

# CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY

# CTQ

Volume 45 Numbers 1-2

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JANUARY — APRIL 1981

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ISSN 0038-8610

Issued Quarterly by the Faculty of  
Concordia Theological Seminary

The *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, a continuation of *The Springfielder*, is a theological journal of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, published for its ministerium by the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

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The CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY is published quarterly in January, April, July, and October. Changes of address for Missouri Synod clergymen reported to Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, will also cover the mailing change of the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY. Other changes of address, paid subscriptions, and other business matters should be sent to CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY, Concordia Theological Seminary, 6600 North Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825.

Annual subscription rate: \$5.00.

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1980

# Law and Gospel in Preaching

Gerhard Aho

In Scripture God addresses us as a God of wrath and of grace. So sharp is the tension between these two roles that He often seems to be two gods rather than one. The Bible appears to be full of contradictions until we reflect that there are in Scripture two entirely different doctrines, Law and Gospel. Through wrath and judgment God exercises what Luther calls His "alien work" and through grace and forgiveness His "proper work." "It is," says Herman G. Stuempfle, Jr., "by His Word as Law that God executes His 'alien work' and by His Word as Gospel that He accomplishes His 'proper work.'"<sup>1</sup>

Stuempfle goes on to point out that it is in preaching that the distinction between Law and Gospel becomes crucially important. Although Luther had a high regard for the written Word, the church for him was a "mouth house" rather than a "pen house." Oral proclamation is the primary means by which God addresses people with both His Word of judgment and His Word of grace. As a summons to repent and believe, the Word's natural and proper form is spoken. This is why preachers must be adept at distinguishing between Law and Gospel.<sup>2</sup>

Any confusion of the two results in the collapse of both, as Walther demonstrates in his classic, *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*.<sup>3</sup> If the Law is not preached so as to reveal our utter bankruptcy before God, then our predicament is not extreme and grace is unnecessary. If, on the other hand, the Gospel is presented as in any sense a demand upon us, then our situation is indeed hopeless, for now there is no word that can release us from our impossible burden.<sup>4</sup> The end result is either false security or abject despair.

Both Luther and Walther continually aver that the distinction between Law and Gospel is a difficult one to maintain. It is relatively easy to analyze the differences between Law and Gospel as to their content, function, and manner of revelation. But such theological analysis does not lead inevitably to their right proclamation in the sermon. To preach them rightly it is necessary to listen to the Law and Gospel accents in the text before us. We must also let the Law and the Gospel work in us so that they become the categories in which we live, so that, as Helmut Thielicke puts it, we "really exist in the house of the dogmas" we proclaim.<sup>5</sup> Here we are life-long learners.

In the sermon the distinction between Law and Gospel can be maintained by letting these two doctrines function in a correlative way. That is, the mode in which the Law is preached must find its correlate in the way the Gospel is proclaimed. When the Law accuses us of sin, the Gospel is to assure us of forgiveness. When the Law describes our defeat, the Gospel is to affirm our victory. When the Law demands obedience, the Gospel is to promise power.

### **1. Guilt-Forgiveness**

The first Law-Gospel correlate is guilt and forgiveness. The Law requires not only an outward rectitude but an inward righteousness — pure, joyous love toward God and neighbor. We are prone to smug self-righteousness. And so the Law is a powerful hammer with which God smashes our pretensions. The target of the hammer of the Law is the conscience. When the Law is truly heard it produces feelings of guilt. The Law not only convicts us of sin; it convinces us of our inability to do anything significant about our sinfulness. The Law does not induce us to try harder to win God's favor. It shows us that there is no use in trying at all.<sup>6</sup> The Law as accuser is a "terrifying tyrant barring our way to God."<sup>7</sup>

The Gospel, on the other hand, assures us of God's forgiveness. It thereby comforts the conscience. It delivers us from guilt by announcing that Christ absorbed all the wrath of God on account of our sins. There is no need to resort to glib evasions, flimsy excuses, or boasts of moral superiority. We can face the Law which condemns us and acknowledge its validity without falling into despair. Since there is "no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1), we can walk before God and each other as forgiven sinners.

The challenge in preaching the Gospel as forgiveness lies in finding images besides atonement, redemption, propitiation, and justification. It is not enough to say, "Jesus died for your sins," "God has justified you," or "Christ has expiated your wrongdoing." Unless we flesh out such statements, sharpening the meaning of the Scriptural terms associated with forgiveness, our hearers may not find meaning. We will lapse into jargon and resort to clichés. Parables like that of the Prodigal Son and the Laborers in the Vineyard not only announce grace but unfold the dynamics of the forgiveness experience. Forgiveness becomes meaningful to the hearers also as we focus on Christ, on His person and work. He is the paradigm of God's gracious action toward us.



## 2. Defeat-Victory

A second Law-Gospel correlate is defeat and victory. The Law not only accuses but exposes. It describes the predicament we human beings are in because of sin — alienation, hollowness, emptiness, meaninglessness, anxiety, despair. Here the stress is on the horizontal rather than on the vertical dimension. The Law evokes self-recognition, enabling us to see behind the masks with which we seek to hide our real selves, to the boredom, loneliness, and terror within. We thus become more conscious of our situation and more sensitive to our plight. The Law evokes self-awareness by mirroring our misery and describing our defeat.

The Gospel, on the other hand, affirms our victory. The Gospel does not resolve the tensions or remove the contradictions. But in the midst of our doubts and fears and uncertainties it makes hope, healing, and certitude possible. For alienation it offers reconciliation, for meaninglessness, purpose, for loneliness, God's presence, for transiency, homecoming. In a world in which tragedy and triumph are inextricably intertwined the Gospel affirms that in Christ who conquered all the evil forces we too shall conquer. In that affirmation we can go on confidently in the midst of seeming defeat.

## 3. Obedience-Power

A third Law-Gospel correlate is obedience and power. The Law's demand that it be obeyed continues to have relevance for Christians. We strive for obedience to God's will, not to earn God's favor but to actualize our faith. Our obedience is a consequence and not a cause of grace. Obedience is not necessary for salvation, but it is necessary. Paul devotes a substantial portion of each of his epistles to the subject of Christian obedience.

In our concern to avoid works-righteousness we sometimes bypass obedience to God's will. It is our task in preaching to clarify the nature and content of the divine ought. Because Christians have a propensity to become indolent unless incited and guided by the Law, we must in our preaching issue the call to obedience concretely and realistically. We are to speak the Law that Christians might know more clearly how to express their love to God and neighbor.

But while the Law can guide, it cannot empower. It is the Gospel that gives power to obey God. This promise of the Gospel's power is never a must, ought, or let us. When the imperative mode predominates in our preaching we are moraliz-

ing. It is the indicative mode that best fits the Gospel promise.<sup>8</sup> Exhortations to holy living are therefore to be couched in a Gospel framework in which we are reminded of who we are. Because we are God's people, made new in Christ, we can live in obedience to God's will. We can keep on becoming what we are. This Gospel context makes obedience a delight.

The sanctified life is a gift. It is God who works in us "both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13, KJV). The Gospel does not demand a response of obedience; it creates that response. The Gospel does this by pointing to what God has made us in Jesus Christ and by promising to us the very power of Christ in Word and Sacraments.

These three Law-Gospel correlates can help us to maintain the distinction between Law and Gospel in our sermons.

Law and Gospel should sound forth in every sermon. Law alone just adds to the "nausea of words." There is no real joy in preaching Law. The Gospel is harder to proclaim than Law, perhaps because images of sin and brokenness seem closer at hand than images of grace. Yet we will strive to preach the Gospel pertinently and abundantly. The Law is only instrumental, it serves the Gospel. The Law remains God's "strange" Word, the Gospel, His "proper" Word.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Herman G. Stuempfle, Jr., *Preaching Law and Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), p. 17.
2. *Ibid.*
3. C.F.W. Walther, *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1929), pp. 79-89.
4. Stuempfle, *Preaching Law and Gospel*, p. 17.
5. Helmut Thielicke, *The Trouble with the Church* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 5.
6. Lowell O. Erdahl, *Preaching for the People* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976), p. 41.
7. Stuempfle, *Preaching Law and Gospel*, p. 21.
8. H. Grady Davis, *Design for Preaching* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958), p. 209.

# Experience over Scripture in Charismatic Exegesis

Thomas Bird

Neither the charismatic nor the non-charismatic will deny that the Neo-Pentecostal movement is based on an experience. The experience is normally called "baptism with the Holy Spirit" and is usually considered to be subsequent to conversion. Both parties are also in agreement that a major change takes place for an individual when he has this experience. The two changes which are emphasized and praised most by proponents of the charismatic movement are an increased reading of the Bible and a greater willingness to witness. These are certainly laudable changes. However, accompanying the increased reading of Scripture is a new hermeneutic, that is, a new approach to looking at Scripture. Accompanying the free witness to others, there is also a new set of teachings. This essay seeks to establish the nature of one aspect of this new hermeneutic through the example and teaching of "Lutheran" charismatics. The new hermeneutical principle is then assessed on the basis of traditional Lutheran principles of interpretation.

## I. The Charismatic Position

The hermeneutical principle to be considered is this: personal experience verifies and confirms articles of faith. Because the charismatic movement has its ultimate distinction in the area of experience and feeling, namely, the experience of the baptism with the Holy Spirit and the feeling of being filled with the Holy Spirit, one would expect to find that experience and feeling become a principle by which one interprets Scripture. In many writings and testimonies of "Lutheran" charismatics this principle is developed.

### *A. Rodney Lensch*

Rodney Lensch, a former Missouri Synod Lutheran pastor, clearly teaches that experience is needed to verify and to confirm Scriptural teachings:

To be perfectly frank I didn't feel loved of God although intellectually I could say, "Yes, but God's Word says you are even if you don't feel it." But when the Holy Spirit flooded my soul with love, I felt it. There was no need to keep quoting Bible passages. The Holy Spirit was now ministering that love from within my heart and not just through my intellect.<sup>1</sup>

This statement by Lensch is significant not only because of the experience which verified the teaching, but also because of the teaching involved. The teaching in question for Rodney Lensch is the very love of God. Lensch seems to need another means of grace beyond the Word of God to work love in his heart. His experience allegedly confirmed the teaching of God's love and afterwards, since he felt that the Holy Spirit was ministering in his heart, "There was no need to keep quoting Bible passages."

Further statements by Rodney Lensch seem to confirm that his charismatic experiences are used to support Scripture. In fact, the Scriptures sometimes seem to be subordinated to his experiences. Concerning his experience of speaking in tongues, Lensch says:

As others were praying I took a step of faith and yielded my tongue to the Holy Spirit . . . For the sake of confirmation I asked the Lord to expand the language and to make it edify my spirit as the Bible says it should.<sup>2</sup>

The test of tongue-speaking as a true spiritual gift must come from Scripture, yet it is quite apparent that for Rodney Lensch the gift of tongues is verified by the experience of an expanded language and a feeling of edification. Rodney Lensch provides another example of experience taking precedence over the teaching of Scripture when he speaks of receiving direct revelation from God:

After praying in the Spirit for some time in my study one morning the Lord revealed to me a word of wisdom. It came into my mind in torrents. Quickly I grabbed a pencil and began writing these thoughts down. When I finished I had six full-sized sheets of instructions.<sup>3</sup>

#### *B. Ervin Prange*

Verification by experience and immediate revelation with an emphasis on subjective feeling is also the pattern of another Lutheran charismatic spokesman, Ervin Prange. The key chapter in Prange's *The Gift Is Already Yours* is the chapter in which he lays the groundwork for his charismatic experience. First he states the problem in his ministry:

I was a "man of God," but it had been so long since I had felt His presence that my attitude was almost that He didn't exist.<sup>4</sup>

Again the emphasis is on feeling. Yet the possibility arises that Ervin Prange is mistakenly identifying feeling with faith, that is, *fiducia*. Thus he might be saying in his own terminology that he has not that trusting faith of the heart that grasps Jesus as its object. If he calls saving faith "feeling," then he might be con-

trusting saving faith with *notitia*, the mere knowledge of Jesus and His saving work. But by reading further in Prange's work, it is evident that he is *not* identifying saving faith with feeling. Feeling is something he must have beyond faith. Concerning a passage in Ephesians,<sup>5</sup> Prange says:

"By faith" — maybe that was the answer. We were supposed to live by faith and not by experience. But if Christ really lived in us as that passage so boldly stated, then shouldn't there be some kind of experience of that life? After all, life was experience and not just concept or faith.<sup>6</sup>

Prange was looking for something beyond faith, beyond the Scriptural teaching. He wanted to feel Christ.

A close look at Prange's testimony of his charismatic experience further clarifies his position:

I heard myself saying, "God, you and I are going to have it out right now. Either you are going to become real, or I am going to give up this farce . . .

. . . What an infinite distance there was between those grandiose proclamations of God's power and the petty frustrations of everyday life! How could a man think he was passing out the bread of life every Sunday and still remain so utterly hungry himself? I was empty, and I knew it. This was the end of the line.

All at once, a voice seemed to come from nowhere and everywhere. It was clear and deep and distinct, neither thunder nor whisper. "The gift is already yours. Reach out and take it."

In an instant, there was a sudden shift of dimensions, and God became real . . . I, too, was fresh and new. I felt forgiven and cleansed. A life-time load of guilt had evaporated like fog in the morning sun. Then I noticed that I was praying in a new language of praise.

. . . For the first time in my life, God was an actual experience and not merely a symbol or a concept.<sup>7</sup>

The "grandiose proclamation of God's power" and "the bread of life" were not sufficient to satisfy Prange's hunger. Holy Scripture and a saving faith worked by the Gospel were not enough. He confronted God with an ultimatum and God spoke to him directly. By means of this encounter and the gift of tongues, Prange felt that God was real. Prange *felt* that he himself was forgiven. For Prange, assurance of God's existence and forgiveness can be demanded of God outside of Scripture.

C. Vernon Serenius

A few more short excerpts from the writings of Lutheran charis-

matic spokesmen show conclusively that using personal experience to verify and to confirm articles of faith is a Neo-Pentecostal hermeneutical principle. Vernon Serenius, another Lutheran charismatic pastor, makes this statement:

Since it is axiomatic that spiritual things are spiritually discerned, it is evident that spiritual truth cannot be arrived at by intellectual pursuit alone. It must come through revelation by the Holy Spirit. But one must be willing.<sup>8</sup>

That spiritual truths come through revelation is an important conclusion, but what does Serenius mean by "revelation"? Later in his work he says:

There is a knowledge which passes all human understanding, which only God's Spirit can give through his revelation — the Holy Word, and the experience of His living presence.<sup>9</sup>

Serenius considers both the Holy Word and subjective experience to be direct revelation from God. Indeed, the burden of his publication concerns "God's revelation of Himself outside of that which the Word itself brings."<sup>10</sup> He further states that the central truth of God's plan is revealed "when one approaches God's Word on the basis of personal experience of His living presence."<sup>11</sup> By personal experience, Serenius does not mean the work of the Holy Spirit in creating faith. He means an experience involving special manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Such experiences, he says, provide the "basis" for understanding God's central truth.

#### *D. Larry Christenson*

Larry Christenson, a major leader of Lutheran charismatics, also describes this understanding when he speaks on the values of speaking in tongues in his book dedicated to the teaching of this particular gift. Two benefits ascribed to speaking in tongues are that "one finds himself able to understand the Bible far better,"<sup>12</sup> and afterwards there is "an awareness of having entered a vast new spiritual realm."<sup>13</sup> Thus the experience of speaking in tongues can be used hermeneutically to understand Scriptures.

### **II. The Lutheran Position**

Simply stated, this new principle of Biblical interpretation is that subjective experience verifies objective revelation. Such a hermeneutical principle must be assessed very carefully. Is it Lutheran to hold that personal experience verifies and confirms articles of faith? The Lutheran Confessions deal clearly and emphatically with this subject:

We believe, teach, and confess that the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments are the

*only* rule and norm according to which all doctrine and teachers alike must be appraised and judged.<sup>14</sup>

This is the *Sola Scriptura* principle of the Lutheran Reformation. This statement sets Scripture apart from and above the Lutheran Confessional writings. This principle also sets Scripture apart from and above human reason, the church, tradition, and especially human feeling or experience.

The Scriptural basis cited by the Formula of Concord is from Paul's letter to the Galatians: "Even if an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed."<sup>15</sup> Further Scriptural support is found in the words of Jesus to the Pharisees: "For the sake of your tradition, you have made void the Word of God."<sup>16</sup> To this statement Jesus adds a prophecy of Isaiah: "In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men."<sup>17</sup> Extra-Scriptural teaching and tradition cannot be made equal to, much less contradict, Scripture.

Again, the basis of Christian teaching is clearly outlined in the Epitome of the Formula of Concord:

Holy Scripture remains the *only* judge, rule, and norm according to which as the only touchstone all doctrines should and must be understood and judged as good or evil, right or wrong.<sup>18</sup>

This statement applied in the first instance to the Roman Church which held that Scripture along with *tradition* verified articles of faith. It applied also to those "enlightened thinkers" at the time of the Reformation who claimed that Scripture along with *rationalistic thinking* confirmed articles of faith. But also in the minds of the Confessional writers were those who felt that Scripture and *personal experience* confirm articles of faith.

The current charismatic emphasis on personal experience, the claim of direct revelation from God, and the use of such experiences and revelations to produce or to confirm Christian teachings closely correspond to the practices of the Enthusiasts of the time of the Reformation. Because of his special dealings with the Enthusiasts of his day, Luther stands firm in his writings concerning the relationship of Scripture with any other writing or with experience. Thus Ralph Bohlmann points out:

Luther answers this claim of the Enthusiasts in the Smalcald Articles. There he emphasizes that God gives no one His Spirit or grace "except through or with the external Word which comes before." If we maintain this truth, Luther contends, we shall be protected from those "who boast that

they possess the Spirit without and before the Word and who therefore judge, interpret, and twist Scriptures or spoken Word according to their pleasure."<sup>19</sup>

Here Luther says not only that feelings and supposed experiences of the Holy Spirit are invalid apart from the external Word of God, but also that people should be protected from such claims because their claims result in twisting the Scriptures. Such twisting of Scripture is exactly the opposite of the result that a student of the Bible desires. Luther's words in the Smalcald Articles go one step further in describing the danger of resorting to personal spiritual experiences:

We should and must constantly maintain that God will not deal with us except through His external Word and sacrament. Whatever is attributed to the Spirit apart from such Word and sacrament is of the devil.<sup>20</sup>

In many of his writings, Luther points out the dangers of relying on experience for verification of God's will.

Indeed, the statements of contemporary charismatics clearly show some of these dangers. Reliance on experience leads to abandoning reliance on God's revealed Word. After discussing his charismatic experience, Lensch says concerning his ministry:

Instead of having to work everything out in advance I realized that the Holy Spirit inside my heart was fully able to give instantaneous direction and utterance as I needed it.<sup>21</sup>

A reliance on charismatic experiences also causes much doubt and confusion. In picturesque language Larry Christenson says:

... the believer's relationship with Christ is incomplete until all three links [repentance and faith, water baptism, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit] have been forged on the anvil of personal experience.<sup>22</sup>

But if a person is taught to resort to his personal experience rather than the testimony of Scripture to determine his relation with Christ, then the result will inevitably be destructive confusion.

In short, the principle that personal experience clarifies Scriptural teaching opens the door to a new hermeneutic and the abandonment of the traditional Lutheran principles of interpretation. This charismatic hermeneutic is destructive of the Christian faith and stands in sharp contrast to the position of the Lutheran Confessions: "... We can affirm nothing about the will of God without the Word of God."<sup>23</sup>



## FOOTNOTES

1. Rodney Lensch, *My Personal Pentecost* (Kirkwood, Missouri: Impact Books, 1972), p. 20.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
4. Ervin Prange, *The Gift Is Already Yours* (Plainfield, New Jersey: Logos International, 1973), p. 45.
5. Ephesians 3:17.
6. Prange, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 52, 53.
8. Vernon A. P. Serenius, *That They May Be One* (Alexandria, Minnesota: Vernon A. P. Serenius, 1973), p. 80.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 260.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 267.
12. Larry Christenson, *Speaking in Tongues* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1968), p. 27.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Theodore G. Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 464, 1 (*italics supplied*).
15. Galatians 1:8.
16. Matthew 15:6.
17. Matthew 15:9.
18. Tappert, *op. cit.*, p. 465, 7 (*italics supplied*).
19. Ralph Bohlmann, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Lutheran Confessions* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), p. 85.
20. Tappert, *op. cit.*, p. 313, 10.
21. Lensch, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
22. Christenson, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
23. Tappert, *op. cit.*, p. 217.



# Luther's Translation of Colossians 2:12

Harold H. Buls

The exegete who is studying the Epistle to the Colossians will do well to read the many references to Colossians in the Book of Concord. In our day opinions differ as to the specific heresy with which St. Paul was dealing in Colossians. Was Paul dealing with Judaizers, or with incipient Gnosticism, or with a combination of both of these heresies? Whatever the nature of the heresy was, it amounted to subtle work-righteousness, similar to that of our modern so-called Charismatics. The Lutheran Confessions are superb in dealing with work-righteousness, and the references to the second chapter of Colossians are worth studying.

But when one compares Bente's translation<sup>1</sup> with that of Tappert<sup>2</sup> in the Apology's treatment of Colossians 2:12, one notes a discrepancy simply because the former used the Authorized Version, whereas the latter used the Revised Standard Version to cite proof texts. Bente's translation reads thus (*italics supplied*):

Such faith is neither an easy matter, as the adversaries dream (as they say: Believe, believe, how easy it is to believe! etc.), nor a human power (thought which I can form for myself), but a divine power, by which we are quickened, and by which we overcome the devil and death. Just as Paul says to the Colossians, 2, 12, that faith is efficacious through the power of God and overcomes death: "Wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith *of the operation* of God."

Tappert translates the same passage thus (*italics supplied*):

Such a faith is not an easy thing, as our opponents imagine; nor is it a human power, but a divine power that makes us alive and enables us to overcome death and the devil. Just so Paul says that through the power of God faith is efficacious and overcomes death (Col. 2:12), "in which you were also raised with him through faith *in the working* of God."

We have no complaint with Tappert's translation except for the difference which the Bible versions bring out. The AV reads "of the operation of God," whereas the RSV reads "in the working of God."

In this reference in the Apology, the Latin text reads, "per fidem potentiae Dei," and the German (Luther's translation)

reads, "durch den Glauben den Gott wirket." The AV maintains the genitive of both the Greek and the Latin after the word "faith." The German makes it a subjective genitive. The RSV renders it as an objective genitive. In other words, the Vulgate and AV leave it to the reader to interpret this genitive. Does it mean that faith arises out of the power of God or that faith is directed at the power of God? The context speaks of what we were before we were alive in Christ. We were dead in trespasses and sin. Through baptism we were raised up and made alive. By citing the RSV for this passage in the Apology, Tappert has destroyed the point which the Apology plainly makes: faith is not a human power but rather a divine one.

This is where Luther comes in. So far as we know, Luther was the very first translator who clearly rendered the word concerned as a subjective genitive.<sup>3</sup> His translation of Colossians 2:12 reads thus: "In dem, dasz ihr mit ihm begraben seid durch die Taufe; in welchem ihr auch seid auferstanden durch den Glauben, den Gott wirket, welcher ihn auferweckt hat von den Todten." According to Luther's translation of this passage, faith is *caused* by the power of God, not directed *at* the work of God.

How have modern translations fared on this verse? Someone has said that there has been a new English translation of the New Testament, in whole or in part thereof, every year since 1900. Only a fraction of these have survived and are well known. But of all these translations, so far as we know, only two have translated Colossians 2:12 as did Luther. Weymouth<sup>4</sup> reads thus: "You having been buried with Him in your baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith produced within you by God, who raised Him from among the dead." And the revision of Beck's AAT reads: "Since in baptism you were buried with Him and raised with Him through faith produced by the power of God, who raised Him from the dead."<sup>5</sup> It must be said to the credit of those who revised the AAT that this rendition is a commendable change from Beck's original translation: "Since in baptism you were buried with Him and raised with Him by believing in the power of God, who raised Him from the dead."<sup>6</sup> In other words, RSV, LB, Phillips, NEB, NIV, JB, the original of Beck, and NASB wrongly translate the genitive as objective, rather than subjective. And, unfortunately, the New King James Version, which otherwise has some very fine things to be said for it, wrongly translates this genitive, assuming that Luther and the Apology understood it correctly.<sup>7</sup>

Rudolph Bultmann was the author of the article which deals with *pistis* in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. In footnote 230 Bultmann lumps this instance of the genitive along with other examples of the genitive which follow the word "faith" (*pistis*) and calls all of them objective.<sup>8</sup> But what Bultmann overlooked was that this is the sole instance in the New Testament of a genitive, following the word *pistis*, which denotes an attribute of God. This alone should have alerted him to the fact that this instance is different. Furthermore, evidently Bultmann disregarded the context of Colossians 2:12.

Why are we going to such lengths in speaking about the proper understanding of the case usage of a single word? Simply to stress the fact that Luther's understanding of Scripture was superb, and this made him a superb translator of Scripture. Who but Lutherans rightly understand the nature of faith? Who but Lutherans understand faith in the manner portrayed by Luther's explanation of the third article of the Creed in the Small Catechism? Who but Lutherans can say,

Holy Scriptures ascribe conversion, faith in Christ, regeneration, renewal, and everything that belongs to its real beginning and completion in no way to the human powers of the natural free will, be it entirely or one-half or the least and tiniest part, but altogether and alone to the divine operation and the Holy Spirit, as the Apology declares.<sup>9</sup>

Who but Lutherans rightly understand Jesus at Luke 8:11: "The seed is the Word of God"? In its context "the Word of God" means the Gospel in the narrow sense. The point of comparison is life. Only the Gospel, not man's fallen nature, contains and gives spiritual life. The synergist invariably misinterprets the Parable of the Sower simply because he misinterprets the words, "The seed is the Word of God."

Synergism makes a man introspective, unsure, and leads to despair or pride. True monergism goes hand in hand with humility and certainty. We thank God not only for the great things our fathers did for us, but also for the small ones, little things like translating Colossians 2:12 "durch den Glauben den Gott wirket."

#### FOOTNOTES

1. *Concordia Triglotta* (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 191.
2. *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 143.
3. The Peschitto translates it as an objective genitive.

4. Richard Francis Weymouth, *The New Testament in Modern Speech*, 6th ed. (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers).
  5. *The Holy Bible, An American Translation*, trans. William F. Beck, 3rd ed. (New Haven: Leader Publishing Company).
  6. *The Holy Bible, An American Translation*, trans. William F. Beck (New Haven, Leader Publishing Company, 1976).
  7. *The New King James Bible, New Testament* (Nashville-Camden-New York: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1979).
  8. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, edited by Gerhard Kittel, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, VI (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), pp. 203-4.
  9. Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Art. II, par. 25-27.
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# Augsburg Confession VII Revisited

Kurt E. Marquart

Does Article VII of the Augsburg Confession speak of outward church fellowship, or only of an inner, invisible unity? In our ecumenical age this question has or ought to have top priority for *bona fide* Lutherans throughout the world. The brief points which follow are meant to indicate how and why a clear and consistent answer to the question may be formulated.

## I.

If the question is framed as above, then it is clear that the issue is *not* whether inner and outer unity must be distinguished. Of course, the oneness of the one church which is an article of faith and not of sight must be distinguished from outward pulpit and altar fellowship — though not separated (cf. Apol. VII — VIII, 5: “The church is not *merely* an association of outward ties and rites . . . but it is *mainly* an association of faith and of the Holy Spirit in men’s hearts,” emphases added). The *Minneapolis Theses* (1925), for instance, distinguish with model clarity between inner and outer unity:

These synods agree that true Christians are found in every denomination which has so much of divine truth revealed in Holy Scripture that children of God can be born in it; that according to the Word of God and our confessions, church fellowship, that is, mutual recognition, altar and pulpit fellowship, and eventually cooperation in the strictly essential work of the church, presupposes unanimity in the pure doctrine of the Gospel and of the confession of the same in word and deed. Where the establishment and maintenance of church fellowship ignores present doctrinal differences or declares them a matter of indifference, there is unionism, pretense of union which does not exist.<sup>1</sup>

## II.

Article VII itself plainly speaks not simply of something hidden and unobservable, but of outward, publicly verifiable entities, *viz.*, correct preaching and teaching of the Gospel and the proper administration of the holy sacraments. This language simply has to be taken at face value. Hermann Sasse put it like this:

The Augsburg Confession was written for a practical purpose which is described in the Preface as a restoration of an outward unity that had been lost: “to have all of us

embrace and adhere to a single, true religion and live together in unity and in one fellowship and church, even as we are all enlisted under one Christ" (Pref. par. 4). While the corresponding Schwabach Article XII had to deal with the question of what the church is, the Seventh Article of the Augsburg Confession had to take up that practical question: How can the unity of the church as an *association of outward rites and ties* be restored? Over against the Roman claim that this would require not only the acceptance of the doctrine and the sacraments of the church, but also of constitution, liturgy, and other traditions, Augsburg Confession VII declares: "For the true unity of the church it is enough . . ."<sup>2</sup>

### III.

This has always been the understanding of the Lutheran Church. The contrary view, *viz.*, that Article VII refers only to the "invisible" church and not to outward church fellowship, was characteristic of the Lutheran-Reformed Union Church of Prussia:

According to Augsburg Confession VII only this [Lutheran] confession can have validity in a Lutheran church. This article was held by the official theology of the [Prussian Union Church's] *Oberkirchenrat* to apply to the "invisible" church. But the *teaching purely and rightly administering the sacraments* takes place in the "visible" church.<sup>3</sup>

How are the Lutheran and the Reformed churches related to the allegedly "evangelical" church? Either the latter exists, and then the Lutheran and Reformed confessions are not churches but merely directions [*Richtungen*, or "confessing movements," in the language of to-day's AELC! K.M.] within one church. Or else the two confessions are churches; then the evangelical church allegedly standing above them is a fiction. The latter has always been the position of Lutheranism, which on the basis of Augsburg Confession VII could not judge otherwise.<sup>4</sup>

### IV.

This same traditional Lutheran position was represented by the two great theological "founding fathers" of the Missouri Synod, C.F.W. Walther and F. Pieper. They took for granted that Article VII of the Augustana governs outward doctrinal and sacramental unity, and does not deal simply with intangibles.<sup>5</sup>

### V.

The standard objections to the traditional understanding of Augustana VII are ill-founded in the sources and therefore



invalid. For instance, it is customary to appeal to Apology VII — VIII, 31: "We are talking about true spiritual unity, without which there can be no faith in the heart nor righteousness in the heart before God." It is held that this refers not to doctrinal unity but to a kind of minimal spiritual unity which cuts across doctrinal differences. Such pietistic, psychologising notions of faith, however, are foreign to the Apology. The German version of the Apology makes quite clear what is meant in this paragraph:

We say that those are called one harmonious church who believe in one Christ, have one Gospel, one Spirit, one Faith, one and the same Sacrament, and we thus speak of spiritual unity, without which faith and Christian existence cannot be. For that very unity now we say that it is not necessary that human ordinances . . . be everywhere the same.

In other words, "spiritual unity" here includes the entire Christian faith or doctrine as well as "one and the same Sacrament." The contrast here, as in Augustana VII, is not between minimal doctrine and maximal doctrine, or central doctrine and peripheral doctrine, but between the divinely revealed evangelical doctrine, all of it, and human customs and ceremonies. All this faithfully echoes Luther, for whom "unity" always rested on the objective Gospel in its doctrinal and sacramental fullness:

I believe that there is on earth a holy little group and fellowship consisting entirely of saints, under one Head, Christ, gathered together by the Holy Spirit, in one Faith, sense, and understanding, with various gifts, but harmonious in love, without sects and divisions . . . Therefore there belongs here what is to be preached concerning the Sacraments, and in sum the entire Gospel and all offices of Christianity.<sup>6</sup>

## VI.

A related objection runs as follows: The purely taught Gospel and the rightly administered sacraments cannot mean the complete doctrinal content of the Book of Concord — agreement "in the doctrine and in all its articles" (FC-SD X, 31) — since that would limit the Christian church to orthodox Lutherans. Therefore, the Gospel and Sacraments come into consideration here only in some vague sense of what the various "denominations" have in common, without doctrinal specifics.

The entire Book of Concord, however, knows no such sentimentally shapeless Gospel and sacraments. To suggest that the "gospel" in the Augustana is simply Article IV, on justification, that is, "one of 28 Articles,"<sup>7</sup> is to impose on the Confession a

forced and — dare one say it? — unhistorical interpretation. In that case the Confession meant to assert that “true unity” existed with the Zwinglians, because they also agreed completely with the Article IV, on justification! Why then were the Zwinglians not allowed to sign the Augsburg Confession? Article X, on the Holy Supper of our Lord, “rejects” the Zwinglian doctrine, and Luther’s Great Confession of the Supper of Christ (1528!) contained these words, quoted later in FC-SD VII, 32:

It does not rest on man’s faith or unbelief but on the Word and ordinance of God — unless they first change God’s Word and ordinance and misinterpret them, as the enemies of the sacrament do at the present time. They, indeed, have only bread and wine, for they do not also have the Word and instituted ordinance of God but have perverted and changed it according to their own imagination.

Does anyone really think that the Augsburg Confession meant to say that the Zwinglian “enemies of the sacrament” also preached the Gospel “harmoniously according to its pure understanding” and distributed the sacraments “in conformity with the divine Word”? Or, for that matter, that the “true unity” and the “purely” and “rightly” distributed Gospel and sacraments were meant to cover also the Romanist opponents who “defend wicked opinions against the Gospel” (Apol. IV, 400), who “defend human opinions contrary to the Gospel” (Apol. IV, 400), whose doctrine “does overthrow faith” (Apol. VII — VIII, 21), and who “seek to destroy the Word of God” (Apol. XIV, 4)? Whatever difficulties there may be in the interpretation of Augustana VII, it is evident that the solution cannot lie in this direction.

Two opposing misunderstandings must be avoided. On the one hand, it will not do to limit the purely taught Gospel simply to justification, or to the Second Article of the Creed. This is clear already from a comparison with Schwabach Article XII, on which the first part of Augustana VII is based: “Such church is none other than the believers in Christ, who hold, believe, and teach the above-mentioned articles and parts, and are on that account persecuted and martyred in the world.” And the Torgau Articles, on which the Augustana’s argument about true unity is largely based, make the point that the unity of the church is not violated by ceremonial dissimilarities, although it is violated by those who “abandon God’s Word in an article.”<sup>8</sup>

Luther’s understanding of the Gospel was holistic, not atomistic. In his Large Catechism, published prior to the Augsburg Confession, Luther contrasted the Ten Com-

mandments as Law not with the Second Article only, but with the entire Creed, that is, with all three Articles. The Creed is “the Faith” (*der Glaube*). Justification, forgiveness, grace, are organically embedded in the Trinitarian fulness of the faith and cannot be cut mechanically out of this matrix: “These articles of the Creed, therefore, divide and distinguish us Christians from all other people on earth. . . . Now you see that the Creed is a very different teaching from the Ten Commandments. The latter teaches us what we ought to do; the Creed tells what God does for us and gives to us.”<sup>9</sup> The Gospel, then, is not one out of many articles, but it is all the articles of faith, seen in the perspective of the grace of God in Christ, in other words, not as Law. In its first paragraph, therefore, the Seventh Article of the Augustana gives the normal and normative description of the church as being bound up with the entire evangelical and saving truth. Of course, Christians can and do exist under heretical regimes — but these regimes exist in violation of Christ’s saving will for His church and as such are illegitimate. He has bound His whole church to His whole truth.

The opposite misunderstanding holds that Article Seven speaks of the Gospel in its widest sense, including the Law. This is a perfectly understandable reaction to the impossible idea that “the Gospel,” agreement in which is sufficient for the “true unity” of the church, is a short slogan about justification. It is this minimalist notion of “Gospel” which probably has created most of the trouble in the interpretation of Augustana VII. What must be seen is that the Gospel in the “narrow” or strict sense is not the Second Article as distinguished from the First and Third. Rather, it is the entire salvific Trinitarian faith or creed, as distinguished from the Law. That is the point of the distinction in Article V of the Formula of Concord (see SD V, 4-6,20). The Gospel in the “broad” sense, then, differs from the Gospel in the “strict” sense only in that the former includes also the Law, or the preaching of repentance. If that be the distinction, then Article Seven means the Gospel in its “strict” sense, as Sasse has shown in his classic *Here We Stand*.<sup>10</sup> Actually Francis Pieper had said quite the same thing rather clearly half a century earlier:

*By unity in faith we understand agreement in all articles of the Christian doctrine revealed in Scripture . . .*

In the thesis only the Gospel is meant. When we speak of “articles of the Christian doctrine,” this is to be understood as the revelation and preaching of Christ . . . The Law does not come into consideration here. The foundation on which

the Christian church is built is Christ, the Gospel . . . Although the Law, therefore, does not belong within faith and, therefore, also not within the definition of faith, acceptance of the Law is, nevertheless, a necessary presupposition of unity in faith . . . The expression "articles of faith" designates a quite definite concept: the doctrines of the Gospel in contrast to the Law.<sup>11</sup>

## VII.

Why is all this important? Official discussions among ALC, LCA, and LC-MS theologians under the auspices of LCUSA's Division of Theological Studies have produced the remarkable "FODT Report,"<sup>12</sup> which includes this formulation:

For Lutherans, Article VII of the Augsburg Confession provides the starting point for investigation of existing unity: "For the true unity of the church it is enough to agree concerning the teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments." All of our church bodies begin from that premise. But exactly what is this "teaching of the gospel" (DOCTRINA EVANGELII)? Discussions among our three church bodies revealed differences on this point.

The sad paradox is that radically anti-confessional forces are appealing piously to the "true unity" and the "Gospel" of Augustana VII — even as they blithely surrender the Sacrament (e.g., *Marburg Revisited* in America and the *Leuenberg Concord* in Europe) and totally overthrow the Reformation's *sola scriptura* foundation in the name of historical criticism! All this is routinely papered over with threadbare formalisms and legalisms about confessional "subscription" and paragraphs in church constitutions. The Lutheran World Federation has even discovered in Augustana VII an "unexpended ecumenical capital,"<sup>13</sup> which was promptly used to finance an ecumenical program of "reconciled diversity" — a "genuine church fellowship" among the various denominations, predicated on "the legitimacy of the confessional differences and therefore the need to preserve them."<sup>14</sup> If only such "ecumenical capital" — about as authentic as Joseph Smith's golden plates — had been discovered a century and a half earlier, the Lutheran Church could have spared itself the whole bother about the Prussian Union (which embodied precisely "reconciled diversity"<sup>15</sup>), including the costly emigrations to America and Australia. Who would have thought that the Lutheran World Federation could within twenty short years go so far beyond the principles of one of its own former presidents, Franklin Clark Fry, who, though not exactly known for extreme

confessionalism, stated in 1956: "Insistence upon agreement in doctrine as a precondition for church fellowship is the distinguishing mark of Lutherans among all Protestants and should never be relaxed"?<sup>16</sup>

### Conclusion

World Lutheranism and Christendom are agog with controversy and confusion not simply over the ecumenical dogma of inspiration ("Who spake by the prophets" — Nicene Creed) but over the very Trinitarian and Christological core of the Faith. Nothing is more necessary in these circumstances than clarity about first principles. The priceless evangelical heritage of our Book of Concord — including its rich ecclesiological dimension — needs to be reappropriated in every generation by means of patient, hard, humble, and prayerful theological work. But in the measure in which the true *evangelical* grandeur of the Augsburg Confession is glimpsed anew, in that measure it will again be clear why it is precisely an *ecumenical* and most relevant duty to confess our dear Augustana both positively, in true *concordia*, "as our symbol in this epoch . . . because it is taken from the Word of God and solidly and well grounded therein," and negatively as a symbol which "distinguishes our reformed churches from the papacy and from other condemned sects and heresies."<sup>17</sup>

### FOOTNOTES

1. *Minneapolis Theses*, III, "Church Fellowship." Richard C. Wolf, *Documents of Lutheran Unity in America* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), Document 146, p. 341.
2. H. Sasse, "Theses on the Seventh Article of the Augsburg Confession," *The Springfielder*, XXV, 3 (Autumn, 1961), pp. 14-15.
3. H. Sasse, *Was Heisst Lutherisch?* (Munich, 1936), 2nd ed., p. 15, note 2.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27, note 7.
5. C.F.W. Walther, *The True Visible Church*, Theses VIII, XII, XVIII D, XXIV; *The Proper Form of an Ev. Luth. Congregation*, par. 1, note 1; *Pastoral-Theologie*, par. 6, note 5. F. Pieper, *Vortraege*, 1916, pp. 26-27, 118-126; *Grundbekenntnis*, pp. 98-99; *Christian Dogmatics*, III, p. 417, cf. allusion on p. 422.
6. *Large Catechism*, Creed, Third Article, pars. 51 and 54; cf. Theodore Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord* (Muhlenberg, 1959), p. 417. Luther on Gal 5:9 (*Luther's Works*, 27, pp. 36-39):

For the sectarians who deny the bodily presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper accuse us today of being quarrelsome, harsh, and intractable, because, as they say, we shatter love and harmony among the churches on account of the single doctrine about the Sacrament . . . This is especially so because they agree with us on other articles of Christian doctrine . . . To this argument of theirs we reply with Paul: 'A little yeast leavens the whole lump.' In philosophy a tiny error in the beginning is very great at the end. Thus in theology a tiny error overthrows the whole teaching . . . For

doctrine is like a mathematical point. Therefore it cannot be divided; that is, it cannot stand either subtraction or addition . . . . Therefore doctrine must be one eternal and round golden circle, in which there is no crack; if even the tiniest crack appears, the circle is no longer perfect . . . . Therefore if you deny God in one article of faith, you have denied Him in all; for God is not divided into many articles of faith, but He is everything in each article and He is one in all the articles of faith . . . . Just as the world with all its wisdom and power cannot bend the rays of the sun which are aimed directly from heaven to earth, so nothing can be taken away from or added to the doctrine of faith without overthrowing it all.

For copious Luther-background and analysis see Armin-Ernst Buchrucker, *Wort, Kirche und Abendmahl bei Luther*, Bremen: Verlag Stelten, 1972.

To interpret the Augsburg Confession here contrary, not to this or that casual statement or individual opinion of the Reformer, but to the consistent and unvarying thrust of his whole theology on this issue is historically and theologically fallacious. The Formula of Concord recognizes this and appeals to Luther as a reliable expositor of the Augsburg Confession's genuine sense precisely on the issue of the sacramentarian distortions and misinterpretations (FC-SD VII, 33, 34, 41, 91; Tappert, pp. 575, 576, 585, 586).

7. H. George Anderson, "Gospel and Doctrine," *The Function of Doctrine and Theology in Light of the Unity of the Church* (Division of Theological Studies, LCUSA, 1978), p. 62.
8. J. M. Reu, *The Augsburg Confession: A Collection of Sources* (Concordia Seminary Press Reprint, n.d.), p. 82.
9. Tappert, p. 419. Cf. also note 6 above. Law and Gospel are not two doctrines among others. They are the "two proclamations" which have "since the beginning of the world" been continually "set forth side by side in the church of God with the proper distinction" (FC-SD V, 23; Tappert, p. 562). These represent God's "alien" and His "proper" works respectively: "These are the two chief works of God in men, to terrify and to justify and quicken the terrified. One or the other of these works is spoken of throughout Scripture" (Apol. XII, 51-53; Tappert, p. 189). Therefore: "All Scripture should be divided into these two chief doctrines, the law and the promises" (Apol. IV, 5; Tappert, p. 108).
10. H. Sasse, *Here We Stand* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1938), esp. pp. 95 ff., 110-180.
11. F. Pieper, "Von der Einigkeit im Glauben," Synodical Conference *Proceedings*, 1888, pp. 6-13.
12. See note 7 above.
13. "Ecumenical Commitment," Section II Report, LWF *Proceedings* (Evian, 1970), p. 72. Cf. Edgar M. Carlson, "The 1969 Theology Commission Meeting — A Report and Appraisal," *Lutheran World*, XVII, 1 (1970), pp. 62-63.
14. LWF *Proceedings* (Dar-es-Salaam, 1977), pp. 173-175.
15. Prussian Union authorities declared officially: "The Union does not intend or signify the abandonment of confessions of faith which have heretofore been used nor does it abolish the authority which the Symbolical Books of the two evangelical communions have hitherto exercised. Concurrence in the Union is only an expression of the spirit of moderation and charity which no longer allows difference in isolated articles of faith to serve as ground for a denial of external church-fellowship on the part of the one communion toward the other" (quoted in H. Sasse, *Here We Stand*, p. 11).

