loves a vacuum. Christianity calls for repentance and faith of the heart, not simply outward reformation.

Verse 21: Said one, "How blessed a mother to have such a Son." Jesus replies, "Blessed is he who hears the Word of God and keeps it in faith, bringing forth the fruit of good works." Luther says: "Therefore let us thank God for such grace that to aid us He sent His Son against the devil to cast him out, and left His Word with us, through which to this day the kingdom of the devil is destroyed and the kingdom of God is established and increased."

Introduction: When Christ died, He appeared to be the victim; but in reality he was the victor.

A Greater than Satan is Here

I. He comes to destroy the power of Satan.
  A. He is not in league with the devil.
    1. If He were, Satan's kingdom would be divided.
    2. Condemning Jesus, the Pharisees condemned their sons.
  B. Christ came to destroy the power of Satan.
    1. Satan gained control of mankind because of sin, Rm 5:12.
    2. Christ destroyed the power of Satan, Gn 3:15; He 2:14-15; Jn 12:3.
      a. He kept God's Law for all men, Ga 4:4.
      b. He paid the debt of man's sin, Rm 5:17-19.
      c. Now we can exalt with Paul, Rm 8:33-34; 1 Cor 15:55-57 (cf. the collect).

II. He invites man to share in His victory.
  A. Neutrality is not good enough, v. 23, Ac 17:32.
  B. Reformation of life is not good enough, vs. 24-26, Rm 3:20.
  C. Saying nice things about Christ is not good enough, v. 27, Mt 7:21.
  D. We need to hear and keep the Word of God.
    1. Hear it in church.
    2. Hear it in our homes.
    3. Keep it in our hearts by faith, Rm 4:5; Rm 5:1-5; Php 1:21; Rm 1:17; Ga 2:20.
    4. Keep it in works of love as the fruit of faith, Jas 1:27; 2:14-17 (cf. Eph 5:1-9).

A greater than Satan is here. Thank God for His victory for us. Live in that victory by faith.

HJE

LAETARE, THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT: JOHN 6:1-15
(March 25, 1978)

Verses 1-4: In the ancient church the Lenten season, with its fasting, began on the day after this Sunday. This Sunday, therefore, was generally a day of feasting; hence this Gospel. Thousands went around the coast of the Sea of Galilee, curious to see more miracles. Luke tells us that Jesus spoke to them of the kingdom of God and healed the sick. Verses 5-9: Jesus put the faith of the disciples to the test, although He knew what He would do. As Philip estimated that 200 denarii, about $34, would not be enough; so anxious people calculate how they will meet their physical needs. Philip forgot the wedding at Cana; Christians sometimes forget the power of God and become anxious. The lad gives up his lunch of five barley loaves and two small fish. Verses 10:14: There were 5,000 men, without counting women and children (Mt 14:21). The loaves multiplied under the almighty touch of Jesus. Christ still blesses the loaves we eat (Ps 145:15). Jesus taught proper conservation of food. Infinite resources do not justify wast. "That prophet" was a reference to Deuteronomy

18:15. This prophet was also to be a king (Ps 2:6; Is 9:6 ff; Zch 9:9). The masses saw Jesus only as a bread king.

Introduction: In Lent we concentrate our attention on the passion of our Lord and the spiritual blessings we receive as a result. And so we should. However, a text like ours reminds us that God provides also for our physical needs.

God Gives us Our Daily Bread

I. Therefore, we ought to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.
  A. Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes.
    1. He saw and met the need.
    2. The people had reason to give thanks.
  B. He still provides our bread.
    1. He makes the soil productive.
    2. He gives us health so that we can work.
    3. Therefore we ought to receive our bread with thanksgiving, Ps 103:1.
  C. Cultivating a spirit of thanksgiving keeps us from three deadly sins.
    1. Complaining (cf. the children of Israel).
    2. Pride (cf. the rich fool).
    3. Worry.
      a. Philip faced a real problem.
      b. We do, too, and too often worry.
      c. We should rather remember that God provides, Ps 145:15; Mt 6:34.

II. Therefore we ought to be willing to share our bread.
  A. There are examples of sharing in the text.
    1. The little boy shared his lunch.
    2. Jesus shared with the multitudes.
  B. So also we should share.
    1. Two-thirds of the world goes to bed hungry.
    2. Christians are to share their bread with others, Pr 25:21; Mt 5:42.
    3. We are to support even more freely the extension of Christ's kingdom, Mal 3:10.
  C. To have bread to share, we must gather up the fragments.
    1. Jesus did.
    2. So should we.
      a. How easy it is to waste food and natural resources.
      b. Let us cultivate the habit of conserving.

HJE

JUDICA, THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT: JOHN 8:46-59
(Apr. 1, 1978)

The text is a bitter debate between Jesus and "those Jews who believed in Him" (v. 31). These Jews accepted Christ as the Messiah in a crassly political sense. Their stolid unbelief and the great affirmations of Jesus stand out in bold relief in this text. Verse 46: None could successfully convict Jesus of sin. "The truth": Jesus claimed to be the truth, Jn 14:6. Verse 47: To hear God's words here implies acceptance in faith. He who is "Not of God" is of the devil (v. 44). Verse 48: The Samaritans accepted only the Pentateuch. They were the most hated neighbors of the Jews. Concerning "hast a devil," cf. v. 44. Verse 49: Jesus' whole mission was to honor His Father (cf. Jn 17:4). Verse 50: cf. vs. 28,42; 7:8. Verse 51: "Verily, verily" introduces a new thought. "Keep" means to heed, or to guard. "Not" is very emphatic. "Not see death": cf. Jn 11:25. Verse 52: The rabbis talked about "drinking the cup of death." Verse

55: They did not know the true God. Verse 56: Abraham rejoiced in the promises of the coming Messiah, Gn 15:4; 17:17; 18:10; 22:18; cf. He 11:13. Verse 58: Jesus is the eternal "I am," Ex 3:15; He 1:1-2; Col 1:17; Rm 1:18. Verse 59: How often Jesus would have gathered the Jews, but they would not.

Jesus' Self-Testimony

I. "I say the truth."
  A. Jesus lived according to the truth.
    1. None could accuse Him of sin, v. 46.
    2. He kept the Law for us, Ga 4:4.
  B. He spoke the truth.
    1. He pointed men to Himself as the only Savior, Jn 10:11; Jn 14:6; 7:37; 15:1.
    2. The Jews rejected His words in unbelief, v. 47; Mt 23:37.
    3. Faith takes comfort in the truth, He 1:1-2.

II. "I honor my Father."
  A. "I know Him," v. 55.
    1. "Before Abraham was, I am," v. 58. Christ is eternal.
    2. Christ is one in essence with the Father, v. 55; Jn 10:30; Col 1:19.
  B. He came to honor the Father, v. 49.
    1. The Father willed the world's salvation, Gn 3:15.
    2. Jesus came to carry out the Father's will.
      a. He did not seek His own honor, vs. 50,54; Mt 20:28; Php 2:5-8.
      b. He honored His Father by His sacrificial death, Jn 17:4; 4:34.
      c. Faith rejoices and takes comfort, Rm 8:32-37.

III. "If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death."
  A. Death came by sin, Ge 2:17; Rm 5:21.
  B. Jesus won life by means of His death, Rm 5:17-21; 1 Jn 5:11.
  C. Life is ours by faith, Jn 17:3; 11:25.
    1. To reject Christ is to remain in death, Jn 3:36.
    2. To accept Christ by faith is to have life, 1 Jn 5:12.
      a. Now, Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 3:14.
      b. Eternally, Jn 14:1-6.

HJE

MAUNDY THURSDAY: JOHN 13:1-15
(APRIL 12, 1979)

Verse 1: This is a most solemn moment in Christ's life. Note the intensity of the language in vs. 1-3. Verse 3: The responsibility for the redemption of the world rested on Christ alone. Note the divine self-consciousness of Jesus. Verse 4: "His garments" refers to His outer garments. Verse 6: Peter sees the incongruity of the situation. Verse 7: "Hereafter" means after the resurrection. Verse 8: The washing is symbolical of the washing from sin which Christ alone can give. Verse 9: Peter is quick to catch the symbolical significance of the washing. Verse 10: Here Jesus talks about the daily cleansing necessary for the Christian who daily sins. Verse 11: Judas has spurned the cleansing of Jesus. Verse 15: The disciples are to apply Christ's example of humble service to their own lives.

Introduction: There were feet to be washed that memorable night when Jesus ate the Passover for the last time with His disciples. There are still feet to be washed.

There Are Feet to Be Washed

I. Your feet.
  A. Jesus cleansed Peter.

1. Peter's objection, v. 8.
2. Jesus' reply, v. 8.
3. Peter understands, v. 9.
4. Jesus points to a need for daily cleansing from sin, v. 10.

B. Like Peter we have been cleansed.
1. Christ won cleansing from sin for all the world, v. 1, 1 Jn 1:7; Is 53:5-6; 2 Cor 5:19.
2. The Holy Spirit gives this cleansing to us.
a. In holy baptism, Tt 3:5-7; Ac 2:38; Jn 3:5.
b. In the Word, Rm 1:16; 2 Tm 3:15-17.

C. Yet we need daily cleansing.
1. For we daily sin, Rm 7:18-19.
2. We receive this cleansing by repentance and faith, Rm 4:5; Ps 51.

II. Other people's feet.

A. Jesus gave the disciples an example of humble service.
1. In pride they quarreled about who should be greatest. None was humble enough to assume the servant's role and to wash the other's feet, Lk 22:23-27.
2. Though Christ knew that He was true God, He washed the disciple's feet to give an example of humble service.

B. We, too, need this example of humble service.
1. Our old Adam is proud, wanting to be served, Jas 4:6.
2. But greatness in the Kingdom comes from humble service, Mt 20:26-28; Mt 25:14.
3. Opportunities abound for selfless service.
a. In the home, Eph 5:25-6:4.
b. In the church, Mt 28:18-20.
c. In our city and nation, Jr 29:7.

Thank God that He washes your feet. Take up your basin and towel and wash another's feet. For there are feet to be washed.

HJE

PALM SUNDAY: MATTHEW 21:1-9
(APRIL 8, 1979)

Verse 1: Jesus had probably gone straight from Jericho to Bethany and spent the Sabbath with His friends. Palm Sunday was the day the paschal lamb was selected (Ex 12:3). Matthew mentions only the mother of the foal. Note the omniscience of Jesus; He knows the ass and the colt will be there. Verse 3: Note Jesus' omnipotence: "he will send them." "The Lord" is a divine title. Verse 4: The phrase "through the prophet" refers to Zechariah 9:9 and Isaiah 62:11. Verse 5: The daughter of Zion is the church. "Thy King" means the King of thine own race foretold of the prophets, Is. 9:6. Cf. Mt. 11:29. Coming as King, Christ must ride upon an animal which had never been used, Nu. 19:2; Dt. 21:3. The ass was used by the judges on peaceful errands, Jdg. 5:10; 10:4. Jesus rode upon the foal. Verse 7: "Their clothes" refers to their outer garments. Verse 9: The Passover brought multitudes, as did also the raising of Lazarus, Jn. 12:18. "Hosanna" means "save now." "Son of David" is a Messianic title. "Help the Son of David. May He succeed": The song is taken largely from Psalm 118:25-26, a part of the Hallel (Ps. 113-118), sung at the Passover Festival and the Feast of Tabernacles. "Blessed is he etc.": Blessed be he that cometh with divine mission, sent with the authority of Jehovah.

Hail to the King

I. Hail Him as your King of grace.
  A. He came as the very Son of God.
    1. He is an omniscient King v. 2; Ps 139:1.
    2. He is an omnipotent King, v. 3; Mt 28:18.
  B. He came not to destroy, but to save.
    1. He could well have come to destroy Jerusalem, Jn 3:17; Mt 23:37.
    2. But He came to save, Phil 2:5-8; Jn 10:11; Lk 19:10.
      a. He assumed the world's guilt, Is. 53:5.
      b. He assumed the world's punishment, Is. 53:5.
    3. We are heirs of the blessings He won: peace with God, reconciliation with God, everlasting life, Ro 5:1-5; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14.

And so we sing: "Thousand, thousand thanks shall be Dearest Jesus, unto Thee."

II. Hail Him with praise.
  A. Jerusalem's reception of the King.
    1. The chief priests and scribes were openly hostile.
    2. The masses were indifferent.
    3. How good that some were there to sing His praises and to garland His path.
  B. Christ comes to us today.
    1. Many are hostile or indifferent, Is. 53:1; Jn. 1:5,10-11.
    2. How shall we respond?
      a. Acknowledge Christ as King, Gal. 2:20.
      b. Sing His praises.
        a. In faithful worship, Ps. 100.
        b. In eager mission activity, Mt. 28:18-20; Ac. 1:8.
      c. Give Him your gifts, Mal. 3:10.

HJE

GOOD FRIDAY: JOHN 18-19
(APRIL 13, 1979)

John 18:1-3: Luther remarks the Jesus neither sought the cross, nor did He flee from it; He entered into His passion willingly, but he did not challenge martyrdom. 18:4-9: Jesus voluntarily delivered Himself. 18:14: Caiaphas is an unconscious prophet. John describes the preliminary trial before Annas. The mock trial before Caiaphas is described in Mt. 26:57-68. 18:28-40: Before Pilate, the Jews charged Jesus with being a rebel, dangerous to the Roman government. In their own courts, the charge against Jesus was blasphemy. 18:37: Jesus, the King of truth, establishes and expands His kingdom by means of the Word of truth; He reigns through His Word. 19:1-6: Pilate hoped in vain that the scourging would satisfy the Jews. Cf. Is. 50:6. 19:7-12: Luther states: "Mark here that the innocence of Christ, our Lord, stands for our guilt. For though He was condemned to death being innocent, He yet is guilty before God according to the Law; not for His person, but for our persons." 19:12-16: Pilate is an unjust, unwise, weak judge, who plays havoc with justice and attempts to please men. 19:16-22: Luther states: "Thus Christ was crucified and hanged on the cross as the greatest thief . . . . The innocent Lamb, Christ, must bear and pay strange debts . . . . Our sins they are that lie upon His neck." The superscription was in

Hebrew-Aramaic, spoken by the common people; in Greek, the language of commerce; in Latin the language of court and camp. 19:25-27: The small band under the cross is a picture of the Christian church. 19:28-30: Cf. Ps 69:21, 19:31-37: Luther remarks: "That same blood of Christ is our advocate with God . . . and thus earns for us God's grace, forgiveness of sins, righteousness, salvation." 19:38-42: Jesus Christ by His burial has sanctified the graves of all His saints.