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16. "Franklin Clark Fry's Presentation of United Lutheran Attitude, 1956," Richard C. Wolf, ed., *Documents of Lutheran Unity in America*, Document 225, p. 546.
  17. FC-SD, Rule and Norm, 5; Tappert, p. 504.





# Repentance and Faith: Who Does the Turning?

## The Language and Its Implications

Theodore Mueller

"Repent and believe," says our Lord throughout the Old and New Testaments. And throughout the centuries the question has been debated as to who performs the turning away from sin and turning to the Lord. The same question also pertains to faith: Who "performs" the believing? To what extent is the one named as the subject of the two verbs engaged in the activity, state, or process expressed by these verbs?

Modern Protestant theology maintains that the individual indeed performs the activity of turning and believing. He decides to turn to and believe in Christ. Some go so far as to say that the individual is totally and solely responsible for achieving repentance and faith. Bill Bright takes this position: "I repent means that I change my attitude toward my sins," a sentence found in a section stressing "what I *must* do to appropriate God's love and forgiveness."<sup>1</sup> J. Goetzmann expresses the same thought: "Repentance is regarded as an act open to man and as a duty. It is a possibility given to man by God as an eschatological gift of grace, and it is also a duty required of him."<sup>2</sup>

The Lutheran Confessions state the opposite position: Of his own free will man is not able to repent and believe. "These are the two chief works of God in men, to terrify and to justify and quicken the terrified,"<sup>3</sup> which is a definition of repentance. The Formula of Concord treats the subject in depth: "Through the fall of our first parents man is so corrupted that in divine things, concerning our conversion and salvation, he is by nature blind and does not and cannot understand the Word of God when it is preached, but considers it foolishness; nor does he of himself approach God, but he is and remains an enemy of God until by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Word which is preached and heard, he is converted, becomes a believer, is regenerated and renewed."<sup>4</sup> And the Formula declares: "Holy Scriptures ascribes conversion, faith in Christ, regeneration, renewal, and everything that belongs to its real beginning and completion in no way to the human powers of the natural free will, be it entirely or one half or the least and tiniest part, but altogether and alone to the divine operation and the Holy Spirit, as the Apology declares. To some

extent reason and free will are able to lead an outwardly virtuous life. But to be born anew, to receive inwardly a new heart, mind and spirit, is solely the work of the Holy Spirit."<sup>5</sup> With respect to the efficient cause man's natural powers cannot contribute anything or help in any way.<sup>6</sup>

The Lutheran position is crystal clear concerning man's action in his repentance and faith. Yet many well-meaning people wonder: God commanded it. Therefore, is it not man who performs it? Why else command it? When we say, "I repent," and, "I believe," is it not *I* who do the turning and believing? Does not our language imply such a performance? Recent developments in linguistics bring new light to this problem and clarify what Scripture says. And although turning to the secular discipline of linguistics for a theological explanation might be startling to some, it should not be considered unusual; for orthodox theology is based upon the language of Scripture, and a poor understanding of language produces bad theology.

The explanation presented here draws on a few grammatical concepts which must be understood first in order to apply them to the subject of repentance and faith. I beg the indulgence of the reader while wending my way through the thicket of the grammatical forest; it is, however, a clear and easy path and requires no special knowledge of linguistics or related disciplines. It is part of the daily usage of every speaker. A sentence usually consists of a verb and a subject as in the following cases:

I drove to St. Louis.

I write a paper.

I am preaching God's word.

The verb expresses an action; the subject often states who performs the action, the doer. In grammatical terms the doer is called the *agent* and is defined as the instigator of the action. The agent decides to perform, and carries out the action by his own power and energy. The problem arises when it is assumed that every subject is the agent of what is expressed by the verb. In the sentence, "The window broke," did the window instigate the action of breaking? Of course not. The verbs mentioned in the above examples belong to a category of verbs which express an action, a dynamic event. These verbs require an agent and are, therefore, called "action verbs."

Other verbs express not an action but a state or a situation:

I like chocolate.

I doubt your words.

I know French.

This category of verbs expresses a stative situation and is,

therefore, referred to as "stative verbs." They express a psychological state of mind or emotions; they specify a certain disposition or condition. The subject of such a verb usually names the person or thing which is in that state. That kind of a subject is called an *experiencer* to distinguish it from an *agent*. It specifies the one undergoing the sensation, emotion, or cognition.

Action verbs are distinguished from stative verbs in English by a simple test. The progressive tense can only be used with action verbs:

I am driving to St. Louis.

I will be writing a paper.

I am preaching God's Word.

The progressive tense cannot be used with stative verbs:

\*I am liking chocolate.

\*I am doubting your words.

\*I am knowing French.

The verbs *hear* as opposed to *listen* and *see* as opposed to *look* illustrate the distinction between action and stative verbs and between agent and experiencer:

I see a girl.

I hear music.

In these sentences the subject undergoes a sensation which he cannot avoid unless he is blind or deaf. The subject is an experiencer. *Hear* and *see* are stative verbs. But the following sentences are different:

I look at a girl.

I listen to your words.

In these sentences the subject is the agent, determines to engage in the activity, and carries it out. *Look* and *listen* are action verbs.

This simple distinction is at the heart of the discussion about repentance and faith. The question can be restated: Are *repent* and *believe* action or stative verbs? Do we perceive the subject of these verbs as agent or experiencer? Modern Protestantism views these verbs as action verbs and the subject as the agent, while Lutherans view them as stative verbs and the subject as the experiencer. Thus theology in this instance is reduced to a question of language, and of grammar in particular. Only sound linguistic analysis leads to sound theology. Resolving the linguistic and theological question is predicated on an analysis of the verbs *repent* and *believe*. The progressive conjugation can be applied as a test. English does not allow the use of a progressive tense with these verbs. We do not say, "I am repenting," or, "I am believing." Thus, in English these verbs are stative verbs. However, the Lord revealed His truth through the medium not of

English, but of the Hebrew and Greek languages. The analysis, therefore, must be based on the meaning which these words had in the original text of Scripture.

The Greek verb for *repent*, *metanoeo*, which renders the Hebrew *niham* ("feel regret"), is interpreted by Arndt, Bauer, and Gingrich as "to change one's mind," then as "feel remorse, repent, be converted." They cite non-biblical authors and then apply the meaning to Scripture. Goetzmann, in the article cited above, states that the preposition *meta* is used with verbs of motion and mental activity. "The change of mind involves the recognition that the previous opinion was false or bad; we get the meaning of feel remorse, regret. . . . The NT stresses the thought, the will, the *nous*."<sup>7</sup> Thus, this verb expresses a mental disposition. Accordingly, it belongs to the stative verb group. It is the English language which has introduced the notion of an action, not present in the original. Note that the verb *repent* does not describe the process of changing or turning, but rather refers to the resultant state of mind, a condition which is different from what it was before. The same is implied when a father tells his disobedient son, "When you have changed your attitude, you may come back."

The Greek verb *pisteuo* corresponds to the Hebrew verbs *batah* ("to feel safe") and the hiphil of *'aman* ("to view as reliable, to trust") and is interpreted by Arndt, Bauer, and Gingrich as (1) to be convinced of, (2) to believe in, trust, in addition to being convinced. Harris summarizes his discussion of this verb as an intellectual apprehension, a simple credence, the confident trust that an individual places in a divine person.<sup>8</sup> Rossiter and Pearce, in their discussion of the role of trust in interpersonal communication, analyze the concept meticulously and describe how trust originates and increases. Trust is a belief, a state of mind towards someone; it is confidence or expectation and is generated not by an act of the will or a decision by someone, but rather "trusting behavior on your part sometimes produces trust in the other. . . . All you can do is to offer trusting behavior in the hope that the other person will respond with trust."<sup>9</sup> Thus the verb *to believe* also expresses a psychological state, not an action. Trust in God develops and increases as a result of, or in reaction to His Word and promises, the means of grace, and not as a function of one's decision, effort, or activity.

The verbs *to repent* and *to believe* belong to the stative verb group. Therefore, the grammatical subject is an experiencer — that is, one who undergoes the sensation, emotion, or cognition,

and not the agent, or doer of the action. This grammatical analysis, therefore, supports the view expressed by the Lutheran Confessions and demonstrates clearly that man cannot play an active or decisive role in his conversion or his faith. The language implies as much.

Repentance frequently seems to imply more than a mere passive state. In such phrases as "produce deeds that are consistent with repentance" (Acts 26:20) and "unless you repent you will all perish" (Luke 13:3) it seems that actions are suggested, namely, good works. A problem arises when the fruits of repentance are confused with repentance proper. Good works are, indeed, expected and demanded, but as the evidence of the changed attitude. Just as the gifts brought to mother do not constitute love itself but a demonstration of it, so the good works are the demonstration of repentance, as expressed in the NIV translation, "prove their repentance by their deeds" (Acts 26:20). The verbs describing the good works (such as "give to the needy, help your neighbor, speak well of him, go to church, confess your Lord," etc.) are action verbs with an agent as subject. There the individual initiates and performs the deeds. Those actions prove and show the attitude and state of mind of a repentant person trusting in his Lord. But with respect to repentance and faith, however, the individual named as subject experiences the sensation or state, and only the Holy Spirit through the means of grace is the effective cause for this disposition.

Yet there remains the question of why does the Lord order repentance and faith if these verbs do not express actions. Normally stative verbs are not used in the imperative. We do not say, \*"Be healthy!" \*"Feel good!" \*"Like these vegetables!" However, the exclusion of the imperative is not an absolute rule with this category of verbs. We do say: "Trust me!" "Be cheerful!" "Cheer up!" Such expressions are encouragements, exhortations, and not commandments to be obeyed, and are analogous to the jussive and cohortative in Hebrew. Furthermore, Greek and Hebrew do not follow the rules of English grammar. The translators have rendered into English imperatives Greek and Hebrew forms which in those languages may not have had the same constraints as English. Thus, "Repent!" "Change your mind!" "Believe in your Lord!" "Trust Him!" are encouragements, rather than orders.

The distinction between the two types of verbs noted above has profound implications for the pastor's activities. Through his words God brings about repentance and faith, nurtures and

strengthens trust in the Lord. An inept ambassador can do great damage by misrepresenting the message entrusted to him. So can the pastor when he misunderstands the nature and growth of faith. Repentance and faith, though not the same, are intimately related and go hand in hand. Every believer is in the state of repentance; to come to faith includes turning to the Lord. The practical implications which are discussed subsequently center around faith, but are applicable to repentance as well. Only faith is mentioned, particularly since the concept is so widely misunderstood and misrepresented today. When faith is presented as man's activity the impression is given that he must contribute something to his salvation — a form of work-righteousness. How we speak about faith does have serious implications and is well worth examining.

"To believe" is presented as an action verb denoting man's activity or accomplishment when it is demanded, ordered, commanded, required, prescribed or enjoined. Expressions like "faith is the only thing for you to do," "faith is all that is needed," "the only requirement," "the only contribution," "all God wants is faith," "you *must* believe," or any statement expressing constraint, duty, task, or obligation, imply that faith is an "act." The theological literature often labels faith as "the act of faith."<sup>10</sup> *Thompson's Chain Reference Bible* betrays the same attitude about faith when the references to faith are listed under such topics as "Faith Enjoined" and "A Fundamental Duty."

Faith is represented as man's act when it is made the condition for salvation. Conditional clauses, like "if you would only believe," "if you believe, you will be saved," make faith a stipulation man must meet. Note, however, that not all if-clauses fall into the same category. Conditionality must not be confused with statements expressing existing circumstances as in "if you have a fever, take two aspirins." Thus, "if you trust the Lord, you have salvation and all the promises which go with it," correctly identifies faith as the tool by which all of God's promises are appropriated; it states what has been expressed technically by the phrase, *sola fide*. Conditions are also expressed through restrictive clauses and have the same effect of stipulating something for man to achieve. Thus, the newer formulas of absolution add a relative clause to identify the beneficiary of the forgiveness: "There is forgiveness for all *who turn to Christ*."<sup>11</sup> Such a clause restricts forgiveness to those who can meet the stated condition of repentance and faith, and will be interpreted as man's contribution to his salvation.

Finally faith appears as man's activity when it is made the cause of justification. Thus, when faith takes precedence over, is glorified over, or is preached with scant references to God's grace and Christ's atonement, the impression is given that man contributes to his salvation. It is a misrepresentation when faith rather than God's grace is the motivating force for sanctification. When faith appears at the heart and center of justification, man's salvation is reduced to the question, "What must I *do* to obtain justification?" rather than, "What has God done for me?" The Gospel has been changed into a law.

How does faith develop and grow? If the one who trusts is not the agent producing faith, under what conditions does it evolve? Common sense tells us that trust, like love, cannot be forced. It results from, and is strengthened by kindness, compassion, love, benevolence, favor, warmth, good will, consideration, etc. In the right context it can be elicited by an exhortation: "Trust me, because I have only the best intentions for you." Recent research into the question of how trust evolves between human beings is of considerable interest to theology.<sup>12</sup> Trust in another person occurs under certain conditions: There is a cognitive dimension which favors its development. The trusting person must perceive that the trusted person's behavior affects him in non-trivial ways; that he is well-intentioned towards him; that his is able and willing to conduct himself in such a way as to prevent harm to him. He must have some basis for predicting how that other person will behave towards him. Sometimes increasing communication may produce better relations, that is, a greater degree of trust. Another interesting observation concerns a subjective dimension, namely, the fact that individuals vary in their response when trust is offered to them. The way one feels about oneself seems to be an important factor. People who are self-confident are more likely to trust than those plagued by self-doubt. The research presents trust as a function of communication, which serves as an instrument for its evolution and growth.

Scripture has always taught what is stated above. The research was adduced to make explicit what is subsumed in the Scriptural statements, not to validate Scripture. (Note that modern research has finally progressed to the point where it has discovered what the holy writers knew two thousand years ago.) "Faith cometh by hearing," i.e., as the result of hearing the great deeds God has done to rescue us from our plight (Rom. 10:17). The Lord Himself mentions those who believe through the words of the Apostles (John 17:20). Christ's witness and John's Gospel have faith as

their objective (John 1:7, 20:31). The Samaritans believe because they have heard the words of life which the Lord told them (John 4:42). Thus, Scripture underscores the role of communication in the development of trust and stresses that the news of His grace and mercy are the means by which faith is created and strengthened.

Certain conclusions can be drawn for Christ's ambassadors. Note that it is the Holy Spirit who produces faith in an individual with the pastor acting as His messenger. But a messenger can do much harm and impede the effectiveness of the message. The cognitive aspect, as mentioned, is instrumental in the development of trust. The pastor must show how kind, compassionate, gracious, loving, and full of good will God is towards us; he must depict His unbounding grace and mercy to rebellious sinners and His eagerness to help us. As he proclaims the Gospel of Christ's atonement, he also affects the self-view of the listener, a second condition mentioned in the research. He assures the listener of how precious he is in the sight of God, how much God values him and everyone of His creation.

Only the message of what God has done for man produces faith. The pastor must put into prominence the Word of Reconciliation, convince his audience of God's immeasurable love and must not talk about faith primarily, or make faith the principal topic of his communication. When he proclaims the objective justification and the reconciliation of sinners through the cross, trust and confidence in such a God develops without even mentioning the word "faith" or explaining what faith is.<sup>13</sup> In such a context exhortations to trust God are in place. In this sense Paul answered the jailer at Philippi who had asked, "What must I do?" (Acts 16:30). The jailer meant: "What acts of penance must I do to obtain forgiveness?" Paul's reply is the antithesis of the verb to *do*: "You are not to do anything; on the contrary, trust the Lord." Believing is the opposite of doing, as is so clearly taught in Galatians. Paul consistently sets faith up as the direct opposite to good works or to keeping the demands of the Law.

This discussion has attempted to clarify the role which the individual assumes in repentance and faith. The question of man's involvement arises out of a linguistic confusion which treats the verbs *repent* and *believe* as action verbs rather than stative verbs. Since the subject of a stative verb is an *experiencer* who undergoes a sensation or a state of mind, he cannot be viewed as an *agent* performing the turning to God or the believing in the Lord. Thus, linguistics vindicates the Lutheran position. This fact goes to



show that the Lord is a better linguist than human beings. Likewise, our fathers who drafted the Lutheran Confessions had a clear understanding of what the Lord says in Holy Scripture, even without the help of modern linguistics.

#### FOOTNOTES

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3. Apol. XII, 53; Theodore G. Tappert, tr. and ed., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 189.
4. SD II, 5; Tappert, p. 520.
5. SD II, 25; Tappert, p. 526.
6. SD II, 71; Tappert, p. 535.
7. Brown, I, p. 357.
8. Brown, III, p. 1213.
9. Charles Rossiter and Barnett Pearce, *Communicating Personally* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merill Educational Publishing Co., 1977), p. 136.
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11. *Worship Supplement* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1969), p. 63.
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# Baptism and the Lord's Supper in the Life of the Church

David P. Scaer

## I.

### The Sacraments Viewed from Different Perspectives

A Reformed theologian and an articulate defender of infant baptism claims that "The Epistles do not say a great deal about baptism."<sup>1</sup> This statement reflects the general Reformed opinion concerning the sacraments.<sup>2</sup> Since they are given little attention in the Scriptures, they logically do not have a necessary or really significant part in the life of the church. Lutherans, of course, have an internal immunization against shelving the sacraments in their popular slogan "word and sacrament," a phrase so much a part of Lutheran theology that it enjoys a stellar ranking of the second magnitude, slightly below the three *sola*'s.

In the Augsburg Confession the sacraments are given a prominent place. Specific attention is given baptism in Article IX and the Lord's Supper in Article X. The office of the ministry according to Article V was instituted so that justification can become operative through the sacraments as they are applied to Christians. In the first of truly unique Lutheran articles, Augustana II, on original sin, baptism is set forth as the remedy for man's depraved condition.<sup>3</sup> Thus Lutheran theology cannot really proceed into the great issues of sin and grace without necessarily becoming involved in the sacraments.

At least superficially it seems that theology in the Lutheran sense cannot exist without a clear and explicit sacramentology. This center of theological focus on the sacraments is reflected in the general Lutheran cultural consciousness. Whether the reason of sacramental prominence is understood in every case is another question. Generally Lutherans do not have to be convinced that their children should be baptized. They have some sense of receiving the Lord's Supper especially in times of crisis. They are comfortable with baptismal fonts, altars, candles — those ecclesiastical adornments which suggest the presence of God in Jesus Christ in their worship life.<sup>4</sup> But in spite of a general favorable disposition to a sacramentalized worship life, perhaps Lutherans are not as clear in their sacramentology as are the Reformed or Roman Catholics. Lutherans at times suffer a discrepancy between what they preach and what they practice. Lutheran theology seems to be more "sacramentalized" than Lutheran church life. While Lutheran theologians are obligated

to a sacramentalized theology through such a phrase as "word and sacrament," Lutheran worship practices suggest that the word, i.e., the preached and taught word, is the overarching center of attention. Perhaps it is too glib to observe that in theology Lutherans are closer to Roman Catholicism, while in actual practice Lutherans frequently resemble the Reformed.<sup>5</sup> Caught between Roman Catholicism and the Reformed, the Lutherans seem to have been caught in a sacramental identity crisis from the time of the Reformation until now.

The Reformed are not really tempted to "sin sacramentally." Their church life can exist without the sacraments and even prosper.<sup>6</sup> The sacraments are desacramentalized into ritualistic ordinances, relics from the Old Testament transformed by New Testament language.<sup>7</sup> As ritualistic laws they benefit the welfare of the community, but not as God's actual working in grace directly in the life of the believer. At best they are regarded as visible proofs of God's working somewhere in the community without direct specific divine commitment to the individual.<sup>8</sup> At worst they are treated as virtually unnecessary additions to the Decalogue.<sup>9</sup> The Reformed are capable of sacramental debate among themselves, but inevitably the conclusion accepts all sides of the debates as acceptable.<sup>10</sup> Thus in the matter of infant baptism, proponents and opponents have really no difficulty in tolerating both views.<sup>11</sup> Similarly the Reformed are quite willing to tolerate Lutheran views as long as there can be some sort of mutual detente. Tolerance for a variety of sacramental views are possible for the Reformed, since the sacraments do not belong to the heart of their theology and thus have no real essential place in their church life.

Roman Catholicism takes the extreme opposite position from the Reformed. If for the Reformed church life is independent of any sacramental action, for Roman Catholicism the life of the church is subordinated to the sacramental actions.<sup>12</sup> The personal spiritual life of the believer is subordinated to the variety of sacramental actions. To maintain the sacramental action the priesthood has been established. If the Reformed can meet God's demands for salvation without the sacraments, Roman Catholics can meet God's demands without the preaching of the word. Here, of course, we must be hesitant in our critique since there are sacramental revivals among the Reformed just as there are preaching renaissances among Roman Catholics.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, in Roman Catholic theology the central action concentrates in the sacraments with preaching serving as preparatory prelude.

The differences on the centers of concentration between Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism can be seen in how each opposes women's ordination. Roman Catholic objection is chiefly focused on the prohibition to engage in the sacrificial action of the mass but not necessarily in the sacramental action (as women now serve as extraordinary ministers of the eucharist) or in the preaching activity (as women have served as readers of the Scripture lessons).<sup>14</sup> Confessional Lutheranism sees no possibility of women either as dispensers of the Sacrament or as preachers. The latter is just as, if not more, repulsive than the former.<sup>15</sup>

Lutheranism, certainly not through design, finds itself in its sacramental theology and practice wedged in between Calvinism and Roman Catholicism. Not that Lutheran theology has attempted to find the golden middle, but through its commitment to the Holy Scriptures and its understanding of tradition it has arrived at this position. The Lutheran position is so situated that any movement from its native moorings means slipping into either the Reformed or Roman Catholic attitudes toward the sacraments. If the sacraments are seen as unnecessary so far as the working of God's grace is concerned, the desacramentalized theology of the Reformed has been introduced. If the impression is given that the sacramental actions are really the only necessary constituent factors of the church's existence, then Lutheran theology has adopted a Roman Catholic posture.

Lutheranism's position of the logical and theological middle between the Reformed and Roman Catholic positions has been verified by over four hundred and fifty years of Lutheran history. The threat of union with the Reformed has plagued the Lutherans since Philipp of Hesse's attempt to reconcile Luther to Zwingli's position at Marburg. This threat can be traced through Brandenburg, Prussia, Arnoldshain, and now Leuenberg. The interims of Augsburg and Leipzig have suggested that Lutherans under certain circumstances could accommodate Roman Catholic thinking in their theology. While Lutheran sacramental theology has been historically endangered by both the Reformed and the Roman Catholic thought, neither has been seriously bothered by Lutheran sacramental thought. Both are willing to be more tolerant of Lutheranism than Lutheranism could ever be of them.

Though the Reformed and Roman Catholic positions stand on either side of the Lutheran positions, both have in common what is called here a "sacramental isolation." In Reformed theology the

sacraments are isolated as ordinances which do not belong to the necessary forming of the church, because they are viewed more from the perspective of Law than of Gospel. In Roman Catholic theology the sacraments are isolated as cultic rituals dispensed by the divinely established institutional church. The sacramental action as ritual is isolated from the preached and inscripturated word as the actual conveyer of salvation among the lives of believers. Thus the absence of the appropriate sacrament is handled differently in Roman Catholicism than in Lutheran theology. In Roman Catholic theology, the absence of the necessary sacrament is resolved by intent; for Lutherans, who see sacraments as forms of the word, the problem of sacramental absence is less severe.

From the Lutheran perspective baptism and the Lord's Supper are not isolated as ordinances or rituals from the life of the church; but to employ another famous Lutheran phrase, these sacraments exist "in, with, and under" the church's life. The sacramental action and efficacy permeate every corner of the church's life, as the sacraments are the actual working of Christ for salvation in the church.

## II.

### **In Baptism God Establishes and Remains in His Church**

In the first instance, the sacraments are to be viewed not as cultic acts of the community through which the community maintains itself<sup>16</sup> and thus satisfies the will or another commandment of God,<sup>17</sup> but they are to be viewed, first of all, as God's gracious presence and action in Jesus Christ in the worshipping congregation. The Holy Spirit creates and sustains the church's life. The Spirit accomplishes this, not as an autonomous force or merely as the presence of God in the world in some sort of modalistic sense, but as Christ's Spirit adorned in the earthly forms of the sacraments. As baptism by the water and by the Spirit are not two actions but one, so the birth of the church through water and the Spirit is also only one divine action.<sup>18</sup> Since the church is created by baptism, her only foundation is and remains baptism. Thus John the Baptist, Jesus, and St. Paul all view the community of believers as drawn together through baptism.<sup>19</sup>

The Matthean commission sees as one command the establishment of the church and the authorization of baptism.<sup>20</sup> The One who establishes His church through baptism is the One who gave His life as a ransom for many<sup>21</sup> and who has now risen from the dead. Baptism attaches future generations to the benefits of death

and resurrection, a thought which later Paul would develop further. Thus the institution of the church and of baptism constitute one act. Stated negatively, without baptism the church is not established and without the church there can be no baptismal activity. Baptism does not play this role among the Reformed, as the Spirit does not establish the church through baptism itself, even though baptism may be a sign-post of the Spirit's activity.<sup>22</sup> Equally unacceptable is any view that isolates baptism as an ecclesiastical rite with autonomous power and authority separated from the Spirit's action in the word of the Gospel.<sup>23</sup> Wherever the Spirit is establishing the church, He does it through baptism. The church, when she becomes conscious of her creation by the risen Lord, sees this action as having taken place through baptism.

Even for Jesus the possibility did not exist that the church could be extended without baptism. Believers are received into His kingdom but through water. The pericope of Nicodemus is informative for our purposes. Jesus, the Head and Bringer of God's kingdom is personally present; nevertheless the Jewish leader must be born of water and the Spirit to share in the kingdom's benefits. Even with Jesus present there can be no detour around baptism's water.<sup>24</sup>

The presence of Jesus in His church has always been maintained through baptism. Spatially and temporally Christians are removed by miles and years, continents and millennia, from the Galilean mountain where Jesus gave His promise to be with His church forever. Through baptism the words of Jesus, "Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world," continue to function as effective promise. In carrying out the command to baptize the servants of the exalted Lord remain as close to Him today as the original Eleven who first received His command and promise. Through baptism the exalted Lord maintains His incarnate presence among us.<sup>25</sup>

The presence of the Lord in Baptism cannot be identified with the sacramental presence of the Supper, but the similarity cannot be avoided.<sup>26</sup> The One who commands us to commemorate His death by eating the sacrificial elements of the body and the blood is the same One who promises His church that He will be present with them in carrying out the baptismal command. If the Supper is the sacrament of sustenance and perserverance in the faith, then baptism is the frontier or inaugural sacrament. Those enslaved to Satan pass through baptism in order to become free in Christ. The ancient baptismal liturgies with their abjurations and denuncia-

tions of Satan depicted the theological reality of sinner turning saint in a way in which the contemporary Protestant liturgies with their concentration on parents simply cannot match.<sup>27</sup> Concentration on family obligations during the rite of baptism is the old business of the Reformed covenant theology now appearing in the guise of a modern family session with pious religious overtones.

Baptism as the sacrament of passage and transmission should maintain as many of the ancient ceremonies as possible within an evangelical setting. The special white baptismal shroud signifies the Christian's new existence given him in baptism. Such symbolism is not without meaning in the modern era. Still vivid are photographs of Viet Cong soldiers being released to the north, tossing off all the clothing given them by their captors. Everything associated with the old life has no use in the new existence. For the old existence there must be healthy contempt.

Baptism maintains its efficacy throughout life simply because the Christian continues to stand at the frontier and in real danger of slipping back into the Satanic dominion. Regardless of what may be considered progress in the Christian life, the believer always stands at the beginning of His sojourn and thus is always in need of what his baptism has given. At the frontier between God's and Satan's kingdom, he again and again renounces Satan, confesses faith in the Triune God, and receives everything which baptism offers. Baptism is performed once, but its effect is daily applied. Those who do not have a life-encompassing concept of baptism suffer as much from a defective anthropology as they do from a defective sacramentology. Both Reformed and Roman Catholic theologies suffer from a defective anthropology and doctrine of justification — defects which are reflected in their understanding of the role of baptism in the Christian's life.<sup>28</sup>

In Roman Catholic theology baptism ushers the believer into the Christian life and almost abandons him. He is abandoned by the grace of baptism to the works of penance. Baptism becomes one chance in his life. If it is lost, human effort must replace divine accomplishment. In Reformed theology, baptism may signify that the believer has crossed the frontier but the really firm evidence of his regeneration is progressive and constant sanctification clearly identifiable in the life of the believer. Such a use of one's progress in sanctification robs baptism of any necessary function. Roman Catholic theology presupposes that after baptism the believer will live without sin through his own efforts. Reformed theology does not recognize the necessary dependence of the sanctified life on baptism. Lutheran theology



sees the baptized as *simul iustus et peccator*, thus always in need of baptism and never abandoned to his own devices. Baptism corresponds to justification. One is a one-time ritual and the other a one-time divine act; but both are continually effective in the life of the Christian who as sinner must be reassured of God's acceptance of him.<sup>29</sup>

The continued effective force of baptism becomes visible and audible in the assembly of the worshipping Christian congregation. The believers assemble as the baptized, and the rite of baptism is repeated and reflected in the church's liturgy. The triune invocation derives its authority from the One who instituted baptism, and again the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost becomes the possession of the baptized. Sins are confessed as a repetition of the denouncing of Satan's kingdom and are forgiven again in the name of the Triune God to whom the believer belongs by baptism. The faith's requirements are repeated in the credal recitation. True worship of the church is the commemoration of baptism.

As baptism is the frontier sacrament, it is most appropriately made available for infants and other children, who are at life's threshold. Baptism as the birth into new life finds its parallel in actual birth, i.e., a birth into sin, even if the parallel is obviously negative.<sup>30</sup> Denial of infant baptism also gives evidence of either a defective theology or a weak anthropology. Those who hold a severe doctrine of original sin and see no possibility of infant salvation through baptism and faith suffer from a Manichean theology with children consigned to a divine evil disposition. Baptists with a Calvinistic orientation belong here. Those who see no need for regenerating grace in children are Pelagian in their anthropology. The Lutheran Confessions see this as the position of the Anabaptists and condemn it.<sup>31</sup> Even those Reformed who do practice infant baptism cannot overcome a certain inconsistency between this practice and their theology. Baptism itself cannot attest to either divine election or personal salvation of the baptized child as these are demonstrated by certain later marks of sanctification or the privilege of birth within the Christian community.<sup>32</sup> The act of baptism reflects not so much God's grace and election, but rather the faith decision of the believer. Baptism loses its significance as a divine act and becomes a human work. Thus baptism is best administered to a self-conscious adult who has made a faith decision for himself. It is correctly noted that for Lutherans infant baptism is the proper form, to which adults are admitted; for the Reformed the reverse is true. The exception is made for children. The denial of infant

baptism in every case not only shows a defective sacramentology; more important it shows a defect in either theology or anthropology. Even among some Reformed who practice infant baptism, defective theology and anthropology exist.

Since Baptism is the frontier sacrament, sin in the life of the Christian requires a return to this sacrament daily. Each falling away requires a recleansing through baptism. Nicodemus must be born again. The disciples though baptized by John continually must again become like children to enter the kingdom. Each day the old Adam must be drowned and the new man, standing on the threshold of God's kingdom, must desire the sincere milk of the word.<sup>33</sup> The cantankerous old sinner must be daily transformed into a child who only wants God as his Father.

### III.

#### Baptism and Faith

Baptism is never the coordinate of faith in the sense that God has established two *sine qua non*'s for salvation. Asking which is more important than the other fails to recognize that the nature of each is qualitatively different. The question of their necessity should not suggest that baptism and faith have become, in fact, the eleventh and twelfth commandments, now viewed as mandated requirements for salvation. Faith should rather be viewed as a recreation of that attitude in man in which he was originally created. In that original state man waited for and clung to every word spoken by God. Baptism is God's act in recreating the fallen creature so that he is again shaped back into the form in which the first man was created. Faith is a reinstitution of the original state of righteousness within men. For this reason the confession of sins is not a part of baptismal faith itself, but is the necessary prerequisite for it. Baptism is pure grace, as it is the act of God alone. It is the embodiment of *sola gratia*. The baptismal state of pure grace is perfectly complemented by a faith which puts its total trust in the One present in baptism. Baptism as God's act alone happens only once, but faith as baptism's required, necessary, and natural response is nothing else but the entire Christian life now returned by God's grace to the original state of righteousness. This solves the apparent tension between the non-repeatability of baptism and its enduring and daily significance, a dilemma solved differently by some Protestants and Roman Catholics.<sup>34</sup> Among the former, baptism as a human work can be repeated to demonstrate what it signifies. Among the Roman Catholics baptism is a divine work, administered once, but its significance is nonrepeatable. The response of faith is not necessary for the for-

givenness of sins and is not necessary to the baptism itself. For Lutherans baptism's meaning, reality, and power are not exhausted by the moment and the rite of baptism. The moment of the baptism does not exhaust its meaning. Baptism is not only the immersion of the body but also the immersion of the total life, from birth to death, in baptism. Here baptism gives us the clue to the entire Lutheran understanding of the sacramental effect in church life. *Living for Christ means living sacramentally. Commitment to the sacraments is nothing else than commitment to Christ.* Without the sacraments or sacramental living, the presence of Christ in the church must be detrimentally affected. Faith in Christ means finding Him in the sacraments. In baptism *sola gratia* is perfected by *sola fide*. Luther's suggestion that crucifix and baptismal certificate be placed over the Christian's bed did not mean that atonement and baptism were two parallel acts with both contributing to salvation. Rather the crucifix and baptismal certificate suggest that the timeless benefits of the historical death of Jesus are incorporated in baptism so that its water does, in fact, become the building block for the new creation. Baptism preserves the theological implications of the crucifixion and thus transcends time.

Baptism as initiation or frontier sacrament does not impose intellectual and theological demands and thus children remain the prime candidates for its reception. Open to debate is the ancient church practice requiring lengthy instruction for adult catechumens before being baptized. The Words of Jesus are quite clear in placing the learning of the *didache* after and not before baptism. Baptism presupposes confession of sins and includes the proclamation of kerygma.<sup>35</sup> But does the proclamation of kerygma really include the *didache*, especially when the *didache* is clearly placed after baptism in Jesus's command?

If baptism is the initiation sacrament standing at the frontier of Christian life, it is also the sacrament of the goal and thus embraces the totality of Christian and church life. Everything offered by Christ is found here. Baptism is the perfect parallel to justification which is perfectly complete from the divine perspective but a constantly new reality in Christian life. The baptized infant and the elderly adult lack nothing. An all-comprehensive concept of baptism does not, to be sure, negate the amplification of baptism in the *didache*, but requires it. Intolerable, however, are the suggestions that baptism is incomplete and necessarily needs preaching and other sacramental action for efficacy and validity. But such is, indeed, the position of the Reformed and

Roman Catholic communions. Where the Reformed practice infant baptism, it is the beginning of a process. Roman Catholics hold a similar position but find the lack filled up by other sacramental actions. Historically even Lutherans have incorporated both kinds of thinking into their baptismal theology.<sup>36</sup>

The Lutheran cliché, "word and sacrament," could falsely give the impression that baptism as a rite needs the corrective or complementary activity of preaching and faith. But baptism is the all-encompassing sacrament. Preaching should not be viewed as a separate function but rather it re-presents to the believer that same Christ in whose death and life he shared through baptism. Preaching directs unbelievers to baptism to find Christ and believers back to baptism to reestablish their faith in Him. The organic unity between baptism and preaching must be preserved.

In a similar sense commitment to Christ in baptism is also a commitment to theology as *didache*, not in the sense of new revelation or of some type of evolutionistic growth of church doctrine, but in the sense that all of church theology is the amplification of kerygma which is the foundation and the core of baptism. Hence theology can never be a mere collection of isolated theological truisms or dogmatisms, each existing with its own autonomous truth value; but theology is the natural and expected development of what is contained in baptism. All theology must in some way conform to the Gospel presuppositions of baptism; with such a view contradictory theologies are impossible and cannot be tolerated as an expression of denominational traditions. New Testament scholars in the modern era have attempted to identify the basic kerygma. A few elements identified are these: Jesus is Messiah or Son of God; He died for sins; He rose; and He will return.<sup>37</sup> Without debating the precise lines of the kerygma these basic ingredients of baptism must be amplified in each aspect of theology. Theological error is, in effect, a denial in some sense or another of the basic kerygma attached to baptism. Without this kind of view, theology is little more than an intellectual exercise in truisms. Maintaining true orthodoxy would be at best an indication of loyalty to God. Where theology is viewed as the necessary understanding required by baptism, then theology is always a return to baptism and hence to Christ who is present for His church in baptism. The Lord who commands baptism is also the Lord who gave His church the *didache*. This *didache* is preserved in the New Testament. The command to baptize is part of the *didache* itself. The ones who are committed to the teachings of Jesus are the very ones who are obligated to baptize and they are required to understand what

constitutes it. Just as there can be no dichotomy between the word and the sacrament, the kerygma and baptism, so there is no tension between baptism and Holy Scripture. The author and the content of both are the same.

Thus the Christian assembly in its worship not only repeats the contents of baptism through confession of sins, Trinitarian invocation, and apostolic credal confession, but in listening to the Gospel also fulfills its baptismal commitment. The reading of the Gospel is the amplification of the essence of baptism within the life of the church.

#### IV.

##### The Lord's Supper as Sacrifice and Sacrament

Baptism is the all-embracing sacrament; and by committing the believer to Christ, it also therefore commits him to observe the *didache* and thus to receive His Supper. The Lord's Supper is a more penetrating sacrament in that it directs the focus of the baptized to the atonement. It is more Calvinistic than Lutheran to work from a general concept of sacraments to Baptism and the Lord's Supper specifically. What is said of baptism should not simply be transported over to the Lord's Supper. Whereas baptism places the believer in Christ, the Supper makes Christ part of the believer. The actions of each are reversed. The Christ incorporated in the believer through the Supper is specifically Christ in His atonement. Strictly speaking, the Supper is the commemoration of His death and not His life, resurrection, or return. Ernst Sommerlath, who first approved and then withdrew his approval of the Arnoldshain Theses, made a significant observation in noting that the document spoke of the exalted Lord rather than the historical Jesus as having instituted the Supper. He pointed out that St. Paul had said that it was on the night of betrayal that Christ instituted the sacrament.<sup>38</sup> The issue raised by Sommerlath was essential. First of all, it pointed to the necessity of upholding the historical character and content of the Gospel accounts, especially against the Bultmannian understanding that placed the institution of the sacraments within the worshipping congregation and not with Jesus Himself.<sup>39</sup> This, of course, is not to deny the influence of the early church on the form made final in the New Testament. However, maintaining the historical character of institution of the Supper is not the only matter at issue. For if maintaining the historical quality of the Supper's institution were really the only point, then the Reformed limitation in seeing the Supper only as a memorial or perpetuation of the first historical Supper would be the correct view.<sup>40</sup>

There is more at stake in the Supper than commemorating one calendar date in the life of Jesus to the exclusion of other dates. When only the historical significance of the Supper is commemorated, then only an annual celebration would be appropriate.<sup>41</sup>

The second and equally important factor in the sacrament beyond and behind the historical institution of the Supper is the atonement, which is the fountain of its saving effects. Here a distinction is being made between the death of the historical Jesus and the act of atonement without in any way separating them.<sup>42</sup> The attention of focus in the Lord's Supper is neither the commemoration of the original Supper nor merely the death of Christ as historical event, but the atonement as sacrifice of Christ to God for the sins of the world.

At this point the place of the mass as sacrifice in Roman Catholic theology must be mentioned. The charge of Arianism against the German theologian Hans Kung was necessary from a Roman Catholic point of view. Had his teaching been permitted to stand, the concept of the mass as the unbloody sacrifice of God would have been destroyed and the cultic life of that church would have been rendered ineffective. Without in any way acquiescing in the Roman view that the Supper is first sacrifice and then sacrament, the force and efficacy of the Lord's Supper derive ultimately from Christ's sacrifice as atonement and not the sacramental ritual itself. The Lord's Supper is the other side of the coin from Christ's sacrifice to the Father. While the death of Jesus must from an historical perspective be viewed as a one-time calendar-day occurrence, His death as sacrificial atonement appears before God as a constant and eternal reality.<sup>43</sup> What men view as historic crucifixion, God views as everlasting sacrificial atonement. What God views as eternal sacrifice, the church receives as sacrament. Sacrifice and sacrament describe the same "thing" but from different perspectives. Crucifixion and atonement are not two different events, but one event viewed from two different perspectives, human and divine. The Lord's Supper is the presentation of the sacrificial atonement among Christians at worship.<sup>44</sup> Three things point to this view. First, the Supper is placed by the Synoptic Evangelists within the context of the Lord's suffering.<sup>45</sup> Secondly, St. Paul is careful to situate the Supper on the night of betrayal.<sup>46</sup> Thirdly, the words of institution themselves involve sacrificial language and may be considered as Jesus's own explanation of the significance of His death.<sup>47</sup>

Apart from the sacrament, several ways to commemorate historically the Lord's death still are being attempted. Crucifixes are reminders of the historical event itself, but without additional explanation do not explain the atonement. The same can be said for the stations of the cross. The medieval passion play remains surprisingly popular not only among Roman Catholics, but also among Protestants on both sides of the ocean. The passion play is comparable to the traditional Roman view of the Mass. Whereas the passion play reenacts the historical events, the Mass, according to a traditional understanding, reenacts the sacrifice. All these remembrances attempt in some way to make the past event contemporary to faith through symbol and reenactment. Christ died once, but He also died for all men, in all places, and in all times. From this tension of historical uniqueness and the desire for contemporaneity have come the attempts of "representation."

In the Lord's Supper the tension between the crucifixion as atonement and the necessary constant appreciation of that death are resolved. From the perspective of God, the atonement of Christ is eternal, even though it is anchored in a specific history. His crucifixion is historical, limited to time and place; but His atonement is cosmic in that it is performed equally for all and extra-cosmic because it is an act occurring between Christ and God alone. As crucifixion happens historically, atonement is made to God eternally. As atonement happens eternally, the church is continually fed eternally by the Supper of the Lord. The Lord's Supper makes the atonement manifest and contemporary for faith. The sacrificial atonement occurring in, but not limited to, time and space appears in the church not as a one-time commemorative meal but as sacrament limitless within time and space.<sup>48</sup> Within this context the "Sacrament of the Altar" is perhaps its best description. The altar is not only sacramental in that from this place the worshipping congregation is fed, but the altar is also sacrificial in that from it Christ's atonement presents itself to the Father. For the altar on which the atonement presents itself to God is the same altar from which the sacrifice now as sacrament is offered to the people. The Supper is the presence of the atoning sacrifice within the congregation. The eternal sacrifice and the temporal sacrament are but two sides of the same act. In this sense, the Supper is both sacrifice and sacrament.

The double significance of the Supper as sacrifice and sacrament is suggested by the accounts of Matthew and Mark, on one hand, and Luke and Paul, on the other. Matthew and

Mark see the institution of the Supper primarily as a conclusion to the sacrifice for sin as required by the Old Testament. The use of the terms "body" and "blood" signify that death as sacrifice is already accomplished. Reference to the blood as concluding the terms of the covenant emphasizes the idea of sacrifice even more. The old covenant, which cried for satisfaction by blood, has been satisfied by the blood of Christ. Now in the Supper Christ's blood is presented to God's people as evidence and proof that the former covenant can make no claims upon them.<sup>49</sup> The Lucan and Pauline accounts stress the Supper as the sacrament which is the new covenant. Since the terms of the old covenant have been satisfied, God is able to establish a new relationship with man commemorated in the sacramental celebration. The sacrificial blood of the Supper becomes evidence for faith in the sacrament.<sup>50</sup> Since the Reformed do not see the necessary connection between the atonement for sins and the Supper, there can be no understanding of the sacrificial and sacramental dimensions of the Supper.<sup>51</sup> Roman Catholic theology places a high sacramental value on the Supper simply because it has a high sacrificial view of the Supper.<sup>52</sup> However, contrary to Roman thought, Christ is the offerer of the sacrifice within the dimension of eternity, and not the priest or the church within the human context.

The adversary relationship with the Reformed has forced Lutheran thought to concentrate on the nature of the Real Presence as the center of the sacrament.<sup>53</sup> Luther's Small Catechism endorses this understanding and sees the forgiveness of sins as next in importance. But the relationship of the presence of Christ to the forgiveness of sins is not really explained, except maybe to the extent that Christ's gracious presence logically implies forgiveness.<sup>54</sup> The discussion of the Real Presence immediately involves Lutherans and Reformed disputants in the philosophical possibilities of the *finitum non capax infiniti*, with final discussion centering in different understandings of incarnation. This discussion is vital to sacramental and incarnational theology, and the Lutherans cannot give up their historic position; nevertheless, the discussion on the nature of the Real Presence should not prevent us from recognizing the presence of Christ in the Supper not only as a sacramental, but also as a sacrificial presence.<sup>55</sup> He is not present as the "whole Christ," or as "Christ with body and soul" or as "Christ by the power of the Spirit."<sup>56</sup> He is present with His body and blood, those evidences indicating that His sacrifice is for us accomplished but for God present and continued reality. The distinction between the body



and blood means that life has ceased, death has occurred, and the sacrifice has been offered to the Father. Today we call the element of bread the host, i.e., the victim of sacrifice.<sup>57</sup> The blood of the sacrament is poured out as sacrificial blood. The sacramental elements of body and blood need no further blessing from an omnipotent God. The elements are present in the sacrament not as a demonstration of God's omnipotence, but as the presence of the eternal sacrifice of Christ within the context of the worshipping congregation. The appropriation of the forgiveness of sins does not depend on the form in which it comes, but the word, baptism, and the Supper must be distinguished in regard to form. The word proclaims what God has done in Christ. Baptism involves the baptized in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The Supper presents to the believer the actual sacrifice, i.e., Christ's body and blood. Here is more than simply another form of the word of God, since the sacrament conveys to Christians the actual elements sacrificed to God.

The traditional liturgy verifies the sacrificial nature of the Supper. In the sacrament the congregation greets Christ with the Trisagion and the Agnus Dei. The Supreme Holy One of Israel has become the Sacrificial Lamb. Christ is adored both in heaven and on earth, as the One who fills all places and as the One who came as Sacrifice to God and Sacrament to His people. Acknowledging the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament, but failing to recognize and adore Him as sacrificially present leaves us with a truncated view. Calvin saw in the *corda sursum* an endorsement for his understanding of a local session of Christ in one place in heaven. The suggestion that Christ is present in the sacrament for the benefit of forgiveness but is present only in heaven for adoration seems to adopt this Calvinistic aberrant understanding of Christ's human nature. Failure to recognize the sacramental presence as sacrificial indicates that the Real Presence is viewed merely as a demonstration of divine omnipresence.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *Children of Promise* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1979), p.29.
2. The Reformed are caught in a tension between their unsacramental theology and their allegiance to the Holy Scriptures which, they admit, do attribute to the sacraments a certain saving efficacy. The passage from which the previously cited quotation was taken demonstrates the Reformed dilemma. "This is one view, but we need not spend unnecessary time on it. To be sure, a

measure of real truth underlies it. Christ undoubtedly instituted baptism, and with the word and the Lord's Supper it may rightly be described as a means of grace. At least, many evangelical Christians accept this definition. Nevertheless, its interpretation as an almost automatic instrument for the infusing of grace finds little or no support either in the teaching and practice of the New Testament, or the anticipatory signs and types of the Old. The only possible verse which can be adduced for this understanding is John 3:5, even if water is meant literally here the saying does not tell us anything about its mechanical functioning. In Acts, baptism is said to be for the remission of sins, but again nothing is said about its serving as an automatic instrument. The Epistles do not say a great deal about baptism. This is strange in any case but especially so if it was intended, and operated, as an indispensable agent of salvation." *Op. cit.*, pp. 28-9. Bromiley recognizes that the Reformed are plainly uncomfortable with the appropriate Biblical references. A careful reading of the passage shows that the Scriptures attribute a saving efficacy to the sacrament of baptism; however he disagrees with his own exegetical conclusion.

3. CA II. "De peccato originis." Original sin is said to bring damnation to all "qui non nascuntur per baptismum et spiritum sanctum." *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche* (sixth revised edition; Gottingen, Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1967), p. 53. All citations from the original languages of the Lutheran Confessions will be taken from this edition and will be abbreviated BK. In the Large Catechism Baptism and the Lord's Supper each receive one of the five sections. In the Small Catechism two of the eight sections focus on these two sacraments. In the Reformed churches, the sacraments are simply not given this devotional, theological, and confessional prominence.
4. Reformed and Lutheran church edifices are noticeably different. The stark appearances of Reformed structures project clearly the idea of the absence of the transcendental God. Lutheran churches, on the other hand, traditionally are so adorned to suggest that God is present in the person of Jesus. By maintaining the Old Testament prohibition against images the Reformed, according to their peculiar interpretation, will ultimately have a truncated Christology and sacramentology. The Reformed, not unlike the Moslem, prohibition against graven images is evident in their worship structures and reveal that these two groups may, indeed, share similar views of God's transcendental nature. Hermann Sasse describes the removal of the altar and other changes in Zuerich in 1525 when the Reformed liturgy was introduced. *This Is My Body* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1959), p. 131.
5. Lutheran sacramentology developed into its classic form in opposition to the Reformed rather than Roman Catholicism. Thus Lutherans criticized the Roman Church for sacramental abuses, CA XXIV, but judged the Reformed as having no Sacrament of the Altar at all. "Because the Reformed publicly declare that they do not have the intention of celebrating the Supper with the Real Presence of Christ's body and blood, but pronounce such a Sacrament an abomination, they are in fact not celebrating the Supper Christ gave to His Church." Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, translated by Walter W. F. Albrecht (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), III, p. 371. Sasse is of the same opinion, *op. cit.* For a fuller discussion of the Lutheran condemnation of the Reformed position in CA X, cf. Hans-Werner Gensichen, *Dammatus: Die Verwerfung von Irrlehre bei Luther und im Luthertum des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1955), pp. 71-84.

6. H. Sasse states that for Luther the transsubstantiation of the Roman Church was the lesser heresy in comparison with Zwingli's view. *Op. cit.*, p. 286. The lack of sacramental necessity among the Reformed is seen in that for them there is no compulsion to baptize infants when their life is endangered but that such baptism should wait for the regular worship assembly. "We teach that baptism should not be administered in the Church by women or midwives." *The Second Helvetic Confession*, 5. 191. "Although it be a great sin to condemn or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated." *The Westminster Confession*, 6. 143.
7. The Reformed perspective on sacraments flows from the basic hermeneutic of Reformed theology that the New Testament is to be understood from the Old Testament. Here enters the peculiar Reformed concept of the covenant. From their earliest confessions to their most recent writings, they are generally consistent in this understanding. "*Are infants also to be baptized?*" A. Yes, because they, as well as their parents, are included in the covenant and belong to the people of God. . . . infants are also by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, to be incorporated into the Christian church and distinguished from the children of unbelievers. This was done in the Old Covenant by circumcision. In the New Covenant baptism has been instituted to take its place." "Question 74," *Heidelberg Catechism*. The Scots Confession (Chapter XXI) sees circumcision and Passover as sacraments of the Old Testament now merely replaced by baptism and the Lord's Supper. No substantive difference between the sacraments in the Old and New Covenants are noted. The same approach is taken by Bromiley. *Op. cit.*
8. While the Reformed do use the word "sacraments," they are much more at home with the term "ordinances." Vernard Eller's *In Place of Sacraments* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972) is an explicit attempt to scrap the term "sacrament" altogether. Consider this question and answer in the *Shorter Catechism* (1958), a revision of the classical Heidelberg Catechism. "Q. 92. What is a sacrament? A. A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers." The idea that the sacrament is an act of the community rather than of God can be traced down from Reformed theology into Rationalism, Schleiermacher, and into certain critical views of the New Testament which place the origin of the sacraments not with the historical Jesus but rather in the community which He established. The eighteenth-century German theologians, J.A.L. Wegscheider, a Rationalist, and F.V. Reinhard, a Supranaturalist, both saw baptism as symbolizing the child's birth within the Christian family. Schleiermacher differed little from this view, but in addition saw the baptism of infants as the beginning of a process leading into fuller Christian consciousness. David P. Scaer, *The Doctrine of Infant Baptism in the German Protestant Theology of the Nineteenth Century* (unpublished Th. D. dissertation, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, 1963), pp. 22-72. His view was that baptism was the ratification of a family or covenant relationship already existing for the child and the beginning of a process to be completed later by a conscious faith. The Geneva Reformer frequently uses the word "ordinance." John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, translated by Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1966), p. 534-5.
9. While the Reformed make every attempt to describe the sacraments as

belonging to the realm of grace, they do in fact belong to the realm of the law. As mentioned in footnote 6, the Reformed are really more comfortable in calling the sacraments ordinances. Bromiley who comes startlingly close to the Lutherans on the matter of infant faith shows his real prejudice in calling baptism and the Lord's Supper "the so-called sacraments instituted by Christ" (*op. cit.*, p.17). The legal aspect of the sacrament becomes clear in the Reformed understanding of the sacrament as symbol of an absent reality. The sacramental symbol or ordinance is mandated as ritualistic law, but is not necessary as a conveyor of salvation. In Lutheran theology the sacrament is itself the reality of grace and even without a specific mandate would have an attractiveness because of the sacrament's benefit to the recipient. In Reformed theology, *the law is needed to bind symbol and absent reality*. Without the law symbol and reality would drift apart. This in fact happens when the Reformed do not become incensed about the absence of baptism in the life of the Christian. Bromiley, *op. cit.* pp. 12-26. This is related to their concept of covenant as placing obligations of the law upon believers. Of Zwingli, Sasse says, "But by rejecting also the Real Presence he again made the sacrament a human action, . . ." (*op. cit.*, p. 405).

10. The Reformed tolerance for the Lutheran position already begins with the Marburg Colloquy of 1529 where Zwingli pleaded with Luther not to consider him a heretic. Hermann Sasse remarks, "While Zwingli regarded Luther's view as wrong, he was prepared to tolerate it because in his opinion the question of the sacrament did not belong to the essentials of the Christian faith." *Op. cit.*, p. 292.
11. A popularly written, attractive, and deceptive example of this approach is found in *The Water That Divides* by Donald Bridge and David Phipers (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1977), which attempts to make defenders and deniers of infant baptism accept one another. The back cover states, "In this book a Baptist and an Anglican get together to face the issue squarely and create understanding between those who disagree."
12. The invention of the *limbo infantium*, the place reserved in the afterlife for unbaptized infants, demonstrates the absolute sacramental necessity. A semi-Pelagian anthropology prevents putting infants in hell with those who committed actual sin and the lack of the sacrament prevents them from entering heaven.
13. Preaching simply has no firm place in Roman Catholic tradition. The Reformation was a protest against this lack. Only the future will reveal whether preaching will be restored in the Church of Rome. The use of the vernacular has opened new possibilities.
14. The movement in Roman Catholicism to ordain women priests is more theologically vigorous than was its Protestant counterpart a generation ago. The present pontiff Paul John II's firm opposition to the practice has not dampened enthusiasm. Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza calls for the ordination of women, the use of feminist terms in liturgy, and understanding God as Mother and Daughter along with the traditional Father and Son. "Towards a Liberating and Liberated Theology: Women Theologians and Feminist Theology in the USA," *Doing Theology in New Places*, edited by Jean-Pierre Jossua and Johann Baptist Metz (New York: Seabury Press, 1979), pp. 22-32.
15. While Roman Catholics see ordination connected with the power to consecrate the sacrament, Lutherans see the pastoral office and with it ordination as pastoral supervision over the congregation especially through preaching and in the administration of the Lord's Supper. The level of

- tolerance for women clergy is, in reality, lower for Lutherans than Roman Catholics. The concentration for Lutherans is on Paul's admonition against women serving as authorities within the worshipping congregation. Cf. Bertil Gartner, *Didaskolos: The Office, Man and Woman in the New Testament*, translated by John E. Halborg (Lund: Gleersupske, 1958).
16. As mentioned above, the Reformed perspective of seeing baptism as an act of the community was perpetuated by Schleiermacher. "Baptism as an action of the Church signifies simply the act of will by which the Church receives the individual into its fellowship; . . ." *The Christian Faith*, II, edited by H.R. Mackintosh and J.S. Stewart (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 619. Edmund Schlunk wrestles, in my opinion unsuccessfully, to avoid placing baptism's origin within the earliest Christian community as maintained by much of contemporary exegetical scholarship. *The Doctrine of Baptism*, translated by H.J.A. Bouman (St. Louis: Concordia, 1972), pp. 26-30.
  17. In *By Oath Consigned* Meredith G. Kline goes one step beyond seeing baptism as an expression of divine legislation in seeing it as an act of divine sentencing: ". . . baptism is a sign of incorporation within the judicial sphere of Christ's covenant lordship for a final verdict of blessing or curse" (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1968), p. 102.
  18. CA II, "qui non renascuntur per baptismum et spiritum sanctum," might suggest that baptism and the Holy Spirit are two disconnected causes of salvation. Such a misunderstanding is not permitted by CA V, "Nam per verbum et sacramenta tamquam per instrumenta donatur spiritus sanctus, qui fidem efficit," BK, pp. 53, 58.
  19. Baptism is not merely an association with the outward association of believers as set forward by the Reformed, the eighteenth-century Rationalists, and Schleiermacher, but actual participation in the *una sancta*. In this respect there is no difference between the baptismal theologies of John the Baptist, Jesus, and Paul. The words, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit" (Jn 3:5), are spoken within the context of John's baptism, but written within the context of the apostolic baptism.
  20. The command to baptize is part of the commissioning of the apostles as guardians and pastors of the church (Mt 28:16-20). Baptizing here does not refer only to the administration of water in the name of the Trinity, but also to that preaching which brings about faith. Baptizing has to be understood within the entire framework that Matthew has developed in his Gospel. With this view baptism will not develop into an isolated sacramental ritual which anyone can administer at any time and place, but it will be understood as belonging to the very essence of God's plan of bringing His kingdom among men.
  21. Mt 20:28; 26:28. One cannot avoid seeing the sacramental imagery in the Johannine corpus where baptism is viewed in intimate relationship with the atoning blood (Jn 19:24; 1 Jn 5:6).
  22. For a lucid study of this in Reformed theology see Ulrich Asendorf, "Luther's Small Catechism and the Heidelberg Catechism," *Luther's Catechisms — 450 Years*, edited by David P. Scaer and Robert D. Preus (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1979), pp. 1-7.
  23. Scaer, *Doctrine of Infant Baptism*, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-156.
  24. The Reformed have always had exegetical difficulties in dealing with those Scripture references which attribute to baptism or water a saving efficacy. In commenting on the typical baptismal passages, i.e., Eph 5:25-6; Tit 3:4; 1 Pt 3:21, Calvin writes, "Nay, the only purification which baptism promises is

- by means of the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, who is figured by water from the resemblance to cleansing and washing. Who then can say that we are cleansed by that water which certainly attests that the blood of Christ is our true water and only laver?" *Op. cit.*, p. 513.
25. Jesus' words, "And lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Mt 28:20), cannot be understood as another proof text of divine omnipresence, but rather as Christ's promise of His gracious presence where His command to baptize is carried out.
  26. Reformed and Anglican rather than Lutheran theology have moved from a general concept of sacraments. The original classical Reformed confessions, i.e., the Scots Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Second Helvetic Confession, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Anglican Thirty-Nine Articles set forth extensive sacramental theologies before specifically handling baptism and the Lord's Supper. In the Lutheran Confessions baptism and the Lord's Supper are handled under separate articles. The closest that Lutherans come to this is in CA XIII, "De usu sacramentorum," which, as the title indicates, speaks not of the essence of the sacraments but of their functioning. While Christ is present in the Supper in a unique way, He is also present in baptism as the one who receives the believer into Himself and thereby into His benefits.
  27. The *Taufbuchlein* preserved the exorcism. "Fahr aus, Du unreiner Geist, and gib Raum dem heiligen Geist." BK, p. 538. The Reformed have from the beginning excluded this. Cf. Second Helvetic Confession (5.190).
  28. In Reformed theology only conscious persons can enjoy the full benefits of baptism, so infants remain inferior candidates for this rite. The baptized also may not look to his baptism for certainty about his salvation and election, since his election remains hidden with God. Calvin is evidently not overly concerned about the absence of baptism. *Op. cit.*, pp. 546-8. Roman Catholic theology is at least semi-Pelagian, as is evident in its concept of *limbo infantium*. While attributing great power to baptism to overcome original sin, its synergistic understanding of justification becomes evident in that any monergistic understanding of baptism is annulled by its view of penance.
  29. Paul's great section on justification precedes his great section on baptism. Rm 5 and 6. Also 1 Cor 6:11.
  30. For an adequate study of New Testament baptismal terminology see J. Ysebaert, *Greek Baptismal Terminology* (Nijmegen: Dekker and Van De Vegt, 1962). For a parallel of the birth into sin and the birth into life see James 1:15, 18.
  31. Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration XII, 2. BK, p. 1094.
  32. Lutheran theology stands in danger of adopting the covenant theology of the Reformed when it allows baptism to be celebrated and understood as a recognition of the child's birth into a Christian family. The use of sponsors and not parents for the baptismal rite would help prevent the intrusion of Reformed thought.
  33. Luther's Small Catechism, IV: "Das Sakrament der heiligen Taufe."
  34. The Reformed attach saving efficacy not to the moment of baptism itself, but to faith. The Westminster Confession, 6.144. Thus there is no problem in making the benefits of baptism efficacious later in life. The Roman Catholics, of course, have resorted to penance.
  35. In Mt 28: 18-20 the Gospel preaching which works faith should be seen as belonging to the activity required by the word *baptizein* and not *didaskein*.
  36. A new liturgy being circulated in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

- makes an explicit mention of confirmation as part of the child's further growth. Regardless of how harmless the suggestion might be, it would be best if it were avoided entirely. Confirmation by Schleiermacher and others was viewed as a complementing rite. *Der Christliche Glaube* (Berlin: Reimer, 1836), II, p. 382.
37. For a conservative treatment of this problem see F. F. Bruce, "History and Gospel," in *Jesus of Nazareth: Savior and Lord*, edited by Carl F. H. Henry (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1966), pp. 87-107.
  38. 1 Cor 11:23. In all four Gospels the Greek word for betraying or handing over, *paradidonai*, is used by Jesus to indicate the act that begins His suffering. While the idea of historical dating is significant in the word, the greater reality of atonement cannot be excluded from it.
  39. John L. McKenzie, "VII. The Sacraments in Bultmann's Theology," in *Rudolf Bultmann in Catholic Thought*, edited by T.F. O'Meara and D.M. Weissner (New York: Herder and Herder, 1958), pp. 151-66. The sacraments' origins are placed within the Hellenized development phase of the church.
  40. The emphasis on the sacrament as a communal meal can be found in Eller's *In Place of Sacraments*, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-8. The original Reformed confessions were, however, quite explicit in seeing the sacrament as a commemorating of Christ's death and not the meal itself. E.g., Westminster Confession, XXIX, 6.146.
  41. Calvin wrote on frequent attendance at the sacrament. *Op. cit.*, pp. 601-2. He understood the New Testament church as providing the sacrament at every regular service. In actual practice the Supper is not frequently celebrated among the Reformed.
  42. Luther, as opposed to Melancthon and the Reformed in general, concentrated on the body and the blood of Christ as being present in the sacrament and not the living Christ, the whole Christ, or Christ as God. Calvin goes one step further than Melancthon and shifts the attention from the total Christ as present in the Supper to the Holy Spirit. Sasse, *op. cit.*, pp. 295-330.
  43. In our century Hermann Sasse has seen this motif both in Scripture and in Luther. The "proprium of this sacrament" is said to be "the eating and drinking of what Christ had sacrificed for us." *Ibid.*, p. 329. 1 Cor. 11:25, 26. The reference to the sacrament as a proclamation of the Lord's death must be more than presenting it as a past historical action, as the words follow directly after the words "body" and "blood," which indicate a special type of sacrificial death has taken place.
  44. This thought is preserved in the hymn, "Sancti, venite, Christi corpus sumite," where Christ is described as "ipse sacerdos exstitit et hostia." The Latin hymn originated from Ireland about 680 A.D. W.G. Polack, *The Handbook to the Lutheran Hymnal*, third revised edition (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1958), pp. 220-1.
  45. Martin Kahler is obviously right in seeing the Gospels as "'passion narrative with extended introduction.'" Quoted from Ralph Martin, "The New Quest for the Historical Jesus," in *Jesus of Nazareth*, *op. cit.*, p. 27. If the Supper had been instituted in a section dealing with Christian life, it might be possible to understand it in a non-sacrificial way. I hasten to add that any separation between atoning death, sacrament, and Christian life is artificial.
  46. See note 38.
  47. Next to Matthew 20:28, 26:28 must be considered the clearest explanation of Jesus's death as atonement. Matthew and Mark in their words of institution

stress the blood as sacrifice and Luke and Paul as a new covenantal arrangement between God and His Church. "In the Synoptic context the Last Supper seems to be given an interpretation of Jesus' death and its meaning. Mark and Matthew seem to extoll the blood of Jesus as blood of the covenant and thus to remind us of Ex 24, 8, whereas Luke and Paul stress also the newness of the covenant by suggesting Jer 31, 31. The common interpretation of the Synoptics is nevertheless the same: Jesus is going to suffer and die for others, which by Matthew is understood to be for the sins of others." Tibor Horvath, *The Sacrificial Interpretation of Jesus's Achievement in the New Testament* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1979, p. 80.

48. The Lord's Supper is only one supper, even though it is celebrated in many places and times. The Supper is, therefore, not repeated but continued.
49. In Ex 24: 5-8 the blood sacrificed to God is sprinkled upon the people as the evidence that atonement has taken place. Christ's atonement is the certainty in the Lord's Supper that the people's sins are forgiven.
50. This thought is put forth in the Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, VII, pp. 48-51.
51. In Reformed theology Christ's sacrifice does not play as prominent a role as it does in Lutheran theology. In the classical Reformed confessions, God, creation, providence, and election are presented before and apart from any Christology. It is from this point in their theology that the Reformed have developed their natural bias against holding a sacramental view with any meaning. Regardless of an innate synergism in Roman Catholicism, their sacraments, especially the Eucharist, are viewed in the light of Christ's death. Regretfully in Roman Catholicism sacraments are also viewed as obligations, reflecting an innate synergism.
52. Sasse, *ibid.* Lutherans have been fully aware that synergism is the natural result of placing the sacrificial power in the hands of the priest.
53. Lutheran theology, since Luther's confrontation with Zwingli at Marburg, has had to concentrate on the possibility and nature of Christ's presence within the Supper. Behind the Reformed view of the sacrament was a more basic philosophical understanding of Christ's human nature as being confined to heaven. Even if Calvin was a more pliable theologian than Zwingli in using more traditional terms, he did in the end state that Christ is still confined to one place in heaven. "Unless the body of Christ can be everywhere without any boundaries of space, it is impossible to believe that he is hid in the Supper under the bread." "The only question, therefore, is as to the mode, they [the Roman Catholic scholastics and Lutherans by implication] placing Christ in the bread, while we deem it unlawful to draw him down from heaven." *Institutes*, II, pp. 585, 587. FC X, in spite of its rejection of transubstantiation and other Roman Catholic abuses is in the main part devoted to a refutation of the Reformed philosophical worldview. The hymn, "Herr Jesu Christ, du hast bereit't," reflects the Lutheran interest in maintaining the omnipresence or volipresence of Christ's human nature. "Though reason cannot understand, Yet faith this truth embraces; Thy body, Lord, is everywhere, At once in many places." Lutheran theology will always be done within a Protestant context and will always be threatened by the philosophical perspective that denies the presence of Christ in the bread. But it might be safe to assume that the fuller dimension of seeing the sacrament as sacrificial food is thereby not completely developed.
54. James Voelz explains that Luther did indeed connect the forgiveness with



- the sacrament itself and not merely with the words; Luther wanted to guard against regarding participation in the sacrament without faith as bestowing forgiveness. "Luther's Use of the Small Catechism," *Luther's Catechisms — 450 Years Later*, *op. cit.*, p. 54. Also Edmund Schlink, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, translated by H. Bouman (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1961), p. 205.
55. Tom Hardt comes closest to expressing this idea when he writes concerning Luther's views: "This does not mean that the Lamb is slaughtered again before the face of the Father in such a way that body and blood are separated. The exalted Lamb freely exercises His freedom to let His body alone be present under the bread and His blood alone be present under the wine. Their union in the resurrected life in the face of the Father does not form an obstacle to different elements being consecrated to convey them to the church here on earth." *On the Sacrament of the Altar: A Book on the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper*, unpublished manuscript in Concordia Theological Seminary Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1978, p. 60.
56. Calvin did, in fact, turn the Lord's Supper into the Spirit's supper. The distance between the human Christ and the church at the Supper is traversed by the Spirit, who actually conveys the Supper's gifts. *Institutes*, II, pp. 582-3.
57. CA X.



# Evangelism in the Early Church

William C. Weinrich

Martin Hengel begins the summation of his article on the origins of the Christian mission by remarking, "the history and the theology of early Christianity are mission-history and mission-theology."<sup>1</sup> This implies that one cannot understand the history of the Church (whether early, medieval, or modern) or the very nature of the Church without taking into consideration — as a central, even essential concern — the mission activity of the Church. To reflect upon "mission" or upon "evangelism" is to reflect upon the Church itself, for the act of mission or of evangelism is not accidental or coincidental to the Church — like the activity of golf, tennis or horsebackriding is to this or that individual — but the act of mission belongs to the very "core" of what it means to be the Church.

The question of the Church and its mission is forcing itself upon the Christian community, and it can not be ignored. The rising importance of nations and peoples traditionally non-Christian — such as China, India, Japan, and much of Africa — is bringing home the fact that Christians are a minority of the world's population. And more ominously, the traditional bulwarks of western Christian culture — Europe, the United States — are without question reverting to what Christopher Dawson has termed "a new kind of paganism."<sup>2</sup> The underpinning of ideals and mores, engendered by the Christian gospel, upon which modern Western cultures were constructed is showing massive fissures. The bowels of Western civilization are being exposed and they are no longer Christian. The manifestations are everywhere about us: the demand for state-supported abortion, declining church membership, increasing Church-State confrontations (i.e. the question of women's ordination in the Church of Sweden, the abortion question in Norway). The Church no longer enjoys the luxury of spontaneous general acceptance. It will increasingly have to proclaim its way, explain its way, and even suffer its way into the hearts of a hostile world. We are, let there be no doubt, returning to a pre-Constantinian era in which the Church is an outcast society whose sole support is the Gospel, whose sole comfort is hope in the resurrection.<sup>3</sup> If such is the situation, a study of the mission endeavor of the early Church may be beneficial and instructive.

### 1. The "Why" of Evangelism

The Church evangelized because it had to. This assertion is to be understood in the strictest possible sense. The early Church did not begin the work of evangelism simply because Christ commanded it (cf. Matt. 28:19); mission was not simple obedience to a high authority. Nor did the Church evangelize out of a sense of gratitude for God's love, out of a sense of responsibility in light of the last judgment, or out of a sense of concern for fallen man's destiny — although these may be considered "emotive causations" for the Church's mission activity, as we shall note below. Rather, the Church evangelized because it could not do otherwise, and it could not do otherwise because in the Holy Spirit the Church had been taken up into the very activity of God in Christ whereby the final purposes of God are fulfilled.

The early Church did not understand mission as a merely human action done in response to the good things God had done. Mission was perceived christologically — as God acting for the salvation of fallen mankind, but God acting only in union with mankind. The early Church understood mission to be the very expression of the Lordship of Christ in the Holy Spirit. But it is important to note where that Lordship of Christ is manifested and where that Lordship is instituted. Christ is Lord in His coming in lowly servanthood to sinful man, a servanthood culminating in and summed up in His atoning death and ushering forth in the life of resurrection. However, this ministry of lowly servanthood even unto death wherein Christ's Lordship is manifested and established is worldwide in its dimensions. When Jesus entered Jerusalem in lowly pomp, the prophecy of Zechariah was being fulfilled (Matt. 21:5): "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, your King comes to you; triumphant and victorious is He, humble and riding on an ass, on a colt the foal of an ass" (Zech. 9:9). It is, however, the following verse which sets this event in context: "... and He shall command peace to the nations; His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9:10). In the light of this truth we may say two things: (1) Jesus' ministry is not contained temporally or geographically but rather contains in itself universal mission, and (2) the mission of the Church is nothing other than Jesus' mission in its universal proportions.

This point is nicely illustrated by the New Testament's application of Isaiah 49:6: "... I will give You as a light to the nations, that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth" (cf.

Is. 42:6). In the New Testament Jesus is expressly called the Light for the Gentiles (Luke 2:32) or the Light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5). In Jesus' ministry of death and resurrection the purposes of God for all nations were being brought to fruition. However, in Acts 13:46 the words of Isaiah 49:6 are explicitly quoted by Paul to the Jews of Pisidian Antioch and are applied to Paul and his compatriots, who now turn their missionary endeavors to the Gentiles. Here Paul and his fellows are the light of the nations. This is not to be so construed that Paul is a light alongside the light of Jesus. Rather, Paul is *in loco Christi* ("in the place of Christ")<sup>4</sup> carrying out the very ministry which is Jesus' own ministry. Thus Paul's mission to the nations is nothing other than the ministry of Jesus to the world. That is, it is essentially God's coming to the world in Christ, for that is the *only* mode of God's salvific work toward the world. God the Father sends Christ to the world. That is how God works; He works salvifically in no other way. To say that the Church is sent into the world is to say that *today* God is coming in Christ to the world (cf. II Cor. 6:2). This explains Paul's insistence that he had no other message than that of Christ crucified. His ministry *as* the ministry of the Crucified One, who is now the living Lord, must be characterized by the message of the cross.<sup>5</sup> There is no other divine ministry than that of Christ's cross, for that is how God works to establish His Kingdom.

This understanding of the Church's universal mission as nothing other than Christ's universal mission was possessed also by the Church Fathers. A reference to Origen will suffice. The pagan polemicist, Celsus, wondered why it was that if God wished to illuminate the world, He sent the Spirit of life only into one corner of the world, namely, Palestine. Origen (c. 230 A.D.) replies that it was proper for God to send His Son to those people whom He had prepared for Christ's coming but that this coming occurred at a time when the Word was about to be sent into the whole world. Origen then continues (*contra Celsum* 6.79):

And therefore there was no need that there should everywhere exist many bodies, and many spirits like Jesus, in order that the whole world of men might be enlightened by the Word of God. For the one Word was enough, having arisen as the "Sun of righteousness" to send forth from Judea His coming rays into the soul of all who were willing to receive Him. But if anyone desires to see many bodies filled with a divine Spirit, similar to the one Christ, ministering to the salvation of men everywhere, let him take note of those who teach the Gospel of Jesus in all lands in soundness of

doctrine and uprightness of life, and who are themselves termed "christs" by the Holy Scriptures in the passage, "Touch not Mine anointed, and do not My prophets any harm."<sup>6</sup>

This christological perspective fundamentally explains the "why" of the Church's mission. Mission is not the Church's work done in response to a prior action by God (this would make mission essentially a human work), but mission is God's work for which and to which the Church has been called.<sup>7</sup> However, in that God calls *men* to the work of mission, one may appropriately speak of human motives to mission, what we termed above "emotive causations." Two such motives may briefly be mentioned:<sup>8</sup> (1) No doubt many Christians, freed from the oppressive tyranny of guilt and released from the baseness of pagan idolatry, were motivated by a sense of gratitude to God. Clement of Alexandria (c. 210 A.D.) gives vivid expression to his gratitude for release from sin and death (*Protrep.* 12):

The Lord . . . clothing Himself with flesh — O divine mystery! — vanquished the serpent and enslaved the tyrant death; and, most marvelous of all, man that had been deceived by pleasure, and bound fast by corruption, had his hands loosed, and was set free. O mystic wonder! The Lord was laid low, and man rose up . . . And though God needs nothing, let us render to Him the grateful recompense of a thankful heart and piety.

That this sense of gratitude could motivate to the task of evangelism is shown by the following passage from Pseudo-Justin's *De Monarchia*: "It is the part of a lover of man, or rather of a lover of God, to remind men who have neglected it of that which they ought to know" (*de monarchia* 1). (2) Firmly believing that Christ was the sole instrument of God for the salvation of the world (cf. Acts 4:12), the early Christians were also motivated by their concern for those who, not having heard of the Savior, were in danger of losing their souls. Justin Martyr (c. 150 A.D.) explicitly states that he writes his so-called *Second Apology* in order that the readers might be converted (2 *Apol.* 15). Tertullian (c. 210 A.D.), writing to Scapula, the proconsul of Carthage, remarks (*ad Scap.* 1):

It is peculiar to Christians alone to love those that hate them. Therefore, mourning over your ignorance, and having compassion on your human error, and looking on that future of which every day shows threatening signs, necessity is laid upon us to come forward in this way that we may set before you the truths you will not listen to openly.

Similarly Clement of Alexandria (*Protrep.* 9): "Do you not fear, and hasten to learn from Him — that is, hasten to salvation — dreading wrath, loving grace, eagerly striving after the hope set before us, that you may shun the judgment threatened?"

## 2. The "Who" of Evangelism

The rapid expansion of the Christian faith is itself testimony to the fact that evangelism was the task of every Christian. As we shall see below, every facet of Christian life served the missionary purpose. Witnessing to the Gospel was not the work just of professional, full-time missionaries. Because all Christians were baptized into Christ, all Christians were taken up into the missionary endeavor.

(a) *Apostles.* According to Acts 1:8 the disciples of Jesus were to witness from Jerusalem to the end of the earth. In fact, little is known of their missionary endeavors or even where they evangelized. Eusebius (c. 330 A.D.) records a tradition that the disciples cast lots to determine where they were to go: "Thomas obtained by lot Parthia, Andrew Scythia, John Asia . . . Peter seems to have preached to the Jews of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, and Bithynia, Cappadocia and Asia, and finally he came to Rome" (*H.E.* 3.1.1). The *Acts of Thomas* maintain that Judas Thomas went to India. It is difficult to assess such traditions, but they do bear witness to the primary function of an apostle, to establish churches through a traveling missionary activity. The best example of this activity, of course, is Paul whose travels and work are well-known to us through the New Testament.

(b) *Wandering missionaries.* Especially in the first and second centuries there were missionaries who believed themselves called by God to the task of evangelism but who do not seem to have been connected with any one congregation. These roving preachers did not stay long in any one place and usually were supported by gifts from host congregations.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps it was this type of ministry that Philip executed (Acts 8:4). Be that as it may, the *Didache* (c. 95 A.D.) gives explicit instructions about how certain "apostles," who traveled from place to place, were to be received. Such "apostles," who "speak the word of the Lord," are to be received as though they were the Lord (*Did.* 4:1; 11:4). They are to be maintained with the first-fruits of wine, grain, and animals (*Did.* 13:3), but they are not to be allowed to stay more than one day, two at the most. If they stay three days, they show themselves to be false prophets (*Did.* 11:5). Such "apostles" appear to have been full-time wandering missionaries, but unattached to any congregation. Only the message of their preaching and their

conduct verified them as authentic or unauthentic (*Did.* 11:2, 8-12).

In the third century Origen could still speak of such itinerant preachers: "Christians do not neglect, as far as in them lies, to take measures to disseminate their doctrine throughout the whole world. Some of them, accordingly, have made it their business to wander not only from city to city but even from town to town and village to village in order to make converts to God" (*contra Celsum* 3.9).

A congregation by itself could enter upon the missionary enterprise by sending out "apostles" of its own. The congregation of Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:1-3), and it was to Antioch that Paul and Barnabas returned to give account of their success to the assembled congregation (Acts 14:26-27). Antioch certainly was not unique in this respect. There were, therefore, wandering missionaries who were in the "employ" of local congregations.

(c) *Local ministers.* Not only itinerant ministers evangelized. The local clergy also helped to spread the faith. In his letter to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, Ignatius (c. 115 A.D.) exhorts: "Press on in your race and exhort all men that they might be saved" (*Ign. Poly.* 1:2). Forty years later (c. 157 A.D.) when Polycarp was being brought to his martyrdom the pagan populace testified to Polycarp's missionary zeal: "This is he, the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the destroyer of our gods, he who teaches many not to sacrifice or worship the gods" (*Mart. Poly.* 12:2). It is known that Irenaeus (c. 180 A.D.), bishop of Lyons (southern France), was active in evangelizing the Celts who lived in his district. At the beginning of his great work, *Against the Heresies*, Irenaeus apologizes that he has been so accustomed to using the "barbarous dialect" of the Celts that he has forgotten how to write correct Greek (*adv. Haer.* I. pref.).

(d) *Philosopher-theologians.* A not uncommon phenomenon of the ancient world was that of the wandering philosopher who would present his views in open-air lectures, and should enough interest be elicited, he might establish a "school" at his place of sojourn. The early Church also had its peripatetic philosopher-theologians. From the *Martyrdom of Justin* (2) we learn that during his sojourn in Rome Justin Martyr "imparted the words of Truth" to any who would come to his dwelling. The Syrian, Tatian, was a student of Justin's and after Justin's death formed his own "school" (*Iren. adv. Haer.* 1.28).<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the best example of a wandering missionary-theologian is Pantaenus. Pantaenus (c. 180 A.D.), converted from Stoicism, is said to have



travelled as far as India preaching the Gospel (Eus. *H.E.* 5.10).<sup>11</sup> Later he was to return to Alexandria and establish the famous Catechetical School there.

(e) "*Common*" Christians. Adolf von Harnack was, no doubt, correct when he wrote: "The most numerous and successful missionaries of the Christian religion were not the professional teachers but Christians themselves, in virtue of their loyalty and courage."<sup>12</sup> The paucity of historical materials concerning daily, informal evangelism is, therefore, all the more regrettable. That such evangelism, however, went on is clear from the testimony of the second century pagan Celsus (c. 180 A.D.; Orig. *contra Celsum* 3.55):

We see, indeed, in private houses workers in wool and leather, and fullers, and persons of the most uninstructed and rustic character, not venturing to utter a word in the presence of their elders and wiser masters; but when they get hold of the children privately, and certain women as ignorant as themselves, they pour forth wonderful statements, to the effect that they ought not to give heed to their father and to their teachers, but should obey them.

The cynical opposition of Celsus cannot hide the fact that simple Christians were actively evangelizing their fellows wherever they might be — in the synagogues, in the streets, in the marketplaces, in the homes, during business contacts, in the courts, in the army. As an illustrative example an incident recounted by Tertullian may be mentioned. A Christian soldier refused to wear the victory garland, feeling it improper for a Christian to wear a crown which bore many pagan associations. Summoned before the tribune the soldier declared himself a Christian and was punished by dishonorable discharge from the army and, at the writing of Tertullian, awaited in prison his martyrdom (*de corona* 1).

Von Harnack devotes a special section to the activity of women in the missionary endeavor of the early Church,<sup>13</sup> and without question women played an important role in the Church's expansion. Acts tells us that Christians assembled in the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark (Acts 12:12); apparently Christians in Laodicea met in the house of a certain Nympha (Col. 4:15); Dorcas was known for her charity (Acts 9:36-39); Priscilla was an important aid to Paul (Acts 18:2; Rom. 16:3: "fellow-worker"); Philip had four daughters who prophesied; Paul mentions one Phoebe, a deaconess at Cenchreae (Rom. 16:1). The second century apocryphal *Acts of Paul and Thecla* has as its

heroine a woman, Thecla, who supposedly was converted by Paul at Iconium. She is said to have baptized herself and to have undertaken the work of evangelism, and she is even called an *apostole*.

What was true of orthodox communions was true also of heretical communities. Two of the leading figures of Montanism were women, the prophetesses Prisca and Maximilla. Speaking of women in Gnostic communities Tertullian writes: "How wanton are even the women of these heretics! For they are bold enough to teach, to dispute, to enact exorcisms, to undertake cures and maybe even to baptize" (*de prae. haer.* 41).

### 3. The "Whom" of Evangelism

Since Christ's mission of love, his Lordship, is universal in dimension, men and women of all tongues, lands, races, social classes and ages were addressed with the Gospel. Through its references to various Christian faithful the New Testament reveals the inclusiveness of its fellowship: Cornelius, a Roman centurion (Acts 10:1); the jailer in Philippi (Acts 16:33); Onesimus, a slave (Philemon); Dionysius the Areopagite, an intellectual (Acts 17:34); Luke, a physician (Col. 4:14); Aquila and Priscilla, tentmakers (Acts 18:3); Erastus, a city treasurer (Rom. 16:23); Zenas, a lawyer (Titus 3:13); Simon, a tanner (Acts 9:43); Lydia, a dealer in purple goods (Acts 16:14); Sergius Paulus, a proconsul (Acts 13:2); Crispus, a leader of a synagogue (Acts 18:8); those connected with high society, such as "the saints . . . of Caesar's household" (Phil. 4:22; cf. 1:13), the Ethiopian eunuch, a court minister to the queen of the Ethiopians (Acts 8:27), Manaen, a court member of Herod the Tetrarch (Acts 13:1), and the "prominent" men and women in Thessalonika and Berea (Acts 17:4,12).<sup>14</sup>

It is no wonder that Pliny the Younger (c. 100 A.D.) wrote the Emperor Trajan that Christians comprised "many from every class" (*multi omnis ordinis*). The second and third centuries present a picture of the same social and cultural inclusiveness as does the New Testament. In the Octavius of Minucius Felix the pagan Caecilius speaks of the Christians as "unskilled in learning, strangers to literature" (*Octav.* 5), as "reprobate, unlawful, . . . unskilled and women from the lowest dregs . . . wretched . . . half-naked" (*Octav.* 8). In the third century Origen can admit that the "simple and ignorant" still outnumber the more intelligent (*contra Celsum* 1.27). The pagan polemicist Celsus often scathingly refers to the low social status of most Christians: "only foolish and low individuals, and persons devoid of perception,

and slaves, and women, and children" (*contra Celsum* 3.49). Evelpistus, a slave of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, was martyred along with Justin Martyr (*Mart. Just.* 4.3). Two of the best-known female martyrs were slaves, Blandina (Eus. *H.E.* 5.1.17-19) and Felicitas (*Pass. Perp.* 15).

But not all Christians were of low estate.<sup>15</sup> We know that one of the Lyons Martyrs, Alexander, was a physician from Phrygia (Eus. *H.E.* 5.1.49). Tertullian testifies that Christians inhabited the military (*Apol.* 37).<sup>16</sup> Eusebius tells the story of the Militene Legion which was saved from thirst by the prayers of its Christian members (Eus. *H.E.* 5.5). Hermas (c. 140 A.D.) often speaks of the rich in Christian communities, often, unfortunately, to attack their lack of charity (Herm. *Vis.* 3.6.5-6; *Sim.* 8.9.1; 9.30.4-5). There were apparently enough rich persons among the Christians of Alexandria for it became a pastoral problem. Some of the well-to-do listeners of Clement of Alexandria worried that wealth itself was a hindrance to heaven. Clement wrote a homily on Mark 10:17-31, "Who Is the Rich Man That Shall Be Saved?" to respond to this concern. Some heretical Christians were likewise wealthy. Perhaps the best example is Marcion (c. 140 A.D.) who is said to have given the sum of 200,000 sesterces to the Church at Rome.

It did not take long before the Christian faith permeated even the highest levels of society and government, non-Roman and Roman alike. Eusebius reports of a correspondence between Jesus and the King of Edessa, Abgar (Eus. *H.E.* 1.13.1-22). The legendary correspondence anticipates events at the end of the second century when Abgar IX, King of Edessa from 179-186, became the first Christian king of that kingdom. From Hippolytus (c. 200 A.D.) we learn that the favorite concubine of Emperor Commodus (180-192), Marcia, was a Christian and was even able to use her influence to intercede successfully on behalf of fellow-believers who had been condemned to the mines of Sardinia (*Philos.* 9.12.11). The wife of Emperor Diocletian (284-304), Prisca, as well as his daughter, Valeria, were won over to Christianity.