Introduction: On Good Friday we stand on holy ground to hear the final words of the suffering Savior. Without a word of complaint, Jesus in His final hours speaks words which we Christians hold dear.

A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth

I. In His willing surrender.
   A. Betrayed by Judas, Jesus is sought out by the chief priests and scribes, 18:1-7.
   B. Christ willingly surrenders, 18:8.
      1. At other times He escaped from violence.
      2. Now His hour has come to drink the cup of suffering.

II. In His testimony to His innocence.
   A. The mock trial.
      1. The verdict is determined in advance, 18:14.
      2. The charge is blasphemy, Mt. 9:3.
   B. Jesus meekly testifies to His innocence, 18:20,23.
      1. He spoke no evil, 18:23.
      2. The comfort for us in Jesus' innocence.

III. In His claim to be the King of truth.
   A. He was no earthly king, 18:36.
      1. He had no army.
      2. Even Pilate conceded Jesus' innocence of that charge, 18:38; 19:4; 19:6.
   B. But a King of truth He was.
      1. He spoke the truth of the Gospel, pointing men to Himself as the Savior, Jn. 14:6; 11:28.
      2. Everyone that is of the truth hears His voice.

IV. In His final victory.
   A. Rejected by the Jews, given over by Pilate, Jesus bears His cross, 19:17.
   B. From the tree of the cross He speaks.
      1. "Woman, behold thy son," 19:26.
         a. He provides for His mother.
         b. As if to remind us of our responsiblity to our parents.
      2. "I thirst," 19:28.
         a. The intensity of Christ's physical suffering.
         b. The intensity of His soul suffering, burdened with the sins of the world.
      3. "It is finished," 19:30.
         a. The physical suffering was over and friends laid His body to rest.
         b. The enemies were conquered: sin, death, and the devil, I Cor. 15:55-57.
         c. The world was redeemed. I Jn. 1:7; II Cor. 5:19; Jn. 3:16.

HJE

EASTER, THE FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION: MARK 16:1-8 (APRIL 15, 1979)

The anointing of Jesus' body had probably been done hurriedly on Friday evening. The women purchased spices Saturday evening, after the sabbath was passed, to anoint Christ's body more carefully. Setting out early Sunday morning, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. On the way they kept on saying to each other, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" (v 3). They no doubt walked with heavy hearts and downcast eyes. Approaching the tomb and "looking up" (v 4), they saw that the stone had been removed. Entering the ante-chamber of the tomb, they saw an angel. His form (a young man) indicated vigor and strength, and his clothing (a white robe) indicated a heavenly spiritual being. The women were taken completely by surprise. The angel's words (v 6) imply that the women actually entered the inner chamber and saw the place where the Lord had lain. But they were not to keep staring at the empty grave. There was work to be done; they were to go and tell the disciples and especially Peter (perhaps to comfort Peter lest he despair on account of his denial of Christ). The reference to Galilee recalls the words of Jesus before His death (14:28) pointing to Galilee as the main scene of His reappearing to the disciples. The angel's words failed to calm the women. The events had been altogether too much for them. They fled the scene of such surprises, trembling with fear and stupor. They were probably afraid to say anything to anyone lest they would be accused by the Jews of having stolen Christ's body.

The central thought of the text is that the stone was rolled away as proof of the stupendous fact of Christ's resurrection. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would live victoriously by means of Christ's resurrection.

Introduction: As the women journeyed to the tomb on the first Easter morning their overwhelming concern was the stone at the entrance. Would that stone, symbolic of their harrowing loss, also prevent them from their last labor of love? The stone which reminded the women of all that had happened is meaningful also to us. It is this stone that catches our attention as we hear Mark's account of Christ's resurrection. Let us consider

The Great Stone as Our Easter Symbol

I. The stone was a symbol of total defeat.
   A. It shouted that Jesus had made a great effort and failed.
      1. He did not resist His enemies but met them with love and sacrifice.
      2. Yet He failed, for now He was dead and buried.
   B. It cried out the power of sin.
      1. The sin of the world had been cast upon Christ.
      2. But see what sin had done!
   C. It cried out the power of death.
      1. See how death wracked its victim with shame and pain.
      2. See how death destroyed Him.
   D. It cried out the power of Satan and hell.
      1. They had heaped indignity and horror upon Him.
      2. Now He was dead in failure and defeat.

II. The stone is a symbol of everlasting victory.
   A. The stone was rolled away to show that death could not hold Christ.
      1. The grave is empty.
      2. A heavenly messenger announces the fact.
      3. All that Jesus said is true.
   B. The stone is rolled away as a symbol that sin can no longer condemn us.
      1. Our sin has been wiped away.

2. The powers aligned with sin - Satan and hell - have been defeated once and for all.

C. The stone was rolled away as a symbol that sin need no longer control our lives.
1. We do not need to be afraid.
2. We have a mission in life—"Go, tell"—for we too have seen Him and continue to see Him in the means of grace.

The stone was rolled away to show that Christ had risen. It reminds us that the powers which threatened to destroy us have been totally defeated and that we can live as conquerors now and forever.

GA

QUASIMODOGENITI, THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER: JOHN 20:19-31 (APRIL 22, 1979)

The first appearance of Jesus to His disciples (vs 19-23) occurred on the evening of the first Easter Sunday when they had fearfully withdrawn to the safety of an upper room. Not the reports by creditable witnesses but a physical demonstration convinced the disciples of Christ's resurrection. They now put their trust in one who is unquestionably divine, who could give peace and impart the Holy Spirit because He is the Son of God. Now they were also to enter a mission issuing from the mission of the Son. "As the Father has sent me" (perfect tense), "even so I send you" (present tense). And He gave them power for it. "Receive the Holy Spirit" (v 22). This gift, imparting to them a fuller knowledge of the truth, would be completed at Pentecost. Christ would continue to pardon believers and condemn unbelievers through His human messengers.

The importance of faith is brought out in Jesus' second appearance to the disciples one week later (vs 24-29). Probably Thomas was no more skeptical than the others had been before seeing the risen Christ. He demanded practically the same proof that had been given them. But he should have accepted their testimony. He refused to believe on sufficient grounds and demanded a specific kind of proof. Conviction came to Thomas when the Lord appeared and offered him the evidence desired. He cried out in adoring wonder: "My Lord and my God!" This confession is both a culmination of belief and the climax of John's gospel. John at once adds that his purpose in writing has been to bring his readers to just such faith in Christ. John's purpose was not to compose a life of Jesus but to select from a vast array of facts a sufficient number to convince the readers that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of God." The term "Christ" designates the office of the Messiah, and "Son of God" denotes His divine person. John is evidently addressing not chiefly those who are unbelieving but those who already have faith in Christ. Among the miracles related in his Gospel, the resurrection of Jesus is supreme. The signs wrought by Christ, especially His resurrection appearances, enlarge belief if they are carefully studied.

The central thought of the text is that we have no reason to doubt that Jesus is a living and merciful Lord. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would daily move from faithlessness to faith in Christ as their Savior and Lord.

Introduction: In the text we see stubborn unbelief. We would expect that in Christ's enemies. But in an apostle? While Jesus had been with the disciples He had often rebuked their faithlessness. Now He does so again. But we also see bold faith and its accompanying joyful confession. Let us look at what is central in this text, Christ's words,

"Do Not Be Faithless, but Believing"

I. Why Jesus rebukes unbelief.
  A. Unbelief is unreasonable.
    1. Some may think it wise, but to disbelieve facts is foolish.
    2. Thomas had Christ's own word as well as the word of the women and the disciples. So do we.
  B. Unbelief causes grief for others.
    1. The disciples were concerned about Thomas. Christian parents and pastors are concerned about those in unbelief.
    2. Apparently the disciples stayed in Jerusalem on account of Thomas (v 26), not going to Galilee as Jesus had commanded. The Lord's work is still retarded by unbelief.
  C. Unbelief brings loss to the unbeliever himself.
    1. It keeps him from Christian fellowship (v 24).
    2. It deprives him of peace (v 24).
    3. It prevents him from receiving the Holy Spirit (v 22).
    4. It results in eternal damnation.
II. Why Jesus pleads for faith.
  A. The object of faith is firm and true.
    1. Christ, His death, and His resurrection are historical facts.
    2. Christ gave physical proof of His resurrection (vs 20-27).
    3. Christ is witnessed to by the apostles in the word of Scripture.
  B. The means to faith are effective.
    1. Christ comes to us in Word and Sacraments.
    2. The Holy Spirit creates faith and sustains it through the means of grace.
    3. The means of grace, including the Office of the Keys, have been given by Christ to the church on earth.
  C. By faith we claim Christ as our God and Lord.
    1. In Him we have the peace of forgiveness.
    2. In His stead we Christians forgive and retain sins.

There is no excuse for unbelief, no reason for skepticism with regard to Jesus Christ. "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

GA

MISERICORDIAS DOMINI, THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER: JOHN 10:11-16 (APRIL 29, 1979)

The distinguishing characteristic of the Good Shepherd is that He seeks, not His own, but His sheep's welfare. The characteristic of the hireling is that he looks out for himself, abandoning the sheep (Eze 34:1ff; 2 Cor 11:20). In verse 11 (in the original) the word is doubly definite. Jesus is not merely one shepherd among many but *the* shepherd. He is not simply a good shepherd as opposed to others that are less good, but He is *the* Good Shepherd. There is no equal to Him. If the shepherd's love led Him to sacrifice Himself as a ransom (Mt 20:28; 1 Tm 2:6), the attitude of the sheep toward the shepherd is also one of self-surrender.

The relationship between the Good Shepherd and His sheep is analogous to the relationship between the Father and the Son. It is a matter of knowing and being known in love. This relationship has its origin not in the sheep but in the shepherd. He knows them first.

Jesus adds (v 16) that as the Good Shepherd He has other sheep "that are not of this fold." Jesus is looking beyond Israel to the Gentile world. All civic and national barriers are broken down in Christ. Jesus says He has these sheep. In His prophetic vision they are even now His sheep (those in all nations who will come to faith in Him).

The central thought of the text is that Jesus is truly the Good Shepherd. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would be convinced of their importance to Christ.

Introduction: A man with a broken leg lay in a convalescent center. Although the leg was healing slowly, he thought it would never heal and that he would not walk again. He felt nobody cared about him. He wished he could die. We may feel sometimes, for any number of reasons, that we are of no importance to anyone. The text helps us deal with feelings of worthlessness. It tells us that

We Are Very Important to Jesus Christ

I. The first proof of this is that Jesus died for us.
   A. The picture of sheep and of shepherds was a familiar one to Christ's hearers.
      1. There is quite a difference between a good shepherd and a hireling (vs 11-13).
      2. The Jewish religious leaders were the hirelings who did not care about the people's spiritual welfare.
   B. Jesus, unlike the hireling, sacrificed Himself for us.
      1. He would not have had to; He could have overcome His enemies (Mt 26:53).
      2. He went all the way to the cross because He wanted to rescue us.
   C. Only by dying for us could He deliver us from the ravening wolf, Satan.
      1. We could never have made recompense for our sins.
      2. We could never have escaped hell.

Obviously, we are very important to Jesus Christ.

II. The second proof of this is that Jesus cares for us.
   A. He knows us intimately, just as a shepherd can identify each of his sheep (v 14).
      1. We may feel that others cannot know what we are going through in loneliness, grief, or nervous tension.
      2. But Jesus does. "Nobody knows the troubles I've seen. Nobody knows but Jesus."
      3. We do not even know ourselves, although we may think we do. We are not so much in control, so strong, so loving as we think we are. It is not easy to know ourselves as we really are. Remember Willy Loman's epitaph in *Death of a Salesman.* "He never knew who he was."
      4. But Jesus does. That is why He is able to care for us.
   B. He is able to keep all of His sheep (v 16).
      1. Jesus has other sheep besides us. All those who know Him as their shepherd comprise one fold. We cannot see this entire fold now, but on the last day it will be visible to us.
      2. Until that day Jesus empowers us through His Word and Sacraments to hear His voice and to obey Him, to resist the evil within and

without, and to remain in His fold. He will let nothing snatch us out of His hand (v 28).

You may feel at times that you are not important to yourself or to anyone else. Yet you are very important to Jesus Christ. He proved it by dying for you and by caring for you.

GA

JUBILATE, THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER: JOHN 16:16-23 (MAY 6, 1979)

Jesus promises His disciples that they will meet again after a brief period of tribulation in a joy that no one will take away. This promise is an expansion of the words of comfort spoken in chapter 14. Not only does Jesus promise them a Comforter to assist them and to continue His work, but He says that He will see them again after a brief interval. This promise was fulfilled during the forty days between His resurrection and ascension. But it was fulfilled in even greater measure in the joyful contemplation of Him through the work of the Holy Spirit after Pentecost. The perfect fulfillment will come in eternity. But the disciples do not understand what Jesus is saying and cannot reconcile His promise with the words in verse 10. When Jesus observes their questioning and realizes that they want more information, He repeats what He has said about the "little while" and adds that the sorrow which they will experience at His departure will be increased when they see the world rejoice. Yet, in the midst of this sorrow eternal joy will be born within them. Their distress may be compared with the pains of childbirth. The birth of a child is the cause of the mother's anguish, but that birth is also the source of a joy in which the sorrows are forgotten. So Christ's words awaken in the disciples a stronger faith and assurance of future glory. As the Spirit enlightens them, doubts and misgivings will be removed as they turn to the Father in Jesus' name. While Jesus was with them, prayer in His name was unnecessary because they could address Him personally. Only after He had accomplished His redemptive work was the full significance of His name revealed.

The cenral thought of the text is that the Christian's life is a mixture of sorrow and joy. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers experience more real joy in their lives.

Introduction: Joy can be so fleeting. The criticism of others, illness, loneliness, a financial squeeze can squash our joy. That is how it is because we are part of humanity, and what is common to one is common to another. Yet there is a joy which only Christians experience. It is a lasting joy that Jesus describes in our text as

A Joy That No One Will Take Away

I. This joy is preceded by sorrow.
   A. The sorrow is real.
      1. The sorrow of the disciples was the more intense because they did not understand why Christ had to die, because they had forgotten the promise of His resurrection, and because the world rejoiced at His death (v 20).
      2. We experience sorrow when we think of what our sins did to Christ and when we see God's cause seemingly failing in the world.
   B. But the sorrow lasts only a "little while."
      1. For the disciples, it lasted only until they saw Christ again after His resurrection (vs 16-22a).
      2. For us, the sorrow lasts that little while until we see Jesus again with eyes of faith.