In light of this pervasive expansion of Christianity it was not simply rhetorical exaggeration when Tertullian wrote at the end of the second century: "we are but of yesterday, and we have filled every place among you — cities, islands, fortresses, towns, market-places, palace, senate, forum — we have left nothing to you but the temples of your gods" (*Apol.* 37).

#### 4. The "How" of Evangelism

Evangelism was the central activity of the Church and was the

final purpose for all the labors of the Church. Virtually everything about the Church was a missionary instrument. We list below only a select few of the means Christians used to further the Gospel.

(a) The evangelist Mark sums up Jesus' ministry as a "preaching the Gospel" (1:14). So also from Jesus' command to go into all the world it is clear that the continuing presence of Jesus with his disciples is given expression by their *preaching* to the nations (Matt. 28:19). Paul is pre-eminent in the New Testament in this regard, for he considered all mission work as fundamentally a preaching of Christ crucified (I Cor. 1:23). It was no different in post-New Testament periods, as Eusebius testifies. Speaking of evangelistic activity in the second century, he writes (Eus. *H.E.* 3.37):

These earnest disciples of great men built on the foundations of the churches everywhere laid by the apostles, spreading the message still further and sowing the saving seed of the Kingdom of Heaven far and wide through the entire world. Very many of the disciples of the time, their hearts smitten by the word of God with ardent passion for true philosophy, first fulfilled the Savior's command by distributing their possessions among the needy; then, leaving their homes behind, they carried out the work of evangelists, ambitious to preach to those who had never yet heard the message of the faith and to give them the inspired gospels in writing.

(b) The world of Rome was in many ways a banal and sensuous world wherein disrespect for life was shown by immoral, hedonistic behavior. In such a context the impact which the *purity of life and high ethical standards* of the Christians had upon the pagan world is not to be underestimated. Tatian testified that the purity of life which Christians led was one reason for his becoming a Christian (*Orat.* 29). Justin Martyr speaks of the converting thrust of Christian behavior (1 *Apol* 16):

He [Christ] has not wished us to imitate the wicked, but rather by our patience and meekness to draw all men from shame and evil desires. This we can show in the case of many who were once on your [pagan] side but have turned from the ways of violence and tyranny, overcome by observing the consistent lives of their neighbors, or noting the strange patience of their injured acquaintances, or experiencing the way they did business with them.

Examples could be multiplied, but the words of the pagan physician Galen (c. 150 A.D.) say it all (*de sententiis politiae Platonicae*):

Most men cannot follow a chain of demonstrative reasoning, and therefore need to be taught in parables. So in our time we see those who are called Christians gathering their faith from parables; and yet sometimes they do just the same thing as the genuine philosophers; for we can all see with our own eyes that they despise death, and further that they are led by modesty to shrink from carnal lusts; for there are among them men and women who have maintained unbroken chastity throughout their lives. There are even those who, by their self-discipline and self-control, and by their ardent desire for virtue, have advanced so far that they are not in any way inferior to the genuine philosophers.

(c) Christians proclaimed the message that in Christ sin and death were overcome. But, if real, this victory was not just to be asserted; it had to be demonstrated. Authenticity is a *sine qua non* for every evangelist, and nowhere did the early Christians demonstrate the authenticity of their convictions more convincingly than during persecution and *martyrdom*. In his *Second Apology* Justin Martyr speaks of his seeing Christians "fearless of death and of all other things which are counted fearful" and remarks that such steadfastness demonstrates the goodness of the Christian: "For what sensual or intemperate man . . . could welcome death that he might be deprived of his enjoyments" (2 *Apol.* 12). The Acts of the Martyrs are replete with instances of Christians, both simple and of high social rank, making bold confession in the face of hostile judges. One might think of the slave girl Blandina, who in the midst of tortures continued the simple confession, "I am a Christian; we do nothing to be ashamed of" (Eus. *H.E.* 5.1.19). Or we might mention the slave girl Felicitas, who when asked by her prison guard how she would be able to endure the pain of martyrdom, replied: "What I suffer now I suffer by myself. But then another will be inside me who will suffer for me, just as I shall be suffering for him" (*Pass. Perp.* 15). Or one may think of Apollonius, who is said by Eusebius to have been "one of the most distinguished of the Christians of his time in learning and philosophy." When told that he must die, he answered: "I have been glad to live, but I have not been afraid of death because of my love of life. There is nothing more precious than life — that is, eternal life — which is the immortality of the soul that has lived a good life on earth" (*Mart. Apoll.* 30; see also Eus. *H.E.* 5.21). Such steadfastness had its effect upon the pagan viewer and could lead him to inquire about the Christian faith. Tertullian ends his address to Scapula, Proconsul of Carthage,

with the assertion that Christian martyrdom had in it the power of Christian expansion (*ad Scapulam* 5.4):

For all who witness the noble patience of its martyrs, struck with misgivings, are inflamed with desire to examine into the matter in question; and as soon as they come to know the truth, they straightway enroll themselves its [Christianity's] disciples.

(d) H. M. Gwatkin in his *Early Church History*<sup>17</sup> remarks that in the Gentile world of the Roman Empire every relation of life was corrupted by slavery. The aristocratic male was, socially, the only true free man. It was impossible for the slave to move up significantly; women were kept in lifelong tutelage to fathers, husbands, and even sons; children were totally dependent upon their fathers, who had literally the power of life and death. It is difficult to overestimate the pull Christianity had for the oppressed and underprivileged. The words of Paul are well-known: "In Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female" (Gal. 3:28). It was not that the Christian faith destroyed distinctions and legitimate order but that it perceived all persons in their highest dignity. Several New Testament epistles (such as Ephesians, Colossians, and I Peter) speak of the *mutual love and service* that husband and wife are to render to one another, that master and servant are to render to one another, that children are to render to their parents and parents to their children. Such an ethic of love toward the other had great impact on the heathen world. In the *Acts of the Lyons Martyrs* the slave Blandina suffers tortures along with her mistress; in the *Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas* the slave Felicitas suffers in prison along with her mistress, the high-born Perpetua. This was scandalous for much of the pagan world, but to many it also testified to the unifying power of the Gospel.

(e) "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God" (1 John 4:7). *Active charity* is the very "stuff" of the Christian life, and with great probability works of charity provided the early Church its best opportunities for mission. Adolf von Harnack<sup>18</sup> discusses no less than ten types of charitable activities performed by the early Church: alms-giving in general, support of teachers and officials, support of widows and orphans, support of the sick, infirm and disabled, care of prisoners and those banished to the mines, the care of the poor needing burial, care of slaves, care of those suffering from calamities, care of the unemployed, and hospitality of the brethren on journeys. Tertullian speaks eloquently of such charity (*Apol.* 39):

Though we have our treasure chest, it is not made up of purchase-money, as of a religion that has its price. On the monthly day, if he likes, each puts in a small donation, but only if it be his pleasure, and only if he be able, for there is no compulsion; all is voluntary. These gifts are, as it were, piety's deposit fund. For they are not taken and spent on feasts and drinkingbouts and eating-houses, but to support and bury poor people, to supply the wants of boys and girls destitute of means and parents, and of old persons confined now to the house; such, too, as have suffered shipwreck; and if there happen to be any in the mines, or banished to the islands, or shut up in the prisons, for nothing but their fidelity to the cause of God's Church, they become the nurslings of their confession. But it is mainly the deeds of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us. "See," they say, "how they love one another."

Perhaps a better testimony, because by a pagan, was uttered by the apostate Emperor Julian (c. 360). He recognized that the largest obstacle to his plan to renew the old pagan religions was the practiced love of the Christians:

Atheism [i.e., Christianity] has been specially advanced through the loving service rendered to strangers, and through their care for the burial of the dead. It is a scandal that there is not a single Jew who is a beggar, and that the godless Galilaeans care not only for their own poor but for ours as well; while those who belong to us look in vain for the help that we should render them.

(f) God intends to convert the mind as well as the heart and the body, and therefore *apologetic, argumentation, and dialogue* were important instruments in the early Church's missionary endeavors. The New Testament itself gives examples. Philip shows the Ethiopian eunuch the truth of the Gospel from the Old Testament (Acts 8:27-38); it was standard procedure for Paul to enter synagogues in order to prove from Scripture that Jesus was the Christ (Acts 17:1-4); Paul argues with the Greeks in Athens in open-air debate (Acts 17:16-34). The writings of Justin Martyr exemplify the full range of argumentation: his *Dialogue* with the Jew Trypho is an excellent example of the detailed debate on the basis of the Old Testament that could occur between Christians and Jews; his two Apologies are addressed to the pagan world in the person of the emperors. In his *Second Apology* Justin relates the public disputation he had with a Cynic philosopher by the name of Crescens. The *Octavius* of Minucius Felix, although

probably a literary construction, is a good example of the way a discussion between an intelligent Christian and an intelligent pagan might be conducted. An interesting example of public dialogue is given by Eusebius. He tells of Origen whose teaching had become so well-known that Mammaea, the mother of the Emperor Alexander Severus, secured an interview with Origen in order to hear him present the Christian faith. While she was at Antioch, writes Eusebius, "she sent a bodyguard of soldiers to fetch him. He stayed with her for some time, revealing to her many things to the glory of the Lord and of the virtue of the divine message" (Eus. *H.E.* 6.21).

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Martin Hengel, "Die Ursprünge der christlichen Mission," *New Testament Studies* 18 (1971-72), p. 38: "Geschichte und Theologie des Urchristentums sind 'Missionsgeschichte' und 'Missionstheologie'."
2. Christopher Dawson, *The Historic Reality of Christian Culture: A Way to the Renewal of Human Life* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960) p. 22.
3. Dawson, *Historic Reality*, p. 23: "... the changes of the past forty years have confronted us with a situation which is not essentially different from that the primitive Church faced under the Roman Empire."
4. See II Cor. 5:20: *huper Christou oun presbeuomen*. Cf. Gunther Bornkamm's fine discussion (TDNT 6 (1968), p. 682).
5. This explains also why Paul, when his apostolate was being questioned by certain "superapostles" in Corinth, referred so explicitly to his apostolic suffering as a "mark" of his apostleship. Not only his message but even the very form of his apostleship was "cruciform" in nature (see IICor. 4:7-12; 5:18-6:10).
6. Origen is referring to LXX Ps. 104:15.
7. Cf. Ulrich Wilkens, "Die Bekehrung des Paulus als religionsgeschichtliches Problem," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 56 (1959), p. 274: "Dass Paulus sein Widerfahrnis [Damascus road experience] in dieser Weise betont als ein Sehen des Auferstandenen beschreibt, hat zunächst seinen Grund darin, dass er das Ereignis vorzüglich nicht so sehr als seine eigene, individuelle Bekehrung zum christlichen Glauben, sondern vielmehr als *Berufung zum Apostel* versteht." What Wilkens says concerning Paul can be said for every Christian and for the Church itself. No one is merely converted to a belief but God calls for a *purpose*.
8. For this see Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1970), pp. 236-55.
9. See Green, *Evangelism*, pp. 167-70; Adolf von Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1902), pp. 242-57.
10. Eusebius (*H.E.* 5.13) tells of a certain Rhodo who was a student of Tatian and fought against the Marcionite Church.
11. Eusebius reports that in India Pantaenus found the Gospel of Matthew in the Hebrew language. It was said that the apostle Bartholomew had preached there and left the Gospel account. It is uncertain what is meant by "India"; virtually anything east of Ethiopia could be so designated.
12. A. von Harnack, *Mission*, pp. 266-67: "die zahlreichsten und erfolgreichsten Missionare der christlichen Religion waren nicht die berufsmässigen



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- Lehrer, sondern die Christen selbst, sofern sie treu und stark waren."
13. A. von Harnack, *Mission*, pp. 395-407.
  14. This brief listing for the most part was taken from C. George Fry, "Evangelism in the Early Church," *The Watchman-Examiner* 57 (1969), pp. 104-6.
  15. A. von Harnack, *Mission*, pp. 376-88.
  16. A. von Harnack, *Mission*, pp. 388-95.
  17. Henry Melvill Gwatkin, *Early Church History to A.D. 313*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1912), 1:221.
  18. A. von Harnack, *Mission*, pp. 105-48.



# Opinion of the Department of Systematic Theology

## The Fruit of the Vine in the Sacrament of the Altar

The classic definition of the Lord's Supper was given by Luther: "It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink, instituted by Christ Himself." Luther cites Matthew (26:26-29), Mark (14:22-25), Luke (22:15-20), and the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 10:16; 11:23-29) as Scriptural proof for the institution, nature, and meaning of the Sacrament of the Altar.

In recent years some have raised the question whether grape juice might be substituted for wine in the Sacrament in view of the fact that the texts do not expressly state "wine," but "fruit of the vine" or "cup." The reasoning is that grape juice should be an allowable substitute for wine in sacramental use, since grape juice can rightly be termed "fruit of the vine."

The Scriptural texts leave no doubt that Christ was celebrating the Passover meal with His disciples. Among the foodstuffs on the table would have been unleavened bread and wine. As regards the latter, it was without question the fermented product of the grape vine, in view of the fact that this was the spring of the year, probably April. Moreover, wine was the customary drink of the Jews at solemn festival meals, the *peri haggaphen* (liturgical Hebrew for "fruit of the vine"). There can be no doubt then, as Lenski points out, that *this* fruit of the vine — with emphasis on the *this* — which the Passover cup contained "shuts out any and all other products of the vine save actual wine and thwarts all modern efforts that speak of unfermented grape juice, raisin tea, or diluted grape syrup" (*Commentary on Matthew*, p. 1028). The point is that "fruit of the vine" is a technical term which in the stated contexts can have no other meaning than *wine*. The church has never, from that day forward, felt at liberty to alter the solemn testament given by Christ in conjunction with the bread and the wine of the Sacrament (cf. Matt. 28:20; Gal. 3:15). Whenever such altering or substitution was introduced, it was promptly repudiated, lest any doubt be cast upon the validity of the sacrament as Christ instituted it.

In an article dealing with the "Archaeology of the Sacraments" (*CTM*, X (1939), p. 328), P. E. Kretzmann avers: "There never

was any doubt in the minds of the teachers of the Church as to the meaning of the expression [fruit of the vine]. For this reason they resented the use of any substitute for wine." The consensus is virtually unbroken. The chief quibble seems to have been whether water was to be added to the wine. This Jewish custom was followed later in the Roman church, on the grounds that this action symbolized the uniting of the people with Christ in the priest's celebration of the Mass and on the fact that blood and water flowed from the side of the crucified Christ.

The Lutheran Confessions stand as a phalanx behind Luther's simple and beautifully clear definition in the Small Catechism, "under . . . the *wine*." There is not a single concession, nor any implication, that anything else was ever to be substituted or understood for "wine." The Small and Large Catechisms enjoy the support on this point of the Augsburg Confession (Article X), the Apology of the Augsburg Confession (Article X), the Smalcald Articles (III, vi), and the brilliant exposition and defense of the Lord's Supper in the Formula of Concord and its Epitome (Article VII). There is total concurrence that in the Lord's Supper Christ "offers His disciples natural bread and natural wine" (FC VII, 64). Countless other references in the Confessions attest the same fact.

Luther's many writings on the Sacrament of the Altar also bespeak the same consistency of usage. There was no substitute for wine in the Sacrament. For Luther, of course, Christ's precious gift of His true body and blood in the Sacrament was the pre-eminent thing, but never apart from the stated bread and wine. He advised those who had doubts or misgivings about receiving both kinds in the Sacrament to forego reception for the time being. That they could do without sinning (St. L. 22, 1862; 21a, 608). He noted, too, that the Sacramentarians, for all their wild notions concerning the meaning of the Sacrament, were at least agreed on one point, viz., that the bread was bread, and the wine, wine (St. L. 20, 1773). While he considered it an adiaphoron whether water was mixed with the wine, Luther's personal emphasis was on natural wine, without additional diluting or mixing with water (St. L. 19, 258). Luther noted that the Scriptures did not specify whether the wine should be red or white (though it was to be of or from the grape vine), nor whether the bread was to be of wheat or barley flour or another grain (St. L. 20, 188). These matters were adiaphora, as were also the quantity and shape of the host or bread, manner of distribution, and other externals or usages connected therewith.

Sometime during the winter of 1542-43 Luther was asked whether a sick person, wishing to have the Sacrament but unable because of nausea to use wine, could be given something else in place of the wine. According to Kaspar Heydenreich, who recorded the conversation, Luther replied (WA 74, TR 5, 5509; emphasis added.):

The question has often been put to me; but I have always responded as follows: *Nothing else but wine should be used.* If wine cannot be taken, then let the matter rest that way, in order that nothing new is done or introduced. *Must* a person who is dying receive the sacrament yet? In times past it was said that he who received the one kind might consider himself to have partaken of both kinds. Why do we not rather say: If you receive nothing, consider yourself to have received both?

Clearly Luther rejected *any* idea of substitution for the *materia terrestris*. Hence the barbed *reductio ad absurdum* above, suggesting that then a person take or receive nothing and just simply believe that he has received something.

Luther's stance, as also that of the Confessions, is upheld by *all* Lutheran theologians. (Cf. Baier-Walther, *Compendium*, p. 498; N. Hunnius, *Epitome*, p. 208; F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* 3, p. 354; T. Engelder, *Popular Symbolics*, p. 93; J. T. Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 525; Ad. Hoenecke, *Dogmatik* 4, p. 115; E. Hove, *Christian Doctrine*, pp. 340f; et al.) Martin Chemnitz, the Lutheran church's greatest theologian in the generation after Luther, wrote definitively of the Sacrament of the Altar in his *Enchiridion*, in his famous *Examen Concilii Tridentini*, and in his beautiful *De Coena Sacra*. As with Luther there is no question in Chemnitz's mind as to the prescribed elements, bread and wine; Holy Scripture clearly teaches them.

Nor ought the question be raised for dispute in our day. Those who do so, that is, argue that "fruit of the vine" should also allow for the use of grape juice, processed or unprocessed, are clearly making this suggestion for other reasons than on Scriptural grounds. The idea of insinuating or substituting grape juice (or something else) for wine is of sectarian background, stemming specifically from religious bodies which pledge total abstinence from all liquids that have alcoholic content.

There is no ground for the notion that the use of wine in the Lord's Supper contributes to alcoholism or even threatens the so-called alcoholic. The sin of drunkenness, like adultery, homosexuality, etc., is clearly exposed in Scripture as serious (1 Cor. 6:10); but the source of the evil in each such case of sin is man's own depraved, evil heart. Even though some may argue on

scientific grounds that certain individuals are naturally and constitutionally more inclined to alcoholism, for example, than others, this still would not remove the onus of sin. By virtue of his sinful nature man is prone to all manner of sin, but Scripture nowhere allows us to teach that man is, as it were, biologically programmed by God to *be so* and so. This would virtually remove from man the responsibility for his sin and place it on God, something totally repugnant to Scriptural teaching. We may be sure that Christ, who knew perfectly what was in man (John 2:25), would not have instituted anything, including the Lord's Supper and the use of wine, if it in *any* way would contribute to man's delinquency. The Apostle Paul's pastoral practice also underscores this fact (1 Cor. 11). The wine in the Lord's Supper threatens no sinner who comes in repentance and faith, but consoles and lifts him up with the precious gift of the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins and gives him strength for godly living. This is the only teaching Scripture supports.

Those who simply "prefer" to receive grape juice instead of wine should be led to see that their "preference" is in violation of Scripture's own clear teaching and that they are thereby making the Sacrament an uncertain matter, if in fact not invalid. Moreover, it is to be feared that such tampering with the Sacrament may in the final analysis involve a deeper error, the relegating of the Lord's Supper to a mere memorial meal instead of the blessed means of grace that Christ has constituted it to be for our spiritual well-being, for the forgiveness of sins.

Any substitution for the Scripturally stated elements is especially offensive because it yields to the intrusion of Reformed theology and practice into the Lutheran church. It is to be expected that those who hold the Lord's Supper to be a symbolical eating and drinking will have little difficulty substituting other elements for the bread and wine. This has been true in some Reformed circles. Needless to say, the *strength*, or alcoholic *content* of the wine, is not the issue, as long as natural grape wine is used. This, therefore, rules out some bizarre concoctions, or mixtures, which are sometimes sold as wine, such as grape juice mixed with alcoholic spirits distilled from grain.

We strongly urge, therefore, lest confusion be multiplied, offense be given, consciences and peace within the church be disturbed, that Lutheran pastors and people continue a consistent practice in support of the Scripturally designated elements in Holy Communion, especially as regards the use of wine, "the fruit of the vine," which Christ instituted when He gave to His church this new testament in His blood.

# Theological Observer

## THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT AS ECUMENICAL PHENOMENON

Though the ecumenism expressed through institutional forms has been increasingly ineffective in the personal piety of Christians, it has through the Charismatic Movement been most effective in bringing together the most diversified forms of Christianity. Thus, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, and Lutherans, all with a tradition of old church worship forms, are sharing the same tents with the oldline Pentecostal churches with their seemingly non-structured worship.

The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod has recognized the attractions and the various dangers connected with the Charismatic Movement. The synod through its conventions, its Commission on Theology and Church Relations, and its seminaries has definite policies directed against the movement and attempting to prevent charismatically oriented pastors from entering its ministry. Church leadership has not been inarticulate on this issue. Along with the officially adopted statements of the synod and its agencies, essays have alerted both the clergy and laity to the dangers of the movement. Missouri Synod Lutherans with their strict understanding of church fellowship immediately see a clear violation of their tradition in charismatic gatherings, whether they are of the intimate cell variety, congregating in a private living room, or whether they are of the mammoth baseball stadium variety. Denominational boundaries melt away in the quest of that "special" outpouring or gift of the Holy Spirit associated with the movement. The charismatic ecumenical abandon reflects an understanding of the Spirit's working entirely different from the Lutheran one. Lutherans understand the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Son of God, Jesus, Christ. This intertrinitarian mystery finds reflection in the doctrine of Christian revelation. The Spirit sent by Christ testifies to Him, especially His atonement, i.e., the Gospel. The Spirit's testimony incorporated in the Gospel comes to expression through what Lutherans term the Word and Sacrament. The Gospel is not only the message originating from Christ, but is also about Christ. The Word and Sacrament do not become instruments or implements to manipulate the Spirit in people's lives or to get hold of the Spirit for personal purposes. The message centering in Christ is the Spirit's working. Thus, in Lutheran theology, the locus on the Word and the Sacraments is, in fact, the locus on the Spirit's working. There is a certain un-Lutheran attitude in treating the Spirit independently of Christ so far as His essence is concerned and independently of the Word and Sacrament so far as His work is concerned.

Lutherans see the charismatic understanding of a direct working of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians as a dogmatic violation of their concepts of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Word and Sacrament. On these issues Lutheran theology and the Charismatic Movement are incompatible. Those bound to the Lutheran Confessions have shared a common abhorrence of the movement while at the same time they have employed several exegetical approaches. The final result of the movement is a doctrinally unrestricted ecumenism where doctrinal boundaries are no longer enforced, simply because they are no longer recognized as important.

The charismatic violation of the Word and Sacrament principle is the chief reason for the evaporation of the traditional denominational boundaries within

the movement. Within the movement the Spirit is no longer, as the charismatics would say, "bound," "captivated," or "encrusted" by the Word, but begins to transcend it, bringing the believers to a higher plateau. The Word is no longer the cradle where the believer finds Christ, as Luther would say, but the Word at best points to Christ or sends the searcher in His direction. This is even true of the Lutheran species of the Charismatic Movement. The Lutheran charismatic form claims to differ from the general Protestant type by giving more attention to the sacraments in search of Christ or the Spirit. Unlike traditional Lutheran theology, however, the Lutheran charismatic is not content to go no further in this world than the Word and Sacrament in finding Christ and the Spirit. The charismatic experience of the Spirit is something beyond the Word and the Sacrament. Such was the basic scheme of medieval mysticism, which had an appreciation for the sacraments not as ends in themselves, but as a means to the mystical blending of the soul with God or Christ. Even here the Lutheran charismatic is offering nothing really new.

The Word which no longer holds within itself Christ and the Spirit, but merely points the believer to them, now begins to lose its authoritative impact for life and doctrine in the personal Christian life. As the Word projects the believer outside of itself to that intimate union with God, it is understood more and more merely as past history with little excitement and real meaning for the charismatic. Personal experience of God with the accompanying and verifying gifts of the Spirit is the real focus point for faith. The Scriptures are valuable in bringing about this personal experience, but become less important to faith than the actual experience itself. The real answers to questions of faith and life are now more frequently found in faith as experience than in the Scriptures. Faith as experience is substituted for Scripture as authority. Problems among Christians from differing denominational traditions are resolved by a common experience and not by the study of Scripture. Differences in belief, where recognized as irreconcilable because of differing interpretations, are dissolved in the common experience of the charismatic group. Refusing mutual Christian fellowship across denominational boundaries is viewed as a legalistic codebook mentality. The Spirit no longer bound to the Word and Sacraments *ipso facto* transcends contradictory understandings of the Scriptures and brings about a deeper unity.

Charismatics can be Lutherans, Baptists, Anglicans, and Roman Catholics without conflict of loyalty. For the tradition represents an outward or organizational unity, while the movement projects the participants into the more important, deeper mystical unity transcending old established denominational or confessional borders. The invisible church begins to become clearly visible (to borrow the older language) in the Charismatic Movement. The same pattern surfaced in the Evangelical Church in the nineteenth century, where the slogan of the merger-mentality stressed unity in essentials, differences in the non-essentials, and charity in all things. The Charismatic Movement sees the essential item in the common experience of the Spirit. In comparison with this experience all other "truths" become mutually tolerable interpretations and opinions.

The twentieth-century ecumenical movement failed to ignite any real enthusiasm through institutional negotiation by forming regional and international councils and ecclesiastical superstructures. The Charismatic Movement has succeeded in generating this enthusiasm, though hardly in the form desired by the first ecumenical leaders. Christians who found it more convenient to give up regular church attendance than to attend a different denomination or a newly formed church have found their way into the multi-



sized charismatic gatherings. Only in such charismatic groups has ecumenism shown sustained success on the local level.

The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod had rightly recognized in the ecumenical enthusiasm of the Charismatic Movement a clear break with Lutheran ecclesiology, which sees fellowship as possible only among those who share, not a common emotional experience allegedly identified as originating with the Holy Spirit, but a common commitment to what God has revealed through the Spirit-inspired Scriptures. Where Christians feel impelled to transcend the older confessional boundaries, they have already put less value on some revealed truth than formerly. Lutherans must beware of this attitude. The ecumenical mentality of the charismatic movement is only a reflection of a deeper problem — an aberrant understanding that detaches the Spirit from the Word and Sacrament and proclaims His freedom from the Scriptures. Euphemistically, this idea can be called the *sovereignty of the Holy Spirit*. Luther would call it *Schwaermerei*! Roman Catholicism with its strain of mysticism and Reformed Protestantism with its understanding of faith as personal experience can permit at least a temporary *detente* with the Charismatic Movement. To Lutheran theology, with its indissoluble bond between Word and Sacrament, the movement is nothing but destructive. More to the point, the charismatic view makes it impossible to say: "I am determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." The Gospel is robbed of Christ as its chief content and souls remain in darkness.

David P. Scaer

### LUTHER AND EMERGENCY COMMUNIONS

Luther in a letter to the Bohemian Christians (1523)<sup>1</sup> suggested that a church — and here Luther is referring to the territorial church in Bohemia — which is deprived of pastors through the refusal of the regular bishops to ordain pastors could establish through lay ordination their own pastors, who in turn would institute bishops and they in turn an archbishop for a wider supervision. There is no thought in Luther that lay ordination would become usual. Though Luther suggests this course, it would be difficult to demonstrate that this actually happened during the Reformation era.<sup>2</sup> Some have reasoned that, since emergency ordination is possible in certain remote cases, then it stands to reason that emergency celebrations of the Lord's Supper, i.e., by non-clergymen, are also possible.

Dialogues, especially between Roman Catholics and Lutherans, can be and have been especially useful since both churches have a serious doctrinal heritage. These dialogues have forced both communions to examine their own heritage and the heritage of the other church. Professor Dr. Peter Manns, a Roman Catholic parish priest and full-time professor at the University of Mainz specializing in Luther studies, has addressed his research to the question of whether or not the Wittenberg reformer would have ever allowed for emergency communions. As Luther would have permitted emergency lay baptisms, preaching, absolutions, and ordinations, it might be somewhat surprising to discover that Luther did not allow the laity under any circumstances to celebrate communion — even if that lay person was theologically trained and called by a congregation. This thesis is developed by Peter Manns in an essay, "Amt und Eucharistie in der Theologie Martin Luthers," appearing with other essays in a volume entitled *Amt und Eucharistie*.<sup>3</sup>

Manns writes his essay after examining Luther's responses to three historical situations. In the first case, Lutherans living in Augsburg were forbidden by three Zwinglian clergymen to celebrate the Lord's Supper according to the Lutheran form. The year was 1531.<sup>4</sup> A certain Caspar Huberius, in the name of his friend Hans Honold, addressed to Luther a request for permission for the laity in this unfortunate situation to celebrate the Lord's Supper. In his request to Luther, Huberius mentions that in times of distress and sickness, Christians have a great need for the Lord's Supper. Huberius argues his case from the medieval argument that absolution can be dispensed by a layman in cases of emergency. A similar situation occurred in 1535 in Freiberg, a Roman Catholic city, where Lutherans were asking permission to celebrate the Lord's Supper without their own ordained pastor.<sup>5</sup> Again one year later another request came to Luther which argued that the head of the household as the religious leader had the obligation to celebrate the Sacrament in the absence of an ordained pastor.<sup>6</sup> Luther's reply to all these requests was no, even though he couched his refusal of permission in the kindest pastoral tone possible.<sup>7</sup>

To the Lutherans in the Zwinglian situation in Augsburg, Luther strictly forbade them to participate in the Zwinglian rites, warning them of the plagues that came upon the Anabaptist fanatics. At the same time he strictly forbade "house communions" or "conventicle communions," as they were otherwise known, with the same vigor as he did the "Winkelmesse," the private masses of Roman Church.<sup>8</sup> Luther bases his advice on the situation of the Jews in the Babylonian Captivity, who were without their own church or worship services. Such deprivation of the sacrament is called by Luther an *Anfechtung*, i.e., a tribulation for faith, but a tribulation which must be accepted with the reading and the teaching of God's Word, deep longings, and prayer. Luther could even speak of substituting a "spiritual communion" (*communione fidei . . . seu spirituali*) and pointed to Daniel who prayed with longing for the temple services in the direction of Jerusalem.<sup>9</sup>

According to Manns, Luther's opposition to non-clerical communion was based on his understanding of the Sacrament as a public remembrance and commemoration of the church which did not belong in the private setting of the home. The head of the household was commanded in the Scripture to lead his family in devotion and give Christian instruction and perhaps even to marry his children, but the command to dispense the Sacrament belonged to the church not to Christians as individuals. Luther derived this conclusion from his exegesis of I Corinthians 11.<sup>10</sup>

Closely related to the problem of individual persons coming together in conventicles to celebrate communion was the case of Magister Johannes Sutel, who had studied theology under Luther and was celebrating communion at St. Nicholas congregation in Gottingen at the request of the city council but without ordination.<sup>11</sup> (Congregational call procedures were simply not known in the Reformation period.) Luther demanded that Sutel cease celebrating the Sacrament until he had been publicly ordained; "tum publice coram altari a reliquis ministris cum oratione et impositione manum testimonium accipies et auctoritatem coenae tractandae" ("then you receive publicly before the altar the certification and the authority to celebrate the Sacrament from the other ministers with prayer and the imposition of the hands").<sup>12</sup>

Luther's writings and his instructions allowing only for clerical celebration of the Lord's Supper may not be canonical for Lutheran practice today; but certainly they cannot be overlooked, since the Lutheran Confessions do place Luther's writings in a special category. It is not uncommon in the Lutheran churches in the United States for unordained men to celebrate communion,

though they have some type of authorization from a congregation or church supervisor. In the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, parochial school teachers are not infrequently asked during the pastor's absence to supervise at the Lord's Supper. It may even happen in the LCMS that a theological student, a professional worker of some sort, or a layman may be asked to celebrate communion for a congregation. Certain small groups are known to come together to celebrate the Sacrament outside of the regularly provided church services. This phenomenon may not be uncommon in college settings. Luther's opinions can never be the final arbiter of truth, but can churches which pride themselves in being legitimate heirs of the Reformation totally ignore them? Certainly Luther's strong opposition to the practice of communion celebration by those not ordained by the church to the clergy should at least open the question for serious study. One thing is clear: Luther had no appreciation for an emergency celebration of the Lord's Supper. We should at least examine the Biblical lines of his arguments.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> "Concerning the Ministry," trans. Conrad Bergendorf, *Luther's Works*, 40 (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958), p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Tom Hardt, a Luther scholar and protestor of the situation in the Church of Sweden, has in recent times received lay ordination.

<sup>3</sup> Ed. Peter Blaser (Paderborn: Verlag Bonifacius Druckerei, 1973; "Konfessionskundliche Schriften des Johann-Adam-Mohler-Instituts," 10), pp. 68-173.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73. Luther's opposition to lay administered and celebrated communions seems to be consistent throughout his career. While Mann's case is developed from Luther's 1530's writings, the period recognized as the Reformer's theological maturity by scholars who operate with such divisions, Luther is giving the same advice in 1523 to the Bohemians. In "Concerning the Ministry", *op. cit.*, p. 9, Luther writes, "Clearly if misfortune and need are so great that they can secure ministers in no other way (than by subterfuge), I would confidently advise that you have no ministers at all. For it would be safer and more wholesome for the father of the household to read the gospel and, since the universal custom and use allows it to the laity, to baptize those who are born in his home, and so to govern himself and his according to the doctrine of Christ, even if throughout life they did not dare or could not receive the Eucharist. For the Eucharist is not so necessary that salvation depends upon it. The gospel and baptism are sufficient, since faith alone justifies and love alone lives." Luther proceeds to discuss that God does and can reward Christians who through no fault of their own are forced to abstain from the sacraments. He makes it very clear that laymen, regardless of the circumstances, cannot celebrate the Sacrament.

<sup>10</sup> Manns, *op. cit.*, p. 80. Here is a translation of the pertinent section from Luther. "Don't let yourselves be persuaded by the group that every householder

may administer the Sacrament in his house. I may very well give instruction at home, but that does not mean that I am an official preacher (*öffentlicher Prediger*), if I am not officially called. St. Paul says the same thing about the Sacrament in I Corinthians 11: 'We should come together and not have everyone celebrating his own Lord's Supper.' Let it not be ever reasoned in this way: The Sacrament is made by the word, therefore I will do it at home. Indeed, this is not the procedure and order of God; but God wants the Sacrament administered through the official office."

<sup>11</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 85

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

David P. Scaer

## TOWARDS A WORLD CONFSSIONAL FEDERATION

For some time confessional Lutherans throughout the world have been setting their sights on a wider confessional fellowship embracing Lutherans on a global scale. The necessity of this kind of a group was first seen when the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) was formed after World War II. At first there had been some legitimate hope that the LWF might provide the skeleton first for serious confessional confrontation among Lutherans and then for confessional fellowship. The LWF simply has not provided this kind of opportunity. Rather it has developed into an ecumenical organization typical of the late twentieth century. It mirrors little more than contemporary theological trends and has overextended itself in political affairs. Ecumenism feeds upon and begets more ecumenism. At one time the LWF along with other worldwide denominational federations of this type could be taken seriously. That time has passed. The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod which was formerly enamoured with ecumenical organizations of various types is gradually outgrowing this delayed middle-aged adolescent puppy love and is quietly but definitely detaching itself from these liaisons.

As a ghost that refuses to depart, the haunting specter of the defunct Synodical Conference is a reminder that confessional fellowship was not only possibility but definite reality. The reasons for the Conference's demise are complex. When the Synodical Conference breathed its last in the early 1960s, it as an association of freely acting church-bodies with a common confessional base was strangely out of step with general ecclesiastical developments. The trend then among churches was toward common church administration and organization with multiplicity and diversity in the church's confessional base. Monolithic belief was sacrificed for monolithic organization. In reality there was no confessional base in most cases at all. What was lacking in confessional unity was compensated by organizational and administrative union. Today the idea of organizational union is hardly spreading with the fury of a forest fire. Denominations are now more concerned in retaining whatever little identity they might have salvaged from the ecumenical homogenization. The time might be right for the reconstruction of a type of Synodical Conference, i.e., freely cooperating churches with a common confessional base.

The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod with its association of sister churches on five continents can easily provide the network operation necessary for a worldwide Synodical Conference. The older Synodical Conference was strictly a North American creature. Its title was the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America. One hundred years ago or even fifty years ago we thought in continental terms. Now the realities are global not only in the political sphere but in the churchly as well. The annual meetings of the sister churches of the Missouri Synod are already providing the first steps toward a wider and more formal association of churches.

While this can provide a base or starting point for a wider confessional association of churches, other churches must be drawn in. The Lutheran World Federation cannot provide the firm confessional and Biblical resources to younger churches of the Third World. Many of these churches have an evangelical fervor in soul-winning which is simply unmatched even by the older more conservative churches. These churches in many cases have become affiliated with the Lutheran World Federation, but here their theological needs have not been met. Any new organization would have to determine what kind of relationship should exist with these churches. Would it be possible for a worldwide confessional fellowship to extend aid and counsel to these churches even if a fuller expression of fellowship would not at first be possible? The day may already be here when American and European Lutheran churches could begin new missions through their sister churches in the Third World.

As the confessional federation would extend its hand into newer fields for Lutheranism, it would reaffirm its past associations which have fallen into disrepair or even disappeared. The greatest concentration of confessional Lutherans outside of the United States are in Australia and Germany. Within recent memory these Lutherans have overcome their differences to establish larger churches. As these have been internal realignments, the Missouri Synod has maintained the courteous posture of a distant but still interested observer. These churches would have to be included in any realistic plans for the future.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty in bringing about a world-wide confessional association of Lutherans would be in the United States itself. The relics of the older Synodical Conference as an association of free Lutheran churches cooperating from a common base are quickly disappearing. The Synodical Conference mission program among blacks has been absorbed by the Missouri Synod into her regional districts. The Slovak Synod maintains its autonomy but within the framework of the Missouri Synod. The Finnish Synod, though not a member of the Synodical Conference but nevertheless a sister church, has lost its identity through amalgamation into the Missouri Synod. The Evangelical Lutheran Synod ("Little Norwegian Synod") maintains its autonomy, maintaining fellowship with the Wisconsin Synod but showing interest in Missouri.

*The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941) still bears the copyright reference to the Synodical Conference on the title page, a vestige of a former age. With pressure for some type of new hymnal, the 1941 hymnal may soon be found in Wisconsin, Norwegian, and some Missouri congregations. Vitally needed for a real revival of any Synodical Conference is the participation and blessing of the Wisconsin Synod. On the surface there appears to be no real solid progress in overcoming the current division. But this hardly means that the Wisconsin Synod and Missouri Synod are ignoring one another.

As a result of the Missouri Synod's participation in ecumenical associations at various levels and with various degrees of enthusiasm, its pastors are keenly attuned to theological developments in other churches. With a firm commitment to the confessions and Biblical doctrines, they cannot avoid seeing that the

Wisconsin Synod has a substance in theology not unlike their own. After the controversy of recent years, Missouri's pastors are aware of the problems connected with higher criticism. They have become better theologians through the fire of experience. They place a high value on historic doctrines because they have had to defend them personally. It might be said without exaggeration that the entire Missouri Synod became a theological battlefield and even now some skirmishes are still being fought. No Lutheran church has had to develop the militancy which the Missouri Synod has had to develop. The clergy have come to a deeper appreciation of Lutheran doctrine through bitter experience.

The Wisconsin Synod has maintained a reserved posture toward the Missouri Synod, but the histories of the two synods have been so interwound with each other that neither can really ignore the other for long. In the April 1979 *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Professor Wilbert R. Gawrisch said in regard to Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogues that "the greatest tragedy is that that one-time pillar of Lutheran orthodoxy, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, has permitted itself to become a participant in this dialogical disaster" (p. 162). At the same time the Wisconsin Synod has noted what it considers positive confessional directions in the Missouri Synod, e.g., the publication of *A Contemporary Look at the Formula of Concord*. The matter of interchurch relations whether it be interdenominational dialogues or the more serious, more formal, and absolutely fragile association with The American Lutheran Church is the real issue separating the Wisconsin and Missouri Synods. The Missouri Synod has not been without fellowship principles. They were the very reason for the synod's establishment and are part of her constitution. The current need is for the synod to recognize her founding principles once again and to expedite their implementation without excessive disruption in normal church life. Here is where the Wisconsin Synod has the opportunity to exercise understanding and patience. The Wisconsin Synod evolved out of a unionistic situation involving both Lutheran and Reformed heritages. Resolving this difficulty was not an overnight occurrence. Still within certain dimensions the Missouri Synod extended the hand of fellowship then. Perhaps one hundred years later the tables are turned. The Missouri Synod is moving back to solid confessional ground. The movement is not uniform in speed or performance, but the movement is clear and pronounced.

The time may be very near for the Wisconsin Synod to recognize her obligation in this matter. The Missouri Synod has sailed through bitter seas in the last generation. She has attracted the world's attention and frequently scorn. Her leaders have maintained a confessional direction without scuttling the ship. World Lutheran leaders have been her detractors and not her supporters as she tried to move in a more confessional direction.

A successful world confessional federation requires the participation of both the Wisconsin and the Missouri Synods. This is the time to support one other in confessional and missionary endeavor. A restoration of the past may not be impossible.

David P. Scaer

# Homiletical Studies

## TRINITY SUNDAY

Romans 8:14-17

June 14, 1981

"Sons of God" (v14) suggests rank and privilege while "children of God" (v16) refers to kinship with God. The aorist (*elabete*, v15) points back to baptism. The Spirit received then does not lead us to shrink from God in slavish fear, but it is a *pneuma huiothesias*, proper to a filial relation to God. "Sonship" distinguishes those made sons by grace from the only-begotten Son of God. By God's grace not only is our position before God different, but the Spirit has created in us a new nature. Our crying "Abba, Father" shows we have not only the status but also the heart of sons.

Our kinship with God is the earnest of an inheritance (v17; 2 Cor 1:22, 5; Eph 1:14). Being in the body will not prevent us from receiving the inheritance of heaven, even though we must suffer now. As Christ suffered and then received glory, so it is with us. Suffering unites us more to Christ and insures our final inheritance with Him (2 Cor 1:5, 7; Php 3:10).

The central thought of the text is that we are the children of God. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would be confident that they are God's children. Suffering sometimes causes us to doubt this. The Holy Spirit assures us that God is our Father and that we are heirs with Christ.

*Introduction:* Trinity Sunday reminds us that God is infinitely greater than we (Ro 11:33-36). Since God's ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts than our thoughts (Is 55:8-9), we might conclude that we cannot be intimately involved with God nor He with us. Our text, however, emphasizes that

### We Are Children of the Triune God

- I. We can call God our Father.
  - A. We do not have to fear him (v15a).
    1. Because of what Jesus did, God no longer condemns us (Ro 8:1-3).
    2. God will not punish us for our sins, here or hereafter (He 2:15).
  - B. He made us His children.
    1. By giving us Christ's benefits in our baptism (Ga 3:27; Jo 1:12).
    2. By giving us faith which moves us to cry, "Abba, Father." That cry is the Holy Spirit's testimony within us that we are children of God (Ga 3:26). Being children signifies not only a new relationship but a new existence.
- II. We are led by the Spirit (v14).
  - A. The Holy Spirit leads us to spiritual life.
    1. He makes us new creatures (2 Cor 5:17).
    2. In our inmost self we love God and delight in His law (Ro 7:21).
  - B. The Holy Spirit leads us to live as God's children.
    1. Avoiding the deeds of the flesh (Ro 8:5; Ga 5:16-21).
    2. Growing in the fruits of the Spirit (Ga 5:22-24). Living as God's children points to endless life.
- III. We are heirs with Christ.
  - A. First we suffer with Christ (v17b).
    1. We suffer from the assaults of sin in the world, experiencing discouragement, sorrow, and pain.
    2. This suffering is not worth comparing with our future glory (Ro 8:18).

3. This suffering is a prelude to glory (2 Tm 2:12).
- B. Then we will be like Christ (1 Jo 3:2).

1. In an incorruptible inheritance (1 Pe 1:4).
2. Experiencing complete victory over sin.

*Conclusion:* Incredible as it may seem, the great God is our Father who makes us alive by His Spirit and glorifies us with Christ. We are children of the Triune God.