3. Our sorrow on earth lasts a little while compared to the eternity of heaven.

C. Like a woman who has delivered a child (v 21), our joy is that much greater when we have first known the sorrow. "Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh" (Lk 6:21).

This joy, preceded by sorrow over our sin and our failures, no one will take from us because

II. This joy has its source in Christ.

A. In Christ we have salvation.

1. Christ left His disciples for a little while that He might return to them as the completer of salvation.
2. His death and resurrection guarantee our forgiveness.
3. He has assured the triumph of His cause (Jn 16:33).

No one can take from us the joy we have as redeemed people.

B. In Christ we have a new relationship with God.

1. God as our Father hears and answers our prayers (vs 23-26).
2. As our Father He cares about us.

No one can take from us the joy we have as children of the heavenly Father.

C. In Christ we have joy forever.

1. When we see Him on the last great day, nothing—Satan, sin, death, the world—will ever again dampen our joy.
2. Then our joy will be perfect.

Although in the Christian life there is more to be glad about than sad about, there is never joy without sorrow. Yet they are holy tears we Christians shed, for they prepare the way for the joy that is in Christ. "Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning" (Ps 30:5). Our joy no one will take away.

GA

CANTATE, THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER: JOHN 16:5-15 (MAY 13, 1979)

"These things" (v 5) refer to the persecutions the disciples will experience after Jesus' departure (vs 2-3). Jesus had not spoken so openly before to them about these persecutions because, while He had been with them, the world's enmity had been directed against Him rather than against the disciples. From now on it would be different. He will return to God, but they must remain in an evil world. However, Christ's departure will bring gain to them, not loss. As the Savior who would suffer, die, rise, and ascend, He would send the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, to comfort them. Jesus goes on to describe the two-fold task of the Holy Spirit, with the world (vs 8-11) and with believers (vs 12-15).

With the world, the task of the Holy Spirit will be to convince people of the sin of unbelief. Since Christ has redeemed the whole world, unbelief is the only sin that excludes sinners from God's kingdom. The Spirit will also convince the world of its need of the righteousness which Jesus demonstrated that He had earned by departing to the Father. This is the only righteousness that counts before God. Finally, the Spirit will convince the world that Satan, to whom the world has been subjected since the fall of Adam, has been utterly defeated through Christ's death and resurrection and deprived of his power to destroy. Through the Word of

Christ the Spirit will make these truths obvious, even though many in the world will refuse to listen.

With the believers, the Spirit will impart a greater understanding of the truths of God through the writings of the apostles whom the Spirit of Truth guided into all the truth, so that in their writings we have God's infallible Word. The Spirit will not act in isolation from God, nor as an emanation from God, nor as a power from God, but as a person sent by the Father and the Son who speaks what he hears within the Godhead as part of the divine counsel and as searcher of the "deep things of God" (1 Cor 2:10). In so doing the Spirit will "glorify" Jesus, enabling Christians to see ever more clearly the centrality of His person and redeeming work.

The central thought of the text is that the Holy Spirit's work is absolutely necessary if people are to become and remain Christians. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would more fully experience the enlightenment of God's Holy Spirit with respect to sin and grace.

Introduction: We confess in the creed, "I believe in the Holy Ghost." Without the Holy Ghost there would be no Christians. Only the Holy Ghost makes Christians and preserves them. If we want to remain Christians, we need to ask God to keep sending us the Holy Spirit. In our text Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to His disciples. The Holy Spirit came to them, and He has come to us. But He needs to keep on coming. And so we ask (*TLH* 225):

"Come, Holy Spirit, Come!"

I. "Convince us of our sin."
   A. It is not easy to be convinced of our sin. We are prone to excuse and to defend it.
   B. It is even harder to be convinced that unbelief is the greatest sin (v 9). We tend to equate knowledge of Christ with faith in Christ.
   C. The Holy Spirit by means of the Law warns us not to take sin lightly.

II. "Then lead to Jesus' blood."
   A. The Holy Spirit by means of the Gospel shows us the righteousness Jesus earned for us by His suffering and death (v 10).
   B. Jesus' blood-bought righteousness makes us acceptable to God. Our own righteousness will not do.

III. "Then to our wondering view reveal the mercies of our God."
   A. What mercy God has shown in breaking Satan's tyranny (v 11)! Satan has been judged, his power destroyed. He cannot harm us.
   B. What mercy to know more fully through the apostolic word the deep things of God (v 13)!
   C. What mercy to have the Holy Spirit glorify Jesus so that the realities of His person and work are clear and vital! What matters is that by the power of the Holy Spirit we have Jesus and with Him, the Father.

Come, Holy Spirit, come! Keep coming through Word and Sacraments. We need you.

GA

ROGATE, THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER: JOHN 16:23-30 (MAY 20, 1979)

"In that day" (v 23), in the period beginning at Christ's resurrection, the disciples would no longer put questions to Christ in the same way they had before because the illumination of the Spirit would make such questioning unnecessary. Futhermore, the disciples would comprehend more fully what it means to pray to

the Father in the name of Jesus. "Hitherto" (v 24), up to the present time, the disciples had not comprehended the fullness of the name of Jesus as an inducement and guarantee of proper prayer. Ask, continuously and habitually (present tense), and you will receive, with the result that your joy will be full. After Christ's resurrection the disciples would not only pray more confidently but understand Christ's words more clearly. While He was with them, Christ often spoke to them "in figures" (v 25). (See chapters 6, 9, 10, 11, 12 where there are numerous condensed utterances in which the words refer to higher things than their ordinary usage did.) Thereby Jesus intended to draw the disciples from their ordinary ideas to the heights of His thought and the mystery of His person. But the hour was coming, the climactic period following His revelation on Pentecost, when the Spirit would convey the meaning also of the parabolic sayings. "In that day" (v 26) the disciples will make petitions, not demands, of Christ, for now they will appreciate Christ's name as the divine equivalent of the work of the high priest on the Day of Atonement. In His name they have access to a heavenly Father. The purpose of Christ's ministry is to bring people by the power of the Spirit's revelation to the Father. There is no need for Christ to make a special prayer to the Father; from the beginning the Father had acted in love in planning salvation through His Son. Jesus' leaving the Father, coming into the world, and the returning to the Father prove the completeness of His sacrifice. Christ is the pledge of the Father's love for Him and for the disciples (v 27). There is no need for Jesus to ask something of the Father because His position as mediator establishes a continual appeal, a continual guarantee of our fellowship with the Father. What Christ says in verse 28 had been said by Him before, but the disciples had never seen it as a whole. The promise made in verse 25 seems already to be fulfilled (v 29). They sensed that Jesus again had known what was in their hearts and had answered their yearnings (v 30). When they had been afraid to ask Him concerning "the little while," He had discerned their yearning and responded to it. In a gush of faith the disciples were sure that Christ's whole ministry and revelation were of God. They had reason to believe in Him and to approach the Father in His name.

The central thought of the text is that we can approach the Father confidently in Jesus' name. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would pray more confidently.

Introduction: Some think prayer is a waste of time. If God does what He intends to do, why pray! Others regard prayer as a form of positive thinking, a psychologically helpful exercise. Many neglect prayer, even though they know God commands it and invites them to pray. They behave like the child who seldom speaks to his father, or is ashamed of him. In the text Jesus encourages us to pray. He tells us

We Can Confidently Approach the Heavenly Father

I. Because the Father loves us.
   A. The proof of His love is in Jesus Christ.
      1. Jesus came from the Father according to an eternal plan (v 28a).
      2. He carried out the redemptive work the Father had stipulated and ascended to the Father again (v 28b).
      3. Jesus' presence before God is a pledge of the love God had for us (v 26).
   B. The Father's love for us is unique.
      1. While God loves the world, he lavishes a special Fatherly love on those who believe in Jesus and love Him (v 27).
      2. When we neglect to pray we despise the Father's love.
      3. It makes no sense not to talk to a God who loves us despite our many failings, also in prayer.

His love is an inducement to pray. We can confidently approach the heavenly Father also because we know He hears us.

II. Because the Father hears us.
  A. He always hears us when we come to Him in Jesus' name.
    1. To pray in Jesus' name means to approach God directly in the confidence that He is our Father on account of Jesus.
    2. The Holy Spirit makes known to us the fullness of that name by which we have the revelation of God (vs 25-26). It is prayer in Jesus' name that marks distinctly Christian prayer.
    3. When we pray in Jesus' name we bring God greetings from His Son. We are so close to Jesus that God hears us just as He hears His own Son.
  B. As He hears, He gives us what we ask (vs 23-24).
    1. Before God, it is Jesus' name that counts.
      a. Our sin often corrupts our prayers so that we ask selfishly and not in Jesus' name.
      b. The Holy Spirit guides us to ask in Jesus' name, that is, according to what Jesus desires (Ro 8:26-27).
    2. We do not receive everything we ask for at once, but we keep on receiving more understanding, patience, strength, and joy.

What an inducement to pray when we know that the Father hears us!

Let us never stop coming confidently to the heavenly Father. We can be sure that He loves us and that He hears us.

GA

EXAUDI, THE SUNDAY AFTER THE ASCENSION: JOHN 15:26-16:4 (MAY 27, 1979)

In the preceding verses (18-25), Jesus speaks of the hatred His own will experience from the world. Now (v 26) He promises the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, as a mighty aid in their conflict against the world's hatred. The Spirit whom Jesus will send from the side of the Father and who proceeds from the Father will bear witness of Jesus and thereby strengthen the disciples to be witnesses for Him.

This verse both the Western and Eastern Church have relied on for their doctrine concerning the procession of the Spirit. The Western Church thought that the whole truth concerning the divinity of the Son was concealed if the *filioque* phrase, "and the Son," were not added to the creed, thereby taking into account also Jn 14:26, "whom the Father will send in my name." Although the Greeks never limited their statement to "proceeding from the Father only," the denial of the *filioque* tends to make Spirit and Son coordinate and subordinate emanations of the Father and thus leads to monarchianism.

The power of the Holy Spirit will counteract the hatred in the world through the witness of the disciples. The disciples will witness to the great deeds of Christ and thereby make an impression on the world. Their experience with Christ from the beginning of His ministry will enable them to give a unique testimony. Jesus indicates in chapter 16:1 that what He had been saying to them about the hatred of the world and the comfort of the Paraclete was intended to prepare them for the bitter persecutions they would experience. As faithful Jews, the disciples at this time would not have expected to be ex-

communicated from the synagogue (v 2). Yet the fanaticism of the world's hatred was shown clearly in the persecution of Stephen. This kind of persecution could easily have destroyed their faith.

Jesus gives the reason (v 3) for the persecution, namely, that the world does not know the Father or Jesus. Jesus had not spoken to them so specifically before about persecution, because He Himself had been with them. It would have been premature to speak of the special help which would be given them by the Holy Spirit to endure.

The central thought of the text is that the Holy Spirit strengthens Christians to witness in a world that hates Christ's cause. The goal of the sermon is the hearers witness to Christ in all they do and say.

Introduction: One cannot be a believer in Christ without being a witness for Christ. If our witness lags, our faith is weak and love is cold. When witnessing ceases our Christianity is dead. Before leaving this world and ascending to heaven Jesus impressed upon His followers that they were to be witnesses. His words apply also to us.

You Also Are Witnesses

I. Witnessing is our calling.
   A. We have been called to bear witness to Christ ("He will bear witness of me, and you also are witnesses").
      1. Who He is and what He did.
      2. On the basis of our knowledge and experience of Christ.
      3. Always according to His Word.
   B. We can witness by the power of the Holy Spirit (v 26).
      1. We sometimes think we cannot witness because we experience in ourselves so much weakness, timidity, tiredness, and indifference.
      2. The Spirit of truth, proceeding from Father and Son, witnesses to us through the infallible writings of the prophets and apostles whose words He provided.
      3. When we use the Word and the Sacraments the Spirit draws us to Christ, establishes us in the truth, and renews us in God's image.

   We can witness because the Spirit-filled Word is near us, in our heart and mouth (Ro 10:8).

   C. We will witness.
      1. Individually by confessing Christ with our mouth and testifying of Him with our actions.
      2. Collectively as members of His Church.

II. Witnessing brings persecution.
   A. Persecution comes because the world does not know Christ (v 3).
      1. It is the proclamation of Christ in contrast to worldly perspectives, goals, and salvation schemes that causes the offense.
      2. Faithfulness to Christ's Word, the Scriptures, is not looked upon favorably by the world but is regarded as narrow dogmatism.
   B. Persecution takes different forms (v 2).
      1. It is almost unbelieveable how Christians have been regarded as the scum of the earth (by the Jewish leaders in Christ's day and by Communist leaders in our day). That should not surprise us, for there is no foolishness people have not believed and no sin they have not regarded as a good work.
      2. Some of the bitterest persecution has been visited by one Christian group (at least in name) upon another.
      3. Even if persecution does not always take severe forms, the world has not changed. If you have sought to be an honest Christian

and have not suffered much, then thank God. He gives each Christian the cross that fits him.

C. Persecution grows or wanes in God's good time.
   1. He controls things in ways that are best for us (vs 1-4).
   2. He knows our weakness and strengthens us.
   3. His help may not always come when we expect, but afterwards we see that He did more than we could ask or think.

There is no more satisfying life than that of a witness for Jesus Christ.

GA

WHITSUNDAY, THE FEAST OF PENTECOST: JOHN 14:23-31
(June 3, 1979)

The question asked by Judas (the Thaddaeus of Mk 3:18 and Mt 10:3) suggests a desire for a great display of power or glory to the world, a display dear to the Jewish heart (v 22). Jesus makes clear (v 23) that the Holy Spirit will manifest Christ only to those whose love is unfeigned. A necessary fruit of love for Jesus is the observance of His Word, which is also the word of the Father. This Word in its entirety, both Law and Gospel, must be kept inwardly in willing obedience of the heart and outwardly in fearless confession. Whoever is not willing to yield such obedience does not love Jesus.

Jesus will be manifested as one in essence with the Father. The Father and the Son will come together in the power of the Spirit and dwell within the believer. The hearts of the believers will become the temple in which the triune God dwells, as the temple in the Old Covenant was the house of God. Here Jesus speaks both of the union of the three persons of God and of the mystical union of God with those who have entered into a relationship of love and obedience to Him.

The Holy Spirit will clarify (v 26) past events and acts of Jesus' life which had been obscure. The disciples would be able to recall what Jesus did and said and would be able to state these truths clearly and objectively to the church. Thus the church for all time would be insured the necessary information and true discernment of matters pertaining to faith. The church has in the apostolic writings a reliable and adequate source of religious information. As the disciples waited for the gift of the Comforter, they would not, however, be without spiritual gifts. Jesus gives them peace (v 27), the peace God had made with mankind in Christ. This objective peace becomes a subjective peace when the Holy Spirit convinces us that God has been reconciled to us through the death and resurrection of Christ. Those who have this peace need not be troubled or afraid. The disciples should not be sorrowful but they should rejoice because Jesus is returning to the Father who is greater than He, insofar as Jesus is a human being. Yet Jesus is returning to the Father in order to receive, according to His human nature, the authority to govern the universe with divine power and majesty. Jesus has informed the disciples of all these truths in advance so that they would not lose courage when He would have to leave them. His departure would soon take place, for Satan, the prince of this world, was approaching with his underlings. Yet these enemies do not exercise power over Him. He went into death of His own free will, conscious of His innocence and in obedience to the Father whom He loved.

The central thought of the text is that the Holy Spirit bestows gifts upon believers. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would more fully appreciate the Spirit's gifts.

Introduction: The gift of tongues, being able to speak different languages,

which the apostles received on the first Pentecost was unusual. There were other unusual gifts which the Spirit bestowed on the apostles, such as the power to heal by command and to raise people from the dead. These gifts are not being given today. This does not mean, however, that the Spirit has ceased giving gifts. The text makes clear that the

The Spirit Gives Gifts to Believers

I. He bestows peace.
  A. A peace the world cannot give (v 27b).
    1. The world's peace is not based on anything permanent.
    2. The world's peace is often a feeling that passes.
  B. A peace based on Christ's atonement.
    1. He conquered Satan, the disturber of our peace (v 30b).
    2. Now our relationship with God is right.
    3. Peace is a state of being rather than a feeling.
  C. A peace which the Holy Spirit brings to our hearts when we believe the Gospel Word.

II. He teaches truth.
  A. By leading us into the Scriptures
    1. He enables us to distinguish true from false doctrine.
    2. He imparts no thought that disagrees with the Word. The prophetic and apostolic Word comprises the whole truth which the Spirit makes known to us.
  B. By bringing to our remembrance what Jesus has said.
    1. He wants most of all to have us center our existence in Christ.
    2. He comforts us and strengthens with the words of grace that Jesus spoke so that we will not be afraid (v 27a). What a teacher the Spirit is!

III. He instills love.
  A. Love for Jesus is shown by keeping His Word (v 23a).
    1. Confessing and teaching all of the inscripturated Word.
    2. Living in accordance with the Word.
  B. When we love Jesus, God Himself lives in us (v 23b).
    1. It is an awesome truth that the great God Himself should be so united with us in love.
    2. There is security in knowing that God's love does not change. Now we can love God because He first loved us.

The Spirit is still giving gifts to Christians. Let us not despise these gifts or quench the Spirit. Let Him give them to us more fully.

GA

Book Reviews

I. Biblical Studies

INTRODUCING THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Clyde Francisco. Revised Edition. Broadman, Nashville, 1977. 315 pages. Cloth. $8.95.

Introducing the Old Testament first appeared in print in 1950 and has been continuously in print for 26 years. In the foreword Dr. Francisco states that he has completely rewritten most of the material and brought it up to date. The purpose of the original edition was not to deal with "the technicalities of scholarly research because such material would have defeated the primary intention of the writing." His purpose was to "acquaint the reader with the essential history and teachings of the Old Testament." According to Francisco the differences between the two editions of the books are the following: "The first writing was more an outline to be filled in by the teacher. In this edition I have sought both to clarify basic issues and to elaborate on the teachings of each book."

On the inside of the jacket the publishers claim that this textbook for theological seminaries "is based on a firm conviction as to the authenticity of the Old Testament, it uses constructively the results of modern scholarship." Francisco, professor of Old Testament at Southern Baptist Seminary since 1944, has capitulated to the higher critical approach relative to Old Testament problems. While he gives the views of conservative Biblical scholarship on the authorship of the Pentateuch and Isaiah, date of the book of Daniel, and other issues which have come to divide scholars into opposing camps, Francisco accepts the conclusions of higher critical scholarship. This appears to be in harmony with the reversal of theological positions once taught at Southern Baptist Seminary, as once held by men like Drs. A. T. Robertson and John R. Sampey. The question of the authorship of Biblical books is unimportant according to Francisco as long as one regards the various Old Testament books as inspired. However, one might ask, what does the higher critical position do for the reliability of various Biblical assertions found in both the Old and New Testaments which ascribe the Pentateuch to Moses? How does one harmonize the authenticity and reliability of the Bible with the concept of contradictions and mistakes?

A helpful feature of this Old Testament introduction is to be found in the summaries of various Biblical characters and outlines of Biblical books.

Raymond F. Surburg

READER'S GUIDE TO THE BIBLE, INCLUDING THE APOCRYPHA. By Richard H. Hiers. Abingdon, Nashville, 1978. 160 pages. Paper. $3.50.

This is a brief guide for the eighty-one books, the sixty-six of the Old and New Testaments together with the fifteen books found in the Protestant version of the Apocrypha. Professor Hiers of the University of Florida at Gainesville has written a compact reference book for non-scholars, which was designed to be descriptive. The *Reader's Guide* embodies numerous Scripture citations and also has introductory essays which pinpoint the main historical events and developments in Israel and the Middle East from 1500 B.C. to A.D. 100. The system of interpretation used in this book has been determined by the presuppositions and conclusions of the historical critical method. Most of the conclusions of higher critical scholarship are found here and would be unacceptable to those who hold to Biblical views on revelation, inspiration, the formation of the canon, and isagogical issues.

Raymond F. Surburg

BETTER BIBLE STUDY. A LAYMAN'S GUIDE TO INTERPRETING AND UNDERSTANDING GOD'S WORD. By A. Berkeley and Alvena M. Mickelsen. G/L Regal Books, Glendale, California, 1977. 176 pages. Paper. $3.50.

The objective of this book is to help non-professional Christians to interpret the Word of God. Much of the material is based upon the book of the male partner of this team, who in 1963 published *Interpreting the Bible* (Eerdmans). In clear and popular language, which the layman can grasp since no technical theological jargon is employed, the authors have discussed those topics which come under the classification of general and special hermeneutics. In sixteen chapters the Mickelsens answer questions like these: How can a person know what the Bible says? How can the untrained Christian avoid the pitfalls of making the Bible say what it does not? In what respects is the Bible different from other books? Why are so many different translations in existence? Why is it necessary to know the history and culture of the period when a Biblical book was written? In addition to answering these questions the technique of interpreting a passage of the Bible is described.

In the area of special hermeneutics there are chapters on the interpretation of prophecy, poetry, apocalyptic, parables, allegory, typology, riddles, and the manner in which New Testament writers quoted the Old Testament. The place of figurative language is also treated. As in *Interpreting the Bible,* the position is advocated that the first three chapters of Genesis are not to be understood literally, thus permitting an interpretation of chapters 1-2 within the context of theistic evolution, the position of the theology department of Wheaton, where A. Michelson taught for years before coming to his present position at Bethel Theological Seminary, in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Now and then assertions are made with which this reviewer disagrees. On page 48 the statement is made: "Today's Christian must base *his* beliefs on the *total* message of the Bible, not on individual verses or phrases chosen because they please him." The command for Christian baptism is based on individual passages. How many passages are there in the New Testament for the descent of Christ into hell? If the writers mean that passages should not be taken out of their context, one would have to agree with the authors.

In the concluding pages the authors caution their readers against the idea that once hermeneutical principles have been mastered it will follow that they will be able always to interpret the Scriptures correctly. "To exercise proper care and balance in understanding the Bible is easier to talk about than it is to practice. This is true of most skills . . . . It takes time and effort to learn to coordinate elements of biblical interpretation involving language, historical backgrounds, culture patterns, figurative language, etc., to arrive at the original meaning for us today. We soon find that understanding the Bible, like swimming, is a personal matter. There is no impersonal way to get its meaning. There are only guide lines to help persons discover meaning" (p. 170).

Pastors will find this a useful book, providing they take into consideration those statements that are subjective and subject to serious challenge.

Raymond F. Surburg

HISTORY OF THE RELIGION OF ISRAEL. FROM BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY TO THE END OF PROPHECY. By Yehezkel Kaufmann. Ktav Publishing House, New York, 1977. Cloth. 726 pages. $25.00.

This colume is a translation by C. W. Efrovmson of Butler University of Volume IV: Book 1 of the four-volume *History of the Religion of Israel* (in Hebrew) by Yehezkel Kaufmann (Tel Aviv: Bialik Institute-Dvir, 1937-1956). There is no second book, because the author never completed his projected history. The University of Chicago's *The Religion of Israel, from Its Begin-*

nings to the Babylonian Exile (1960) is an abridged translation by Dr. Moshe Greenberg (Hebrew University, Jerusalem) of volumes I-III of the Hebrew original. The publishers claim that *History of the Religion of Israel, Toledot Ha-Emunah Ha-Yisraelit,* is considered by many scholars the greatest work of biblical scholarship of our time.

In general, Kaufmann's approach is that employed by critical scholarship, although he frequently differs from the views put forward by Protestant and Roman Catholic critical scholars. He has the temerity to challenge Wellhausen's Four-Source Documentary Hypothesis. In *The Religion of Israel* Kaufmann writes:

> Wellhausen's arguments complemented each other nicely, and offered what seemed to be a solid foundation upon which to build the house of biblical criticism. Since then, however, both the evidence and the arguments supporting the structure have been called into question and to some extent, even rejected. Yet biblical scholarship, while admitting that the grounds have crumbled away, nevertheless, continues to adhere to its conclusions. The critique of Wellhausen's theory which began some forty years ago has not been consistently carried through its end.

In volume IV Kaufmann starts with the Babylonian capitivity and then discusses the author and contents of Deutero-Isaiah, the decree of Cyrus, the activity of Zerubbabel and the building of the Temple, and the preaching of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. The efforts of Ezra and Nehemiah receive a chapter each. The prophets Obadiah and Malachi are considered the last of the Old Testament prophets. One chapter is devoted to the close of the prophetic movement. The work concludes with a hundred-page chapter treating of the Persian period of Biblical history. There are 12 appendices totalling 84 pages, matching the 12 chapters of the book.

In this fourth volume Professor Kaufmann examines the situation of the exiles in the Babylonian Capitivity and notes how the prediction of Ezekiel that the dry bones would come alive again (ch. 37:3) was fulfilled. He then deals with the development of Israel's religion in Palestine during the Hellenistic period and in doing so provides his readers with detailed discussions of the postexilic prophets.

According to some modern scholars, Israel adopted true monotheism only in the postexilic period. Kaufmann rejects this view. He firmly contends that the Jewish nation accepted monotheism from the very beginning of its existence as a nation. He further claims that the history of post-exilic Israel can be understood only as the history of a people whose very beginnings were monotheistic. Critical as well as conservative scholars will be challenged by the theories and views of this eminent Hebrew scholar.

Raymond F. Surburg

LICHT AUF DEM WEG. LIGHT ON THE PATH. LUMEN SEMITAE. PHOS TAIS TRIBOIS. OR LINETIBAH. By Heinrich Bitzer. Oekummenischer Verlag Dr. R. F. Edel, Marburg an der Lahn, 1969. 395 pages. Cloth. $4.20

This is a handy pocket-size book which is designed as a *Vademecum* for every thorough theologian. It contains for each day of the year, beginning with January 1 and ending with December 31, a Hebrew and a Greek passage of the Bible, which, it is suggested by the author, should be read verbally (better audibly). The passages were selected with care. The inspiration for the book was the widely used and translated devotional booklet *Daily Light on the Daily Path* (published by Samuel Bagster and Sons of London). Important passages of the Bible were chosen and assigned to the 365 days of the year.

Bitzer assures those who will faithfully use this *Vademecum* that, if these words of Holy Writ are read regularly year after year, they will become

familiar with the basic text of Holy Scripture more and more. "He who learns these words by heart will acquire an imperishable treasure of holy words"(p. 11).

While the Greek text is merely printed out, for the Hebrew text there are notes relating to vocabulary and grammar. In these notes the meanings of less common words are given in English, German, and Latin.

The dictionaries of Koehler-Baumgartner (*Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros,* 1953) and Gesenius (*Hebraeisches und Aramaeisches Handwoerterbuch ueber das Alte Testament,* edited by Dr. Franz Buhl, 1921) were used to arrive at the meaning of Hebrew words. However, often references are also made to *Neue Verdeutschung der Schrift* by Martin Buber, who, according to Bitzer as "a born Jew sometimes suggests a surprising but meaningful meaning for difficult words, true to the root-meaning of the word, where Koehler and Gesenius often make a conjecture" (p. 11). For the text of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures the latest editions (up till 1966) of the Priv. Wuertt. Bibelanstalt have been utilized.

Bitzer regrets the fact, as stated by him in his preface, that "good theologians tend to lay aside the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. They may still read the Greek text of the New Testament rather frequently to prepare sermons. But the skill acquired in exegesis over the years and increasing familiarity with recurring passages often leads to neglect of the Greek basic text" (p. 9).

Bitzer believes that the more a pastor allows himself to be detached from the Hebrew and Greek of the Bible, the more he detaches himself from the source of true theology, which is the foundation of a fruitful and blessed ministry.

Those who defend the verbal and plenary inspiration of Holy Writ need to be reminded of the famous statement of Luther made in 1524 in his tract "To the Councillors of all Cities in German States . . . ." (Bitzer, p. 9):

> As dear as the Gospel is to us all, let us as hard contend with its language. For God did not allow his Holy Scriptures to be written alone in the two languages without reason, the Old Testament in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek. Those languages, that God did not despise but chose above all others for his Word, we must also honour above all others . . . Therefore the Hebrew Language is called holy . . . Let the Greek language therefore be called holy, because it was chosen to be the language of the New Testament.

Those who need help with New Testament Greek have at their disposal Fritz Rienecker's *Sprachlicher Schluessel zum Griechischen Neuen Testament,* published by Brunnen-Verlag, Giessen.

Raymond F. Surburg

ISAIAH, AN EXPOSITION. By W. A. Criswell. Zondervan Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1977. 316 pages. Cloth. $9.95.

Dr. Criswell is the pastor of the large First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas. This is his eighteenth book, a number of which purport to be expositions of Biblical books of both the Old and New Testaments. This is no commentary on the Book of Isaiah. It is not a word-by-word examination of the sixty-six chapters of "The Evangelical Prophet." In its 46 messages the reader will find word studies, discussion of the historical setting, provocative analysis, and colorful descriptions of the text.