GA

## SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 3:21-25a, 27-28

June 21, 1981

In Ro 3:1-20 Paul explains the function of the law and shows the universal need for the Gospel. In the text he sets forth the Gospel itself. He shows that the righteousness of God which all people need has been made accessible to all. The law contributes nothing to this righteousness, for it is a righteousness which is all of grace. The righteousness held out in the Gospel would never have come about except for the propitiatory virtue of the blood of Christ. God for a time seemed to pass over sin, but when the time had fully come He demonstrated His righteousness in the death of Jesus. The cross is at once the vindication of God and the salvation of man. The sharp distinction between faith and works of the law in v28 shows that faith cannot be interpreted as a work of law but is a renunciation of all such confidence as legal obedience inspires.

The central thought of the text is that justification on God's part is a gift. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would be more certain of their acceptance by God. The problem is our tendency to think that acceptance with God depends on something we do. The means to the goal is God's justification of us by His grace as a gift.

*Introduction:* There are many distinctions or differences among people — physically, economically, socially, temperamentally, educationally. Yet God says,

### There Is No Distinction

- I. With regard to sin.
  - A. "All have sinned" (v23a).
    1. We readily admit that thieves, adulterers, and murderers are sinners who are under God's judgment. We are not so ready to admit that decent people like us are under the same judgment.
    2. The law reveals our sin (20b).
      - a. God has not always been first in our life — work, pleasure, family have come between us and God.
      - b. We have not always loved our neighbor as ourselves — indifferent to his needs, unwilling to become involved.
  - B. All are under God's wrath.
    1. God is righteous (v26). He must punish disobedience, His justice must be carried out.
    2. Since we have all fallen short of God's glory (v23b), making excuses, comparing ourselves favorably with others, trying to make up for our sins by doing good will not change our situation before God. There is no distinction with regard to sin. But since that is the case, there is no distinction either —



## II. With regard to righteousness.

## A. All are justified (v24).

1. God set forth Jesus as an expiation for sin (v25a).
  - a. Only Christ's blood could expiate sin.
  - b. Only Christ's death could satisfy God's just demands.
2. God declared the whole world righteous for Jesus' sake (Ro 5:8-10).
3. No matter how evil the world becomes, a redeemed world it will remain. The redemption by Christ took in everybody. Anyone who thinks he has been excluded is thinking too highly of himself. God has justified you — declared you righteous for Jesus' sake.

## B. All may believe.

1. God's justification is "to be received by faith" (25b).
2. Faith too is a gift of God and not a work by us (Eph 1:8).
3. Faith is created and sustained by the good news that in Christ God regards us as righteous people, no matter who we are or what we have been.

*Conclusion:* Let us never say, "I'm right with God, so what's a little more or less dirt on my conscience?" Rather let us take our sin seriously and admit that there is no distinction with regard to sin. On the other hand, let us not think we can make ourselves worthy before God. The righteousness of Christ is available as a gift to all people. How thankful we can be that there is no distinction with regard to righteousness!

GA

## THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 4:18-25

June 28, 1981

Since the "fall" our world functions abnormally, and humanity as a whole has run off the track on which God initially set it. At various times we all have to face this reality, which may challenge our hope, security, or joy. Sin takes its toll (health, relationships, world events, etc.). For the believer, there is only one answer to the reality of a fallen world and that is to trust in the promises of God which are ours through Christ Jesus our Lord. There is hope and power for living when the believer trusts moment by moment in the promises of God which are ours through Christ. Trusting in the promises of God is the only answer to the reality of life in a fallen world.

*Introduction:* It has been observed that when faced with unpleasant realities, some people dream of castles in the sky and some people live in them and others comfort themselves by collecting the rent. The question before us this morning is how do we as God's people deal with the sometimes stark and unpleasant realities of the world in which we find ourselves.

## A Faith for the Real World

## I. The realities of life may not look hopeful.

## A. The realities of life did not look hopeful for Abraham.

1. Abraham had to face the reality of no seed (Gn 15:1-3).
2. Abraham had to face the reality of both his and Sarah's age (v19).

## B. The realities of life have not looked hopeful for many others of God's people.

1. Examples abound in the Scriptures of believers facing situations that

did not look hopeful (Israel at the Red Sea; David as he faced Goliath; the disciples in the midst of a storm on the Sea of Galilee; etc.).

2. Also contemporary examples of the realities of life which seem crushing abound. (Here personal examples from one's own life experiences would be appropriate.)

- C. The realities of life may not look too hopeful to you at times, maybe at this very moment. (At this point the preacher should paint with as much vividness as possible the realities that people in the congregation might be facing such as unemployment, marital or family problems, fears about the economy or world events, guilt, issues concerning old age or loneliness, etc. It is important at this point to be as concrete as possible.)

*Transition:* The realities of life in our fallen world can be stark and sometimes frightening. However, we must never forget that our gracious Father equips us to deal with the realities of life victoriously.

- II. Faith in the promises of God equips God's people to face the realities of life in a fallen world.

- A. Faith in God's promises equipped Abraham to live in the real world
  1. Abraham, through faith, maintained his hope even in the face of a seemingly hopeless situation (v19).
  2. Abraham, through faith, staggered not at the promise of God (v20).
- B. Faith in God's promises will equip you to face the realities of your world.
  1. God, our Father, has made many personal promises to you that become real in your life through Jesus (forgiveness, help in time of trouble, strength to endure, the perspective of a new world coming, the promise to work all things together for good, etc.).
  2. Let us therefore be persuaded as Abraham was that God can and will deliver what He has promised.
    - a. Let our hope be unquenchable.
    - b. Let us not stagger at the promises of God; we shall stand strong in Christ.

*Transition:* Trusting the promises of God in Christ will give us the victory in the face of the realities of living in the twentieth century and will, in addition, bring into our lives certain other benefits (blessings).

- III. Faith in the promises of God in Christ brings wonderful blessings into our lives.

- A. Abraham's faith proved to be a blessing.
  1. Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness (v22).
  2. Abraham's faith was confirmed and strengthened (God kept His promises and Abraham witnessed their fulfillment.)
- B. Your faith will prove to be a blessing.
  1. Your faith in Christ is the foundation of your relationship with God the Father (Ro 5).
  2. Your faith will be confirmed and strengthened. God's promises are real and certain and will come to pass. You will witness their fulfillment (II Tm 1:12, He 10:22,23).

*Conclusion:* In Christ Jesus, our Lord, God the Father has given us marvelous promises to cope with the realities of life we all face. Let us be persuaded beyond any doubt that even when situations do not look hopeful or are discouraging, faith in God's promises will full equip us to live victoriously and will bring wonderful blessings into our lives. Truly we can say that trusting in the promises of God is the only answer to the reality of life in a fallen world.

Mark R. Oien  
Duluth, Minn.

# FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 5:6-11

July 5, 1981

When God's Law has done its work, we experience the depth of our sinfulness. Facing the fact of who we are according to our human nature and of who God is according to His perfect and holy nature, we can sometimes get troubled and wonder, does God really love me? Am I really one of His beloved children or am I just fooling myself? There are many possibilities the preacher could pursue with this text. One would be to focus on the depth of our Father's love for us. The love of God in Christ Jesus has broken through into our lives "in spite of" the fact that we were helpless to effect our own righteousness, "in spite of" the fact that we were sinners who separated ourselves from God and fell in love with the world, and "in spite of" the fact that we were rebels, convinced of the sanctity of our revolution against the true and the living God.

How then can God love us? More specifically, how can God love me when I find myself a sinner, rebelling against the will of God for my life? The love of God in Christ breaks through it all! The penetrating power of the Gospel is the ground of our unshakable confidence in God's undying love for us. The love of God in Christ breaks through every obstacle.

*Introduction:* The great Houdini was a master of breaking out (A little research on the life of this great escape-artist will provide ample material for an attention-getting and interesting introduction.) This morning we want to focus on One who was and is the greatest master at breaking "in."

## Love Conquers All

- I. The love of God in Christ broke into our lives when we were helpless (v6).
  - A. We were helpless to seek the true God, without strength and without desire.
    1. We had totally lost our sense of direction.
    2. We had zero capacity to retrace our steps back into fellowship with the true and living God.
  - B. However, while we were still weak, Christ died for the ungodly (v6).
    1. We were lost, but Christ sought us out. (The parable of the lost sheep would be appropriate at this point or possible Ez 34:1-16).
    2. The love of God in Christ continues to break into our lives when we fell helpless and have lost our sense of direction.

*Transition:* Not only did the love of God in Christ break into our lives when we were helpless, but Christ broke through when we were still trapped in our sin.

- II. The love of God in Christ broke into our lives when we were yet sinners (v8).
  - A. God did not wait until we showed some glimmer of worthiness.
    1. He would have waited forever.
    2. We had long passed the point of no return.
  - B. God did not give us a little grace and then sit back to see what we would do with it.
    1. God's grace does not come in installments.
    2. We were not in a position to accept anything from God. (The cup of reception was tipped upside down.)
  - C. But God shows His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. God acted decisively on our behalf on the cross of Calvary and broke through the wall of separation that our sin had built.
  - D. The love of God is still based upon that decisive act in history when Christ died not for the righteous, but for sinners like you and me.

1. It is the same power of the cross that convinces us that "in spite of" our sin we are forgiven and loved.
2. It is the same power of the cross that produces discontent with sin.
  - a. We are moved to repentance by the power or the cross.
  - b. We are motivated to change by the power of the cross.

*Transition:* As if it were not bad enough that we were helpless and trapped in sin, God had one more obstacle to overcome in His passion to convince us of His love.

### III. The love of God in Christ broke into our lives while we were enemies of God (v10).

- A. We were enemies of God because our human nature, devoid of the Holy Spirit, was at war against God.
  1. The natural man feels guilty, but believes there is no remedy,
  2. The natural man consequently fears God.
  3. Therefore, the natural man sees God as the enemy and fights (actively resists) the entrance of God into his life.
- B. While we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son (v10).
  1. In spite of our resistance to peace with God, the war is declared over on the basis of Christ's reconciling death on the cross.
  2. We are children of God by faith in Christ. We are no longer God's enemies, for we have peace with God.

*Conclusion:* The love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord broke into our lives when we were helpless, sinners, and enemies of God. Can there be any question, any doubt, that the love of God in Christ has broken through every obstacle? Be assured that nothing — nothing will keep the love of God in Christ out of your life. After all, He is the master of all time at "breaking in."

MRO

## FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 5:12-15

July 12, 1981

In v12 *dia touto* refers to Christ's relation to humanity as expounded in 3:21-5:11, although the grammatical reference may be only to 5:1-11. Sin as a power antagonistic to God entered the world through Adam (Ge 3) who succumbed to the temptation of Satan. Sin and death were inseparably connected and consequently death extended over all people. The universality of death rests upon the universality of sin — "all men sinned" (v12). All have been implicated in the sin of Adam ("in Adam all die", 1 Cor 15:22). Sin as an infection of human nature has continued since Adam, though not everyone has sinned the same way Adam die (v14), consciously going against a known command. Yet even before the Mosaic law, all were sinning and were doomed to die.

Adam was a type (*typos*) of Christ, "the last Adam" (1 Cor 15:45), in that both represented humanity, the one fallen, the other restored humanity. The transgression of the one and the obedience of the other alike affected all (vv18-19). But there is a difference (v15). If one man's trespass had such far-reaching effects, much more must the grace of God displayed in One have far-reaching effects. A contrast is thus drawn between trespass and grace, the free gift in Christ annulling the effect not only of that one trespass but of all subsequent trespasses. If the race suffered through the first Adam, much more will that done by the second Adam benefit the race.

The central thought of the text is that the Second Adam achieves greater things than the first Adam. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers will experience God's abounding grace in their own lives. The problem is that sin and death often seem more significant than grace. The means to the goal is the grace of God in Christ which annuls the effects of sin.

*Introduction: A Tale Of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens shows the author's genius for revealing the very pulse of life. It is an engrossing story. Paul in our text writes a still more gripping story, for it is one in which we all are involved. It is

### A Tale of Two Men

- I. Misery came through the first man.
  - A. Sin came into the world by the first man, Adam (v12a).
    1. Not all the descendants of Adam sinned in the same way he did (consciously violating God's clear command (v14b; Ge 2:17; 3:6). Yet even before God gave his law in written form, all who lived from Adam to Moses were accounted sinful (v12c).
    2. We are involved in that one man's sin, for our nature is corrupt (Ro 5:19; Ps 51:5; Jr 17:9). We do bad things because of this inner corruption which is the essence of sin (Mt 15:18-19).
    3. Because of that one man the whole world lies in sin and remains an evil world.
  - B. Death came into the world by the first Adam.
    1. Death is the inevitable consequence of sin (v12b; Ge 2:17; 3:6).
      - a. Physical death is proof of the universality of sin.
      - b. Eternal death or hell is proof of divine retribution for sin.
    2. What grief and anguish we experience because of death! The tale of the first man ends in unmitigated disaster. Not so the tale of the second man, though it is all one tale.
- II. Blessing came through the second man.
  - A. Grace came to the world by the second Adam, Christ (vv15, 14b; 1 Cor 15:45).
    1. Grace signifies a free gift, not at all like the "tit for tat" matter of "we sin — we must die."
    2. Grace signifies unconditional generosity.
      - a. Demonstrated in the willingness of that one man Jesus Christ to become sin for us (2 Cor 5:21).
      - b. Demonstrated in his readiness to endure death for all.
  - B. The grace of the second Adam has abounded to us, a grace infinitely better than the misery caused by the first Adam (v15).
    1. This second man's righteous act led to our acquittal before God so that we are freed from guilt and condemnation (Ro 5:18).
    2. This second man's victory over death led to life for us.
    3. No need exists for anyone to live under sin's condemnation and to die eternally. The free gift of the second Adam is being offered to the world.

The tale of the second Adam, Christ, ends in incomparable blessing.

*Conclusion: Dickens' A Tale Of Two Cities* is entertaining reading. The tale of the first and the second Adam is far more than entertainment; it tells of misery and of blessing that touches us all.

## SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 6:2b-11

July 19, 1981

For us who have "died to sin" (v2b) to be still living in it is as ridiculous as a physically dead person reacting to stimuli. The dying to sin occurred in our baptism (v3), which brought us into union with Christ so as to identify us with Him. To be buried (v4) one must have died, which is Paul's way of emphasizing that baptism so connected us with Christ's death that we died to sin. Then baptism also has power to effect a new life (v4b). Walking in newness of life presupposes a resurrection analogous to Christ's. As Christ died and rose again, so we died to sin in order to rise to a new life (v5). Because our sinful self was crucified (v6), ours is no longer a body enslaved by the power of sin (v7). Christ by His death broke the power of sin and is done with both sin and death (v9). So it is with us. Not only have we been delivered from eternal death, but the new man in us has taken over now. We are to live in such a way that sin dominates no longer in our life (v11).

The central thought of the text is that in Christ we are dead to sin and alive to God. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would live as the new people they are. The problem is that we often let sin assert its power in our lives. The means to the goal is our baptism by which we became partakers of Christ's victory over sin.

*Introduction:* Who of us does not want to live right and do what is good? A source of power for such living is our baptism. Paul makes clear that

**Our Baptism Gives Power for Right Living**

- I. Our baptism made us dead to sin.
  - A. In our baptism our old self was crucified with Christ (v6).
    1. Nothing less than crucifixion could destroy sin's power to control us.
    2. Now we do not have to be enslaved by sin.
  - B. It makes no sense to live in sin.
    1. To respond to evil desires when our old self has been "killed."
    2. To play with sin when we are done with it, as surely as Christ is once and for all (v10a).
  - C. While the decisive victory has been won, the battle with sin is not over.
    1. We must live in such a way that sin does not get control of us.
    2. When sin tempts, remember that your baptism has made you dead to sin (Col 3:9; Ga 5:24).

But there is a positive as well as a negative side to our living.
- II. Our baptism made us alive to God.
  - A. In our baptism we were raised with Christ from death to life (v8).
    1. Only God who raised Christ could raise us also.
    2. The evidence of this life is the newness of our walk (v4b).
      - a. We bear fruit to God (Ro 7:4).
      - b. We no longer live for ourselves (2 Cor 5:15).
      - c. We set our minds on things above (Col 3:3).
  - B. It is natural to live as the new people we are.
    1. Good thought, attitudes, and actions are an integral part of our new self.
    2. No wonder Christians on the last day will not even be aware of their good deeds (Mt 25:37).
  - C. Yet it will take effort to live as the new people we are.
    1. The resurrection power of Christ given us in our baptism will impel us.
    2. Our aliveness through our baptism will spur us.

*Conclusion:* Our baptism happened once but has ongoing significance. It is a continual source of power for right living.

GA

### SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 7:15-25a

July 26, 1981

No more realistic and dramatic articulation of the inward struggle between good and evil exists than that found in Romans 7:15-25a. St. Paul's testimony fits all of us. As the famous German preacher, Helmut Thielicke, said, "The wolves howl in our basements too."

Acknowledgement of the problem opens us to the therapy in which

#### Christ Helps Us Win Our Inward Battle

- I. He understands our failure to cope at times with evil.
  - A. Since Christ was tempted, He knows how strongly sin asserts itself also in our lives.
  - B. If even Christ had to fight evil that threatened to overcome Him, we who still have the sinful flesh must never think that our being Christians frees us from struggling against the evil within us.
- II. He enables us to desire the good.
  - A. He died to take away the sin to which we yield.
  - B. He sends the Holy Spirit to cleanse our conscience and to strengthen the new life within us.
- III. He delivers us from the body of death.
  - A. He frees us from captivity to sin and death.
  - B. He moves us to delight in the law of God.
    1. So that we will to do the good.
    2. So that we daily work at doing what God would have us do.

HHZ

### EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 8:18-23

August 2, 1981

Everyone has to find some kind of explanation of tragic suffering. People ask us, "Why?" when suffering comes. The best explanation we can find appears in Romans 8:18-23. These words of Paul enable us to adjust to issues and feelings of tragic suffering because they assure us that

#### God Guarantees Us a Glorious Future

- I. God directs our destinies toward a hopeful outcome.
  - A. Of itself creation is subjected to futility.
    1. Compare the philosophy of nihilism.
    2. Note the myth of Sisyphus, who was condemned continually to roll a stone up a hill only to have it roll down again.
  - B. By the will of God we are subjected to suffering in hope.
    1. The divine will has the power and eternal scope to bring the total creative process to a meaningful fulfillment.
    2. That hope which we now have in God brings motivation to our lives.
- II. God will glorify His suffering children.
  - A. The sufferings of this present time can be tolerated when we know what

- the future has in store for us.
- B. The glory that is to be revealed is so majestic and worthwhile that it encourages us to bear the pain of our present suffering.
- III. God will reveal a marvelous fulfillment of His plan for His waiting sons.
- A. Creation waits with eager longing for the end which lies in store for it.
- B. God will reveal a dramatic climax of His plan for His sons.
- IV. God will free us from the decay of death.
- A. Creation will be set free from its bondage to decay.
- B. We shall all obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God.
- V. God will deliver us from travail.
- A. Creation has been groaning in travail until now.
- B. God will redeem our bodies along with the material creation in the new heaven and new earth.

HHZ

### NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 8:26, 27

August 9, 1981

Here we are told that we really do not know how to pray. But the Spirit does not forsake us in our weakness or frustration. The Lord knows the mind of man and the mind of the Spirit. The intercession of the Spirit will be attuned to the will of God.

The central thought of the text is that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would keep right on praying. The problem is that we do not pray as we ought. Yet we are not alone when we pray, we have a partner. The Spirit helps us.

*Introduction:* Gertrude Behanah, the former aristocrat, alcoholic, and non-Christian, was stunned when Christian friends visiting her in New York said that when they returned to Chicago they would pray for her each morning at 9:00 a.m. Gertrude said she was floored — “nobody ever told me they would pray for me.” Our text tells us that the Holy Spirit has promised to pray with us and for us. Therefore, we are.

#### Partners in Prayer

- I. We need the partnership of the Spirit because we are often discouraged from praying.
  - A. Not knowing God’s will fully can keep us from praying. We find it hard to trust God to do what is best. Or we feel that our analytical minds must have everything figured out and that we must know that outcome before we can make a commitment.
    1. We may give other reasons for not praying, such as our prayers not being answered, being too busy or too tired.
    2. The basic reason for not praying, or for praying very little, is that we try to probe into what we cannot know. We fail to remember that God’s ways are not our ways (Is 55:8-9; Ps 33:10).
  - B. The Holy Spirit knows God’s will.
    1. The Spirit has an inside track on what is best for us. He has the perspective of the past and of the future.
    2. The Spirit prays in accordance with God’s will. We have the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Counselor, as our prayer partner, praying the right prayers for us in accordance with God’s will. God’s will may sometimes be hidden from us; that should not keep us from praying.



II. We need the partnership of the Spirit because our prayers often seem so weak.

A. We do not know how to pray as we ought.

1. "The Apostle is not trying to say that holy and good people are asking for things which are contrary or harmful, but rather that they are asking for too little — things that are too lowly or insignificant in comparison with what God wants to give them" (Luther).

2. The Spirit helps us by reminding us that, since God did not spare His own Son, He will also give us everything else we need.

B. The Spirit intercedes for us.

1. As Jesus did for His disciples and for others. Jesus reminded Peter that He had prayed for him for he would be tested by Satan. From the cross He prayed for those who had crucified Him.

2. With signs too deep for words. When we cannot find the words, the Spirit finds ways to make our anguish or elation known to God.

*Conclusion:* How encouraging to know that someone no less than the Holy Spirit is interceding for me. I have a partner in prayer.

Jerrold L. Nichols  
Fort Wayne, Indiana

## TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 8:28-30

August 16, 1981

The central thought of the text is that the Lord has established a process for our growth until we reach the image of His Son in glory. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would grow spiritually. The problem is that our growth is stunted when we become discouraged and depressed by the events of life and we lose confidence in God's providential care for the growth of His elect. The power of the Gospel is found in the knowledge that God, who has provided for our salvation through the gift in His Son, can be counted on to provide all we need for spiritual growth.

*Introduction:* The biennial theme of our Synod from 1977 to 1979 was "That We May Grow!" That is also a fitting theme for a study of our text.

### That We May Grow

I. Our growth is stunted.

A. When we become discouraged.

1. We do not know why certain things happen. Paul wanted the thorn in his flesh removed. We want to be able to understand trying events.

2. We resent the events of life which seem to say that God does not love us. How can we love Him when we cannot accept what He sends us?

B. When we become depressed.

1. Discouragement can lead to depression if it is not handled properly. The more discouraged a person becomes the more depressed he becomes. The more we see the negative side of life the more we are siphoned downward into despair. "Why are you cast down, O my soul?" (Ps 42:5).

2. Depression causes us to forget who we are. The circumstances surrounding us become a stronger force than the certainty of the promises of God. The prodigal son at last remembered who he was.

C. When we lose confidence.

1. That everything works for our good. We are often convinced that an event is no good, that God is unable to bring good out of it. We see only the loss. God used Joseph's struggles to bring blessing to many.
  2. In God's love for us. If we have not experienced love in the family unit it may be difficult to accept the fact of God's love. The Word of the Lord must win out over our human experiences. We may feel unworthy of God's love.
  3. In God's providential care. It sometimes appears that we are left to ourselves to provide for our daily needs. ("Guide Me, Oh Thou Great Jehovah," *TLH* hymn 54).
- II. Our growth is assured.
- A. When we remember that we were predestined (vv 29-30).
    1. God chose us already before we were born to be His own.
    2. God chose purely out of His grace, not on the basis of our faith or any other condition or behavior of ours (Eph 1:12; 3:11; 1 Pe 1:2).
  - B. When we remember that we were called (vv 28-30).
    1. The call to receive God's grace came to us in baptism.
    2. The Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament calls us daily to renew our grasp on grace.
  - C. When we remember that we were justified.
    1. God declared our sins forgiven when Christ died and rose.
    2. Through faith we appropriate God's declaration that He has been reconciled to us.
  - D. When we remember that we were glorified.
    1. We are conformed to the image of Christ in that we have all of His righteousness. We are thus brothers and sisters of Christ, who is the firstborn of many brethren.
    2. One day we shall be conformed to Christ's image also in that our bodies and behavior will be perfect (Php 3:21; 1 Jo 3:2). By remembering this fact, our growth is assured in faith and hope and love.

*Conclusion:* An insurance company assures its clients that they "are in good hands." We can say no less when we view the providential care of God for His elect until they arrive in glory. He has chosen and called us, justified and glorified us. We are in the good hands of our God who makes it possible for us to grow.

JLN

## ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 8:35-39

August 23, 1981

V35: "The love of Christ" is Christ's love for His people, not their love to Him. (Cf. v37, "through Him who loved us," and v39, "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.") V36: Contains a verbatim quotation of Ps. 44:22 (He 44:23). Adversity is the lot of God's people in all generations (Ac 14:22; He 11:35-38). Vv38,39: Paul develops an antithetical pattern to demonstrate the strength of the love of God. Death — life, things present — things to come, height — depth, angels (good) — principalities (evil) all show the boundlessness of the power of God to overcome everything.

*Introduction:* Many counselors today are emphasizing the values of a "trial separation." The hope is that the couple will have the opportunity to stand back and assess the situation from a distance.

In the text, Paul is encouraging us to step back and evaluate "trials" that come into every Christian life. Trials usually separate — husband and wife, man from job, even parent from child. The emphasis is that no trial, no matter how severe, has the power to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

### **Trials Cannot Separate Us from the Love of God**

- I. Trials are one of the "givens" of the Christian life.
  - A. Physical trials for Christians have persisted throughout history (vv35,-36).
    1. Tribulations are the marks of a Christian's struggle (Ro 2:9; 2 Cor 4:8).
    2. Persecutions, famine and nakedness were experienced by many (I Cor 4:11; 2 Cor 11:26f.).
  - B. Spiritual trials befall every Christian (v38).
  - C. Death is the final trial through which we all must pass (v38).
- II. Trials were experienced by Jesus throughout His state of humiliation.
  - A. He was rejected (Mt 21:42).
  - B. He had no place to lay His head (Mt 8:20).
  - C. He suffered (Lk 24:46).
  - D. He felt separated from His Father (Mt 27:46).
  - E. He died (Mt 27:50).
- III. Trials are "overwhelmingly conquered" through Jesus (v37).
  - A. Our ability to overcome is based on His promises.
    1. He will not leave us nor forsake us (Jn 14:18).
    2. He will not give us more than we can bear.
  - B. Our future is secure.
    1. Jesus rose and so shall we.
    2. Jesus has prepared a place for us.

*Conclusion:* History has proven that individuals and the church have always been strongest when persecution was most severe. So, lift up your head, disheartened father. Keep smiling, pain-racked mother. Do not lose heart, grief-stricken spouse. Be strong, grandfather who is facing death. You are winners! You are conquerors through Jesus Christ, your Lord.

Wayne A. Pohl  
Trenton, Michigan

### **TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**Romans 9:1-5**

**August 30, 1981**

"I do not lie" — Paul was aware of his responsibility for his statements, since He calls on Christ as a witness. "My conscience" — Paul has proved his feelings with regard to the Jewish people through his conscience and the Spirit of God. V3: "I could wish" — Luther translates "I have wished," referring to Paul's former state as a persecutor of Christians. V4: "Who are Israelites" — the glory of the Jews is that they are bearing the honorable name of Israel (See v6). "The adoption" signifies the close relationship between God and men through the regeneration of the Holy Ghost. V5: "God blessed forever. Amen." A quotation from the synagogical liturgy, well known by Jews and Gentiles alike.

*Introduction:* The score is 62-61. There is a shot at the buzzer. It bounces around the rim and falls out. The game is over — so close and yet so far. It is the bottom of the ninth; the bases are loaded; the fans are cheering; Mighty Casey

strikes out — so close and yet so far. It is disappointing to come that close and yet not to win. However, in the spiritual realm it is devastating to be at the threshold of the Kingdom of God and fall back. That is a fatal error.

### So Close and Yet So Far

#### I. So close.

##### A. The Jews were so close to God.

1. They were adopted as His sons (v4).
  - a. They were first-born sons (Ex. 4:22; Dt. 14:1; 23:6).
  - b. Circumcision was the symbol of that relationship.
2. They had a covenant relationship (v4).
  - a. A covenant was made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob.
  - b. The New Covenant was conveyed to these people (Jr 31:31-34).
3. They worshiped in the Sanctuary (v4).
  - a. Temple and synagogue worship was a part of their lives.
  - b. The reading of the law (Torah) was a part of the worship.
4. They received God's promises (v4).
  - a. Many prophecies were made concerning their physical life.
  - b. The Messianic prophecies foretold the Savior.
5. They descended from good stock (v5).
  - a. Their "fathers" were men of God (11:17).
  - b. The Chosen One came from that race (v5).

##### B. Many today were so close to God.

1. They received the adoption of baptism.
2. They worshiped and were trained as children.
3. They confirmed their faith before God's altar.
4. They received the sacrament of the Body and the Blood.
5. They descended from good stock (godly parents).

#### II. And yet so far.

##### A. The Jews walked away from the Kingdom of God.

1. They were separated from Christ (v3).
  - a. They denied His Messiahship.
  - b. They nailed Him to the cross.
2. They sought their own righteousness, not Jesus'.

##### B. Many today walk away from the Kingdom of God.

1. They remove themselves from the Means of Grace.
2. They cease attending the worship services needed for mutual strengthening.
3. They become self-righteous and have no need for Jesus.

*Conclusion:* Paul's heart was heavy. He could not keep silent. It was not condescension but concern. It was not speaking down. It was speaking as a brother. We cannot keep silent either. As individuals we must share with relatives and friends who are so close and yet so far. As a congregation we must develop active and faithful programs for reaching delinquent members and returning them to the family of God. Their future depends on it!

WAP

### THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 11:13-15, 29-32

September 6, 1981

Paul will add glory to his apostleship if through it the Jews also are converted (vv13-14). The more successful he is with the Gentiles, the greater the prospect

that some of the Jews may be provoked to jealousy and saved.

God reconciled the world to Himself in Christ (2 Cor 5:19), but this began to be made known only after Jewish unbelief diverted the Gospel to the Gentiles (v15a). Yet God is not sorry for His gifts to and calling of the Jews (v29). The misuse of the gifts contributes to the working out of God's universal plan of redemption (v30). Both Gentiles, who had formerly been disobedient, and Jews are objects of God's mercy (vv31-32). All are under sin and are saved only by mercy.

The central thought of the text is that God is earnest about offering mercy. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would more fully appreciate God's mercy. The problem is that we sometimes focus more attention on our position and gifts than on divine mercy. The means to the goal is God's desire to show mercy to all.

*Introduction:* In the non-Christian world mercy is neither greatly admired nor widely practiced. We too are sometimes more concerned about getting our rights than showing mercy and are ready to withdraw mercy at the slightest provocation. How different is God. The text shows that

### God Does Not Withdraw His Mercy

- I. Even though some rejected it.
  - A. Israel as a whole rejected God's mercy in Christ.
    1. God chose the people of Israel to be the first recipients of His mercy.
    2. Christ Himself was a Jew and worked among the Jewish people. Yet His own people rejected Him.
  - B. God did not reject His chosen people (vv29, 28, 1).
    1. He did not shut them out from the mercy now being shown to the Gentiles (vv31b; 15b).
    2. God was ready to use even jealousy on the part of the Jews to arouse their interest in His offer (v14).
  - C. God uses the rejection by some to extend mercy to others (v15a; 30a).
    1. Most of us are among the Gentiles who have received God's mercy.
    2. God uses us to extend mercy to those who have rejected it.
      - a. Our church's work is magnified when rejectors of mercy receive it by faith (v15b).
      - b. How thrilling it is when a person we thought would never become a Christian rejoices in God's mercy!

We might think that our not rejecting God's offer makes us more worthy than those who have rejected it. Not so. None of us is worthy. Yet God does not withdraw his mercy —

- II. Even though no one is worthy of it.
  - A. We all, both Jews and Gentiles, are consigned under sin (v32a).
    1. We all are naturally disobedient to God.
    2. We all naturally rebel against God's offer. That is why we so desperately need mercy.
    3. We are Christians today only because God in His mercy brought us to repentance and faith.
  - B. We have no reason to be proud.
    1. We are God's people, not through heredity or gifts or position, but only through divine mercy (v32a).
    2. We continue as His people because God in his mercy enables us to stand fast in our faith (v20).
    3. Must we not stand in awe of a mercy which is extended to all, even to us, in all our unworthiness!

- a. It is the nature of divine mercy that it is for sinners only.
- b. God wants more than anything else to show mercy to all (1 Tm 2:4).

*Conclusion:* What a contrast God's mercy is to human exclusiveness, meanness, and revenge! God is utterly in earnest — He does not withdraw His mercy even though some have rejected it and even though no one is worthy of it.

GA

## FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 11:33-36

September 13, 1981

Paul, contemplating the mercy and love of God revealed in His dealings with Jews and Gentiles, adores the divine wisdom and knowledge which can never be fully known by human beings (v33). In v34 he quotes from Is 40:13 to prove the unsearchableness of God's ways and that no one can be His confidant. In v35 quotes from Job 41:11 to show that the initiative always belongs to God and that we have nothing which we did not receive. In v36 he emphasizes man's absolute dependence on God — "from him" as the source, "through him," as the power by whose energy the whole world is sustained and ruled, "to him" as the goal for whose glory the world and all that is in it exists. Creation, redemption, providence and all the phenomena connected with them are to the glory of God.

The central thought of the text is that God is supreme. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers will acknowledge God's supremacy. The problem is that we sometimes honor persons and things more than God. The means to the goal is God's ordering and controlling of the world to serve His love in Jesus Christ.

*Introduction:* When we look at what human beings have accomplished, especially in medicine and computers, it is easy to give glory to man. The test shows that it is more appropriate to give the glory to God.

### To God Be the Glory

- I. He is the source ("from him," v36).
  - A. He created the world and all that is in it (1 Cor 8:6; 11:12).
    1. Researchers discover what was there all along.
    2. God's wisdom and knowledge are apparent in His creation of the human eye and ear, for example.
  - B. He initiated the world's redemption.
    1. The riches of His love moved Him to plan the redemption as a gift (v35).
    2. His wisdom found a way to meet the demands both of His justice and His love. No one offered Him any suggestion as to how to do this (v34).
- II. He is the power ("through him," v36).
  - A. His energy sustains the world and the universe.
    1. He holds it all together (Col 1:17; He 2:10a).
    2. He keeps us alive (Ac 17:28).
  - B. He is the agent of salvation.
    1. In Christ He saw it through to the resurrection and the ascension.
    2. He brought us to Christ and keeps us with Him.
- III. He is the goal ("to him," v36).
  - A. The world and the universe exist for God's praise.
    1. All created things (Ps 19:1; 148:9-10).
    2. Our physical body (Ps 139:14).
  - B. We have reason to praise Him for who He is and for what He has done (our creation, redemption, and preservation).

- C. We praise Him with words and songs of adoration and with lives that honor Him.

*Conclusion:* It is exhilarating to focus on God rather than on ourselves. We become truly human when we give God the glory.

GA

## FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 12:1-8

September 20, 1981

The mercies (v1) are those God has shown in the redemption through Christ. Our body is the instrument by which we serve God. The reasonableness of the service (KJV) lies in the presenting rather than in the sacrificing of the body, the act of offering and not the thing offered constituting the service. It is reasonable service also because it is rational and not merely outward and mechanical. Christian renewal imparts not only the will and power to do God's will, but also the intelligence to discern it (v2). The will of God here is that which is good in a moral sense. The present tenses suggest ongoing renewal by the Holy Spirit. Although various degrees of self-estimation are proper since God gives one person more and another less (v3), all are regulated by humility, for none of us has anything we have not received. Each of us has received a gift or gifts. Yet we are no more than members in the whole body (v4). We are mutually dependent on each other (v5). We are to exercise whatever gift we have as well as we can (vv6-8). In v9 the stress is on using the gifts on the basis of love which never condones evil but clings to the good. Love is to be directed to the whole family of God (v10). Love moves us to zealous performance of our duties as service to the Lord (v11).

The central thought of the text is that the mercy of God moves us to worship with our body, mind, and gifts. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would worship God with their whole being. The problem is that fleshly rather than spiritual considerations often motivate and direct our worship. The means to the goal is the mercy of God in Christ which impels and empowers our worship.

*Introduction:* In the chapters preceding the text Paul describes the mercies of God demonstrated in the redemptive work of Christ. He reminds us that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ (Ro 8:1), and that nothing in heaven, on earth, or beneath it can separate us from God's love in Christ (Ro 8:38-39). Such mercy calls for a response. However, Paul does not say, "I command you," but rather, "I appeal to you . . . by the mercies of God . . ." To do what? To perform our "reasonable service" (KJV). He goes on to explain

### Our Reasonable Service

- I. We present our bodies.
  - A. As a living sacrifice.
    1. Not as slaughtered animals or perfunctory performances.
    2. Rather as instruments for rational, moral behavior (v1c; 1 Pe 2:5; Ro 6:13, 16, 19).
  - B. Acceptable to God.
    1. God's mercy motivates our behavior.
    2. God's mercy covers our shortcomings.
    3. God's mercy hallows our efforts.

Such presenting of our bodies is a reasonable service (1 Cor 6:20). But this service involves the mind as well as the body.

## II. We are renewed in our minds.

- A. The Holy Spirit enables us to discern God's will (v2b).
  1. We become more sensitive to what is good.
  2. We become more watchful that the world does not squeeze us into its mold (Phillips).
- B. The Holy Spirit enables us to assess ourselves honestly.
  1. We neither denigrate ourselves nor think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think (v3).
  2. The awareness that all we have is from God makes us humble (v3b, 6a).

So to be renewed in our minds is a reasonable service. With bodies and minds activated by mercy —

## III. We use our gifts.

- A. We use whatever gifts we have as well as we can (vv7-8).
  1. Each of us has different gifts from God (v6).
  2. We are most ourselves when we use our gifts as fully as possible.
- B. We strive to use our gifts for the good of others (v5).
  1. We are dependent on each other.
  2. We each can contribute to the functioning of the whole body.

*Conclusion:* What a challenge to present our bodies as living sacrifices, to be renewed in mind in holiness and humility, and then, with body and mind, to use our gifts more fully! This is but our reasonable service in view of the magnificent mercies of God.

GA

## SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Romans 13:1-10

September 27, 1981

Paul is not referring to cases where it might become necessary to obey God rather than man, nor does he touch on whether it may be right at times to resist tyranny. He simply states that the government and its representatives are of God and are, therefore, entitled to honor and obedience from Christians.

Imperfect as governments are, they exist by divine right for the purpose of security and order in the world (v1). Judgment against evil-doing is carried out by magistrates as God's instruments (v2). To escape the fear of punishment one must do what is legally and morally good. Paul assumes that the state will approve this kind of good (v3). In v4 Paul is not speaking merely of capital punishment but of the punitive right of the government generally. Yet one should submit not only because of the consequences of disobedience but because the conscience recognizes the state as an agent of God (v5). For this reason, too, taxes are to be paid (v6). Beginning with v7 Paul introduces the duties all individuals have toward each other in society. In vv8-10 he moves on to the principle which should inspire all our dealings with our fellow human beings in the government and also other spheres. Love moves us to do good to our neighbor and thus to be law-abiding citizens.

The central thought of the text is that love moves us to be good citizens. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers will obey laws of the state and of God out of love for their fellowman. The problem is that failure to love our fellowman often leads us to break the law to secure our own advantage. The means to the goal is that Christ whom we have put on by faith enables us by His love to love others.

*Introduction:* "Owe no one anything." Many people would be happy to go along with this because they do not feel indebted to anyone or anything. Their



attitude is reflected in expressions like, "Count me out," "Let George do it," "I couldn't care less." They speak much of rights but little of responsibilities. But there are no rights without corresponding duties. We cannot claim the rights of free citizens unless we fulfill our duties of voting and paying taxes. The fact is we are debtors. The debt we owe is love. Paul says it well:

**"Owe No One Anything, Except to Love One Another"**

- I. Love inspires obedience to civil laws.
  - A. God reveals His love through civil governments.
    1. Governments exist by divine right (v1).
    2. Through national, state, and local governments God maintains order and security in society (vv3-4). Governmental authorities are God's instruments for punishing evil-doers and for protecting those who obey the laws.
      - a. Fear of punishment should spur us to avoid wrong-doing.
      - b. We should avoid wrong-doing also for the sake of conscience, recognizing that, when we disobey the laws of the state, we disobey God.
      - c. A still stronger inducement to avoid evil and to do good is the love God showed in making government His agent for our welfare.
  - B. God reveals His love most fully in Jesus Christ.
    1. As we daily put on Christ by faith (Ro 13:14), we put on the forgiving, accepting love of God in Christ.
    2. We reflect God's love by loving people in tangible ways — respecting property rights, obeying traffic laws, paying taxes.
- Obedience to civil laws flows from God's love for us.
- II. Love makes obedience a delights.
  - A. Because "love does no wrong to a neighbor" (10a).
    1. In the name of love for the fatherland people have sometimes trampled under foot their fellow man.
    2. Torturers often are sustained by an ideal that blinds them to the ugliness of their deeds.
    3. The second table of the Law is a way of expressing love that does not squeeze people into the shape we like but that respects their personhood, accepts them as they are, and does good to them.
  - B. Because "love is the fulfilling of the Law" (v10b).
    1. We are freed from the burden of keeping the Law in order to earn God's favor. Love does not say, "Must I do this or that?" It is already busy doing it.
    2. We can be free from pride, knowing we have but done our duty, simply paying our debt of love.

*Conclusion:* We owe everything to God, all the blessings we have in this country and with family and friends. To human beings we owe nothing at all — except to love one another.

GA

**SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**Romans 14:7-9**

**October 4, 1981**

The text must be seen in its immediate context. It appears to have been "sandwiched" in between a portion of the letter in which Paul is admonishing his

readers not to judge the weaker brethren because of their misunderstanding about a practical matter very similar to the problem addressed by Paul in 1 Cor 8. Rather than judge or condemn the weaker brethren, they are to welcome them.

*Introduction:* We know of a young man whose mother, though a devout Christian was an invalid with a terminal illness and whose father was a very weak Christian. Shortly after this young man was confirmed, he quit attending the worship services of his congregation altogether. A member of his class questioned him about this conduct, and he replied that he was going to drop out of the church for now but rejoin when he was old and about to die.

To be sure, few people would be so honest and blunt as this young man; however, his reply seems to reflect the unspoken attitude of many in the church today. Therefore, we see that our text is a timely reminder that

### We Are the Lord's

- I. Whether we live
  - A. What this meant for Paul then.
    1. I do not judge my fellow Christians in things neither commanded nor forbidden (vv2-6, 10).
    2. I will welcome the weak brethren into my fellowship (v1).
    3. I will strive to live my life in a way that is pleasing to the Lord (v8).
  - B. What this means for us today.
    1. We, too, will refrain from judging our fellow Christians in matters neither commanded nor forbidden.
      - a. Such as playing harmless card games.
      - b. Such as the moderate use of alcohol.
    2. We, too, will welcome weak brethren into our fellowship.
      - a. In order to have opportunity to nurture him in the faith.
      - b. In order that we might rejoice in the Lord together.
    3. We, too, will strive to live our lives in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord.
      - a. Therefore, we need to grow in our understanding of God's will for us.
      - b. Therefore, we need to grow in our ability to express our faith.
- II. Or whether we die.
  - A. What this meant for Paul then.
    1. He was confident that he would spend eternity with His Lord (v8).
    2. Because he believed that Christ lived, died, and rose again for him (v9).
  - B. What this means for us today.
    1. We have the same hope for eternity that Paul had.
      - a. Being in the presence of the Lord (Ps 16:11).
      - b. Experiencing eternal bliss (Re 21:3-4).
    2. Because Christ has earned it also for us.
      - a. By His active obedience to the Law.
      - b. By His passive suffering and death in our place.
    3. We appropriate this blessing unto ourselves through our personal faith.
      - a. Which is a gift of the Holy Spirit.
      - b. The Spirit creates and sustains this faith by the Means of Grace.

*Conclusion:* May this text serve as a reminder to us that we are the Lord's now, and may that be obvious to all by the way we conduct our lives now. May this text also remind us that we are the Lord's even in death and that we shall spend

an eternal bliss with Him. May this thought strengthen and comfort us when we face our last enemy, be that soon or in the distant future.

Dwight O. Weber  
Steeleville, Illinois

## **EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**Philippians 1:3-5, 19-27**

**October 11, 1981**

Paul's words in v24 might make it appear that he is boasting of himself. From the context, however, it is clear that he is expressing his confidence in being God's man for a particular time and task.

*Introduction:* A popular song a few years ago had the refrain: "People who need people are the luckiest people in the world!" These words point up the fact that each human being has a basic need to love and be loved.

Paul recognized this truth. He is telling us:

### **We Are in This Together**

- I. We need each other's support.
  - A. Paul was thrilled to receive support from the Philippian Christians.
    1. They had joined him in furthering the Gospel (v5).
    2. He knew that they were still praying for him (v19).
    3. He urged them to continue to manifest their faith (v27).
  - B. We, too, need spiritual encouragement.
    1. We sometimes feel so alone in our attempt to live as Christians.
    2. The Christian lives of others can encourage us.
    3. We are encouraged when we know others are praying for us.
- II. We can help each other.
  - A. Paul was sure that he could assist the Philippians in their faith.
    1. Going to the Lord would be great gain for him (v23).
      - a. He could leave the cares of this world behind.
      - b. He would begin to enjoy the complete joys of eternal life.
    2. Yet he also recognized he could be God's agent to benefit the Philippian Christians to facilitate their progress and joy in the faith (v25).
  - B. We can help our fellow Christians to grow in the faith.
    1. By reminding them of the kind of Lord they have, a Lord who has helped us through the Gospel in our greatest need.
    2. By reminding them of how Christ desires to use all Christians in His work of spreading the Gospel.
      - a. Each of us has different abilities.
      - b. We are to use them for the common good.

*Conclusion:* We are all member of one big family in the Church. We are in this task together. We need each other's support. We can help each other. We can be so thankful for our partnership in the Gospel.

DOW

## **NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**Philippians 2:1-11**

**October 18, 1981**

This text is more than an exposition of the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus. It teaches us to serve as He did. It was pure love that caused the Son of

God (v6) to volunteer His service to become one of us — to save us.

The central thought is that in His humiliation Jesus not only fulfilled the Law for us but showed us how to glorify God in our lives. The goal is to have Christians use Jesus as both their guide and strength to serve each other. The problem is that we so easily fail to follow Jesus with the excuse that "He is God; He can do it. I can't." The means to achieve the goal is our union with Christ and our fellowship with the Spirit.

*Introduction:* Imitation is not only a form of flattery but one of the best ways to praise. Our text calls us to take a close look at Jesus.

### Think Like Jesus

#### I. Think like Jesus *about yourself*.

##### A. See Jesus' self-view according to His human nature.

1. He was fully God and able to do whatever He willed (v6).
2. He was not pre-occupied with merely displaying His divinity; otherwise there would not have been an incarnation.

##### B. Examine your own self-appraisal.

1. It is not wrong to be self-concerned. V4 (NIV) implies that it is right to look to one's own interests. "Love your neighbor as yourself" means it is right to love yourself.
2. Never let self dominate (v3). We fool ourselves by the titles we cling to. Everyone can find someone "lower" whom he can dominate, subjugate, humiliate.

*Transition:* Jesus' attitude toward Himself in His human nature is inseparable connected with His attitude toward others.

#### II. Think like Jesus *about others*.

##### A. Jesus became a servant (v7).

1. That is what His incarnation was all about.
2. His ministry was filled with continual serving of people's spiritual and temporal needs.
3. His greatest service was to do for all people what no person could do for himself or for another; Jesus redeemed us with His blood (v8; Is 53; Mt 20:28).

##### B. How do we serve others in His name?

1. We need not and cannot duplicate Jesus' service and redeem the world.
2. We are challenged to consider other people and their needs as more important than ourselves (v3b). We are not to disturb and destroy others, but reach out to them in love.
3. Service (v4) comes in many and varied opportunities: listening to someone's problems, mowing his lawn when he is sick, babysitting, and, best of all, sharing with him the love of God in Christ.

#### III. Think like Jesus *about God*.

##### A. This is the relation in which Jesus, according to His human nature, stood to God.

1. He wanted to glorify God (Jn. 17).
2. He was obedient (v8).
3. He was strengthened by His Father for the task (Jn 17:2ff.).
4. At the right time, God exalted Him (vv9-11).

##### B. We also need to look up to God.

1. He equipped us for the servant-role (v1).
  - a. Christ is our strength as well as example for the task.
  - b. Through God's love, we have His pardon and presence.

- c. The fellowship of the Spirit daily nourishes us through the Word.
2. He blesses us abundantly (v2).  
Christians are united by His love; they have a common bond.  
Christians are enabled to serve with united purpose and harmonious effort.

*Conclusion:* Our text presents no dazzling display of divine power. Rather we see the possessor of all power joining the human race as servant-Savior. How we need to think like Jesus! God pays no attention to the titles we hold, but rather to the role we play. A servant role would fit us just fine! With the opening of the church door come many opportunities this week to think, and act, like Jesus.

Lloyd Strelow  
Covina, California

## TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Philippians 4:4-8

October 25, 1981

"Always" (v1) has staggering implications. As Law, it reminds us that we want to rejoice only when God does things our way. As Gospel, it reminds us of the constancy of our Lord's love. In view of the nearness of the Lord's return (v5) and the spiritual emptiness of many people, our joyfulness in the Lord needs to be expressed. The six "whatevers" (v8) open doors for expression of our joy. How can the content and delivery of the sermon, the selection and singing of the hymns, the doing of the liturgy, exhibit joy in the Lord and stimulate God's people to show it?

The central thought is that joy is a gift from God through Christ. The goal of the sermon is that Christians would express their joy in the Lord. The problem is that we too often see Christianity providing eternal joy but stifling happiness on earth. The means to joy is the peace of God in Jesus Christ.

*Introduction:* An unhappy Christian is a contradiction. Yet the conversation and conduct of many Christians indicates that joy is not a primary factory in their lives. They apparently are of the opinion that sadness is more fitting than joy. Our text is saying we do not have to wait for the joy of heaven. It calls us to rejoice now.

### Yes, You — Rejoice!

- I. You have the right reason.
  - A. Your joy is not superficial.
    1. The world's joy does not last (the "now generation," "have a blast"; wild parties).
    2. The painted smiles of the model, actress, clerk, politician quickly fade.  
*Example:* The television announcer for a Saturday children's program, thinking he was off the air, said: "I guess that'll hold the little stinkers for awhile."
    3. Even the emotional ecstasy of a church service may not last.
  - B. You are a Christian (v4).
    1. Your Heavenly Father loves you; He made you and cares for you (Ps 103).
    2. Your Savior redeemed you (1 Jn 4), He is coming soon (v5b).
    3. The Spirit nourishes your faith (Jn 15:26; Jn 14:26).
  - C. You have a reason to rejoice even in hardship.
    1. Paul knew this from personal experience, writing this text and letter from prison.

2. In the midst of pain, family crises, financial concerns, ridicule, temptation, we too can rejoice, for our Lord strengthens us (vv6a, 7, 13, 19).

*Transition:* God does not give you the right reason to rejoice without also giving you a way to express that joy.

## II. You have ample opportunity to rejoice.

### A. Rejoice before God.

1. Rejoice as you come to Him in prayer and petition (v6) whether about a problem at work, your spouse's health, a math problem, dating, or whatever.
2. Rejoice in your thanksgiving and praise to Him (v6). Let it be both spontaneous and conscious. Remember His strength to fight temptation, a blessing you received through a family member, the Sacrament of the Altar.

### B. Rejoice before people.

1. Display an attitude of joyful trust in God (vv6,7).
2. Select activities that honor God and help people (v8). Christianity is not a narrowing of options for joy. As Christians we do not view God's will as "boxing us in."
3. Such rejoicing is not bragging but witnessing (v5).

*Conclusion:* Rejoice in the Lord always? This "impossible" assignment becomes a delightful opportunity for God's people. God is asking us to remember whose we are. In the Hawaiian sunset the sun sets rapidly, but there is a long, beautiful afterglow that paints the skyline. Jesus' visible ministry on earth was brief. But the love He brought glows in and through us. Rejoice! Again, I say, "Rejoice!"

LS

## TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Philippians 4:10-13, 19-20

November 1, 1981

This text is best known for the affirmation, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Many today feel stampeded into helplessness to cope with one crisis after another. They lose their will to live with graciousness toward God, others, and themselves. This text puts them into touch with Christ's strength to restore their self-esteem, their confidence in God, and their newly oriented concern for others.

### I Can Do All Things Through Christ Who Strengthens Me

- I. I can deal with my personal relationships responsibly through Christ who strengthens me.
  - A. I can rejoice in the Lord when people show *concern for me*.
  - B. I can show *concern for others* by asking God to supply their every need.
  - C. I can find strength in Christ in times of abasement when others do not show concern for me.
    1. I understand their limitations when they have no opportunity to show concern.
    2. I know that Christ will move some to concern in the future.
- II. I can deal with my worldly needs through Christ who strengthens me.
  - A. I have learned the secret of facing prosperity.
    1. I thank God who provides the plentiful resources.
    2. I seek means of sharing my abundance responsibly.

- B. I have learned the secret of facing poverty.
  - 1. Christ gives me strength to endure hunger.
  - 2. I know that God will supply my wants according to His providential plan.
- C. Christ gives me the mind to glorify God in whatever worldly status I am placed.

HHZ

## TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

I Thessalonians 1:1-5a

November 8, 1981

In v1 Paul states the characteristic peculiarity of the church: Christians are in God and in Christ. Their hope and help is their *kurios*. Paul goes on in v3 to give thanks for the Thessalonian Christians' faith which was productive of good works and for their love which was manifesting itself in acts of kindness. These evidences of the Spirit's work were proof that they were God's chosen people (v4). Paul is confident of their being God's chosen ones also because the Thessalonians received the Gospel joyfully, being convinced of the Gospel's reality by the power of the Holy Spirit (v5a).

The central thought of the text is that our attitude toward the Gospel and our life of faith give evidence that we are the chosen of God. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers would be confident that they are God's chosen ones.

*Introduction:* What a thrill to be chosen for a coveted position or award! Maybe you have never been chosen for anything. Yet we Christians, all of us, are the objects of a unique choice. God has chosen us to be His people (Jn 15:16). How can we be sure? According to Paul in the text

### We Know We Are God's Chosen Ones

- I. Because of how the Gospel is working in us.
    - A. The Gospel consists of words with power (v5a).
      - 1. By the operation of the Spirit in the Gospel at our Baptism we were transferred from Satan's kingdom to God's kingdom.
      - 2. Through the Gospel in the absolution, in Holy Communion, in sermons and devotions, the Spirit continues to work in us the full conviction that God loves us for Jesus' sake and regards us as His own.
    - B. The Gospel supplies the power to live under grace.
      - 1. Does the Gospel sometimes strike us as the "same old thing?" It is not the "same old thing" at all; it has many facets, and it can speak pertinently to our need.
      - 2. Do we sometimes feel that God is a wrathful deity? The Gospel assures us that God loves us in spite of what we have done and what we are.
- The working of the Gospel in us is evidence that we are God's chosen ones. The Gospel-worked conviction that God accepts us in Christ is faith. Faith expresses itself. We know we are God's chosen ones —
- II. Because of how our faith is showing through us.
    - A. Faith shows itself in labors of love.
      - 1. To love takes will and effort.
      - 2. It may be a labor at times to help a child with homework, to listen to one's spouse, to visit a lonely person.
    - B. Faith shows itself in the steadfastness of hope.

1. Hope that God will see us through our troubles.
  2. Hope that we will one day be with our Lord in heaven.
- Although our faith could be showing itself much more, it is nevertheless showing itself in love and in hope. This activity of faith is evidence that we are God's chosen ones.

*Conclusion:* In us, as in the Thessalonians, the Gospel is working and faith is showing. Therefore, we know we are God's chosen ones. To be chosen by someone for a responsible task or a coveted award may seem to be a great thing. Yet there is no other greater than to be the chosen of God.

GA

## TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

I Thessalonians 1:5b-10

November 15, 1981

The Thessalonians' reception of the Word was accompanied with "much affliction" (v6), for unbelieving Jews stirred up the heathen rabble and raised a persecution against Paul and his associates. After Paul left Thessalonica the persecution increased against the Christians. Yet the Thessalonian Christians gave evidence of a Spirit-inspired joy. Their witness to the Lord excited the attention of people both to the north and to the south of them. Their faith sounded out (v8) like a trumpet; many heard of how they had made a radical turn-about from dead idols to serve the living God. God had manifested Himself in the raising of Jesus from the dead (v10). The Thessalonians could commit their life into the hands of God who at the parousia will judge His opposers and eternally deliver His own.

The central thought of the text is that Christians by their attitudes and actions sound forth for the Lord. The goal of the sermon is that the hearers' sounding forth for the Lord will be clear and certain. The problem is that our attitudes and actions often send out uncertain sounds. The means to the goal is that God who raised Jesus from the dead transforms us with His power to send forth certain sounds.

*Introduction:* A baby grand piano I once owned began emitting a rattling sound whenever I played the ten keys below middle C. After much investigation by the company representatives it was discovered that the sounding-board had a crack in it. A piano's sounding-board is crucial for the clarity and sonority of the tone. Paul says of the Thessalonian Christians that "the word of the Lord sounded forth from you." Evidently they were good sounding-boards. We too are

### Sounding-Boards for the Lord

The question is, how clear and pure is the tone that sounds forth from us? According to the text, one way to be good sounding-boards is by

#### I. Rejoicing in affliction.

A. The Thessalonians actually rejoiced in the afflictions that came to them as a result of their believing the Gospel.

1. What a peculiar reaction to affliction! No wonder the news of their behavior spread throughout Greece.
2. Their joy was not something they worked up themselves — sort of gritting their teeth and saying, "Affliction is fun." It was "joy inspired by the Holy Spirit."

B. We too can rejoice in affliction.

1. Affliction should not surprise us; it is the lot of all Christians (TLH



413, st. 2).

2. God, who raised Jesus from the dead, will support us with His power. We can trust God no matter how joyless we feel.
  - a. Joy does not depend on joyous feelings. Sometimes we feel like the book title, "Been Down So Long, It Looks Like Up to Me." Life is up and down — testing, stretching, then peace again.
  - b. Joy does not depend on our comprehending all the tragedies of life.
3. Rejoicing is possible because we do not have to pretend affliction does not hurt, or display a foolish bravado. Yet we know that affliction can be used by God to enrich our life and enlarge our faith.

We are sounding-boards for the Lord not only by the attitude we display but also by the action we take.

## II. Serving the living God.

- A. The Thessalonians turned from idols to God.
  1. They gave their allegiance to God.
  2. They served God by imitating the apostles in struggling against the flesh, in speaking the truth, in demonstrating love.
  3. They relied on Christ's resurrection power to serve God.
- B. We too can serve the living God.
  1. Many things hinder our service — judgmental attitudes, lustful desires, selfish motives. We need help from God.
  2. Through Word and Sacrament God renews us daily in Christ's image as we wait for the day when Christ will deliver us from all evil and bring us to His heavenly kingdom.

*Conclusion:* The sounding-board of even a very good piano can develop a crack. The Word which sounds forth from us is Christ's own Word through which the Spirit works. That Word is able to mend the cracks in our lives and make us better sounding-boards. It is such a privilege to sound forth for the Lord.

GA

## LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

I Corinthians 15:20-28

November 22, 1981

Too many sectarian religious leaders confuse innocent believers with the chronology of the end times instead of following the simple order of the resurrection events which have as their purpose the consummation of the kingdom and those who belong to Christ. Too many free-lance speculative religious spokesmen have subordinated Christ and attacked the Trinity. St. Paul's statement of the order of events of the last things affirms the resurrection of Christ, the glory of Christ in His kingly work, and the consummation of God's saving work through Christ in relationship to the world and us.

### The Sequence of the Resurrection Events

- I. Christ is the first fruits of the resurrection.
  - A. In Adam all die.
  - B. In Christ all shall be made alive.
- II. Those who belong to Christ will be raised next.
  - A. The *assurance* of their resurrection is their belonging to Christ.
  - B. The *time* of their resurrection will be at His coming (Parousia).
- III. Then Christ will deliver the Kingdom of God.

- A. Christ will deliver the Kingdom to God *when the end comes*.
- B. Christ will *destroy* all *opposition* to God.
  - 1. Every rule.
  - 2. Every authority.
  - 3. Every power.
- IV. Death will be the last enemy to be destroyed.
  - A. God puts all things in subjection under Christ's feet, including death.
  - B. The children of God will be freed of the fear of death and its grievous consequences.
- V. God will be everything to everyone.
  - A. God will consummate the divine destiny for everything in His creation.
  - B. Through everything in the restored creation God will fulfill our lives.
    - 1. He will consummate the abundant life for us.
    - 2. He will give us eternal life.

HHZ

# Book Reviews

## I. Exegetical Studies

NAVE'S STUDY BIBLE: REVISED AND EXPANDED EDITION. KING JAMES VERSION. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978. 1985 pages. Cloth. \$24.95.

This volume is an update of the original *Nave's Study Bible*, which many have used in their Bible study over the years. This "Revised and Expanded Edition" is based on the King James Version, because the editors believe that in it "we have a heritage worth preserving." The following quote from the preface indicates that the editors also believe in inerrancy: "The Authorized Version is beautiful not only from a literary viewpoint, but also from a perspective that attaches importance to the reverent handling of God's inerrant Word on the part of the translators."

This is an excellent study Bible. The topical notes in the margins, together with the footnotes, make this Bible worth the price. The footnotes are full of valuable information on every conceivable biblical subject. Eight new features have been added. One of them, a glossary of archaic words and phrases, is extremely handy. Such Elizabethan words as "cor," "habergeon," "helve," and "knop," receive simple but precise definitions. In the reviewer's estimation this glossary is easily the best of the new features, which include an Old and New Testament cross-reference index, tables of weights and measures, a revised chronology, a geographical gazetteer, and an atlas.

Unfortunately, there are two other new features which would have been better left out: an outline and index on the sovereignty of God and an outline and index on the trinity and covenant of grace. The Reformed influence is immediately apparent in the "Outline on the Sovereignty of God," which the heading calls "The Master Theme of Holy Scripture." There is no need to dwell at length on what follows in the body of both outlines. God's "call" to a person to become His child may or may not be serious depending on who the person is (elect or not). The following few sentences from the outline on the section on the covenant of grace describe exactly how the game is played according to Calvinistic theology: "The *Author* of this call is God the Father . . . This call is an irresistible summons, since it comes from the Almighty God, whose will cannot be frustrated . . . The *subjects* of this call are those whom the Father predestinated. His elect . . . The *pattern* of this call is grounded solely in the Father's sovereign good pleasure, in setting His love upon whom He pleased . . ." It is interesting that Romans 8:32 is used to support this doctrine of the "limited atonement," but the last word in the text, "all" (" . . . delivered Him up for us *all*"), is omitted. Evidently to include it would be a bit risky, since one of the non-elect might read it and get the "wrong" idea. All of this demonstrates, as we Lutherans are well aware, that even if a man accepts the inerrancy of Scripture, his theology may still be horribly crooked. Correct theology remains among us purely by God's grace.

John W. Saleska

THE BIBLE: ITS CRITICISM, INTERPRETATION AND USE IN 16TH AND 17TH CENTURY ENGLAND. By Dean Freiday. Catholic and Quaker Studies, No. 4, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1979. 195 Pages. Paper. \$8.50.

Since 1972 several Catholic and Quaker Studies (1110 Wildwood Avenue,

Manasquan, New Jersey 08736) concerning "the Spirit-centered Community," Christology, and "the Means of Salvation" have appeared. This, the fourth work to appear in this series and format (printed by offset, bound in plastic, with heavy paper covers, 8½ by 11 inches in size), is an appraisal of the role of the Bible in English-speaking Christianity in the era of the Reformation. Certainly such a useful volume is to be welcomed.

This survey begins with two preliminary chapters which discuss "The Inheritance from Preceding Centuries" and the "Developing Linguistic and Critical Skills" that occurred in the Renaissance (the "historical-grammatical method"). A review of "The Polyglot Bibles" (published in Paris, Antwerp, and London, as well as "The Complutensian Polyglot" from the University of Alcalá) indicates the new prominence of Biblical studies in Tudor England. After this treatment of the recovery of the Bible and the pioneering of the new method of Scriptural study, the author presents individualized treatments of eleven key figures — John Colet ("The Pauline Renaissance"), William Tyndale ("A Pastoral Interpretation"), Thomas Cranmer ("A Biblical Liturgy"), Richard Hooker ("Law — Natural, Scriptural, and Celestial"), Hugo Grotius ("Linguistic and Historical Exegesis"), John Wilkins ("Do-It-Yourself Preaching"), John Bunyan ("Transforming the Bible into Allegory"), Richard Baxter ("How to Read the Bible"), John Owen ("Providential and Experiential Exegesis"), Samuel Fisher ("Interpreting Spiritual Truths") and Richard Simon ("Forerunner of Modern Biblical Criticism"). Each of these persons — Roman Catholic, Anglican, Puritan, Baptist, Quaker, and other Dissenters — is examined as an exemplar of a particular method of studying the Word of God.

This book is a valuable contribution to the history of Biblical interpretation in the English-speaking world. While the purpose of the volume is to focus on the contributions of Quakers and Roman Catholics to Biblical scholarship in the sixteenth and seventeenth century in England, that aim could not be attained without considering the broader spectrum of Anglican and Puritan theological development. As might be expected, the approach of the author favors a "spiritual" as opposed to a "literal" reading of the Scriptures, and would indicate that Quakers and Roman Catholics, as people of Spirit and Community, tended to be less "book-bound" and "creed-oriented" than were Anglicans and Puritans. Experience and reason are seen as complementary sources alongside Scripture. Readers of the *CTQ* would question this connection, as well as the author's contention that progressive seventeenth-century scholarship seemed to point toward the "historical-critical method" of Biblical study that came into favor in the Victorian era. Occasional errors of fact (as the contention that Lutherans were iconoclasts [p. 25] or that they taught consubstantiation, [p. 37]), combined with these interpretative biases, will alert the Confessional Lutheran reader to a critical use of this crucial analysis of an important era of Biblical scholarship.

C. George Fry

**THE GOSPEL OF MOSES.** By Samuel J. Schultz. Moody Press, Chicago, 1979. 165 pages. Cloth. \$5.95.

This is Moody's reprint of Schultz's book previously published by Harper and Row in 1974. The subtitle for this book is "God's Plan for Man as Revealed in the Old Testament." Samuel Schultz is also the author of *The Old Testament Speaks*. Some may wonder about the meaning of the title. Schultz believes that Moses was one of the greatest men of the Old Testament and the author of five books which constitute one-fourth of what is now known as the Old Testament. The Torah of Moses has as much content as the first five books of the New

Testament. The Pentateuch is just as important for the Old Testament as the Gospels are for a comprehension of the rest of the New Testament. The Old Testament's message says Schultz, was summarized by Jesus as "Love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself." The essence of this epitomization by Jesus is found in Deuteronomy. *The Gospel According to Moses* makes special use of Deuteronomy, a book about which Schultz wrote: "After years of study I came to the conclusion that Deuteronomy is the most important book in the Old Testament. Consequently after two decades of teaching I revised my methodology in sharing the Bible with my students by beginning Old Testament survey courses with Deuteronomy instead of Genesis. Consequently the following pages represent my personal interest in delineating this approach with those who may read these pages." (p. ix).

Nine of the ten chapters endeavor to show God's plan for man's salvation. Chapter X, "The Gospel for this Age," ties up the Old Testament with the teachings of Jesus and also attempts to make the biblical message relevant for the twentieth century. It is the author's contention that the basic revelation of God's message to man came through Moses and was only surpassed and completed in the coming of Jesus Christ. Through Moses, God made known what was important for man to know about himself, his origin, his purposes in life Godward and manward, and his prospects for the future. The prophets who came after the time of Moses supplemented and showed their agreement with the Mosaic teachings. In Chapter V Schultz gives the history of Pentateuchal criticism and defends the Mosaic authorship over against the higher-critical understanding of the Pentateuch. He accepts the view of P. J. Wiseman that Moses had written documents at his disposal in the composition of Genesis.

Schultz is not employing the word "Gospel" in its narrow sense. His use covers both Law and Gospel. As a member of the Wheaton faculty, he represents a conservative approach to isagogical, hermeneutical, and exegetical questions. Those who hold to the reliability of the Bible will in general appreciate this challenging book.

Raymond F. Surburg

**FROM BABYLON TO BETHLEHEM.** By H. L. Ellison. John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1979. 136 pages. Paper. \$4.95.

Ellison, a British Old Testament scholar, author of a number of previous books, has portrayed the history of the people of God from the exile to the Messiah. The eighteen-chapter book deals with the period between the fall of Jerusalem (587 B.C.) and the birth of Christ. This is a time period which is of great interest and importance for the story of Israel and the development of Judaism. Because many Christians know little about these nearly six hundred years, their understanding of the New Testament consequently suffers. Ellison informs the reader in the preface: "This book seeks to serve a double purpose. On the one hand, it tries to make the post-exilic books of the Bible more comprehensible so far as this can be done without a detailed exegesis. On the other, it seeks to discover the main reason why Palestinian Jewry rejected Jesus at least in the person of its leaders, and why it went down to ruin less than forty years later. It is not one more history of the period, for there are enough of them, nor is it a description of the Judaism that lies behind the New Testament and modern Jewish Orthodoxy alike. Here again sufficient work has been done by others" (p. vii).

The perceptive reader will notice that Ellison manages to exact the last ounce of information from contemporary history and literature. Ellison examines and evaluates the activity and writings of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah.

He appears to favor the view that Ezra came to Palestine between the two visits of Nehemiah, 444 and 432 B.C. He challenges the contention of many scholars that the synagogue originated during the Babylonian captivity. Some of the post-Biblical books are discussed in more detail than others. Although Zechariah has fourteen chapters, he ignores questions of its content and authorship almost entirely. Some of the Apocrypha are outlined and discussed.

Raymond F. Surburg

**A GUIDE FOR THE STUDY OF THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN IN THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT.** By Marvin R. Wilson. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1979. 65 pages. Paper. \$4.95.

Wilson's book is a 'self-study' guide intended to lead the beginner in Greek into the Greek New Testament. The First Letter of John is chosen for this purpose because it has a vocabulary range of only 234 words, its syntax is simple, and its theological depth is profound.

Each of the twenty-five lessons of this book consists of vocabulary study, questions, and suggestions for further study. It is the second part, the questions, which will be of most interest to the pastor who wishes to review his Greek or renew his enthusiasm for New Testament study. The questions lead the student into the major grammars, lexical aids, word studies, commentaries, and textual studies which apply to First John in particular and the New Testament in general. For example, at I John 3:9 Wilson asks the question: "Does v. 9 teach sinless perfection? Give particular attention to the tense of *poiei* and *hamartanein*. How does Zerwick (*Biblical Greek*, p. 82, par. 251) resolve the puzzling paradox of I John 2:1 and I John 3:9?" The question is intended to show on the basis of the present tense of *hamartanein* that the Christian does not "live in habitual sins," even though he still commits sin daily, for which the blood of Christ cleanses him by virtue of the "atoning-sacrifice" of Christ (I Jn. 3:6; 1:7; 2:2). It is an "honest book," without theological bias, but limited to those who take their Greek New Testament seriously.

W. Degner

**REVELATION.** By J. P. M. Sweet. Westminster Pelican Commentaries. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1979. Paper. \$8.95. xv + 361 pages.

The Revelation remains, as it were, the rough waters between Scylla and Charybdis, waiting to wreck the ship of interpretation either on the rocks of excessive spiritualism or those of excessive literalism. Prof. Sweet, of Cambridge University, however, proves to be a steady and reliable helmsman as he guides the reader in an evenhanded and balanced fashion through this most difficult book. In the best English tradition, Sweet's treatment of Revelation remains sane — firmly rooted in the text, guided by an enlightened common-sense, not given to fancy or to excessive mental ingenuity. He wishes to explain, not to construct theories or systems. The result is, in my opinion, the best commentary on Revelation to appear in recent years (of English commentaries only that of G. B. Caird rivals it; it is superior to the best recent German commentary, that of Heinrich Kraft).

Sweet's success rests upon several overarching principles or perspectives which color the whole interpretation and gives it depth and focus: (1) Revelation is taken as "an impressively coherent whole," as "substantially the work of one mind" (p. 36). The occasional strangeness of the text does not issue forth into massive textual reconstruction (the undoing of R. H. Charles). (2) Sweet operates with a truly Biblical notion of prophecy: "A prophet in the biblical sense is not simply one who predicts the future, but one who sees into the realities

that lie behind the appearances of this world and sets them out, with the consequences he sees, so that people may act accordingly" (p. 2). This view excludes any purely futuristic understanding of Revelation and therefore allows the Revelation to be truly Word of God also to *our* situation. (3) The full, total dimension of the Revelation, the Revelation as a whole, is kept in mind when interpreting the details. Sweet understands that the Revelation is a piece of literary art in which "the proportions of the whole are more important than the individual scenes" (p. 13). Like a painting, the detail serves to elucidate, to flesh out, major themes. (4) Revelation is structured around major themes which are essentially Old Testament themes (of course, now understood through the prism of Christ's death and resurrection): "In fact Revelation can be seen as a Christian re-reading of the whole Jewish scriptural heritage, from the stories of the Beginning to the visions of the End" (p. 40).

The "Introduction" (pp. 1-54) — which discusses questions of imagery, date, authorship, historical situation, and the like — is one of the best I have read. Sweet presents all the pertinent data and comes to sound conclusions, careful not to overstep the bounds allowed by the evidence. Typical of Sweet's approach is his discussion of date (pp. 21-27). He takes seriously arguments in favor of an early dating, c. 68 A.D. (most recently and cogently advanced by J. A. T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 1976), but determines that the traditional date (c. 95 A.D.) is more probable: "the earlier date *may* be right, but the internal evidence is not sufficient to outweigh the firm tradition stemming from Irenaeus" (p. 27). Concerning authorship, Sweet decides that certainty is impossible, although the apostle in his opinion is most probably not the author (pp. 36-38).

Commensurate with his principle that one must understand the details in light of the major themes, Sweet first introduces each section with a discussion of the "big picture," often relating it to what will come or what has gone before, and only then does he comment on the book verse by verse. In this way Sweet is successful in keeping before the mind of the reader the central focus of the book as a whole and gives the reader the sense of theological movement which is so lacking in most commentaries on the Revelation.

That focus is the new creation which arises out of the redemption wrought by the slain Lamb. Therefore — and Sweet brings this out better than any other commentator I know of — chapters 4 and 5, which speak of the monarchy of God the Creator and of the victorious Redeemer Lamb, are the proper backdrop for all that happens. The rest of the Revelation reveals what that Lordship looks like under its double aspect of salvation and judgment and what the final denouement of that Lordship will be. Sweet puts the relation between chapters 4 and 5 and the following chapters in Pauline terms: "the revelation and execution of God's righteousness (his saving action to right the wrong) in the gospel is bound up with the revelation of his wrath (the recoil of his righteousness on all who ignore it). Salvation and wrath are two sides of the same coin" (p. 123). To be outside the Lordship of the Creator is to be given over to destruction, death, chaos. Also, the victory of this Lordship is finally to be seen in a new order which is simply God (the Creator) Himself: "The frail 'tabernacle' of the incarnation (John 1:14) has been left as the one remaining reality when all else has been shaken (Heb. 12:27). The new order is simply God" (p. 296). Sweet quite nicely highlights the role such dominant Old Testament themes as Exodus, new creation, and new temple play in the Revelation's message.

The sole disappointment is the treatment of the difficult passage concerning the 1000 years (Rev. 20:1-14). Sweet rightly emphasizes the restraint of John, the insignificant role this passage plays in the whole of the Revelation (a welcome

realism given the excessive interest this passage awakens in many commentaries). However, while declaring the 1000 years to be a symbolic period, Sweet is not clear what role this 1000 year period plays in the Revelation, although he refers to it as "an interim period" (p. 287). The release of Satan after the 1000 years is said to represent "man's free will, the capacity God has given for sin" (p. 290). This almost certainly is an erroneous guess.

This commentary is commendable. It captures superbly the message of the Revelation, keeping it rooted deeply where it belongs, in the Old Testament, although Sweet is not oblivious to the parallels with ancient astrology and pagan symbolism. Sweet demonstrates that the book of the Revelation is a book worthy of study and comment, and in his able hands it has been worthily commented upon.

William C. Weinrich

**UNDERSTANDING REVELATION: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE KEY INTERPRETATIONAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL QUESTIONS WHICH SURROUND THE BOOK OF REVELATION.** By Gary G. Cohen. Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois. 187 pages. \$6.95.

"Was Christum treibet." That, according to Luther, determined Biblical interpretation, for Christ is the center, the *principium*, of Scripture; all relates to Him, to His person and to His work. No book of the New Testament so requires that this essential hermeneutical principle remain central as does the Apocalypse of St. John, and no book has so often provided occasion for this principle's total disregard. *Understanding revelation* is a typical example of the "searching after times and seasons" which arises when the Crucified One no longer is the center of the Scripture: "Once this task . . . is accomplished" (i.e. placing the events in the Revelation "in their proper dispensational time period, and in their correct chronological order of succession"), "a framework will exist upon which the interpreter can rightly position and interpret each and every verse of the Apocalypse" (p. 15). Christ has been replaced by chronology!

This book was originally doctoral dissertation at Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, Indiana, and is the Moody Press edition of an earlier Christian Beacon Press release (1968). It is predicated on the presuppositions of premillennialism and wishes to program the sequence of events (allegedly referred to in the Revelation) in the final days: visible coming of Christ, pretribulational rapture of the church, the tribulation during which God will once more deal independently with Israel as a nation, the millenium, the final end. Clear and detailed charts throughout the book aid the reader as he wends his way through the argumentation. It is too bad they do not help in "understanding Revelation."

William C. Weinrich

**THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA AND THEIR PLACE IN THE PLAN OF THE APOCALYPSE.** By William M. Ramsay. (Hodder and Stoughton, London 1904.) Reprinted by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. Paper. Pages xviii + 446. \$6.95.

Perhaps no scholar in the English-speaking world has been so persistent and persuasive in setting forth the necessity of understanding the Graeco-Roman environment for a comprehension of the New Testament and the history of the Early Church as has Sir William M. Ramsay (1851-1939). His books remain models of sagacious scholarship which are never pedantic, sometimes creative, and always illuminating. Those who have interest in New Testament and early Christian study are beholden to Baker Book House for making available once again the works of Sir William in its reprint edition, "The William M. Ramsay



Library."

The present book is one of the better known productions of Ramsay and remains a *sine qua non* for any study of the Revelation of St. John. The book does not present an exegesis of the letters to the seven churches (Revelation 2-3) but rather argues the thesis that the seven letters reflect through and through, in both form and content, their cultural, political, economic, and even physical environment. Virtually all conceivable questions arising from the seven letters are dealt with by the author. Chapters representative of the breadth of issues addressed in this book include "Writing, Travel, and Letters among the Early Christians"; "Transmission of Letters in the First Century"; "The Province of Asia and the Imperial Religion"; "The Jews of the Asiatic Cities"; "The Pagan Converts in the Early Church"; "Origin of the Seven Representative Cities". Additional chapters provide historical sketches and geographic description of each of the seven cities and detailed discussion of major imagery in the letters.

As the "Preface" indicates, the seven letters of the Apocalypse are, in the eyes of Ramsay, representative of that fusion between East and West which is of the essence of Christianity's historical importance. Underlying this overarching thesis is the typical belief of classic Protestant liberalism (so prominent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) that Christianity is a cultural leaven raising civilization to ever higher plateaus. This belief has been shattered by intervening historical events and by more recent scholarship, but the profit one may derive from reading this book is not thereby diminished. This book remains a true classic, but the serious student will wish to consult modern re-examinations such as C. J. Hemer, "The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia" (Ph.D. Dissertation; Manchester University, 1969).

William C. Weinrich

**THE DARK SIDE OF THE MILLENNIUM: THE PROBLEM OF EVIL IN REVELATION 20:1-10.** By Arthur H. Lewis. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980. Paper. 65 pages. \$4.95.

The presence of evil forces and satanic deception in the millennial kingdom depicted in Revelation 20:1-10 has given rise to some of the stranger notions of modern-day chiliasts: the future, temporal messianic kingdom, over which Christ will rule, will be a mixed bag of good and evil, of resurrected spiritual saints and tribulation embodied saints, together with those who — even in the midst of a visible, earthly rule of Christ — still refuse to believe.

Does this "mixed" view of the messianic kingdom of Christ receive any support at all from Old and New Testament statements concerning the messianic kingdom? This is the question addressed by Arthur Lewis, professor of Old Testament at Bethel College, St. Paul. The author is clearly sympathetic to the concern of modern millennialists that the literal nature of Biblical prophecy not be spiritualized away. Yet, after comparing Old and New Testament prophecies of the future messianic kingdom with Revelation 20:1-10, Lewis concludes that the glorious kingdom of Christ envisioned by the prophets cannot be the same as the millenium of Revelation 20:1-10 — nowhere in the Scriptures is it allowed that the messianic kingdom will be characterized by good *and* evil.

The view then that there will be a future, temporally delimited kingdom of Christ before the final, eternal kingdom of God is devoid of Biblical warrant. This is certainly true. But of what then does Revelation 20:1-10 speak? "Where does the millenium belong?" Labeling his own position "historical millennialism," Lewis adopts in modified form the traditional amillennial view, first clearly espoused by Augustine, that the 1000 year period is symbolic of the present age between the two comings of Christ. With the second coming of Christ the

"millenium" will cease and the true messianic, eternal kingdom will begin.

However, when Lewis attempts to provide the contours of his "historical millennialism," his argument becomes problematic and unconvincing. He does not wish to spiritualize the picture of the millenium — understood as the present age — pictured in Revelation 20:1-10: "The martyred and enthroned saints are real, the angel who binds Satan is real, Satan himself is very real, and the wicked nations in revolt against the King are real nations and part of history" (p. 50). The result is an implied adoption of the old "historical" exegesis of Revelation, which wished to correlate the images of Revelation with specific historical occurrences. This is especially clear in the treatment of the revolt of the nations: "The same nations are deceived by the devil, then not deceived for a thousand years, then deceived again. Why not consider these events as actual and historical, placing them within the world of sinful peoples of our present age?" (p. 59). And Lewis has the same difficulty as have all representatives of the "historical" approach — they find it difficult to find really good and convincing correlations. Lewis' attempt limps: the time when the nations are not deceived is a time of "relative freedom from the domination of satanically-inspired rulers and oppressive governments" (p. 60). And when has this occurred? "The world has always had areas of cruel domination by evil kings and leaders. Generally speaking, however, the freedom for men to believe and receive the gospel (since Pentecost) has been worldwide" (p. 60). Clearly, the vision has become opaque and dim.

According to Lewis, this present period of "relative freedom" will be followed by a short final period, immediately before the return of Christ, in which the nations, once more deceived by an unleashed Satan, attack the saints of Christ. How the "historical" event of the unbinding of Satan comports with the universal assertion of the New Testament that the binding of Satan in the cross of Christ (Lewis is correct in seeing the cross as the binding of Satan, p. 52) is all-sufficient and final is a question Dr. Lewis may wish to address in another book.

William C. Weinrich

## II. Systematic Studies

**I BELIEVE: A STUDY OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION AND THE APOLOGY OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION.** By Bjarne W. Teigen. Lutheran Synod Book Company, Bethany College, Mankato, Minnesota, 1980. 80 pages. Paper. \$2.00

This is the fifth and final study commissioned by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod commemorating the anniversaries of the Lutheran Confessions. Dr. Teigen's series is among the most valuable for several reasons: (1) all the confessions are covered; (2) the manual size and the arrangement of the doctrinal articles according to topics are conducive to teaching; (3) questions are provided for all chapters in the series; and (4) pictures of the major confessional figures from the sixteenth century and photographs of the historic places give the reader an idea of the original circumstances. Lutheranism should never deteriorate into an historical glorification, but a little nostalgia is appropriate for an anniversary.

In his final study, Teigen treats the Augsburg Confession and the Apology as a unit and in several cases groups several articles from both confessions into one chapter. While the article on baptism receives its own chapter, the three articles on the church, VII, VIII, and XV are merged into one chapter. The method avoids redundancy. Teigen combines a keen historical appreciation with a ready willingness to address contemporary theological issues. Thus he falls into neither insignificant historicism or theological truisms.

Concerning the current debate about the moment of the real presence in the Lord's Supper, Teigen says, "Article X makes it evident that the Body and the Blood of Christ are present before the distribution, 'that they are present in the Supper of the Lord,' . . ." (p. 49). Teigen is at his relevant best when he addresses the employer-employee mentality with which some congregations regard their pastors (pp. 62-63):

All this is a far cry from the popular conception of the minister as a sort of public relations man who has been democratically chosen by the congregation to serve as a sort of executive secretary for a loosely knit group, . . . In addition, he is expected to serve as a private psychoanalyst for those who are having some problems in adjusting satisfactorily to the stresses of modern life.

Since Teigen is as much a Luther and confessional scholar as he is a systematic and practical theologian, he is constantly addressing current situations. For example, there is no ecumenical mandate in Article VII to establish fellowship on a minimal understanding of the Gospel, as the Gospel here as total revelation is contrasted with human ceremonies (p. 39). Highlights are the chapters on Christ and justification (V and VI). Both are tied together clearly. Rarely is a clearer statement of the Gospel found (pp. 22-23):

The death of Christ was the propitiation that removed the holy wrath of God against sin. Christ as the substitutionary victim received the full weight of that righteous wrath which sinners deserved because of their sin, not only their original sin but also "all actual sins of man." Hence God forgives sinful men and forgives them righteously, that is, without condoning sin, because now the wrath of God has been appeased by the sacrifice of His Son. Through the vicarious suffering of Christ, God and the entire human race are reconciled. By raising His Son from the dead, God has pronounced absolution upon the entire race, justifying the ungodly. Our sins necessitated Christ's atoning death. But his resurrection is the gracious reconciliation and justification of the world of sinners.

A special chapter (II) discusses Luther's contribution to the Augsburg Confession. By including appropriate paragraphs from Luther's writings throughout the study, Teigen demonstrates further the Reformer's contributions. Though Melancthon's flirting with Rome and Geneva proved to be an embarrassment to Lutherans as early as the writing of the Formula (1577), Teigen does give him the honor for the Augsburg Confession and Apology which he still deserves. While Luther gave the confession its general approach, Melancthon "is the author of the first specifically Lutheran Confession. He gave it its form, dignity and irenic tone, and he succeeded in uniting the basic insights of the ancient church and the Reformation" (p. 9). He is credited with giving the Augustana "its balance of mildness and firmness together with its vigor and freshness" (p. 73). High marks are also given to the Apology (p. 10).

The courage of the laymen in presenting the Augsburg Confession (pp. 4, 5, 6, 74, 75) also receives its due. Teigen can be thanked for placing Melancthon correctly with the theologians (p. 4) and *not* the laymen. Viewing the author of the Augsburg Confession and the Apology with the laity might be good church politics, but it is bad history and theology.

The confessional anniversaries are drawing to a close, but Teigen has left the Lutheran Church in his five-study series a means for the adherents of these confessions to keep them alive in the years to come.

David P. Scaer

THE ROLE OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION. Edited by Joseph A. Burgess. Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1980. 203 pages. Cloth. \$13.95.

The year 1980 as the 450th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession (AC) was an appropriate time to ask about the possibility of Catholic-Lutheran rapprochement. Back in 1967 Peter Brunner suggested Catholic recognition of the AC as one way of bridging the gap. Eleven essayists from both communions test the theological possibilities of this suggestion. Vincenz Pfnuer and Heinz Schuette for the Catholics and Pannenberg and Harding Meyer for the Lutherans express the most enthusiasm for the idea. Pfnuer sees no reason to deny that the AC is a witness to the faith of the Catholic Church with the proviso that Luther cannot be regarded as an arbiter of the contested portions. Since the Lutheran World Federation in 1963, Schuette points out, concluded "that the Catholic doctrine of justification could, from a Lutheran standpoint, no longer be dismissed as false, unbiblical, and unevangelical" (p. 55), the major obstacle to Catholic recognition of the AC had been removed. Pannenberg urges the Lutherans to see in the AC a document lacking in full catholicity and as somewhat provincial. A return to the *quatenus* subscription is urged by Meyer, without using that technical term, when he states that the Lutheran Confessions should be viewed as historical documents subject to the Scriptures (p. 79). The Catholic writers, Walter Kasper, Avery Dulles, and Harry McSorley have less enthusiasm for recognition. Kasper knows that historically Lutherans have regarded the AC as the correct interpretation of the Scriptures and that it cannot be isolated from the other confessions, including the Smalkald Articles with its explicit condemnation of the papacy. These documents in turn were condemned by Trent.