In some of the addresses there will be found comfort and assurance for the Christian believer; the need for Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world is effectively set forth. Criswell believes in the verbal inerrancy of Holy Scriptures and finds Christ foretold in numerous passages of Isaiah. Criswell holds that the Virgin Birth is announced by the prophet in

Isaiah 7:14 and finds the Savior's work and person foretold and described in the famous Servant Songs of Isaiah.

Unfortunately, Criswell subscribes to the belief that there will be a millennium and to the idea of Christ's return to Palestine to establish an earthly kingdom, a kingdom which Jesus was prevented from establishing in the first century A.D. when the Jews rejected Christ as the promised Messiah of the Old Testament. The interpretation of Old Testament prophecy and Criswell's eschatological teachings are affected by his dispensational hermeneutics. In many places, therefore, the author reads interpretations into the text of Isaiah which are not there.

Raynond F. Surburg

KNOWING THE SCRIPTURE. By R. C. Sproul. Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois 1977. 125 pages. Paper. $3.50.

The author of this volume is theologian-in-residence at Ligonier Valley Study Center (Stahlstown, Pennsylvania), which was founded by Sproul in 1971 and is dedicated to providing biblical and theological instruction to college students and other adults. This center has as its goal to help Christians to continue to grow in their knowledge of God and the Christian faith.

In his preface the author notes that there has been a renewal of interest in the Holy Scriptures. Unfortunately, there has arisen great confusion about what the Bible teaches because there has been little agreement concerning the rudimentary principles of biblical interpretation. "This confusion in the scholarly world has made an impact on the life of the whole church" (p. 11).

With this problem in mind Sproul has written *Knowing the Scripture,* which is comprised of six chapters. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 contain Sproul's system of Biblical interpretation. Chapter 1 discusses the reasons why a person should study the Bible, while chapter 2 endeavors to relate personal Bible study and private interpretation to correct interpretation. In chapter 6 Sproul takes up the need for various tools. He gives his views on the use of translations, annotated Bibles, concordances, the King James Version, and commentaries, and the desirability of studying and using the original languages of Holy Writ.

The author of *Knowing the Scripture* believes the Bible is the inspired Word of God and his hermeneutics reflects his conservative Presbyterian theological stance. The beginner of Bible study will find this a useful volume, and those who have been studying the Bible a long time will discover now and then interesting and helpful insights on certain Biblical passages.

J. I. Packer has written as appreciative foreword, in which he states that this book is characterized by "clarity, common sense, mastery of material and a bubbling enthusiasm which turns the author from a good communicator into a superb one."

Raymond F. Surburg

A LEXICON FOR THE POETICAL BOOKS. By Neal D. Williams. Williams and Watrous Publishing Co., Irving, Texas, 1977. 136 pages. Paper. $4.95.

This lexicon was originally the author's research project for the master's degree at Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas. This book was undertaken because of the need for Hebrew students to have help with the massive Hebrew vocabulary of the poetical books which serves as a deterrent to the reading of the text for many students. It is similar to Ferris L. McDaniel's, *A Readers' Hebrew English Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Like the latter, Williams' *Lexicon* is not designed to replace the large standard lexica. In his introduction Williams describes his procedure as follows:

> To accomplish this goal of this lexicon the author has simply read through the poetical books listing the words verse by verse which occur

less than seventy times in the entire Old Testament. The brief definitions are taken from Brown, Driver and Brigg's, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907) and Koehler and Baumgartner's *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958). Homonyms are recorded with a Roman numeral corresponding to the classification of BDB. The word statistics are taken from Lisowsky's *Konkordanz zum Hebraeischen Alten Testament* (Stuttgart: Württenbergische Bibelanstalt, 1958) and Mandelkern's *Veteris Testamenti Concordantiae: Hebraicae atque Chaldaicae* (Tel Aviv: Sumptibus Schocken Hierosolymis, 1971). However, where BDB differs with these concordances, BDB has been taken as authoritative for the statistic.

Words occurring more than five times have been given at the beginning of the vocabulary for each book under the caption of "special vocabulary," with Psalms being the exception. Concerning the statistics found behind each word Williams states:

> Each word in the text is followed by parentheses enclosing two numbers: The first number gives the frequency of the word in that particular book except the Psalms where the first number records the frequency for only that individual Psalm; The second number records the frequency of the word in the entire Old Testament. Words which occur more than once in a particular verse are immediately followed by parentheses indicating the frequency of the word in that particular verse. An appendix is provided with a list of all words occurring seventy times and over.

Hebrew and Aramaic students in the last fifteen years have been supplied with many excellent helps which it is to be hoped will encourage more reading of the Old Testament Scriptures in the original languages.

Raymond F. Surburg

EBLA TABLETS: SECRETS OF A FORGOTTEN CITY. By Clifford Wilson. Master Books, Division of Creation-Life Publishers, San Diego, 1977. 124 pages. $1.95.

In this volume Dr. Clifford Wilson, for a number of years director of the Australian Institute for Archaeology, relates the story of the finding of the archaeological discoveries at Tell Mardikh in Syria. Between 1964 and 1973 Professor Paolo Matthiae and his team uncovered the remains of the ancient city of Ebla. A 26-line inscription on a male statue, dedicated to Ibbit-Lim, son of Ikris-Hepa, King of Ebla, was found in 1968. The discovery of the Ebla tablets must be reckoned as one of the greatest discoveries of Near Eastern archaeology. For years to come scholars will be studying these tablets, and all their implications will only become evident when much more study will have been devoted to them.

Wilson was prompted to publish this small book because people are asking basic facts about the Ebla tablets, and because of "sensational exaggerations have already appeared. That is unfortunate, and a balanced appraisal is needed" (p. 6). Because of contacts with both Professor Matthiae and Professor Giovanni Pettinato, the epigraphist, Wilson was in a position to give an estimate of the importance of these major finds. The materials in this book are based, according to Wilson, on articles by Pettinato which have appeared in *The Biblical Archaeologist* (May, 1976), on reports in other journals, on public lectures given by Pettinato, and on conversations with Dr. Noel Freedman.

In this ten-chapter book the reader will be able to learn about the history of the finds, and what the Ebla tablets are all about. In a number of chapters the implications for ancient history are stated. Because of the Tell Mardikh finds the *New Cambridge Ancient History* is no longer up-to-date in all of its

statements. Not only does Wilson acquaint his readers with the history and archaeological data about this third great center of political and cultural influence in the Ancient Near East, but also he shows how the newer finds from Ebla do not support previous critical assumptions about the Book of Genesis.

Raymond F. Surburg

A SYMPOSIUM ON CREATION, VI. Donald W. Patten, editor. Pacific Meridian Publishing Company, Seattle, Washington, 1977 153 pages. Paper. $3.95.

This is the sixth in the series entitled *A Symposium on Creation.* The following scholars are contributors to this volume: John H. Fermor, Donald W. Patten, Charles McDowell, William I. Thompson III, Bolton Davidheiser, and C. E. Allan Turner. A forword was penned by W. Dennis Burrowes, secretary of the North American Creation Movement, Victoria, British Columbia.

The one feature that all writers of Symposium VI have in common is that they are creationists who hold the Bible to be God's infallible revelation. In the essays presented to the public, the reader will find attempts at scientific inquiry that involve a wide range of disciplines with special attention given to astrophysics, climatology, physical geography, and history.

Dr. John Fermor in his essay, "Paleoclimatology and Infrared Radiation Traps" examines the canopy concepts of Whitcomb and Morris and of D. W. Patten, and gives an alternate view which he believes meets the geographical difficulties which he feels adhere to earlier models. Fermor allows for rain before the Flood, which the other models of the "greenhouse effect" do not.

Donald Patten's "millennial clematology" rests upon the assumption that Christ will reign visibly upon earth for a thousand years. Patten employs Exekiel 47:1-12 in his description of the climatological changes which supposedly will take place when the millennium arrives. Lutherans, of course, reject the millennialist views of Scofield and others.

The third article of the symposium, written by Dr. Charles McDowell, is an excursion into the history of science. In "Catastrophism and Puritan Thought: The Newton Era," McDowell treats of the development of the opposing ideas of catastrophism and deism in Puritan England and on the European continent. McDowell sheds new light on the great Newton-Leibnitz debate concerning calculus. There is also a discussion of the reference to the moons of Mars in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels.*

Dr. Davidheiser gives an overview of the life and scientific views of Louis Agassiz. The latter was a great opponent of the views of Charles Darwin. He realized what the implications were of mega-evolution, the theory at the heart of Darwinianism. Agassiz, although a vigorous opponent of Darwin would not be classified as a strict creationist. Darwin's views won out over those of Agassiz in the scientific community of the latter half of the nineteenth century. Davidheiser has shown the inconsistencies and contradictions in the views advocated by Agassiz. It is difficult to exactly ascertain where the Agassiz stood in the creation-evolution controversy. Relative to Agassiz, "we do not know for sure on what spiritual grounds he fought the battle, whether on the grounds of religious respectability or true Christian conviction" (Burrows, p. 13).

The final essay is by Dr. C. E. Allan Turner, entitled "The Place of Trace Elements in the Creation." Dr. Turner deals with the effects of the presence (or absence) of a wide variety of metals and nonmetals in relation to plant and animal physiology. He points out that with our increase of knowledge the list of useful and necessary metals grows. Those interested in biochemistry will be challenged by this contribution.

Raymond F. Surburg

FOSSILS IN FOCUS. By J. Kerby Anderson and Harold G. Coffin. With a Response be Russell L. Mixter. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, and Probe Ministeries International, Richardson, Texas, 1977. 95 pages. Paper. $2.95.

This is one of a number of books that comprise what is to be known as "The Curriculum Word View" of the Christian Free University Curriculum, which affirms "the world view that reality includes both material and immaterial realms, that man and nature are finite and created." The Christian Free University Curriculum is a continuing series of monographs within 15 different academic areas of interest: (1) History; (2) Issues; (3) Life Sciences; (4) Political Science; (5) Business; (6) Physical Sciences; (7) Literature; (8) Philosophy; (9) Education; (10) Religion; (11) Sociology; (12) Psychology; (13) Anthropology; (14) Earth Sciences; and (15) Fine Arts.

Fossils in Focus is a book in the "Earth Sciences Series." The authors of this monograph show a wide acquaintance with the scientific literature on the occurrence of fossils throughout the world. On the basis of their examination they believe that the paeleontological evidence supports the belief that the gaps in the paeleontological record are real and that there is no evidence for missing links, for hybrid animals which would bridge the zoological gaps. Anderson and Coffin contend that there is no continuity of fossils from one kind to another. Of their presentation, Russell Mixter in his response asserts: "Here is a well-documented discussion of the creationist's position."

The authors do not argue for "the fixity of species," a notion espoused by Linnaeus, but allow "for change possible in limits. In fact, as we look at the fossil record, the results from genetic research, and the natural world about us, we are led to believe that the truth lies between the two extremes of fixity of species and limited change." The word min in such passages as Genesis 1:21 has wrongly been identified with species. It includes a larger classification of animals or plants. Microevolution is possible within the "kind," (as the word *min* is usually translated).

Raymond F. Surburg

THE TABERNACLE OF GOD IN THE WILDERNESS OF SINAI. By Paul F. Kiene. Translated by John S. Crandall. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1977. 176 pages. Cloth. $14.96.

This is a translation of a book published in German as *Das Heiligtum Gottes in der Wueste* (1976). The volume is an art volume, in which there are 34 beautifully colored illustrations of the tabernacle and its appurtenances. Kiene's volume contains five chapters. An introductory chapter, in which there is a discussion of the tent of meeting, its spiritual meaning as the dwelling place of God, its place in the wilderness wanderings of Israel, the heave offering and its fourteen components, is followed by chapters devoted to the outer court (ch. 2), the tabernacle structure (ch. 3), the Holy place (ch. 4), and the Holy of Holies (ch. 5).

The exegetical literature of the Old Testament does not include many volumes treating of the tabernacle, the first place of public worship for God's chosen people. In his bibliography Kiene seems to know of only eight books written about the tabernacle from a conservative viewpoint.

Kiene starts from the New Testament teaching that the Spirit of Christ was active in the Old Testament prophets who foretold the sufferings, death, and glorification of Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah of the Old Testament (1 Peter 1:11). In the preface the author states the hermeneutical approach which he follows throughout this useful and informative study of the tabernacle:

> May His wisdom lead us as we elucidate the types of Christ in the tabernacle. This holy, unique construction speaks of Him in all of its details. Throughout we see the magnificent greatness of His wonderful person with wonder and amazement. At the same time we also see how

His perfect work of salvation is prophetically represented in the sacrificial acts. Thus, the Word of God by the mouth of the prophet is fulfilled: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:10).

In order to carry out the objective to see in *all details* of the tabernacle Christ's humiliation and exaltation, Kiene is forced to resort to excessive typologizing and even to deploy at times what unfortunately is a wrong form of numerics. This reviewer is in sympathy with Kiene's basic hermeneutical presupposition that many of the features of Israel's cultus were designed by the Holy Spirit to predict by means of types the essential plan of salvation. As Christ said to his contemporaries: "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they that testify of me" (John 5:39). The Epistle to the Hebrews clearly teaches that certain aspects of the Old Testament cultus typified facts about the person and ministry of Jesus Christ. However, the exposition of Kiene is characterized by a typologizing that amounts to allegorization, in come cases of the wildest and strangest sort. While he does this in the interest of showing how Christ permeates the entire Old Testament, still in many cases his interpretation is unsound. Any person reading through the entire volume will find many Bible passages quoted, and on the basis of these he will learn or be reminded of the essentials of the plan of salvation as given by God in the Old and New Testament Scriptures. And that is worthwhile!

Raymond F. Surburg

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY. VOLUME TWO:NEW TESTAMENT. By Chester K. Lehman. Harold Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1974. 566 pages. Cloth. $18.95.

This volume is a companion to *Biblical Theology: Old Testament* and thus completes what might be termed the *magum opus* of one of the ourstanding theologians of the Mennonite Church. The same approach to the Word of God which characterized the author's Old Testament volume also characterizes his New Testament theology, in which the theological teachings of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament canon are discussed under four major divisions. In Part One "The Earthly Ministry of Christ" is presented. In Part Two "The Beginning of Jesus' Rule as the Enthroned Lord and Christ" is explicated. In this part Lehman treats the teachings of the emerging church as reflected in the Epistle of James, followed by the theology of Peter and Jude. In Part Three the theology of Paul is discussed in nearly 150 pages of text. In Part Four the author concludes with the theology of the Letter to the Hebrews and of the Johannine Writings.