Beneath the placid waters of the AC are the Smalkald Articles, observes Dulles, who offers this caveat, "the Catholic Church, therefore, cannot properly domesticate the AC as being, without qualification, a Catholic confession (as it understands Catholicism)" (p. 136). Dulles suggests that both communions recognize each other and overlook the confessional problem (p. 138). McSorley sees no problem in Catholic recognition, but then hedges his bets by saying that no creeds express the full confession of faith (p. 143). Each communion is not really closer to the other, but both should stay in the tunnel hoping to find the light at the end. Robert Jensen, a Lutheran, offers a solution to the historical division over justification. The problem lay in what he calls "the special hermeneutical character of the gospel as a mode of discourse" (p. 159). Since the Catholics preached the law, they concluded that salvation was by works, and the Lutherans law-and-promise theme resulted in the *sola fide* concept. Catholic recognition of the AC would mean accepting this "specific critique of all churchly discourse" (p. 163). Novel as the suggestion is, it seems little more linguistic existentialism dressed up in Lutheran terms and leaves untouched the old problem of whether justification happens *coram Deo* or *in me*. Luther's great contribution is the proclamation that justification happens before God in Christ, not simply some type of preaching activity.

Especially useful are the Catholic essays as they attempt to wrestle with the AC. The writers have put behind them the historic negativism of 450 years and have gone back to square one to listen to the Lutheran concerns. Any contemporary study of the AC cannot overlook these essays. The Lutheran contributors seem too willing to overlook the unique Lutheran confessional attitude. At the 1979 November meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, the Jewish speaker in a panel representing the three great monotheistic faiths remarked that in too many dialogues the theologians expressing the classical positions of Christianity are not asked to participate. The same type of critique is

valid here. The classical Lutheran attitude toward the confessions with its *quia* subscription is simply missing in the essays. The Catholic writers are aware of this and are slightly wary.

Catholic recognition of the AC might present an historical problem. Can any document be excised from its historical situation and be dropped down 450 years later leaving behind the original situation? Recognition of the AC would mean leaving Luther and the other confessions back in the sixteenth century. Not everyone will pay this price. Highly improbable at this writing is any meaningful Catholic recognition of the AC. McSorley is the most sober in stating that we have begun the discussion and that it should continue.

David P. Scaer

**JESUS: GOD, GHOST OR GURU?** By Jon A. Buell and O. Quentin Hyder. With a response by F. F. Bruce. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978. Paper. 135 pages.

"Let it be clearly understood that if the Gospels are historically reliable," states Bruce in the concluding epilogue, "their critical study can only confirm their reliability." He has in mind literary (documentary sources behind the Gospels), form (the oral material and *Sitz im Leben* that purportedly shaped things), and redaction criticism (the editorializing by the respective writers). But none of this changes the conclusion to which the two principle authors lead their readers that Jesus was indeed "the peer of the Most High," or, as Bruce puts it, that "the validity and personal implications of his claim still challenge us to a decision."

Perhaps the book's title is a bit misleading, specifically the "Ghost or Guru" part. Buell and Hyder have effectively shown that Jesus was not merely proposing a kind of messiahship in the Jewish sense of that term (so most recently in Schonfield's *Passover Plot*), but that He was confronting His disciples and contemporaries with the staggering truth of His full deity, as He does to this day on the basis of incontestably accurate and reliable sources in Sacred Writ. There is some very fine argumentation by the authors in behalf both of Christ's self-revelation as God incarnate and also in behalf of the written record in Holy Scripture. The average inquirer into Christianity, its Lord, and its Biblical Word, cannot help being braced and edified by the apologetics assembled in their behalf. Christianity's foes, the authors show, have approached their task with presuppositions that are as far off-target and with as disastrous results as a piano tuner who works with a faulty tuning fork for middle C. Christ did not claim to be a prophet, or a great teacher, or a holy man, among other great prophets, teachers, and holy men so-called; but He did indisputably claim to be God's Son, and His grounds and evidence for doing so are beyond cavil. As C. S. Lewis put it, "Either this man was, and is, the Son of God," or one *has* to conclude that He was "a madman or something worse." The alternatives to Christ's utter truth and veracity fall of their own total absurdity, if not to say vacuous nature. Here is a book to share with that intelligent, inquiring, avowed agnostic friend who so far has only affirmed, "almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

E. F. Klug

**PERSPECTIVES ON PENTECOST**, By Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. 127 pages. Paper.

Gaffin, chairman of the exegetical department of Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia, addresses the current challenge of "charismatic" phenomena by attempting to demonstrate that tongue-speaking and the other related gifts of 1

Corinthians, in particular, were limited to the lifetime of the apostles. The close of the canon, viewed as the near equivalent of the death of the apostles, means that the supernatural gifts are no longer needed and are thus removed. Gaffin's *Perspectives* combines popular appeal and serious exegesis. *Perspectives* evolved from a series of lectures and classroom presentations prepared between 1974 and 1978. At each of the crucial points of his argument, Gaffin addresses critics who, as he says, have responded to the earlier essays. The exegesis is pointedly directed to matters in debate. At no point does the reader flounder, questioning the direction of Gaffin's argument.

Gaffin does admit that his arguments at several points may seem to some a little contrived. It is difficult to disagree with his self-confession. Central to Gaffin's hypothesis is a near identification between the New Testament prophets and tongue-speakers (pp. 55-87). The tongue, unintelligible without the interpretation, becomes with an interpretation what he calls the functional equivalent of prophecy (1 Cor. 12, 13, 14). His exegetical conclusions about the nature of prophet and prophecy are then applied to tongue-speaking. A supposed office of New Testament prophet is defined with an amazing, though not convincing, precision. New Testament prophecy is defined as "itself the inspired, non-derivative word of God" (p.59). In another place it is defined as "the word of God in the primary, original sense" (p. 65). In regard to revelation (in the narrow sense of revealing things known to God but unknown to men), the New Testament prophets are placed on the same level as the apostles. Pauline references, especially in Ephesians, to prophets are understood as New Testament, not Old Testament figures. It would logically follow that something written by one of these "New Testament prophets" quite independently of an apostle would have the same validity as an apostolic writing. True to his argument, Gaffin sees a place for the Book of Revelation in the canon, not because of an apostolic, but because of a "prophetic" origin (pp. 68-70). The immediate divine appointment of Gaffin's "New Testament prophets" and their function of speaking *directly* for God grants them a type of immunity from apostolic supervision. This conclusion follows from the thesis that the office of the Old Testament prophet continues in the New Testament office or function which bears the same name.

Against this opinion it must be said plainly that John the Baptist is and *remains* the last prophet of the Old Testament variety and that the successors of the Old Testament prophets are not the New Testament prophets but the apostles (who are not called prophets). Secondly, if God inspires directly with authoritative words the New Testament prophets, of what real use are the apostles. They have become superfluous. If apostles and New Testament prophets are both norms in the early church, there are at least two problems: (1) two independent norms exist side by side; (2) Paul, an apostle, has no ultimate authority over the New Testament prophets. But he does! Though at first glance the idea of New Testament prophets speaking immediately for a "sovereign God" might seem unusually attractive to conservative Christians committed to the Bible as the inspired word of God, the concept itself is pure *Schwaemerei* (fanaticism)! More importantly, Christ gave us no promise about this office of New Testament prophet as being revelatory, and He commanded us to listen only to the apostles. The church knows the New Testament as the apostolic, not as the prophetic, writings.

After the New Testament prophets are presented as revelatory agents on a par with the apostles, they are pictured as being a species of the same genus as the tongue-speakers. Gaffin sees Paul's handling of prophesying and tongue-speaking together in 1 Corinthians as support for this view. However, is not our author

completely overlooking the fact that Paul calls for an increase of prophesying and the virtual extinction of tongue-speaking? Paul wants less tongue-speaking, even when interpreters are available. Almost inexcusable is his citation of Acts 19:6, "they were speaking in tongues and prophesying" (p. 82), to demonstrate that *both* phenomena existed side by side. This is an exegetical "and". As they spoke in a foreign language, they also glorified God. It does not mean that first they spoke in some kind of tongue and then they glorified God.

But why did the early church need these direct-pipeline prophets and tongue-speakers? Gaffin's answer is that the lack of a complete canon necessitated them: "We must ask ourselves whether we grasp our profound advantage in the access granted us to God's completed statement of His Word," (p. 100). Ridiculous! Does Gaffin really believe that the Thessalonians' knowledge of Christianity was limited to the epistles which Paul addressed to them? Would they know, for example, nothing of Baptism and the Lord's Supper unless it came through one of the "prophets"? First of all, the apostle orally instructed them in *all* Christian truth. The presence of one living apostle would be worth more than a copy of the completed canon. After all, the canon's authority comes from and through the apostle(s). Secondly, it overlooks the role played by oral tradition. For several generations the apostolic truth existed in oral form. No immediately appointed prophets were needed to supervise it.

In the course of reading this book I had to wince at a number of unacceptable exegetical and dogmatic conclusions. There is, for one thing, the identification of Christ with the Spirit (p. 20). This position is only a logical corollary of the Reformed insistence that the human nature of Christ is confined somewhere up there. Christ's divine nature and the Spirit are merged. Such a concept resembles modalism. The discussion of whether the Spirit was given before Pentecost (John 20) or on Pentecost (Acts 2) could have been more easily resolved by looking at the former as a reference to the induction of the apostles as pastors of Christ's church and the latter as the inauguration of the spread of the Gospel (pp. 39-41). Since the word "interpret" is used in I Corinthians, Gaffin concludes that known, intelligible tongues were used in that congregation as they were in Acts. Unanswered by Gaffin is the question of why in Acts no interpretation is ever needed. Might not the wiser answer be that in Acts and in Corinthians we are dealing with two different phenomena? Isaiah 28:11, cited in I Corinthians, is seen not as condemnation of the Jews in the time of Isaiah but as a direct prophecy of the Jewish obstinacy during the days of the Messiah. But this would mean that the Corinthian congregation had to be chiefly Jewish, though the evidence clearly points to its being Gentile. Gaffin again adjusts the evidence to fit his conclusions. But if Gaffin were right, then the greatest manifestation of tongues should have happened in the Palestinian congregations just before Jerusalem's destruction. Unintelligible tongue-speaking is, contrary to Gaffin, clearly related to Gentile problems and is best explained as a practice taken over from paganism. Gaffin's logic is consistent, but the exegesis which serves as the basis of his argumentation simply does not test out against the raw New Testament data.

Gaffin concludes that the current Charismatic Movement has nothing in common with anything happening in the New Testament. This conclusion means that the New Testament provides us with no principles for handling the current problem. Gaffin does not want to brand contemporary charismatic phenomena as Satanic. He sees the current tongue-speaking as "non-conceptual verbalization," i.e., noise without meaning. He proposes that we explore "the compatibility of non-conceptual verbalization in church worship." St. Paul already explored it in I Corinthians 12-14 and found it unacceptable. In the end

Gaffin encourages what Paul successfully discouraged. The conceptual verbalization of Acts must be distinguished from the non-conceptual verbalization of I Corinthians. And the most effective way of handling the non-conceptual verbalization of modern charismatics is the method outlined by Paul in I Corinthians 14 in opposition to the charismatics of his day. Any other way will be less than apostolic and perhaps anti-apostolic.

David P. Scaer

#### CHILDREN OF PROMISE: THE CASE FOR BAPTIZING INFANTS.

By Geoffrey W. Bromiley. William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. Paper. 116 pages. \$3.95.

Bromiley, who made "Kittel" available for the English-speaking world, offers a case for the salvation of infants which should evoke a major response from the Reformed community. No new ground is ploughed by seeing infant baptism within the boundaries of covenant theology, but his arguments for the salvation of infants will attract attention. He argues thus: Children along with all people are condemned because of original sin and are also included in Christ's work of salvation. Participation in this work demands and requires faith. Any insistence on the innocence of children is Pelagian. Such an approach is not unfamiliar to Lutherans and will be welcomed by them as only they have consistently held to the doctrine of infant faith.

Bromiley cannot, however, untie himself from his Reformed moorings in spite of his eloquent presentation of infant faith and salvation. Baptism is still the sign and symbol of God's working rather than the actual working itself. The covenant is seen in terms of an agreement that God makes with families. This kind of blood-line thinking is responsible for the intolerable support that fundamentalists give for the modern state of Israel. Infant faith must come to fuller expression by a conscious decision, says Bromiley.

While infant baptism, faith, and salvation are eloquently defended, Christian parents who do not bring their children for baptism are to be tolerated in the church. Not recognized is the strong connection between baptism and the pericopes of Jesus and the children. The basic presuppositions of Reformed theology are as real and as objectionable as ever, but Bromiley puts forth the point clearly that salvation even for infants is impossible without faith.

Even though Bromiley cannot really tear himself away from Calvin, I hope that he has started a debate. The Baptists, which must number about 20 million in America, should be confronted with the two alternatives that their denial of infant baptism leaves them — infant damnation or Pelagianism.

David P. Scaer

DOING THEOLOGY IN NEW PLACES. Edited by Jean-Pierre Jossua and Johann Baptist Metz. CONCILIUM: RELIGION IN THE SEVENTIES. Seabury Press, New York, 1979. 114 pages. Paper. \$4.95.

*Concilium* is an endeavor to publish ten volumes annually exploring trends in the sociology of religion, liturgy, dogma, practical theology, canon law, etc. Though some Protestants are listed among the editors, the direction of the essays and the intended audience are clearly Roman Catholic. The theological approach is definitely *avant garde*. Some of the essays in the present volume discuss the process and possibility of doing theology in a modern setting. Elizabeth Schuessler Fiorenza, professor of New Testament at Notre Dame (USA) since 1970, argues that women will not have a secure place in a church leadership role until we "learn to speak of God as Father and Mother, as Son and Daughter, as she and he" (p. 29). Francois Bussini offers a hybrid ecumenism in



suggesting a communion between denominations supervised by the Church of Rome and its bishop (p. 42). Bas van Iersel kills historical-critical exegesis with faint praise and offers a method identified as structuralism and linguistic analysis which concerns itself with the organization of the text rather than with concentrating on questions of the development of the text into its present form. Alfredo Bardaji encapsulates the general tenor of most of the essays by asserting that tomorrow's successful theologian will have to break with what has been traditionally recognized as theology. *Concilium*, a name probably chosen to commemorate the spirit of Vatican II, is innovative, if not downright radical, but is still a real delight. With Roman Catholic Church authorities censuring the leading pioneers in the new movement, the theology of tomorrow could very well be the theology of yesterday. None of the writers seem faintly aware of any blockade in the future of theology.

David P. Scaer

THE NEW LIFE: READINGS IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY. Edited by Millard J. Erickson. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. Paper. 524 pages. \$10.95.

The list of authors in this basic reader in areas dealing with the sinner's regeneration and renewal, the doctrine of the church and the sacraments, and finally eschatological themes, is impressive. Readings from Luther, Wesley, Ritschl, Shedd, Pieper (Franz), Bavinck, Berkouwer, Berkhof, Carnell, Bultmann, and the like, for a total of 38 significant theological writers, is bound to make for substantive, meaty stuff. The authors are allowed to speak in their own terms — thus, for example, Luther on Galatians 3:13, Franz Pieper on the means of grace, Wesley on perfectionism, Bultmann on mythological eschatology, the various kinds of millennialists on the various kinds of millennialism, etc.

The resulting *mixtum compositum* is not for the average student. Unless he is well acquainted with the formal and material principles operating in Romanist, Lutheran, Reformed, and Arminian theologies, he is destined to get lost. If he is well acquainted, he will often miss key elements or theological nuances that fail to get their due. Thus, while Calvinist and Arminian viewpoints on sanctification are given, the Lutheran is missing, or simply assumed as being identical with one of the others. The power of the means of grace, as the Holy Spirit through them restores forgiveness and works faith, is simply not there. The same thing happens in the treatment of the important subject of perseverance in the faith; Arminian and Calvinist positions are described, but the Lutheran is lacking. The same is true in the handling of divine election and a number of other key doctrines.

Discounting this built-in weakness (perhaps somewhat unavoidable in a compendium like this), the selected readings are very often well chosen, allowing the reader to see for himself firsthand the thinking of a given theology through the mouth or pen of one of its leading spokesmen. Thus church polity is described in its representative forms, episcopal, presbyterial, congregationalist, hierarchical — with the Lutheran viewpoint again lacking, however. Some of the shorter essays are especially attractive — for example, Carl F. Henry's on the perils of independence and the perils of ecumenicity, reprints of articles that appeared in *Christianity Today*. This volume is the third and last in the series. The first volume treated *The Living God*; the second, *Man's Need and God's Gift*.

E. F. Klug

**CHRIST CAN MAKE YOU FULLY HUMAN.** By Kenneth Cain Kinghorn. Abingdon, Nashville, Tennessee, 1979. Paper. 110 pages. \$3.95.

"The main thesis of this book affirms that God wants us to become fully human," is the author's opener. It is the Barthian notion that only in Christ does the individual finally attain to full humanity. That includes the Scripturally impossible idea that man is not fully human because of his present sinful state, that Christ alone is the epitome of the fully human, and that He "showed us what it means to be truly man."

Kinghorn is sharply critical of humanism's elevation of man and failure to recognize the broken relationship with God, but he is equally severe with orthodoxy for its emphasis on total depravity. He will not grant that the fall into sin affected man so deeply as to make him totally incapable of spiritual response on his own. That doctrine he labels "extreme pessimism" as regards human nature. The image of God may have been sullied, but in no way lost, according to his Wesleyan way of thinking. Barthian theology fits well into the modified, relative perfectionism of that school, which combined free grace with man's free will, and good works with faith, as the ground of man's salvation. In that kind of thinking, sanctification is hitched to justification, not only for a man to become fully human, but to be saved. Kinghorn is critical of Luther and the Lutheran Confessions for dwelling "so excessively on the deep sinfulness of human nature that they neglect a truly biblical emphasis on God's transforming grace." Obviously he knows very little of Luther and of the Confessions. And when he finds Luther saying something about our sinning even in our best works, Kinghorn is thoroughly distressed even though Luther bases his case on very sound Scriptural grounds.

Some very good things are stated about Christians becoming overly identified with, or overly withdrawn from, the world; also about Christian colleges and universities failing to deliver "both a superior academic education and sound grounding in the essentials of biblical Christianity." Such concerns are by no means of small moment in our day. But why a theologian and a publisher committed to perfectionist theology would run against Webster's grain and insist on spelling the word "perfectibility" as "perfectability" over and over, is a mystery.

E. F. Klug

**BETWEEN GOD AND MAN.** By Charles J. Fitti. Philosophical Library, New York, 1978. 49 pages. Cloth. \$6.95.

This book is composed of two essays written by a physicist in the area of philosophical theology. The orientation of the first essay falls within the boundaries of Roman Catholic pastoral moral theology. The author is quite clear in establishing his arguments in the light of the natural law. All acquainted with Roman Catholic moral theology know that the basic thrust of its argumentation is found in the light of reason provided to us as we work through the nature of things. This is a basically Thomistic approach that persists in Roman Catholic theology today in spite of the more recent so-called biblical (i.e., historical) thrust since Vatican II. (Cf., for instance, *Gaudium et Spec.*) It is **strange, however, that a layman, given the nature of the Roman Catholic church, should write an essay in which he clearly places his argumentation over the teaching office of the church and, in particular, over the office of the "chief bishop," i.e., the Pope (pp. 28-29).**

Fitti's arguments, however, call for a "universal norm" given in a natural law. For this universal norm the "chief bishop" bears responsibility. However, within that norm there is a certain degree of randomness in which there is still part of the

universal structure of things. To this concept the author appeals through arguments connected with science. In this way he is trying to provide for an individuality that, although it might seem to be outside the boundaries of a natural norm, actually falls with the range of possibilities. Hence, he can uphold the teaching office and at the same time provide for a situational ethic within natural law.

The second essay deals with the relationship of science to theology. Fitti upholds God as primary cause, but a God that is sustaining the universe through His presence. We as secondary causes are, in essence, guided and sustained by God. God, however, does not control, but coincides in His creative freedom with individual men (p. 36). Fitti's approach essentially places science in the same framework as theology. Science depends on the creative freedom of God. At the same time it depends on our creative freedom. Scientific laws are always in freedom open to the possibilities of God. These possibilities, then, are open to us as God reveals His Spirit in creation. In essence, discovery is "a pentecostal event" (p. 41).

Fitti's essay, although immersed in evolutionary thought and a concept of God that is pantheistic, makes some observations that bring to mind basic conservative principles of theology in relationship to science. First of all, when we talk about the possibility of miracles, let us remember that, according to the biblical view of God, God is always a sustaining presence. Thus, the world is open to miracles without any difficulty. The Resurrection, also, can be viewed scientifically as something possible, for natural law is not something fixed once and for all time. To be truly scientific is to be open to new possibilities. Science cannot say with certainty that "the dead cannot rise." What is more interesting is that it is quite impossible to theorize in a scientific setting unless there be a controlling principle in the "novelty" (namely God). Theology is most definitely related to science, in spite of frequent assertions to the contrary. It is refreshing to see a nuclear physicist of the quality of Fitti pointing out such a relationship.

Albert L. Garcia

**EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE.** By Richard L. Pratt, Jr. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1979. 142 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

Attempts to popularize the profound, provocative, philosophical, and distinctly Reformed apologetics of Dr. Cornelius Van Til of Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia continue to roll off the presses. We think of such recent titles as *Cornelius Van Til and the Theologian's Theological Stance* by Douglas Vickers (Cross Publishing Company of Wilmington, n.d.), *Van Til: The Theologian* by John Frame (Pilgrim, 1976), *For A Time Such As This* by Jim S. Halsey (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1976), *Van Til - Defender of the Faith* by William White (Thomas Nelson, 1979), as well as the older work by Rousas J. Rushdoony, *By What Standard?* (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1959).

To these is now added *Every Thought Captive* by Richard L. Pratt, Jr., a book which bears the subtitle, *A Study Manual for the Defense of Christian Truth*. According to the foreword by John Frame, we have here a volume which presents Van Til in genuinely popular language in the form of a training manual for — of all people — high school students (pp. vii, viii).

The fourteen chapters of *Every Thought Captive* can be readily divided into four main heads. Chapters 1 through 5 present, in capsule form, the Biblical-theological foundations of Van Til's thought. Chapters 6 and 7 develop this apologetic in terms of an absolute distinction between non-Christian philosophy

and Christian philosophy. Here one is reminded of Abraham Kuyper's distinction between two kinds of people and two kinds of science (see his *Principles of Sacred Theology*, Eerdmans, 1963, pp. 150-175). Chapter 10, "Structure of a Biblical Defense," presents the sum and substance of the apologetic methodology of the book. A sampling of this methodology is as follows (p. 94)

The unbeliever cannot have any certainty about his view of God and His revelation because he has not known and *cannot* know exhaustively all of creation, much less God Himself. His ignorance forces him to be totally uncertain. The non-Christian, however, cannot be uncertain either, for to be uncertain is to be *certainly uncertain*, and the unbeliever cannot have such certainty. Most non-Christians can be shown the reality of this dilemma by pointing out their ignorance in religious matters. They cannot speak consistently about God or His revelation.

One cannot but admire the training which some Reformed teenagers are evidently receiving. The final four chapters are illustrative of chapter 10 and tend to be somewhat mechanical and, to this reviewer, a trifle tedious.

The main value of a book such as *Every Thought Captive* for Lutherans is that it offers us one more attempt at understanding the apologetic implications of the Van Til approach. The challenge that Van Til presents to Lutherans is twofold: first to understand him and second to subject his work to a thorough critique from a distinctively Lutheran theological point of view. J. W. Montgomery has, on occasion, risen to meet the second challenge. See his "Once Upon an A Priori" in *Jerusalem and Athens — Critical Discussions on the Theology and Apologetics of Cornelius Van Til*, Presbyterian and Reformed, 1971, pages 380-391. I am not sure that he has really mastered the first.

R. E. Muller

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE THEOLOGY OF KARL BARTH. By Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. Paper. 253 pages. \$7.95.

Who could be better qualified to write a one-volume summary of Barth's thinking and theology than the man who has done the yeoman task of translating Barth's twelve volumes of *Church Dogmatics* from German into English, and who, by his own admission, has had "a lifelong encounter with Barth" through classroom teaching? The facts are that few will have the time or inclination to plow through Barth's wordy, often complicated, sometimes confusing definitions and discussions. Bromiley's strong point is that he not only knows the subject through his minute attention to the text and meaning, but that he can unravel what is complicated through helpful distillations, constantly citing chapter and verse, as it were, so that the reader may, if he wishes, check the subject out in Barth's own original.

There is probably no reason to fault Bromiley for being sympathetic to Barth's thinking on most points. What else could one expect from one who has devoted so much time and effort to Barth's theology? Thus he presents Barth's position on the Word and Scripture in a fully sympathetic manner; but many doubts naturally remain in the minds of those who take the inspiration of Scripture seriously (according to the obvious meaning of the Scriptures themselves) when Barth is able to say both "Yes" and "No" to the teaching. Barth may be shown to be critical of liberal theology because of its attitude toward the text, but in the final analysis one may rightly wonder whether his position was any better. For the Scriptures remain for him no more, in the end, than a human witness to the Word, as Bromiley also admits. No wonder, then, that the contentions of conservative theology concerning Scripture's inspiration and inerrancy seem like "interminable squabbles" to Bromiley, as well as to Barth (p. 44).

When Bromiley is critical of Barth's position he never lets it disturb his objective presentation of Barth's position. So, for example, he apparently disagrees with Barth's view that all people are elect in Christ, but nonetheless articulates Barth's position fairly. He also shows how Barth intertwines redemption with creation, how universalism seems implicit to Barth's way of presenting objective reconciliation, how Barth will at times turn a blind eye to Scriptural evidence which does not suit his purposes, now "infant baptism [becomes] and erratic block that does not belong to authentic baptismal teaching and practice" (p. 242), etc.

There are evident good reasons for considering this analysis to be a fair and very useful tool in getting to know Karl Barth's theology, whether this be in the classroom or in the privacy of one's own study.

E. F. Klug

**THE PHILOSOPHY OF REVELATION.** By Herman Bavinck. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. Paper. 349 pages. \$7.95.

One would have to cast far to come up with a more incisive, intellectually satisfying, philosophically knowledgeable, and Biblically oriented treatment of the subject of revelation. Though the book is old and a reprint of a 1909 edition, it is still a classic. Bavinck taught theology at the Free University of Amsterdam for most of his life, and stood between the redoubtable Abraham Kuyper and present-day G. C. Berkouwer at that institution. Some of these chapters were delivered as lectures at Princeton in the early part of the twentieth century, at a time when that seminary was trying to fight off the inroads of liberalism.

"With the reality of revelation, Christianity stands or falls," is Bavinck's platform; he contends, moreover, that "belief in such a special revelation is the starting-point and the foundation-stone of Christian theology" and "knowledge of God rests on his revelation" (pp. 20-24). Having stated these thetical truths the author proceeds to show the philosophical, religious, historical, and cultural connecting-points to the epistemological question of how man knows what he knows concerning theology, or talk concerning God. "God, the world, and man are the three realities with which all science and all philosophy occupy themselves" (p. 83); and Bavinck is able to lead the reader through the labyrinth of thought-systems that have engaged in this pursuit. Early on he points out the difference between two giant Reformation figures, Luther and Erasmus. The latter, Bavinck notes, moved away from Pauline theology to a kind of Sermon on the Mount theology and thus became internalizing religion rather than directing the sinner outside of himself to Christ, as Luther did, following the Apostle's lead. Bavinck has put his finger on a key element in Luther's thinking with this distinction between the two sixteenth century giants and is thus able to show that without Luther's kind of Christ-centeredness not only theology but all of history loses its bearings, "its heart, its kernel, its centre," and "becomes a chaos, without a centre, and therefore without a circumference" (p. 141). In fact, it is at this point that Christianity differs from all natural religions: "Without revelation religion sinks back into a pernicious superstition" (p. 169), and becomes the catalyst for all manner of cultic forms. Bavinck recognizes, of course, the reality of both general and special revelation; also that there is a certain amount of inter-action, or inter-dependence, between the two, that "general revelation leads to special, special revelation points back to general," that "the one calls for the other, and without it remains imperfect and unintelligible," that "together they proclaim the manifold wisdom which God has displayed in creation and redemption" (p. 28). One may not wish to accept every

implication here, but Bavinck is much closer to the truth of things on this matter of revelation than, for example, Karl Barth; and it is good to be able to read that "for this purpose God has deposited the truth in nature and Scripture, that we might have it, and by knowing it might rule through it" (p. 82). Perhaps the main flaw in Bavinck's theology in this otherwise significant text is the absence of a proper emphasis upon the means of grace in the whole matter of special revelation. But this lack points to the major gulf between a Lutheran and a Reformed approach.

E. F. Klug

### III. Historical Studies

DER REICHSTAG ZU AUGSBURG UND DIE CONFUTATIO. By Herbert Immenkoetter. Aschendorff, Muenster, 1979. Paper. 110 pages.

There is a particular timeliness for the appearance of this scholarly monograph. It tells the story of the Augsburg Diet and the presentation of the Augsburg Confession by the Lutheran party in 1530. In its second part Immenkoetter, a Catholic scholar, includes also the *Confutatio* with critical apparatus. This is based on the August 3, 1530, copy as it was read at the Diet. Thus there is available here, albeit in German, the most reliable version of that famous response to the Lutherans' historic Confession, which then in turn triggered Melancthon's notable Apology to the Augsburg Confession of 1531. The availability of an authoritative text of the *Confutatio* alone makes this monograph valuable to scholars on both sides of the Reformation confrontation. Undoubtedly it merits translation into English.

Immenkoetter's introduction is likewise a good, succinct, generally very objective presentation. He tells the story of the several recensions through which the Catholic efforts went in trying to reply to the strong, evangelical, appealing statement of the Lutheran princes and theologians. There was evident shame on the imperial, Romanist side for the feeble responses that were successively offered. Charles V wanted a substantial, convincing reply, and it was not coming forth in spite of feverish efforts and commotion by the Catholic theologians. Finally, the August 3 version was completed. In arriving at this finished answer there were numerous interchanges and dialogues between the two parties, and Immenkoetter observes, no doubt correctly for the most part, that never again, before or after, were the divided parties closer together or nearer to a resolution of the religious differences. He quotes Luther's comment in that regard from his *Table Talk* (WA TR 4, 495); but it is unlikely that Luther was by that date very optimistic, as his letters at that time and other sources indicate. There was no official publication of the *Confutatio* that followed its public hearing; thus Melancthon and the Lutheran party had to employ their own ingenuity and notes in formulating the response of the Apology by April 15, 1531. This makes the appearance of this critical version by Immenkoetter, from the Roman Catholic side, all the more valuable. It does not change the pertinence, or the accuracy, of Melancthon's response, however.

E. F. Klug

A HALF CENTURY OF THEOLOGY. Movements and Motives. By G. C. Berkouwer. Translated and edited by Lewis B. Smedes. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1979. Paper. 268 pages. \$6.95.

The place of Dr. Berkouwer, now retired after many years of teaching at the Free University of Amsterdam, has a secure place in this century's parade of

notable theologians. With more than twenty volumes on systematic theology to his credit the venerable dean of Reformed dogmaticians has left his mark. As a result, one can only be grateful for this summary of fifty years of theology since the 1920's. Included in this "hit parade" are the big names in theology, the four "B's" (Barth, Bultmann, Brunner, Bonhoeffer) and a host of others. The book, however, is not child's play, nor a simplistic rehearsal of theological clichés. Berkouwer is too astute and keen a theological thinker for that. However, it may be said in partial criticism that there also is a certain amount of parochialism in the attention given to Dutch theologians whose names (and often whose thoughts) will mean very little to readers beyond the Rhine, the Maas, or the Atlantic.

A consuming objective for Berkouwer is "the question of the truth and credibility of the Christian faith in our modern world" (p. 23). This leitmotif runs through the book. Does Christian faith retreat into its own sheltered enclave or does it strike back boldly in the world of Christ's sake? Berkouwer, of course, opts for the latter and seeks to demonstrate the urgency of this task. Karl Barth, for whom as the years went by Berkouwer gained greater admiration and respect (admitting to me that during the years through personal contact he changed his mind concerning Barth), receives more attention, perhaps deservedly so, than any other twentieth century theologian. It is plain that Berkouwer agrees with Barth's criticism of the various "forms of anthropocentric theology, in which not God, but man was the focus" (p. 47), so typical of liberalism. Barth *wanted* to make God the center of his own theologizing, *but* a critical analysis of his work leaves many wondering whether that is so and whether in final assay Barth had not also actually made man the center — witness Barth's own pretension of sounding the "prophetic" voice *himself*! He remained more indebted to Kantian-Schleiermachiian thinking than he admitted. Berkouwer, however, is at his best when he demonstrates how some of those who leaned on Barth, like J.A.T. Robinson (of *Honest to God* fame), came off as "flatfooted" theologians (p. 65). "Robinson's book," said Barth in disgust, "reminded him of a man sipping the foam from three full glasses of beer, with the etched-on initials R.B., R.T., and D.B. respectively, and then claiming to have discovered the theological miracle drink" (*Ibid.*). Somewhat inexplicable is Berkouwer's apparent support for Barth's criticism of Luther for handling faith's power against evil in "lusterless fashion" (p. 68).

For Berkouwer, theology's challenge today zeroes in on these four points: (1) the problem of authority, specifically and especially Scripture's authority; (2) the possibility of dialogue between faith and reason, and the question whether faith is merely an irrational phenomenon in this world; (3) the centrality of eschatological concern for a theology that addresses the life and work issues which the ecumenical movement has singled out in a world filled with poverty and injustice; and (4) the central questions concerning the Christian faith itself, Christ's deity and His atoning, reconciling sacrifice, or the meaning of theology of the cross. Berkouwer undoubtedly has his finger on the neuralgic points. His answers may cause more stir in some instances than comfort. Thus, on the first point, critical of orthodoxy, including Luther and Lutheran orthodoxy because of their theological "positivism," Berkouwer opts for a relativized, functional view of Scripture's authoritative, inspired, inerrant nature.

Showing the tension that has always existed as faith meets reason, Berkouwer states the case for faith's dependence upon revelation in a more traditional and satisfying manner: "If we are to speak of a ground for believing, our only recourse is divine revelation" (p. 147). He also indicates his preference for Luther's stand against that "whore reason," because Luther depended not on an

irrational commitment (like Tertullian with the "absurd") but completely upon the *theologia crucis*. Critically reviewing writers like Tillich, Pannenberg, Moltmann, and others, Berkouwer argues with considerable success that theology has no need to "commit intellectual suicide." His chapter on the passionate concern which Christian faith, theology, and the church must retain in behalf of the sick body of mankind traverses the movements, trends, and thinkers of our day — with some notable gaps, especially on the side of liberation theology.

The final chapter, "Concern for the Faith," is somewhat disappointing. This is not due to any failure to record the movements and the men that have played leading roles in theology's movement in various directions in recent years. Most of these are spoken to and about. But the chief criticism must arise from Berkouwer's charge against orthodoxy for supposedly being Docetic in its thinking concerning the divine nature of Christ and the divine side of Scripture's nature. When liberalism under higher-critical presuppositions has so radically undercut Christ's deity and Scripture's divine inspiration, Christian theology would be remiss indeed if it did not meet this assault head on, even at the risk of being unjustly dubbed Docetic. Berkouwer seems overly committed to what is termed scientific theology, too ready to accept Lessing's critical stance over against truth as absolute. "If God held all truth in his right hand" Lessing stated, "and in his left the everlasting striving after truth, so that I should always and everlastingly be mistaken, and said to me, 'Choose,' with humility I would pick the left hand and say, 'Father, grant me that. Absolute truth is for thee alone'" (p. 263). Luther would never have acceded to such feigned humility, in view of God's revelation of Himself and His gracious purposes to man. When Erasmus chose skepticism and relativizing over Holy Scripture's assertions of God's unchanging and changeless truths, the great Reformer commented: "Take away assertions, and you take away Christianity!"

E. F. Klug

ENCHIRIDION OF COMMONPLACES. Against Luther and Other Enemies of the Church. By John Eck. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. Paper. 312 pages. \$9.95.

With the 450th anniversary years of Augsburg and the Apology with us there is a peculiar significance to this work. Eck was also a primary author, after all, of the *Confutatio*, which was Rome's response to the Augsburg Confession and which prompted Melancthon's Apology of the Augsburg Confession in 1531. Here we have Eck's most notable work in an English translation for the first time. Originally begun by Eck in 1525 the *Enchiridion* went through 91 editions by the year 1600. The present translation is based chiefly on the 1529 edition, with collations from the 1532 edition and compared with the 1572 edition. Thus, while the author terms his work "provisional in nature," it is most useful in making another of the important sixteenth century documents more accessible to the English-speaking world. It represents Eck at his definitive, dogmatic best. His work was "ostensibly directed against the *Loci Communes* of Philip Melancthon, although Luther is, of course, his prime target," the translator reminds his readers. Substantively there is much here that will appear again in the *Confutatio*. Therefore, the translator is, no doubt, correct in claiming that "a study of Eck's argumentation in relation to his opponents will open up for the student the whole Protestant-Roman Catholic dialogue from its inception in 1517 to the period immediately preceding the Council of Trent." He minces no words in pegging the blame on Luther who "with perverse will" set himself against the authority of the whole church. The first locus or chapter is on the



church and its authority, and Eck very plainly asserts that the Roman church's authority is primary, even when compared with Holy Scripture; moreover, "Scripture would not be authentic without the Church's authority" (p. 13). He rejects the teaching that the *una sancta* is properly to be thought of as hidden, and he simply identifies it with the Romanist structure: "The church is her prelates and leaders gathered together." Hence its supreme authority! In his second chapter Eck repudiates the notion that lawfully assembled councils can err; also the Protestant notion that the laity may judge in matters of doctrine. The primacy of the Petrine See is defended in the third chapter with Eck's customary eloquence, but with the usual loopholes remaining unfilled and unsatisfied. Because he lumps Lutherans together with the heretics who rashly introduced their own notions into theology, Eck justifies the conclusion that "it is necessary for there to be another judge than Scripture, namely, the Church" (p. 48). In all there are thirty-eight topics or chapters ranging over the articles of dogma in the Roman church.

There can be little doubt that this volume constitutes a valued addition to Reformation studies as a counterfoil to the challenge which the Romanists were facing in Luther and the other voices that were crying for reform. Although the book is apparently produced by off-set print from a typewritten manuscript, it is very well done, easily readable.

E. F. Klug

A COMPANION TO THE STUDY OF ST. AUGUSTINE. Edited by Roy W. Battenhouse. Reprinted by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Paper. xiii + 425 pages. \$7.95

Baker Book House is doing a real service in making available once again books of merit which have earlier gone out of print. Good books, like good wine, stand the test of time, and Baker Book House has shown considerable foresight (and no doubt good marketing sense) by recognizing the enduring quality of truly worthwhile books. The present book was first published by Oxford University Press in 1955, the 1600th anniversary of St. Augustine's birthday, and had as its central theme "the continuing vitality of Augustinian wisdom" (p. vi). Concerning Augustine the "Preface" went on to say: "Augustine's appeal has never been more pertinent, probably, than today. Our own twentieth-century tensions, bred of a secularized society in torment, find a close parallel in his fourth-century Mediterranean world. Augustine was then the interpreter of such tensions, the analyst at a profound level of the spiritual deficiencies and cultural decay which characterized Roman life and indirectly were disturbing the Christian community. By his personal involvements in the situation, along with an acute vision of its deeper meanings, he made of the crisis an exercise of transition of new foundations" (p. v). That was written in 1955, twenty-five years ago, a time now regarded with nostalgic reminiscence as "the good old days." Today the tensions are greater, society more secularized, even paganized, the Christian community not indirectly but directly confronted. The times, if anything, are worse, but for that reason the "Augustinian wisdom" shines the more clearly.

As the title indicates, this book was offered as a guide and introduction to the works and thought of St. Augustine. It is divided into three sections: (1) "Introduction," which presents broad, comprehensive essays indicating the richness of Augustine's life and work and his continuing significance; (2) "A Critical Guide to the Major Works," which gives a systematic exposition of the contents of Augustine's chief works (e.g., anti-Manichean, anti-Donatist, anti-Pelagian writings, *On the Trinity*, *City of God*); (3) "Special Aspects of St.

Augustine's Thought," which consists of interpretive essays on faith and reason, creation, the person and work of Christ, ethics, and the devotional life. The essays are of consistently high quality and accomplish admirably their intended purpose — to guide and to introduce the reader to the study of St. Augustine. Like a good wine, this book is highly recommended.

William C. Weinrich

**THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.** By E. H. Klotsche. With additional chapters by J. T. Mueller and David P. Scaer. Revised edition. (First published, 1945.) Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. 387 pages. Paper. \$6.95.

Most of our readers are familiar with Klotsche's handy, one-volume historical survey of Christian doctrine. It has served as a standard text in many seminaries and colleges — and for good reason, simply because it is a reliable, objective, compact presentation for the most part. At the time of its first appearance Dr. J. T. Mueller had supplied a necessary concluding chapter on "The Christian Doctrine in Its Modern Setting." Klotsche himself had been unable to complete the work because of his sudden death in 1937. Now the thirty-seven page addition to the text by my colleague David P. Scaer, "Theological Developments Since World War II," has successfully brought the survey up-to-date. In many ways this section by itself makes the book worthwhile for the reader who is looking for a capsule treatment of the theologians and the theological trends during the last forty years. The theologies and their chief proponents are all present: neoorthodoxy (Barth, Bultmann, Brunner, Tillich); secular theology (Robinson, Altizer, Cox, Fletcher); theology of hope (Bloch, Moltmann); theology of history (Pannenberg); liberation theology (here the leading names, like Garaudy and Gutierrez, are missing); ecumenical theology; etc. Prof. Scaer also includes a short vignette of the survival of confessional theology in the Lutheran church as a result of the inner struggle within the Missouri Synod for Biblical and confessional integrity during the late sixties and seventies. There is even a short evaluation of the Bible versions which in recent years have crowded each other for attention. Dr. Scaer closes with a pertinent reminder: "The effectiveness of conservative biblical theology will depend largely on how the challenge posed in contemporary questions is met." Here and there the proof-reading leaves something to be desired, as dropped letters and transposed or missing sentences creep into the text. In one instance (in the original version) the sense of a given sentence and teaching is completely reversed through the dropping of a "not": "The redemptory functions and actions which belong to the whole person are predicated only of one or the other nature" (p. 215). The sentence should read that "they are *not* predicated only of one or the other nature" but of the entire person of the God-man, in whom both natures are conjoined and who performs the works of His office as the world's Savior according to both natures. After all, Klotsche wanted to explain the third genus (*apotelesmaticum*) of the communication of attributes in Christ. Aside from a few shortcomings, however, the book in its revised edition merits renewed attention and use.

E. F. Klug

**BAPTISTS AND THE BIBLE: Baptists' Views of Inspiration and Inerrancy and Present Controversies.** By L. Russ Bush and Tom J. Nettles. Moody Press, Chicago. 456 pages. \$10.95.

This Baptist history of dogma begins with Balthasar Hubmaier, a supporter of Zwingli and author of "Eighteen Dissertations." A long roster of church leaders

is reviewed, quite different from those reported in Lutheran treatises. John Smyth repudiated infant baptism, but baptized himself by pouring water over his head. The ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are not prominently treated, since the emphasis of this book is Holy Scripture. The word "sacrament" hardly occurs, except as on page 17: "Baptists believe that two ordinances (not sacraments) were instituted by Christ. Baptism by immersion is the initial act of obedience to Christ's command. It symbolizes the reality of the believer's baptism (complete immersion) into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit . . . The memorial supper is to be practiced by the church as a remembrance of the Lord's atoning death until He returns." In the index the reader is referred to "ordinances" under the entry "Lord's Supper." There is no discussion of the fact that early Baptists were not wholly devoted to immersion.