Lehman correctly holds that the New Testament stands as the glorious climax of God's revelation to man. The Four Gospels are rightly held to be of great value because they set forth the life, teachings and the mighty works of God's Son. The Book of Acts sets forth the activities of the Holy Spirit, who blessed the missionary efforts of Peter, John, Paul, and other Christians as they carried out the great commission of Christ to evangelize the world. In the letters of Paul, Peter, James, and Jude we have apostolic messages and teachings which are nothing less than God's revelation to all mankind unto the end of this age. The reader will quickly discover that Lehman accepts a high view of the Bible, espouses a high Christology, and employs a Christocentic hermeneutic. President Augsburger of Eastern Mennonite College and Eastern Mennonite Seminary informs the reader in the introduction that "true to his Anabaptist faith, seeing the whole Bible as the Word of God written, he sees the New Testament on a higher level than the Old Testament as God's full Word in Christ."

The bibliographical data at the end of each chapter as well as the selected bibliography (pp. 538-544) show that Lehman was acquainted with all schools of thought as they have been reflected in the last one hundred years in the discipline of New Testament theology. Although he is well acquainted with the

views of Bultmann, Conzelmann, Jeremias, Bornkamm, Dibelius, Burrows, Barr, Ogden, Perrin, Barclay, and others he does not accept their anti-Scriptural interpretations. The newer forms of the historical-critical method, such as form criticism, redaction criticism, content criticism, and structural criticism are not utilized; otherwise the sound Biblical position worked out in this book would have been impossible.

In distinction from other New Testament theologies, Lehman correctly places the Four Gospels and the epistolary literature of the New Testament on the same level. Lehman holds that "the nature of the kerygma and the full development of the theological understandings of the person of Christ is both confirmed and expanded is such great passages as Philippians 2" (p. 9).

Since the author has set out to write a New Testament theology which reflects the Anabaptist stance, it stands to reason that those who do not share the distinctive theological positions of Anabaptism will not accept everything which Lehman says here. However, in a time when most churches of Christendom no longer teach and defend their historic theological positions, one must admire a theologian who unabashedly sets forth his demoninations's historic stance. This book should aid seminarians, pastors, and graduate students in their study of that portion of the written revelation of God which is the climax of all that God has recorded for the salvation and guidance of mankind.

Raymond F. Surburg

A POPULAR GUIDE TO NEW TESTAMENT CRITICISM. By H. P. Hamann. Concordia Publishing House, 1977. 78 pages. Paper $2.95.

This volume by Dr. H. P. Hamann, Professor of New Testament and vice president of Luther Theological Seminary, Adelaide, Australia, purports to be a conservative approach to the problems of Biblical interpretation. This means that the Australian theologian considers the Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God and that he accepts the traditional doctrines and teachings derived from the Old and New Testaments as the revelation of God.

The area of theological concern of this book is an important one. The author wishes to initiate the layman into the subject of New Testament criticism, which involves the use of the following types of criticism: textual, literary, form, content, and redaction. The employment of these various kinds of criticism is at the heart of the current debate in Biblical studies. The consistent employment of a radical kind of literary criticism has in the past led to radical conclusions relative to the reliability and authenticity of the message of the New Testament. Add to this kind of criticism those of form, redaction, and content critisisms and the result is the emergence of views which are totally different from those expressed in the three ecumenical creeds of Christendom as well as from the doctrines set forth in the distinctive creeds of historic Lutheranism.

Throughout the book Hamann endeavors to treat honestly and clearly the views of modern literary critics. First he sets forth the principles of textual criticism, the problem of variant readings and the search for a reliable text. Then he presents a description of form criticism, gives the views held by some of its outstanding proponents, and provides his personal evaluation of them. The same is done for redaction and content criticisms. Hamann finds serious flaws in the methodology and conclusions of the proponents of literary, form, and redaction criticisms and frankly states what they are, because of the danger that they may lead to the rejection of basic Christian doctrines.

Not all conservative scholars will agree with all assertions appearing in this book. For example, questioning the Petrine authorship of 2 Peter makes New Testament book a false writing. If the latter were the case, the book could never be used as Scripture in our churches.

Raymond F. Surburg

II. Theological-Historical Studies

OUR COSMIC JOURNEY. By Hans Schwarz. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1977. 379 pages. Paper. $7.95.

This volume by Hans Schwarz, a professor of systematic theology at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, is described as a "Christian Anthropology in the Light of Current Trends in the Sciences, Philosophy and Theology." As the subtitle indicates, *Our Cosmic Journey* embodies information obtained from the fields of physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, behavioral psychology, psychiatry, and theology to shed new light on creation and human nature. A look at the many references alluding to the scholarly literature in these different scientific disciplines will show that this is a scholarly work, clearly written, and a literary work covering a wide range of subject matter.

Professor Schwarz wants to help Christian readers make up their minds as to how traditional Christian anthropology relates to modern thought. The present situation in the world greatly disturbs the author, who quotes Martin Heidegger, who in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, wrote: "No other epoch has accumulated so great and so varied a store of knowledge concerning man as the present one: . . . But also, no epoch is less sure of its knowledge of what man is than the present one" (p. 9). In this situation, says Schwarz, "it is imperative to rediscover the origin, direction and goal of *Our Cosmic Journey*. The most appropriate way for self-assessment is to tap the immense resources that science has uncovered concerning the origin and history of the universe, of life within the universe, and of our own kind. We must also listen to the important things science has to say about our potential for self-improvement, the peculiarities of human behavior and its possible modification, and our psychic potential for good or evil" (p. 10). Schwarz endeavors to relate the findings of the sciences to the traditional doctrines of creation, sin, and divine providence. According to the author, this is necessary because "such theological reflection upon the findings of the life sciences is even more necessary, since the life sciences can only project a warranted future as an extrapolation of the past. Since the future of the stream of life is basically unpredictable, such extrapolations cannot suffice as a trustworthy foundation on which to build the future" (p. 10).

Traditional Biblical anthropology dealt with the following topics: creation of man, the nature of man, the primeval state of man, the propagation of human beings, the fall of man, hereditary guilt and sin, actual sins, the state of wrath, the Ten Commandments, universal condemnation, the material of good and evil acts, divine government of evil, matrimony, civil government, laws of nature and temporal death. The creation of the universe and of this earth is traditionally discussed under cosmology.

Our Cosmic Journey includes items from the *loci* of cosmology and eschatology, and so does not strictly limit itself to what traditional theology defined as the scope of anthropology. The Bible seems not to have the same authority for the author as it did for older dogmaticians of churches now affiliated with the TALC, such as Reu, Lenski, Klotsche, Fritschl, Lindberg, Norlie, Sasse, Neve, and Hove. While Schwarz does refer to numerous passages from the Old and New Testaments, in his interpretation he follows the conclusions of the historical-critical method. The Bible and the teachings of the Bible are referred to by means of the unsatisfactory term, "the Judaeo-Christian tradition." The Lutheran Confessions are never quoted and are completely ignored, a fact which should tell conservative Lutherans something about the author's theological orientation.

Raymond F. Surburg

AUTHORITY AND OBEDIENCE IN THE CHURCH. By Milton L. Rudnick. Lutheran Education Association, Chicago, 1977. 100 pages. Paper. $3.95.

A STUDY GUIDE FOR MILTON RUDNICK'S AUTHORITY AND OBEDIENCE IN THE CHURCH. By Kenneth Heinitz. Lutheran Education Association, Chicago, 1977. 20. Paper. 50¢.

This is the 1977 yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association, written by the Rev. Dr. Milton Rudnick of Concordia College, St. Paul, Minnesota. The motivation for this theological treatise was the current controversy in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. This study, says Rudnick, is to focus on authority and obedience in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, a church body which is "in the throes of an authority crisis." The authority and obedience issue, however, is not the only one convulsing the LC-MS. This study avoids taking sides in the controversies now dividing the Synod. In the preface Rudnick states his purpose in publishing this study as follows (p. v):

> I have chosen to focus attention, not on current arguments about church authority in the LC-MS, but rather on what Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions have to say on the subject. I have attempted to state as clearly and simply as possible, not so much for the theologian as for the Lutheran educator and pastor, as well as for the concerned lay person: (1) what the four basic kinds of church authority are, (2) how they relate to each other, and (3) the form of obedience appropriate to each.

As Rudnick utilizes the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions he identifies four kinds of church authority and sets forth their relationship to each other and to authority. This 100-page study has five chapters: Chapter I, "Introduction," Chapter II, "Evangelical Authority," Chapter III, "Confessional Authority," Chapter IV, "Disciplinary Authority," and Chapter V, "Organizational Authority." These chapters are followed by a brief epilogue.

Concerning this book the St. Paul professor informs his readership: "This book is to be a discussion rather than a definitive interpretation." To have a well-functioning church body this reviewer agrees with the author that "as teachers of the church, we are responsible for interpreting the church to those whom we serve, as well as to others." The author is also correct when he writes: "Crises in authority and obedience are not confined to the Missouri Synod. The Biblical and theological insights which are the heart of this presentation may also ring true to those of other confessional and ecclesiastical commitments and prove useful to them in responding to their own situations" (p. v).

Neither the "moderates" nor those espousing the historic doctrinal stance of the LC-MS will have much quarrel with these discussions of authority and obedience. Both sides in the controversy can employ the argumentation against the other party and claim that the other side needs to have action taken against it, because of its false position. One thing is certain: "A house divided against itself cannot stand." The polarization that exists in the LC-MS and the divergent theological views relative to what is involved in the authority of the Bible and what in the latter is binding upon human conscience can only lead to further confusion of the laity and frustration of the clergy. Under existing circumstances, and with not much prospect of improvement, the name "Ichabod" might well be given to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod., when its present state is compared with the doctrinal unity which characterized its history for over a century.

Raymond F. Surburg

BIBLICAL AUTHORITY. Edited by Jack Rogers. Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1977. 196 pages. Paper. $4.50.

This book would not have been written were it not for Harold Lindsell's

book, *The Battle for the Bible,* which dramatically exposed the liberal theology of many so-called Evangelicals concerning Biblical inspiration and inerrancy. Every writer of this symposium appears clearly threatened by Lindsell's expose, although a facade of scholarship and sophistication covers, albeit only superficially, their vulnerability. The discerning reader will readily discover that each of the authors has departed from the classical Protestant Biblical doctrine of inspiration and inerrancy, although he will want to use these venerable terms. Missouri Synod readers will find nothing new in the symposium: the arguments undermining, denying, and obfuscating the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy have all been employed in Missouri circles in the recent past; e.g., but the term "inerrancy" is unclear (Clark Pinnock), that it is a negative term (Berkeley Mickelsen), that we do not have the autographa (Rogers), that the doctrine of inerrancy should not be devisive (Pinnock), that the classical doctrine was inconsistent and self-contradictory (Bernard Ramm), that there has never been "one certain theory (sic!) of inspiration" (Ramm), that Luther taught an existentialistic view of inerrancy (Rogers), that cults and sects representing persons of mediocre education and mind teach verbal inspiration (Ramm), that theologians with a low view of Scripture have written some good things (Ramm), that orthodox Christians have overreacted to liberal assaults against the Bible (David Hubbard), that the Reformed and Lutheran doctrine of inerrancy is rationalistic (Hubbard), that proponents of verbal inspiration have sometimes done bad exegesis (Hubbard), that the doctrine of inerrancy undermines the sufficiency of Scripture (Hubbard), that inerrancy is a secular concept (Hubbard), that the doctrine of Scripture is infallible rather than Scripture itself (Hubbard), that those who hold to the inerrancy of Scripture are really faulting Scripture by defending it (Hubbard). Hubbard seems to argue that every poor piece of exegesis by a fundamentalist or conservative is due to his belief in Biblical inerrancy. The ridiculous chiliasm and dispensationalist aberrations of some fundamentalists have even been laid at the foot of the doctrine of inerrancy.

The purpose of this symposium, apart from answering Lindsell's blasts, is apparently to alter radically the Protestant understanding of Biblical authority without letting the reader know what is happening. And so the authors champion the *sola scriptura* principle, and they lay claim to such popular terms among Evangelicals as inspiration, infallibility, yes, and even inerrancy. We all really agree, they tell us, let us just rally around our consensus, Hubbard says. They want us to believe that they have changed nothing, and the differences between those who believe that they have changed nothing, and the differences between those who believe in inerrancy and those who do not are really not very important.

History is repeating itself. What happened at the St. Louis seminary prior to 1974 is happening at Fuller Seminary today. And it is happening elsewhere among those who call themselves Evangelicals. We can only hope and pray that lay people and pastors all over the country will recognize this and do something about it before it is too late.

Biblical Autnority, edited by Jack Rogers, is a vindication of Harold Lindsell's book, *The Battle for the Bible.* Lindsell was right on target as he analyzed what is going on in evangelical circles today.

Robert Preus

THE CHURCH UNDER SIEGE. By M. A. Smith. Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, England, 1976. 277 pages. Paper. $5.95.

The Church Under Siege is a popular survey of the Church's history from the time of Constantine (early 4th century) to the time of Charlemagne (early 9th century). It is a continuation of an earlier book, *From Christ to Constantine.* Mr. Smith, at present a Baptist minister in Lancashire, is to be

commended for presenting a popular account of this segment of the Church's history. The period of the early Middle Ages is often a neglected period and is generally a *terra incognita* for the lay person and for many clergymen. It is unfortunate, therefore, that the author chose to devote almost two-thirds of his narrative to the period from Constantine to St. Augustine. This period is well-trodden and readily accessible in manifold other works. Because generally neglected, it is the reviewer's opinion that the period from Augustine to Charlemagne (c.450-c.800) deserved a more expanded treatment. Nevertheless, the novice reader can meet here summary discussions of figures rarely met: Salvian, Germanus of Auxerre, Sidonius Apollinaris.

The reason why the early medieval period is often neglected, especially by evangelicals, is, however, reflected in the very thesis of the book. The period from Constantine to Charlemagne is one in which the Church became "debased and mediaevalized" (p. 249). Smith writes (p. 248):

> The contrast between the beginning of our period and the end is most instructive. When Constantine became emperor, the churches were loosely grouped congregations of believers. At the end of the period we have two fairly monolithic systems, the eastern one ruled by the Byzantine emperor . . . the western system centered around the pope of Rome . . . . In Constantine's time, and for a century afterwards, there was a fairly wide spread of education which made theology understandable, and the Christian faith was at least partially a matter of intellectual belief and commitment. By the time of Charlemagne, general culture had become virtually nil. Only the churches and the clergy were centers of learning, and even there the Christian message had undergone serious debasement.

Further evidence of this debasement is the fact that under Constantine baptism was still a rite concerned with personal commitment to Christ, while by Charlemagne it had become "a magic rite to wash away sin and to be performed on a baby as soon as possible"; the "free, rhetorical worship" of the Constantinian churches gave way to uniform worship; preaching withered to a mere reading of sermons by the Church Fathers; the clergy had become an intellectual elite (pp. 248f.). "The metamorphosis of Graeco-Roman Christianity into mediaeval religion is complete" (p. 248). However, ". . . the church had not departed so far from original Christianity as to be unable to be called back to it in due time" (p. 249).

Without wishing to impugn the generally good overview of the historical material this book presents, the interpretation the author gives to this period is quite frankly itself a debasement of Church history. It is interesting how often "conservative" views of Church History parallel those of classical liberal Protestantism (von Harnack, von Soden, and kindred spirits): primitive Christianity was informal, spontaneous, free, zealous while later Christianity became formalistic, uniform, and prosaic. This is apparently the pattern with which Mr. Smith works, and it leads him to make one-sided judgements which skew the historical record. For example, reviewing the fourth century the author writes (p. 126):

> The spontaneous enthusiasm for Jesus has departed from the monasteries and hermitages, and, although there were some who returned to pastor churches, the old spirit had gone. While there was still regular preaching, people would have some idea of Christian truth, but already alien ideas were creeping in . . . . When the great crash occasioned by the barbarian invasions took place, the West swiftly became superstitious and barbarized . . . . The era of the first drop-outs and communes was one of loss for the Christian churches (p. 126).

This is at best a half-truth emphasizing negative aspects of the Church in the fourth century. This distorts as well. While rigidity and formalism did enter the monastic movement, the monastery nevertheless remained a place for

the exercise of deep personal piety and established a bastion of Christian belief and culture which to a considerable degree was the vehicle for Christianity during the unstable period of the 5th-8th centuries. Furthermore, the Church did not have to wait until the 4th century for alien ideas to creep in; they were there from the beginning. Nor did the West have to wait for the barbarians for it to be superstitious and barbaric. The best of Romans were often superstitious and Roman culture was a veneer for considerable barbarity. What the Church faced within and without after the fourth century it had always faced, only after the invasions in considerably altered form.

The period of the early Middle Ages did not usher in a period of debasement for Christianity. The Church from its inception had to deal with entrenched paganism. One need only remember Irenaeus' remark about the difficulty of evangelizing the Celts in France or the slow advancement of Christianity in the rural areas of Asia Minor. The general level of culture and the extent of education also cannot be used as standards for measuring the level of a genuine Christian consciousness, as Mr. Smith appears to do (see quote from p. 248).

In any subsequent re-working of the text discussion of Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus ought to be included in the chapter on the rise of Byzantium. Factual errors were virtually absent, only one coming to the attention of the reviewer. The Hegira of Mohammed is to be dated 622, not 612 (p. 211). The book includes a helpful time chart and a glossary of the most important figures in the Church's history from the fourth to the ninth century. All in all this is not a bad book for a lay person interested in learning something about the Church's history in the early Medieval period. However, I am not sure whether it is worth the required $5.95

William C. Weinrich

THE UNIVERSE NEXT DOOR: A BASIC WORLD VIEW CATALOG. By James W. Sire. Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1976. 240 pages. Paper. $4.25

A striking new fact about late twentieth century America is that we increasingly live in a pluralistic society in which widely divergent ideologies compete for the loyalties of our people. In this eminently readable and reliable book Dr. James W. Sire, an Associate Professor of English at Trinity College (Deerfield) and editor of Inter-Varsity Press, takes a look at eight of these world views": (1) Historic or Biblical Theism, (2) Deism, or "The Clockwork Universe," (3) Naturalism, or "The Silence of Finite Space," (4) Nihilism, or the "Zero Point," (5) Atheistic Existentialism (a la Jean Paul Sartre), (6) Christian or Theistic Existentialism (a la Soren Kierkegaard), (7) Eastern Pantheistic Monism (ranging from the Maharishi to TM), and (8) The New Consciousness, of "A Separate Universe" (which is a world-view still in the process of formation, with exemplar as diverse as Andrew Weil of the Harvard Medical School and Carlos Castaneda, anthropologist author (also novelist?). Each system is reviewed in terms of its attitude toward the nature and character of God, the universe, man, death and the possibility of life beyond the grave, the basis of ethics, and the meaning of history. Written from the standpoint of historic Evangelical Christianity, generously illustrated with suitable selections from literature, and composed with the practical needs of pastors and teachers in mind, Dr. Sire has produced a useful and insightful volume that I recommended to our clergy and laity as a good introduction to the value-systems of our society.

C. George Fry

INTRODUCTION TO ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION. Edited by R. M. Savory. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1976. 204 pages. Paper. $5.95

IN 1970 ten members of the Department of Islamic Studies at the University of Toronto prepared and delivered a series of talks on the Middle East over CJRT radio. These twenty-four half-hour broadcasts, revised and aired again in 1974-1975, now have appeared in print for the benefit of a wider audience. Edited by R. M. Savory, the chairman of the Department of Islamic Studies at the University of Toronto, these eighteen essays are primarily by members of that Canadian faculty, as G. M. Wickens. Michael and Ella Marmura, Eleazar Birnbaum, R. Sandler, L. M. Kenny, and Albertine Jwaideh. Three contributors - C. E. Bosworth (University of Manchester), Charles J. Adams (McGill University), and W. Millward (American University in Cairo)—came from other schools.

The anthology begins with a study of the geographic, ethnic, and linguistic background of the Middle East, defining that region narrowly as the Core Countries of the Islamic World (excluding, for instance, the Maghrib). After a brief resume of Islamic history, the book moves to its central purpose - a major emphasis on the cultural and social aspects of Muslim Civilization. Chapters on theology ("Islamic Faith," "God and His Creation: Two Medieval Islamic Views," and "Law and Traditional Society" - and for Muslims, Law is a branch of theology), literature (a survey of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish Literature is provided in three chapters), culture ("Islamic Art: Variations on Themes of Arabesque," "The Middle East as a World Centre of Science and Medicine," "What the West Borrowed from the Middle East," "Christendom vs. Islam: 14 Centuries of Interaction and Coexistence") and society ("The Changing Concept of the Individual," "The Modern Arab World," "Tribalism and Modern Society: Iraq, a Case Study," "Ian," and "Turkey: From Cosmopolitan Empire to Nation State") follow. Throughout there is a considered concern for the dynamic tension existing between Islam and the West - from the Arab conquests and the Crusades to the days of European Imperialism and the counter-attack by OPEC.

This is a concise and challenging discussion of the World of Islam that will be widely appreciated in the English-speaking community.

C. George Fry

THE HUMOR OF CHRIST. By Elton Trueblood. Harper and Row, Publishers, New York, 1975, 127 pages. Paper. $1.95.

Recently Harper and Row Publishers began a series called "Jubilee Books" intended primarily for the evangelical market. Among the titles that originally appeared in hardback that have been re-issued as soft-cover editions in this series are Helmuth Thielicke's *The Waiting Father,* Walter, Trobisch, *I Married You,* Paul Tournier, *The Person Reborn,* and Elton Trueblood, *The Humor of Christ.* Initially published in 1964, this volume received glowing reviews. *The Baptist Standard* called it "an invaluable contribution." *Eternity* commended it for "fresh and plausible insight." *The Churchman* remarked that it "solves many of the perplexing problems in the New Testament." The consistent popularity and utility of this text have more than justified its reproduction in an inexpensive format for the general scholarly and ecclesiastical communities.

Long a Professor of Philosophy at Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana, Elton Trueblood in this work turned his attention to a relatively neglected subject, the *wit* of Jesus Christ. The opening chapter of the volume probes this "Neglected Aspect" of Christ's character. The remaining five chapters explore "The Universality of Christ's Humor," "Christ's Use of Irony," "The Strategy of Laughter," "Humorous Parables" (New Wineskins, The Unjust Steward, and The Talents), and "A Humorous Dialoge" (with the

Syrophoenician Woman). I am confident that most Lutherans will not agree with Trueblood's exegesis on every occasion, but I am persuaded that preachers and teachers of the New Testament will profit from a few hours spent in the presence of Elton Tureblood on the subject of *The Humor of Christ.*

C. George Fry

MAPPILA MUSLIMS OF KERALA: A STUDY IN ISLAMIC TRENDS. By Roland E. Miller. Orient Longman, New Dehli, 1976. 350 pages. Cloth. Rs. 60.00 (approximately $7.14.)

In October, 1977, I was attending a Mini-Consultation on Muslim Evangelization sponsored by the North America Continuing Committee of the Lausanne Congress. The Rev. Don McCurry, the Coordinator, of our Steering Committee of seven, said to us, "Gentlemen, what we need are scholarly studies of Muslim peoples." McCurry, long a professor at Gujranwala Theological Seminary, Pakistan, went on to estimate that among the 700 million adherents of Islam, there are probably at least 500 or 600 separate ethnic and cultural communities. The world of Islamic is not monolithic, it is polymorphous. In our efforts to effectively minister to Muslims, we need to be aware of these significant cultural differences. Such "awareness" can come about only through careful scholarship that can identify, describe, and interpret each of these Muslim peoples to the Christian community.

I am happy to report that one of our pastors has done such a conscientious analysis of one such Muslim people, the Mappilas.

Dr. Roland E. Miller, an ordained minister of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, holds his MA and PhD degrees in Islamics. Currently the Dean at Luther College, Regina, Saskatchewan, Dr. Miller was a Visiting Scholar at Harvard University in 1976. Prior to that, starting in 1953, Miller was a missionary of the LCMS in India working among the Mappila Muslims of the Malabar Coast. He became fascinated with this religio-cultural community, studied it for more than fifteen years, and presented his findings in a doctoral dissertation at the Hartford Seminary Foundation. We are deeply in debt to Orient Longman of New Dehli for publishing this pioneering study and making its valuable findings available to Islamicists throughout the English-speaking world.

Miller is to be commended for a work of impeccable scholarship that identifies conscientiously and carefully the Mappilas of Kerala State India. The author has examined the history of these Muslims, probably the earliest believers in India, through eight centuries of progress and a four century road of decline, with notice of the renaissance occurring among them in the past thirty years. Utilizing a vast body of literature not only in Western and Middle Eastern languages, but also in the indigenous Malayalam of the Malabar Coast (and Miller includes his own translation system as well as several helpful statistical appendices and a thorough bibliography of relevant titles in English), Miller discusses the political, economic, cultural and religious context in which the Mappila Muslims find themselves. Then he surveys their history from the introduction of Islam on the Malabar Coast by Arab traders through the Colonial Era - Portuguese, Dutch, French, and British. This occupies Part I of the text. Part II, viewing the past as prologue, is concerned with the "Encounter with the Present" and is an insightful discussion of the Mappila Muslim community's role as a minority in modern India, its reaction to Socialism, Marxism, and secularism, and its current rebirth as a fellowship of faith and culture, as well as its prospects for the future.

In my opinion this is precisely the kind of ethno-cultural-religious histories that we need so that we can better appreciate Islam as a challenge and an

opportunity facing the Christian World. Congratulations to Dr. Miller - and I heartily commend this book to all who have a scholarly and missionary interest in Islam in India.

C. George Fry

THE BETRAYAL OF THE WEST. By Jacques Ellul. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell, The Seabury Press (A Continuum Book), New York, 1978. 207 pages. Cloth. $9.95.

Jacques Ellul is a noted lay theologian of the Reformed Church of France, Professor of history at the University of Bordeaux, patriot having served in the Resistance in World War II, later was mayor of Bordeaux, and the author of many thought-provoking books, including *Autopsy of Revolution, Meaning of the City,* and *The New Demons.* In this volume, published originally in France in 1975 as *Trahison de l'Orient,* Ellul presented to the public what is, at the very least, "a classic" (according to *Le Mond*) and, at the most, his most constructive and controversial text.

In a mere 207 pages and a brief three chapters ("Defense of the West," "The Truly Poor and the End of the Left," and "The Betrayal of the West") Ellul, while writing as one who loves all civilizations-East and West, Ancient and Modern ("How could I have chosen to be a professional historian if I didn't?)- makes the claim that the West is unique, for it "represents values for which there is no substitute." Chief among these values are liberty genuine ordered freedom, which is neither leftist anarchy nor Facist tyranny), personality (genuine selfhood, as opposed to modern mass-man and rugged individualism), and rationality (which is neither rationalism and certainly not a cult or irrational absurdity). These values are the product of the creative tension in the West between two traditions - the classical (of Greece and Rome) and the Biblical (from Israel and the Ancient Church). The result of two millennia of interaction between Biblical religion and classical civilization has been the westernization of the entire earth. Today all the planet has become the beneficiary (for better and worse) of Western Civilization.

It is indeed paradoxical that at this point Western Civilization - at the very moment of its universal reception - has been confronted with the very possibility of its total repudiation and extinction. The attack on the West is in part justified (yes, the West did practice slavery, pollute the environment, exploit the Third World, and much more) - but is greatly exaggerated (what civilization did not do these things? Arabs, Blacks, Indians, and Chinese have been just as brutal as Spanish conquestidores and Dutch slavers). Ellul contends that the point of Western clivilization is not its exploitation of the weak (all civilizations do that; after all, Cain, the murderer, was, according to Genesis, the founder of the first city and the father of civilization), but in its dissemination of certain values (liberty, personality, rationality) that make possible the transformation of humankind (after all, the West is being rejected on its *own values,* for no one has come up with a superior ethical code. Why? Because the innate values of the West are those of divine revelation). Unfortunately, the worst enemies of the West are not Third World liberationists (they may condemn the West with their lips, but in their deeds they imitate Europe as rapidly as they can - the jet airport, the steel mill, and the nuclear reactor remain the marks of arrival in most Afro-Asian states), nor the Marxist propagandaists (for at best Communism is but bastardized Christianity, a deformation of the Biblical imperative for justice), but the Leftist intellectuals of the West itself, Ellul is unrelenting in his attact of these "traitors," who, in their blindness, have become the new barbarians rapidly leading the world into a latter-day Dark Age that will eclipse the former in terms of tyranny, impersonality, and irrationality. This "treason of the in-

tellectuals," the "betrayal by the Left," is what will be fatal for the West (Ellul sees no hope whatsoever from the Right, making the capitulation of the Left to "neo-savagery" so critical). Catapulted on a gigantic "guilt trip" by the Leftists, and filled with self-hate the West, in Ellul's opinion, is committing suicide, a suicide that is ultimately due to both spiritual bankruptcy and false theology. This desertion of what Ellul regards as the finest system of values known in human history is producing an unmitigated disaster (p. 200):

> Well, the West cannot live on nothing. The politicians and the economists will not keep it alive. The astonishingly deep and balanced creation (the Christian West) I have tried to bring before the reader in this book is now close to its end, simply through the fault of those who didn't understand it and were incapable of grasping it. I am speaking of all the intellectuals. I mean *all* of them without a single exception; all those who have a reputation and do the talking, the men who create the myths. Today it is the myths of death, and they alone, that speak to us in our madness. The West is at its end - but that does not necessarily mean the end of the world.

This is strong medicine for the stout-hearted. I recommend it to those who love their Western Tradition and who are open to rapid-fire, tough talk from a hard-hitting lawyer-historial-theologian who refuses to mouth the conventional moralisms and pietisms of the mass-media. While this is not recommended bedtime reading, it should be required study in the stark light of high-noon in every minister's office.

C. George Fry

TWILIGHT OF THE SAINTS: BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY AND CIVIL RELIGION IN AMERICA. By Robert K. Linder and Richard V. Pierard. Intervaristy Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1978, 212 pages. Paper. 4.95.

Every hundred years in the modern age the English-speaking nations have undergone some major ordeal - 1453, the end of the Hundred Years' War and the advent of the War of Roses; 1553-1558, Mary and the struggle for the English Reformation; 1640, Cromwell and the English Civil War; 1776, the American Revolution; and 1861 and the American War Between the States. Since 1963 "the history of the United States . . . reads like a grand gothic horror tale" with multiple assassinations, the loss of the Indochina War, civil unrest, educational drift, moral collapse, a critical energy crisis, dangerous inflation, and the erosion of the national value system. It is to that subject, American civil religion, that this volume addresses itself.

This carefully-researched, generously-documented, well-written, and highly-readable book by two noted Evangelical historians, Robert D. Linder (Kansas State University) and Richard V. Pierard (Indiana State University) define civil religion, determine its major components, trace its sources, narrate its historical development, and discuss possible Christian attitudes toward it.

Civil religion "is the use of consensus religious sentiments, concepts and symbols by the state" for its own purposes. As old as Greece and Rome, civil religion disappeared during the Christian millennium of the Middle Ages to return with a vengeance during the Italian Renaissance. Fourteen years before the Declaration of Independence, the *philosophe*, Jean Jacques Rousseau, commented in *The Social Contract* that "no state was ever founded without having religion as its basis." He then conceived of a way in which to reconcile modern religious freedom and pluralism with the state's necessity of at least a minimal spiritual foundation. The result was "civil religion," or "social sentiments without which a man cannot be a good citizen . . . few, simple, and exactly worded . . . ."

While *philosophes* defined the term, American patriots applied the reality. Drawing heavily on Puritanism (with its biblical notions of election, covenant,

and liberation) and Deism (with its conceptions of Universal Divinity and destiny), the Founding Fathers came up with a ready-made civil religion. This faith, framed by Calvinists and Rationalists, was employed in a Republic filled with Methodists and Baptists. For more than a century (1814-1914) there was an Evangelical Consensus in the land which provided some Biblical substance to the national credo. That Consensus collapsed in the twentieth century in the wake of Continental immigration, hostile ideologies (Marxism and Darwinism), urbanization, and a secularization of American life. By 1920 America was at a watershed. One British visitor, G. K. Chesterton, said the United States is "a nation with the soul of a church." But another, Alistair Cooke, exegeted the observation, noting: "That's true, but it also has the soul of a whorehouse." The tension became evident in the Vietnam fiasco and the Watergate debacle. By 1978 American civil religion seemed totally bankrupt.

Evangelicals are divided in their attitude toward this situation. Pierand and Linder examine five possible positions: (1) do nothing, (2) try to recapture America for God (a la Bill Bright), (3) embrace and then revive the civil religion (after all, it is the only faith of most Americans), (4) resign ourselves to the increasing paganization of American life, or (5) reject the civil religion and return to a strict practice of New Testament Christianity. The last is the authors' choice.

Pierard and Linder point out that only Christ can save, not the nation, that civil religion is often used for ignoble ends, that it is powerless to stand in judgment on the culture, that the God of the Bible is universal (not national or tribal), and that idolatry (which is often the result of civil religion) is the first-named sin. In an eloquent concluding section the authors describe the shape of a new Christian patriotism resting on the rigorous honesty of Biblical Evangelicalism.

This book is a most-welcome contribution by two outstanding Evangelical historians to the growing literature on the role of Christianity in the current national crisis.

C. George Fry

A LAYMAN'S GUIDE TO PROTESTANT THEOLOGY. By William Hordern. Revised Edition. Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, 1978. 265 pages. Paper. $1.95.

William E. Hordern is President of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatchewan, having received his Th. D. from Union Theological Seminary, New York, where he worked with both Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich. In this paperback book, first published in 1955 (and, prior to that, presented as a series of essays in *Friends Intelligencer*), Hordern seeks to introduce the church-going public to Contemporary Protestant Theology. Twelve chapters, starting with "The Growth of Orthodoxy," survey such movements as Fundamentalism, Conservative Christianity, Liberalism ("The Remaking of Orthodoxy") and Neo-Orthodoxy ("The Rediscovery of Orthodoxy"). Individual theologians as Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich, Rudolf Bultmann, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer receive a chapter apiece. One chapter is dovoted to "The God is Dead" theology of the 1960's. The author strives to be both sympathetic to and objective with each man and movement and thus present the whole panorama of Protestant Thought in this century. Revised and expanded in 1968, *A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology* has become a popular text in university and seminary classes. Should another revision be made, a chapter on "Evangelicalism" should be especially appropriate, particularly in view of Hordern's prophetic observation made a decade ago (p. 72):

> Far from dying out, various opinion polls indicate that conservatives speak for a larger number of Protestant clergy and laity than does any other theological position. Furthermore, conservatives are keen

students of non-conservative theology and are willing to learn from it. Nonconservatives are less willing to read and much less willing to learn from conservatives.

I recommend this popular volume to all our laity and clergy who want a brief introduction to Protestant thought in this century.

C. George Fry

MCGUFFEY AND HIS READERS: PIETY, MORALITY, AND EDUCATION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA. By John H. Westerhoff III. Abingdon, 1978. 206 pages. Cloth. $9.95.

William Homes McGuffey (1800-1873) is one of the most celebrated personalities in our history. Among the makers of the American mind, he must rank very high. McGuffey was "The Schoolmaster of the Nation." Between 1836 and 1920 more than 120 million copies of McGuffey's Readers were sold, placing them in the same class as the Holy Bible and Webster's Dictionary. Even in the 1970's they continue to sell at the rate of 30,000 copies a year. For many, even as we approach the magic year of 2001, McGuffey, the nineteenth century pedagogue, remains the model of all that is good in American education.

In spite of his popularity among the masses, McGuffey has been relatively neglected by the scholarly community. In the *Oxford History of the American People* Samuel Eliot Morison cites seven American educators of the last century - Horace Mann, Victor Cousin, Calvin Stowe, Orville H. Browning, George Ticknor, James Gordon Bennett, and Horace Greeley, but William Holmes McGuffey, whose name is a household word, is neglected. Morison's ommission has been matched by many other professional students of the American past.

The recent upsurge of interest in Evangelicalism, Populism, and the impact of Puritanism, the Frontier, and Democracy on American Religion makes the appearance of this volume so apropos. John H. Westerhoff III, Associate Professor of Religion and Education, Duke Divinity School, originally composed this book as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education at Columbia University Teachers College. Westerhoff went on to author other volumes in different areas, but, fortunately for the students of American Intellectual and Religious History, he revised his dissertation and has shared it with the academic public under the title *McGuffey and His Readers: Piety, Morality and Education in Nineteenth-Century America.*

In four chapters and a very helpful appendix, Westerhoff introduces us to the unknown McGuffey, who was really a philosopher (who thought his claim to fame would be his yet unpublished study of Moral Philosophy), a Presbyterian divine (descended from a long line of Scotch-Irish Calvinists), with forebears from both Pennsylvania and the British Isles, who spent his formative years on the Ohio frontier, whose own father was illiterate, who was twice, unhappily, a college president (of the now defunct Cincinnati College, and Ohio University, the first educational institution in the Old Northwest), but whose creative years were spent in the college classroom - a decade at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio (where he was "teacher, elocutionist, debate coach, preacher, lecturer, parent, compiler of schoolbooks, and ex-officio librarian at the college . . . founder of the college's literary society . . . and its journal . . .") and, from 1845 until his death in 1873, as a member of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Virginia.

Following a succinct and insightful study of McGuffey's life, the volume moves to a very helpful analysis of his theology. An "energetic persuader," McGuffey was convinced that his textbooks ought to fulfill the mandate of the Northwest Ordinance to promote "religion, morality, and knowledge" (and in exactly that order). A lateborn Puritan, whose Readers drew heavily on the writings of Congregationalist, Presbyterian, and Anglican divines (especially

the third and fourth volumes), McGuffey sought to instill a firm faith in the God who is Creator, Preserver, and Judge, an understanding of Nature and Man as mirrors of divinity, and a conviction of the fallen state of humanity, the need for salvation, (through "Our best friend - the Lord Jesus - who died for us on the cross . . ."), and the requirement of repentance. Faith, McGuffey taught, should result in virtue, and his Readers instill a list of virtues derived from the Classics and Calvinism, as "cleanliness, forgiveness, gratefulness, cooperativeness, curiosity, self-control, and meekness . . . ." The chief virtues were "charity, industriousness, patriotism, kindness, and piety." Only after he had inculcated "true religion" and "right living," did McGuffey move on to "good learning," - reading, writing, and rhetoric. Divorced from Religion, the other "three 'r's" were worse than pointless, they were harmful.

I personally found this to be a very readable book and a reliable one (though on page 58 we are told that Henry Ward Beecher and Lyman Abbott were "eighteenth-century American Congregational . . . clergymen;" they were nineteenth century divines), as well as being a valuable introduction to the American Religious Mentality and the role played in its foundation by McGuffey the man and his Readers (which assumed pretty much an independent existence after the original edition by the Miami Professor in 1836 as they were revised and "secularized" by editors in 1857 and 1879). I highly recommend it to students of the American religious tradition.

C. George Fry

Books Received

CHRISTIAN COUNTER-CULTURE. The Message of the Sermon on the Mount. By John R. W. Stott. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1978. 222 pages. Paper. $3.95.

THE MYSTERY OF PREACHING. By James Black. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1978. 169 pages. Paper. $3.95.

THE BIBLE IN THE PULPIT. By Leander E. Keck. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1978. 172 pages Paper. $4.95.

THE EDGE OF DEATH. By Phillip J. Swihart. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1978. 96 pages. Paper. $2.25.

IS ADAM A "TEACHING MODEL" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT? By J. P. Versteeg. Trans. By Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Nutley, New Jersey, 1977. 67 pages. Paper. $1.75.

A KEY TO DOOYEWEERD. By Samuel T. Wolfe. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Nutley, New Jersey, 1978. 125 pages. Paper. $2.95.

HOW TO OVERCOME EVIL. By Jay E. Adams. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Nutley, New Jersey, 1978. 107 pages. Paper. $1.95.

THE SHAKING OF ADVENTISM. A Documented Account of the Crisis Among Adventists over the Doctrine of Justification by Faith. By Geoffrey J. Paxton. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1977. 172 pages. Paper. $3.95.

A HISTORY OF EVANGELISTIC HYMNODY. By James Sallee. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1978. 104 pages. Cloth. $6.95.

UFO'S—GOD'S CHARIOTS? Flying Saucers in Politics, Science, and Religion. By Ted Peters. John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1977. 192 pages. Cloth. $7.95.

THE HOLY WAR. By John Bunyan. Moody Press, Chicago, 1948. 378 pages. Paper. $7.95.

DYNAMIC RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS. Case Studies of Rapidly Growing Religious Movements around the World. Edited by David J. Hesselgrave. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1978. 326 pages. Cloth. $9.95.

COMMENTARY ON ROMANS. By Frederic Louis Godet. Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, 1977. 531 pages. Cloth. $12.95.

COMMENTARY ON FIRST CORINTHIANS. By Frederic Louis Godet. Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, 1977. 920 pages. Cloth. $14.95.

NIKOLAUS VON AMSDORF (1483-1565). By Robert Kolb. Nieuwkoop B. De Graaf, 1978. 296 pages. Cloth.

THEY WERE THERE. Two Series of Lenten Monologs. By Roy Barlag and Richard Andersen. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1977. 79 pages. Paper.

STAND FAST IN FAITH. Finding Freedom through Discipline in the Ten Commandments. By Wallace E. Fisher. Abingdon, Nashville, 1978. 142 pages. Paper. $4.95.

GOD INCARNATE. Meeting the Contemporary Challenges to a Classic Christian Doctrine. By George Carey. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1978. 67 pages. Paper. $1.95.

PROTESTANT AND ROMAN CATHOLIC ETHICS. Prospects for Rapprochement. By James M. Gustafson. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1978. 192 pages. Cloth. $12.50.

PULPIT WORDS TRANSLATED FOR PEW PEOPLE. By Charles W. Turner. BMH Books, Winona Lake, Indiana, 1978. 139 pages. Paper. $2.95.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION: A CHRISTIAN APPROACH. By Norman DeJong. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Nutley, New Jersey, 1977. 87 pages. Paper. $2.75.

THE SECRET OF SOUL WINNING. By Stephan F. Olford. Moody Press, Chicago, 1963. 121 pages. Paper. $2.50.

PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. By H. C. G. Moule. Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, 1977. 252 pages. Cloth. $5.95.

SELF-REALIZATION AND FAITH: Beginning and Becoming in Relation to God. By Thomas A. Droege. Lutheran Education Association, Chicago, 1978. 104 pages. Paper.

HARE KRISHNA, HARE KRISHNA. By J. Isamu Yamamoto. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1978. 28 pages. Paper.

HOPE FOR A TROUBLED WORLD. By John W. Alexander. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1978. 23 pages. Paper.

BLIND - AND I SEE! By Robert Weller. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1978. 145 pages. Paper.

FOR EXAMPLE . . . . Illustrations for Contemporary Preaching. By Richard Andersen and Donald L. Deffner. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1978. 221 pages. Paper. $5.95

SIGNS OF CELEBRATION. How to Design Church Banners. By Edie Lauckner. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1978. 31 pages. Paper. $2.50