On the doctrine of Holy Scripture there is a special index of five columns. The Quaker citation of the Bible "without regard for the context" is repudiated. On the other hand, infant baptism is rejected because the term "infant baptism" does not occur in the Bible. In general the inerrancy of the Bible is ably defended, to the great satisfaction of this reviewer. Biblical "scholarship" has to so great an extent become simply Biblical fiction, attempting to reconstruct the history and the documents of the Bible according to arbitrary theories. This is the principle source of the undermining of Christianity in America and Europe.

Considering the popular repudiation of creeds and confessions, Chapter Seventeen offers an amazing treatment of confessions which have been issued by the Baptist world. The various chapters have imaginative titles: "The Spirit of God Moved upon the Face of the Waters," "The Waters Brought Forth Abundantly," "The Beginning of Sorrows," and "Of Them Which Keep the Sayings of This Book."

Otto F. Stahlke

**RELIGION IN NORTH AMERICA.** By Ronald J. Wilkins. Wm. C. Brown Publishers, Dubuque, Iowa, 1979. 201 pages. Index. Paper. \$3.50

There are several features that make this book an attractive study tool on denominations in America. Its general make-up, many illustrations, easy style, low price are all pluses. The minuses come on the question of general suitability for use as a college or seminary text. Perhaps on the college level, or with adult study groups, it might be quite useful, if used in conjunction with one of the standard reference works. The compact nature of the six main chapters puts it easily within reach of the average reader.

"Religious pluralism has tended to lessen the influence of one or another denomination," the author contends, "while at the same time it has increased the influence of religion in general." Some might want to argue with this judgment, but the author is probably right in saying of the present moment of religion in America that "the evangelical Churches are experiencing unprecedented growth." The introductory chapter is devoted to describing the general religious picture in America, as Wilkins sees or understands it, including a cursory look at some of the trends and cultic happenings. The second chapter focuses on a summary of religion among America's native peoples prior to the coming of the white man. It is interesting, but probably too sketchy to be of real, significant value. In the third chapter Wilkins attempts to portray Christianity's beginnings and then for some strange reason couples Roman Catholicism with this treatment. The reader is left with the impression that this church body is the rightful successor of the apostles. The Eastern Orthodox do not come into the story, and then only for a few pages, until much later in the book in a chapter on "Other Influential Religious Groups," among which are the Jews and Mormons.

The Mormons, in fact, get a completely disproportionate amount of space in the text, more than almost all others, except the Roman Catholics. One can only wonder at the motivation. The cults, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Scientists, Seventh Day Adventists, etc., get short shrift, a few paragraphs. Even the mainline churches among the Protestants — Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Presbyterians — merit at most a half-dozen pages each in the chapter on "The Principal Protestant Denominations in North America." The author shows little understanding of the difference between conservative and fundamentalist theology. Hence Missouri Synod Lutheranism is simply dubbed "fundamentalist." The bibliography is rather extensive for each chapter. Strangely missing, however, are F. E. Mayer's *Religious Bodies of America*, A. C. Piepkorn's *Profiles in Belief*, and A. Hoekema's *Four Major Cults*, to mention just a few significant works that a serious scholar of the subject would neglect only at peril to the outcome of his project. Listed as primary advisers for the book are Rabbi Edward Zerlin and Martin E. Marty.

E. F. Klug

**THE LIVES OF TWO MEN.** By Ernest Eckhardt. Enterprise Publishing Company, Blair, Nebraska, 1967. 88 pages. Paper. \$3.75.

The two men are Ernest Eckhardt Senior and Ernest Eckhardt Junior. Ernest Eckhardt Senior (1868-1938), a native of the Kingdom of Saxony, Germany, was for seventeen years the statistician and chronologist of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, a position which he ably filled (his "zeal for accuracy" meant that few statistical errors appeared in the year-books; it was said that the maximum number recorded was eight — not bad when one realizes that the annual, even in the 1920's, was "a big book dealing with hundreds of reports concerning a synod with over 1,000,000 members"). Prior to his call to St. Louis, Ernest Eckhardt Senior had been a pastor in Nebraska, the editor of a number of works (especially the great opus, the *Real-Lexikon*), and an author and essayist. The early portions of this volume tell his life-story, with his emigration from Germany and his education at Concordia College, Ft. Wayne, and at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and then give a summation of his 47 years in the Lutheran ministry.

Ernest Eckhardt Junior (1895- ), a native of Nebraska, was, at the time of his retirement on December 31, 1965, pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Congregation, Hooper. During his forty-five years in the Lutheran ministry, Ernest Eckhardt Junior served but two congregations (in keeping with the old Lutheran ideal of long pastorates in one place) — both of them in Nebraska — the first, a Russian-German parish in Gering, and the second, Immanuel Church, Hooper (for thirty-eight years). His has been the life of a faithful pastor to Lutheran people on the prairies.

We have in this book not only two biographies, but also a series of vignettes of Lutheran faith and life over three-quarters of a century. In the microcosm of Nebraska congregations we see reflected the very issues that involved an entire Synod — war (the Spanish American War, two World Wars, as well as the Korea and Vietnam Conflicts), the language question (with the transition from German to English), ministerial supply (with alternative seasons of "shortages" and "surpluses" of pastors), expansion of the church (as Lutherans began to reach out to the unchurched in their communities), and preservation of the faith (in some very troubled times). Certainly August Suelflow of the Concordia Historical Institute is to be commended for having encouraged Pastor Eckhardt to write these recollections, for it is precisely this kind of personal, pastoral, congregational reminiscences that will help future generations understand what

it meant to be a Lutheran minister in the American Midwest.

As the author admits, this is not "a masterpiece of literary art," nor is he a professional church historian. But Eckhardt has described two representative lives in a fashion that enables the reader to empathize with the opportunities and problems of Synod's ministers. Readers of the *CTQ* may secure copies of this book from the bookstore of Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, as well as directly from the author (1614 North Union, Fremont, Nebraska, 68025).

C. George Fry

**CHARLEY GORDON: AN EMINENT VICTORIAN REASSESSED.** By Charles Chenevix French. Allen Lane, Penguin Books, London, 1978. 320 pages. Cloth. \$13.95.

The American "hostage crisis" in late 1979 and the concurrent intervention by Russian troops in Afghanistan both serve to give a strange relevance to this new biography of General Charles George Gordon who died in Khartoum, the Sudan, in 1885 fighting against the Mahdi and his Muslim insurgents. By the author's own confession, since his death "General Gordon has been portrayed, or caricatured, as hero, martyr, evangelist, rebel, imperial pro-consul and anti-imperialist." Certainly he "chain-smoked, he was at times a poseur, and a heavy drinker." Contemporaries such as Lord Cromer described him as "mad or half-mad," and Gladstone was told he had "a small bee in his bonnet." During the course of a life spent in Europe, Asia, and Africa, Gordon "changed his opinions so flagrantly and so often that, whatever views are held of him, evidence for them can be found . . ." Such a colorful character has attracted his share of biographers and film-makers. This well-researched and readable biography by Charles Chenevix French admits Gordon's many weaknesses, adding that "on his last mission to Khartoum he wholly misjudged the situation, military and political . . ." Having made these concessions, Trench continues to contend that "with all his imperfections, he was . . . a hero of heroes; a magnificent fighting soldier; a man inspired by a deep, if highly idiosyncratic, religious faith, of extraordinary energy and fertility of mind . . . a much loved, infuriating eccentric." I recommend this book — to students of church history and Islam — as a fascinating chapter in the story of the Victorian Age.

C. George Fry

**THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN AFRICA.** By Peter Falk. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. Paper. 554 pages. \$9.95.

In his foreword to this exciting and useful volume, Charles Kraft, noted anthropologist, observes that the growth of Christianity in Africa in this century has been nothing short of phenomenal. In 1900 less than three percent of Africa's people were Christian; now it is more than thirty percent, with the prospect of reaching the figure of fifty percent by the year 2000. This book tells the long story behind the recent spurt of growth.

Starting with "a promising beginning," early Christianity took root in Egypt, Nubia, and North Africa. After initial success, it was plunged into "a millenium of darkness" (640-1652) in the wake of the spread of Islam. Most of the material in this text centers on the recent awakening of mission interest in Africa, tracing the development both regionally (North, West, East, South, and Central Africa) and chronologically (about equally balanced between the early and late modern eras). Useful chapters at the end deal with conditions promoting and retarding the growth of Christianity, as well as various consequences of the Christian movement on the earth's second largest continent.

A graduate of Fuller (with a D. Miss. degree) and professor at the School of Theology of Kinshasa, Zaire, Peter Falk has prepared a valuable English-language textbook, continent-wide in scope, that will place church-historians, missiologists, and Africanologists in his debt for years to come.

C. George Fry

**THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY IN ISLAM.** By Tjitze J. De Boer. Translated by Edward R. Jones. Dover Publications, New York, 1978. 216 pages. Paper. \$2.75.

This classic study of Islamic philosophy (and theology) in the Middle Ages (from Muhammad through Averroes) by the celebrated Dutch scholar, Tjitze J. De Boer, was originally published by Luzac and Company in 1903. Dover Publications of New York re-issued it in a paperback edition in 1967 and it has consistently re-appeared since then as an almost indispensable aid to the serious student of Muslim thought. It is still being published and will be a valuable asset to a new generation of Islamicists (and at what is today a modest price of only \$2.75).

De Boer begins his survey of Islamic thought with a consideration of its antecedents — both in the Orient (Arabia, Persia, and India) and the Occident (especially Greece in both the Hellenic and Hellenistic eras, though the Greek contribution to Islamic civilization was not consistent — the Arabs had little interest in Hellenistic theater, poetry, art, and history, though the preservation of Greek philosophy for posterity will forever remain a major legacy of medieval Islam to the West). A description of five main divisions of Islamic philosophy follows — grammar, ethics, doctrine, literature, and history. This is followed by an analysis of the fate of the major Greek systems of philosophy in the Arab World — particularly the Pythagorean, the NeoPlatonic, and the Aristotelian. Major Islamic philosopher-theologians are given their due attention, as al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, al-Gazali, Ibn Khaldun, and Ibn Roshd (Averroes). The reader will have to look far before he can find such succinct coverage (less than 216 pages) of such a vast amount of philosophical reflection.

In many respects the book is dated (much research has occurred since 1903 which is not indicated in the text), there is no bibliography, and the "dry-as-dust" style of presentation will deter all except the sincere and dedicated student of Muslim thought. For serious readers, interested in "the Islamic Mind" (and its major contributions to Medieval Christian Thought — after all, St. Thomas Aquinas borrowed much of his methodology from the Islamic South, and Aristotle, for better-or-worse, was reintroduced into Christian Europe from Muslim Spain), De Boer's book remains a helpful starting point.

C. George Fry

**MODERN ISLAMIC LITERATURE: FROM 1800 TO THE PRESENT.** Edited by James Kritzeck. New American Library, New York, 1972. 334 pages. Paper. \$1.95.

Dr. James Kritzeck, long-time Professor of Oriental Languages and History at Notre Dame, has written (p. 9):

... what can be said about the recognition and appreciation of modern Islamic writers? Certainly every great modern Russian author has been translated into English, usually more than once, and his works have been studied in depth and inserted into the curricula of most of our universities. Nearly every great modern Japanese author enjoys similar recognition. We always hear of, whether or not we actually read, books by prominent Latin American, Asian, and African writers. We could hardly avoid learning the

names of the great and semi-great European and North American writers. Yet there is scarcely one modern Moslem author whose name is familiar to most of us, and not a single one, all of whose works are available in translation.

This excellent anthology is an effort to correct that situation.

In the 328 pages of text within this volume Professor Kritzeck has collected excerpts representative of all parts of the Muslim World (not only from "the World of Inner Islam," the Middle East, and "the World of Outer Islam," Black Africa and Indonesia, but also from "the World of the Muslim Diaspora," including such Western Muslim authors as the Briton, Marmaduke Pickthall), the major Muslim languages (Arabic, Persian, Turkish) as well as the minor (such as Urdu and Fulani), and all classes of society (from Egyptian peasants to Persian Emperors, from secular Turkish intellectuals to religious leaders such as Muhammad Aga Khan) and various literary forms (from folk tales to essays, as well as poetry, proverbs, short stories, and theological treatises). Even a quick survey of the pages of this book will introduce the Westerner to Muslim wit ("Politics is the profession of those who have neither trade nor art"), aspirations (as in President Gamal Abdel Nasser's work on *The Philosophy of the Revolution*), belief (particularly in the critique of Immanuel Kant by Sir Mohammed Iqbal in his essay, "Is Religion Possible?"), daily life (as in the selection, "A Change of Faith," by the Turkish feminist, Halide Edib, dealing with the problem of the love of a Christian man for a Muslim woman), and Christianity (as in Muhammad Kamel Hussein's reflections on "The Apostles' Self-Reproach," probably the most profound Muslim literary — encounter with the death of Christ in this century).

It has been said that the peoples of planet earth are of two types — verbal and visual. Muslims are a people of the Book and books, and literature occupies a central place in their lives. This anthology provides a valuable introduction to the faith and thought of the world's 750 million Muslims. Interested readers are also directed to the reviewer's own anthology (compiled with Dr. James R. King, *An Anthology of Middle Eastern Literature from the 20th Century*, Springfield, Ohio, Wittenberg University, 1974).

C. George Fry

MELANCHTHON'S BRIEFWECHSEL. KRITISCHE UND KOMMENTIERTE GESAMTAUSGABE. Im Auftrag der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften hg. Heinz Scheible. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1977 ff. Volume 1: Regesten 1-1109 (1514-1530), 1977, 456 pp. DM 195.00.

Despite the importance of Philipp Melanchthon for studies in Renaissance humanism, history of education, the Reformation period, Luther interpretation, research into the Lutheran Confessions, and church history, scholars have been seriously hampered by the inadequacy of the published source collections, and especially of the correspondence. Therefore, the appearance of the extensive new *Melanchthons Briefwechsel* (MBW) is an event of paramount importance to historians, theologians, and philologists.

Under the capable editorship of Dr. Heinz Scheible and the sponsorship of the Heidelberg Academy of the Sciences, a monumental reference tool presenting Melanchthon's letters in some 80 volumes is taking place. The project is to consist of five parts:

- I. The *Regesta* (in 7 volumes to be described below)
  - II. The Register or Indices (in 2 or 3 volumes)
  - III. The Catalog of Manuscripts (in 2 or 3 volumes)
  - IV. The Edition of the Letters (calculated to comprise 35 volumes)
  - V. The Commentary on the Letters (expected to reach about 35 volumes)
- Although Scheible is a relatively young man, the work will likely extend beyond his life-time. Therefore, the *Regests* are appearing first, and the actual editions of letters, Part IV, are to be accompanied closely by their respective notes in Part V.

Between 1834 and 1842, Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider pioneered by publishing some 7000 letters in the first ten volumes of the *Corpus Reformatorum* (CR). Unfortunately, his editorship predated modern critical scholarship. He missed several thousand letters, many of which were later published in various books and scholarly journals. In some periods over 19 per cent of the letters are erroneously dated. (See Heinz Scheible, "Überlieferung und Editionen der Briefe Melanchthons," *Heidelberger Jahrbucher* 12[1968]:135-61, and especially p. 155).

This is one of the reasons why MBW is starting with the *Regests*. These are chronologically arranged listings of the documents with short descriptions of the contents of each letter or paper, their location as manuscripts or printed sources, and references to important investigations. These *Regests* will serve scholars using less satisfactory editions during the many years of waiting for the 35 volumes of the letters in MBW, and will also serve as introductions to the letters when they appear in MBW.

Notes on the correspondence, to be given in the *Regests* and in the Commentary, are more important than the casual reader might realize. There are many instances where the documents require highly-specialized knowledge for an accurate interpretation. For instance, Melanchthon's letters contain many cryptic words and names. Granvella was called "Lucius Gellius" and the bellicose Nikolaus von Amsdorf was known by the cryptonym *leokrates*; important political figures and movements were likewise disguised. Some of these pseudonyms are manageable (see glossary in CR 10:317-24) but others are baffling. Help is needed to recognize and identify such references. Past failures have led to faulty interpretations of Melanchthon and his thought. Therefore, the importance of the notes in MBW is clear.

The significance of Melanchthon has often been obscured by lack of information or even party prejudice. But his crucial importance for the Reformation era and for subsequent developments in education and theology is becoming increasingly evident and demanding of attention. MBW is unreservedly recommended to every serious scholar working in related areas. Its use will be indispensable for any investigation related to Melanchthon and the history of the Lutheran Church and its Confessions. Every larger library will need to obtain the work, and every theological library and center of studies in Renaissance humanism will need to make this work available to its scholars. Scheible is a competent scholar and his work will supercede those which have gone before.

Lowell C. Green

THE CELTS. By Nora Chadwick. Penguin, Baltimore, 1971. 301 pages. Paper. \$3.50.

This Pelican original has been a consistent profit-maker for Penguin Books



for almost a decade. That explains why it continues in print. It does not account for its appeal. In part the continuing popularity of this volume is due to the scarcity of competition (when was the last time you saw a good book on the Celts?) as well as its literary and scholarly quality (where else can one find such a multifaceted introduction to Celtic history and culture, with chapters on the Celts in Europe, Celtic kingdoms in Britain, as well as Celtic institutions, religion, mythology, art, literature, society, and Christianity?) and the fact that its creator, Nora Chadwick, writes with authority. (She has spent most of her life doing Celtic research, and Nora Chadwick was born in 1891.)

For the Christian reader this book about the Celts, who once occupied much of Western Europe (ranging from the Irish Sea to the shores of the Danube and from the Pyrenees to the Harz — both Bohemia and Bologna are Celtic words) before Roman and Germanic invaders forced them to retreat to "the Celtic Fringe" (Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and Brittany) at the "edge of the earth," has a unique interest. The Celts were important participants in the Christian adventure right from its inception and made valuable contributions from the age of Paul to that of Patrick. The Galatians to whom the Apostle wrote were of Celtic ancestry (Galatae). Constantine, the soldier-emperor who befriended the Christians, came from Romano-Celtic Britain. Theologians as orthodox as Irenaeus, as heterodox as Pelagius, labored in Celtic lands. For centuries the Celtic Church was a rival to the Roman for the leadership of Christendom. Many feel the Celtic Church surpassed the Roman in intellectual brilliance (after Augustine, any Medieval European who knew Greek was surely Irish), missionary fervor (Celtic saints took the cross to much of Western Europe; some say, also to America — did St. Brendan really discover the new world? was the Quetzalcoatl of the Mexican Indians really a Celtic evangelist?) and moral and doctrinal purity. No wonder Arnold J. Toynbee once speculated about the possibility of an Atlantic Celtic Christendom standing over against the Greek Orthodoxy of the Eastern, the Roman Catholicism of the Western Mediterranean. Capitulation to the Pope and conquest by the Anglo-Normans ended such Celtic aspirations. But for all Protestants it is important to remember that there was a distinct Christian Church in the North before "the Papal Conquest."

For anyone interested in church history and the cultural life of the Atlantic community, *The Celts* by Nora Chadwick will prove to be rewarding reading.

C. George Fry

**EERDMANS HANDBOOK TO THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY.** By Tim Dowley, Organizing Editor, and John H. Y. Briggs, David F. Wright, and Robert D. Linder, Consulting Editors. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978. 656 pages. Cloth. \$19.95.

Inspired by the success of the **EERDMANS HANDBOOK TO THE BIBLE** (over 750,000 copies sold worldwide by 1977), Eerdmans Publishing Company decided to prepare and publish a companion volume on the story of the Christian Church from Pentecost to the present. Similar in design and format to its predecessor, **EERDMANS HANDBOOK TO THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY** is a succinct and exciting summary of almost twenty centuries of Christian community life.

This **HANDBOOK** is divided into eight sections — "God and History" (composed of essays reflecting on the historical nature of Christianity), "Beginnings, 1-325" (from Christ to Constantine the Great), "Acceptance and Conquest, 325-600" (from Athanasius to Patrick), "A Christian Society, 600-

1500" (from Gregory the Great to Savonarola), "Reform, 1500-1650" (the Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, Free Church, and Roman Catholic Reformations), "Reason, Revival, and Revolution, 1650-1789" (from the Peace of Westphalia to the Fall of the Bastille), "Cities and Empires, 1789-1914" (focusing on theology and missiology in the nineteenth century), and "Towards 2000" (on the middle and late twentieth century). Within each unit there are several main chapters and numerous shorter sections written by an international team of seventy contributors from more than ten countries. The use of various colors for different sections of the book and the inclusion of 450 photographs (many in full color), plus maps, charts, and line drawings make this a cheery book to read and to view.

Coordinating the writing and compiling of the HANDBOOK was Tim Dowley, who holds his Ph.D. from the University of Manchester and who was with the British and Foreign Bible Society for some time. Assisting him were John H. Y. Briggs, Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Keele, David F. Wright, Senior Lecturer of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Edinburgh, and Robert D. Linder, Professor of History at Kansas State University.

The aim of producing "a rounded picture of the worldwide development of Christianity" has been attained in splendid fashion. The authors, each an expert in his area, have striven to show that "they are committed both to Christianity and to the unhindered pursuit of truth." In my estimation this is the most comprehensive, objective, and sympathetic exposition of Christian history I have seen in many years.

As with any work of encyclopedic scope and with a multiplicity of authorship, there will be errors of fact (as the notion, long since disproven, that medieval man expected the world to end in A.D. 1000, p. 234; or that early churches were oriented toward the west, p. 152 — actually, it was toward the east, for "orient" means east; or that ordination was "at one time a ritual merely tacked on to the communion," p. 149) and statements of denominational bias (as the contention that the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist is a medieval teaching, p. 257; or that the Church suffered a great loss through the exclusion of the Montanists, p. 74; or that so-called "believer's baptism" was normal, "infant baptism" abnormal, until late antiquity, p. 257). But given these qualifications, I recommend this HANDBOOK as a visual, verbal, and spiritual delight. It is a must for the minister's library.

C. George Fry

#### IV. Practical Studies

THE INTEGRITY OF THE CHURCH. By E. Glenn Hinson. Broadman Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 1978. 195 pages. Cloth.

Hinson is a professor of church history at the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville. As he states in the preface, he writes this book in "the Southern Baptist context." Hinson's main arguments develop from his reading of Alvin Toffler's well-known book *Future Shock*. We live in such rapidly changing times that the individual needs a place where he can take the change. Nevertheless, the church as it keeps its identity needs to be open to change. The author, however, sees the very nature and function of the church changing with the times (p. 10). This is a tragic compromising of the nature of the church. The church, although it has to work with new problems, has as its primary task the preaching of Christ as it is clearly expounded in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20). A change in approach can never replace the very nature of the church.

One of the themes that the author employs is the Kingdom of God. In the light of a faulty exegesis of John 3:16-17 (p. 79), the author upholds what he calls a conversionist approach. In this approach he wants to incorporate a realism that sees in culture evil, along with an optimism that at times generates work for the transformation of culture (p. 81). This transformation is possible even at present for "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him" (p. 79). The saving of the world is stressed, according to this position, in order not to fall into a Gnostic approach. John, however, as we can see clearly from the context, points to eternal life and the salvation of the world in that light. We who hold this position, not affirming the world, are not Gnostics by a long shot. The world *per se* is not evil. God still affirms and sustains His creation. But evil is in the world and that very tension is found in the Gospel of John, in which Jesus is seen always as the light shining in the darkness.

Through reading Hinson's book one finds several symptoms of a disease that we all need to be aware is present at a Southern Baptist Seminary today. Hinson's prejudice is evident, for instance, in regard to the doctrine of Scripture: "First, it is questionable whether the Bible itself supports a theory of infallibility and inerrancy as Lindsell argues" (p. 32). The Scriptures, to Hinson are not the Word of God but contain the Word of God (p. 35). The author also states, "The Bible affirms that God directs this process [of creation]; it does not tell how. To affirm evolution is not to deny God, therefore" (p. 140). This last statement gives us more problems than solutions. I wonder how the author can explain evil in this light. He makes no reference to Genesis 1-3 but we could certainly guess what his interpretation of these chapters would be.

**SHEPHERDING GOD'S FLOCK.** By Jay E. Adams. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. 531 pages. Paper. \$8.95.

This book is a combination of three previous publications by Adams. The subject matter embraced would be covered in courses in pastoral theology, pastoral psychology, and parish administration. There is much in this book to be commended to the discriminating reader. There are helpful insights into the use of Law and Gospel in dealing with people in counseling situations. We can wholeheartedly subscribe to the thesis from which Dr. Adams operates: "The only proper basis for Christian living and pastoral ministry is biblical and theological." At the same time, Lutheran pastors will find in places that what Adams has to say theologically unacceptable. This book is based on the foundation of Reformed theology, and Lutherans will be less than comfortable with Adams' concept of sin and the way he uses Law and Gospel in dealing with solutions to problems. Furthermore, his categorical rejection of the use of secular insights, techniques, and skills in the area of counseling (he considers them to be inimical to the Christian faith) is objectionable. The reader will find that Adams' writing is clear, stimulating and provocative. Read with discretion, the book could well prove helpful to the parish pastor.

Norbert H. Mueller

**SPEAKING BOLDLY GOD'S WORD OF RESCUE.** By Arthur E. Graf. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979. 31 pages. Paper.

This book is one of a series of guidebooks put out by the Task Force for Planning and Coordinating of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The author writes in his usual simple and easy-to-understand style and makes a good use of Scripture in telling the reader about organizing for evangelism. He

assumes the reader is not a pastor, but a layman. The book is a useful tool for layman or pastor. The chapters on organizing and doing evangelism were quite helpful. He does, however, make one wonder just what he means, as a Lutheran, in asking for a commitment (p. 25), since much discussion centers on this point. There is also a question as to whether the pastor, by virtue of his training, actually has no advantages in witnessing over and above the layman.

Robert H. Collins

**PASSPORT TO MISSIONS.** By W. Guy Henderson. Broadman Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 1979. 180 pages. Paper.

The author, W. Guy Henderson, served as a foreign missionary 1958-78, and now serves in the stewardship department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. He brings many moving anecdotes into his pleading for greater concern for missions at home and abroad. These personal accounts of sacrifice and heroism in mission service move the reader to a new commitment to mission support. The author urges Christians to go beyond tithing and points to a congregation in a Western state whose member gave as high as sixty percent of their personal income for church support and missions. Giving should flow from love, not a legalistic ten percent custom, Henderson writes. Church growth expertise is applied to world mission strategy. With missions of mercy must go witnessing of the Christian message.

The unique contribution of this book is its appeal to Christians to use their vacations for mission field visitation. There the vacationer can visit, encourage and support the foreign missionary of the place visited; study, record, and photograph the foreign mission operation; and report back to the home congregation on the dramatic work being carried on in missions. What better way to use vacation time and money?

Harold H. Zietlow

**PASTORAL CARE IN THE BLACK CHURCH.** By Edward P. Wimberly. Abingdon, Nashville, Tennessee, 1979. 127 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

One does not have to complete the book to get the author's ideas. He describes himself as a black man who was surprised at the reaction of other blacks who were pastors: "While working with black pastors, I became aware of the difference between what I was learning in pastoral care at the seminary and what was being practiced by these black pastors . . . This book is the result." It is well-written and easy to read but has the problem of trying to "prove" that it is a necessary book. The reviewer (also black) sees no real purpose in trying to show that pastoral care varies according to ethnic groups. Pastoral techniques may vary, but not the need for pastoral care.

Wimberly makes several remarks that do little to enhance the image of black parishioners. He assumes, wrongfully in my view, that the advent of black storefront churches is a carry-over from an inability to relate denominationally and follows the familiar Southern rural pattern. Actually in the South black storefront churches are quite rare in rural areas. The reason for the Northern storefront churches has to do with economics (it is too expensive to build, even if one found the land) and proximity to the people, not rural customs.

Wimberly's idea of how a black pastor is seen by black people is downright offensive. "Many people in the black community have assigned to the black pastor wisdom and competence in all matters of living . . . Because of this assignment, many of the laity have expected the minister to be omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent . . ." (p. 36). This assertion all but depicts black people as a bunch of cultists. More importantly, however, the statement is false.

Wimberly has attempted to observe "other" blacks and then to "justify" what he considers a bit strange (from the view point of his training). He brings in several interesting concepts very familiar to most pastors involved in counseling (e.g., systems method and crisis counseling) in an attempt to validate black ministry. The attempt fails and, more importantly, *it really is not necessary!* His book goes on and on calling many things "black" with which non-blacks also identify (caring, guiding, etc.). I am not sure what kind of readership the author anticipated, but he obviously did not expect it to be well-informed. Whether black, white, yellow, brown, or whatever, the people of God have the same assets and liabilities. To assume that one ethnic group needs a different sort of pastoral care than another is an insult to the Holy Spirit, who calls all men to Christ.

Robert H. Collins

**THE DYNAMICS OF DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING.** By Gary W. Kuhne. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978. 162 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

One of the first ideas the author expresses is that Matthew 28:18-20 is not really a passage to be used for evangelism, but for discipleship training. He erroneously states that "the command to evangelize is no where given. Yet evangelism is the usual emphasis derived from this passage" (p. 12). His definition of a disciple is "a Christian who is growing in conformity to Christ, is achieving fruit in evangelism, and is working in follow-up to conserve his fruit" (p. 13). He proceeds from here to tell the reader his criteria for being a disciple, criteria to which the original twelve would have found it hard to measure up. He does have good goals for the disciple, but he seems to emphasize far too much the role of the person in the place of the role of the Holy Spirit in bringing this maturity about.

Kuhne's goal of having people involved in the church is a commendable one that should not be ignored by any person dealing with the souls of men. There are, however, "rough spots" in the book. In one section the author seems overly concerned that the Christian protect his image by not being seen in certain places (like a party where alcoholic beverages are served), instead of taking the biblical example of Christ who loved enough not to worry about being seen with harlots and tax collectors. Another point is the idea that the one a Christian is discipling will "tend to copy your life in all areas, not only the specifically spiritual" (p. 47). This places a particular burden on the "mature" Christian to worry (unnecessarily) about the newer Christian. It would have been better to have both focus more on Christ as an example.

The book mentions what could appear to be "new" categories (life transference, etc.) that really amount to new names for old groupings. They are valid categories, but Lutherans will recognize them as sanctification, justification, etc. Although Kuhne puts entirely too much responsibility on the trainer, he does make a good point that the trainer is to be a good model for the trainee. One could say that the "meat" of the book is in the first three chapters (new terms, new challenges, etc.). After that, it is a matter of reading some of the routine things to which those who work in evangelism or follow-up are most accustomed. Kuhne's comment on not expecting too much from one's labors is welcomed: "Often as Christians we will work and not see any immediate results. We must learn not to be discouraged by this . . . The important thing is to do *what* God desires *when* He desires it" (p. 64). Kuhne's point that Christians should be "thinkers" is indeed welcome. They should know how other Christian groups use similar terms but have different meanings. The author's point that

one should not have "faith in faith" but in Christ is meaningful, hitting hard at those who preach Christ without the mention of sin and grace and forgiveness. "The thinking is that if you are committed and there is a job to be done, then God wants you to do that job. How tragic this becomes. Since when is need the sole criterion for determining God's will?" (p. 97). Here is a very good statement leading to the simple conclusion that none of us can do everything and we need proper priorities. Kuhne's stress on being simple is similar to Synod's KISS ("Keep It Simple, Sir") approach. The book has bright moments, especially in the first portion (chapters 1-3), but loses its vitality after that.

Robert H. Collins

**DYNAMICS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE: AN EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY OF RENEWAL.** By Richard F. Lovelace. Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1979. 455 Pages. Paper. \$8.95.

Richard F. Lovelace is already well-known for his work in the field of ethics (he is the author of *Homosexuality and the Church* and has been active in the struggle to bar practicing homosexuals from ordination to the ministry in the Presbyterian Church) and history (he wrote *The American Pietism of Cotton Mather* and is currently Professor of Church History at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary). This book marks his debut in a new area, one which he has entitled "spiritual theology."

The interest of Dr. Lovelace in "spiritual theology" dates from his conversion. In 1952, at the age of twenty-one, while still an atheist studying philosophy at Yale, Lovelace came across a copy of Thomas Merton's *Seven Storey Mountain*. Reading that work of "spiritual theology" caused him to abandon atheism as a viable option. After toying with Roman Catholic monasticism and Protestant Fundamentalism, Lovelace found himself at home in the Reformed variety of American Evangelicalism, eventually graduating with a Th.D. from Princeton and accepting ordination in the Presbyterian communion. His career in Protestant academia, however, surprised him in at least one respect. Protestant theology, whether Liberal or Conservative, seemed to him about "as supernatural as a Sears Roebuck catalog." He observed (p. 231):

I was amazed to find that most Protestants were ignorant of the body of tradition which seemed to me to be the living heart of the Reformation heritage. There was not even a name among Protestants for the sort of thing I wanted to study. Catholics had one — spiritual theology . . .

This volume is written to fill that gap.

The contention of Professor Lovelace is that the heart of Protestantism has been a "living Orthodoxy," seen in Martin Luther and John Calvin, eclipsed in the scholasticism of the seventeenth century, but revived in Pietism and Puritanism, then expressed in a kind of nineteenth-century Evangelical Consensus which broke down by the time of the First World War, fragmenting into various components — Liberalism, Fundamentalism, Conservatism, Neo-Orthodoxy — each of which maintained but a few elements of the "wholeness" of Classical Protestantism. As we enter the 1980's Lovelace is persuaded that the New Evangelicalism can see a reintegration of these ingredients into a faith that has sound theology, a dynamic personal and social morality, an intense spirituality, and a sense of destiny.

As Evangelical Theology replaces New-Orthodoxy as the dominant motif in American Protestantism, this volume will become ever more valuable as an inside disclosure of the emphases and intentions of those who are increasingly responsible for the training of America's ministers and the shaping of the Evangelical future.

C. George Fry

# Book Comments

**THE SACRIFICIAL INTERPRETATION OF JESUS' ACHIEVEMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.** By Tibor Horvath. Philosophical Library, New York. Cloth. \$8.95. 100 pages.

After analyzing nine words or phrases used in the NT for sacrifice, Horvath traces through the various NT authors the concepts of Jesus' life and death, the life and death of Jesus' followers, and the Last Supper together with Eucharistic celebration. A final section relates the Eucharistic words to Jesus' death, the Passover, and Qumran. The author, a Jesuit priest, makes use of the most recent research. Succinct and compact, this study can lead the pastor to see the atonement as the center of NT theology. This book will probably not receive the attention it deserves.

**WHEN GOD BECAME MAN.** By George Lawler. Moody Press, Chicago, 1978. 154 pages. Paper. No price given.

Christ's preexistence, deity, incarnation, crucifixion and exaltation are the chapter themes which develop exegetically, devotionally, and occasionally polemically Paul's ode in Philippians 2:5-11. The Reformed blurring of incarnation and humiliation prevents the author from recognizing that the subject of Paul's hymn is not the preincarnate Son of God, but Jesus, who in His human nature by virtue of the incarnation possesses God's attributes but conceals them during the period of His humiliation.

**THE ARAB MIND.** By Raphael Patai. Charles Scribner & Sons, New York, 1976. Paper. 376 Pages. \$5.95.

This is a provocative study of Arab values prepared by a Jewish scholar, born in Hungary, educated in Germany, resident in Israel, and now teaching in the United States, who contends that child-rearing customs provide a clue to the Semitic psyche. While it is not the last word on Arab manners and mores, Patai's volume is certainly an essential part of the current "quest for the key to Arab character."

**THE VENTURE OF ISLAM: CONSCIENCE AND HISTORY IN A WORLD CIVILIZATION.** By Marshall G. S. Hodgson. Phoenix Books, published by the University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1975 ff. 3 vols. 1,407 Pages. Paper. \$7.98 each.

For many years the late Marshall G. S. Hodgson was Professor and Chairman of the Committee on Social Thought and Professor of History at the University of Chicago. Just prior to his death in 1968 he summed up a life-time of thought and research concerning Islamic Civilization in this trilogy. Written with special attention to the intellectual and spiritual values of Islamic civilization, though not neglecting politics, biography, diplomacy, geography, economics, these volumes have a special pertinence as we enter the 1980's. The recent resurgence of Islam lends renewed credence to Hodgson's contention (a sort of thesis on which his entire work rests) that "the most significant element of the Islamic heritage now is religion and the religious conscience." This three-volume survey is a *must* for all serious students of Muslim faith and life.

**INSPIRATION.** By Archibald A. Hodge and Benjamin B. Warfield, with an introduction by Roger R. Nicole. Baker, Grand Rapids, 1979 (reprint of the 1881 edition). 108 pages. Paperback. \$2.95.

The struggle over Scripture's inspiration, authority, and inerrancy racked nineteenth-century Presbyterianism with considerable furor. Archibald Hodge and Warfield were both students of Charles Hodge, father of the former. Later they also served as professors of systematic theology at Pittsburgh and Princeton respectively. Their position in favor of verbal, plenary inspiration is summed up in this statement: "The historical faith of the Church has always been that all the affirmations of Scripture of all kinds, whether of spiritual doctrine or duty, or of physical or historical fact, or of psychological or philosophical principle, are without error when the *ipsissima verba* of the original autographs are ascertained and interpreted in their natural and intended sense" (p. 28). Rejecting notions that explain inspiration in terms of a mechanical sort of dictation, and the like, the authors without actually attempting to unravel the miracle of inspiration itself placed heavy emphasis upon God's divine superintendence over the holy writers, who otherwise wrote out of the experience of their own lives and the revelation given them by the Holy Spirit. A number of short appendices, reprints of articles that first appeared in answer to critics of the original main essay that constitutes the book, are included. Roger Nicole has likewise appended bibliographical lists which can be of value to the student of Warfield's and Charles Hodge's work on Scripture, as well as of the Westminster Confession's stance on the subject of inspiration and inerrancy.

**LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.** By Henry C. Thiessen. Revised by Vernon D. Doerksen. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids. 450 pages. Cloth. \$13.95.

The eighteenth printing in thirty years is now revised to include a chapter on the Holy Spirit's work along with more contemporary theological references. As the sacraments are viewed as ordinances and millennialism is espoused, along with a peculiar view of the atonement which benefits unbelievers in delaying their final execution, the book will not directly serve the purposes of Lutheran theology.

**THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.** By Rene Pache. Translated by J. D. Emerson. Moody Press, Chicago, 1978. 223 pages. Paper.

A direct, well-outlined, sermonically styled, well-documented study on the Holy Spirit sets forth dispensationalism, supports Zionism with a universal conversion of the Jews, and treats the Spirit's indwelling as something other than faith.

**THE GREAT UNVEILING: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF REVELATION.** By W. Graham Scroggie. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 140 pages. \$7.95.

This book contains the author's unaltered lecture notes on the Book of Revelation. Topics include the author of Revelation; the relation between Revelation and the rest of Scripture; Christ as the central subject of the book; the interpretation of the book; discussion of the various interpretive approaches to Revelation. This book is intended as a study tool for teachers and students, and contains over 200 study questions at the close of the book. The discussion is superficial and given from a dispensationalist, millennialist standpoint.

**EXPERIENCES OF GOD.** By Jurgen Moltmann. Fortress Press,



Philadelphia. 1980. 83 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

*Experiences of God* is Moltmann's own personal and hence popularly written exposition of his theology of hope. Most of the weight here is placed on God's suffering, i.e., divine participation in all human misery. This has no reference to the older Lutheran concept of God's suffering and dying by virtue of the incarnation, though Moltmann borrows heavily from Lutheran terminology. Positively, Moltmann has alerted theology to a real pathos in God, who does not remain detached from the human condition. Negatively, it is impossible to see how his "incarnational" theology can be regarded as anything but a form of pantheism.

**THE FRIENDSHIP FACTOR: HOW TO GET CLOSER TO THE PEOPLE YOU CARE FOR.** By Alan Loy McGinnis. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1979. 192 pages. Paper.

This is a relatively good book to read to give one clues on how to deal with oneself as well as with one's friends. McGinnis writes in an easy style. A good part of the book deals with various ways to communicate effectively, and this discussion seems to be needed since communication seems to be a growing area of concern for many people. He divides the book into sections dealing with such things as deepening one's relationships, and handling negative emotions without destroying a relationship.

**ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION OF JOHN CALVIN.** By Ford Lewis Battles. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980. 421 pages. Paper. \$10.95.

Battles died before his *Analysis* went to press. Having translated the *Institutes*, he must be recognized as one of history's foremost Calvin experts. The *Analysis* is a detailed outline of Calvin's *Institutes* so arranged that specific doctrines can easily be found. Calvin was an orderly, well-organized, and nearly cold systematizer. Calvin can speak about God abstractly and can make justification but one point in his theology, whereas for Luther all theology is Christ, atonement, and justification. Battles places Calvin with Paul in believing the "Real Presence" and calls Luther's position "corporealization" (p. 380).

**PREFACE TO PASTORAL THEOLOGY.** By Seward Hiltner. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1979. 244 pages. Paper. \$4.95

First published in 1958, this is a reprint of what might well be subtitled: "Prolegomena to an Apologetic for Pastoral Theology." Working from the thesis "... that pastoral theology is a formal branch of theology, resulting from study of Christian shepherding, that it is just as important as biblical or doctrinal or historical theology, and that it is no less the concern of the minister of the local church than of a specialist," the author uses the concept of "shepherding" and functions embraced in that term, such as, "healing," "sustaining," and "guiding" to expand upon that thesis. To illustrate Hiltner cites case studies from Icobad Spencer's *A Pastor's Sketches*, first published in 1851. Dealt with also are "communicating" and "organizing", which, strictly speaking, are not part of "shepherding" (per the working definition) but are definitely important in the conduct of the office. As a theological discipline, pastoral theology is of comparatively recent origin. Of interest is Hiltner's historical overview and his demonstration of pastoral theology's rightful and legitimate place among the theological disciplines and, more importantly, its contribution to effective ministry. This book is imminently worthwhile for those engaged in pastoral ministry. Its modest price makes it accessible to all.

**WRESTLIN' JACOB: A PORTRAIT OF RELIGION IN THE OLD SOUTH.**

By Erskine Clarke. John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1979. 207 pages. Paper. \$6.95.

A church historian and Dean of Students at Columbia Seminary, Decatur, Georgia, Dr. Erskine Clarke has provided a well-researched and carefully-written account of the efforts of white masters to bring the Gospel to black slaves in the ante-bellum South, both in the country (Liberty County, Georgia) and the city (Charleston, South Carolina).

**THE ENCOURAGER.** By D. Elton Trueblood. Broadman Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 1978. 144 pages. Cloth.

A collection of twenty-six quarterly letters written by Dr. Trueblood between June 1969 and March 1978 and sent to four thousand "Christian workers" who are joined in an expression of "new Evangelicalism" (p. 140) under the name "Yokefellows International" (Phil 4:3). The letters are meant to offer encouragement (I Thess. 5:11) to perplexed "evangelical Christians" who face various problems in the world today.

**WELCOME TO THE FAMILY.** By William Wells. Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1979. 184 pages. Paper. \$4.25

A rapid-fire review of theology, church history, and Christian living within the space of 184 pages and under the rubric of "Evangelical Christianity," which is defines as: (1) confidence in the Bible, (2) commitment to Jesus Christ, and (3) pursuit of a holy life (pp. 10-11). The book is light reading for beginners who are seeking an introduction to the "evangelical family."

**A PROFILE FOR A CHRISTIAN LIFE STYLE.** By Gene A. Getz. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1978. 200 pages. Paper. \$1.95.

This Bible study of Paul's letter to Titus take a novel approach and is a rather complete treatment, but this does not compensate for its theological deficiency with regard to baptismal regeneration and its ambivalence with regard to the office of the ministry.

**CREATIVE STEWARDSHIP.** Richard B. Cunningham. Abingdon, Nashville, 1979. 128 pages. Paper.

This book is one of a series edited by Lyle E. Schaller entitled Creative Leadership Series. It contains some challenging concepts and some very practical ideas with regard to stewardship, but is somewhat weak on the primary motivation of Christians, the love of God for man in Christ.

**THE ELDERS HANDBOOK.** By Berghoef and DeKoster. Christians Library Press, Grand Rapids, 1979. 303 pages. \$12.95.

This book operates with a concept of church and ministry which is foreign to most if not all Lutheran congregations. It defines a function and role of the "ruling elders" in which there is no clear distinction between that role and that of the pastor, or to put it another way, the role of the called pastor and the ruling elder is virtually indistinguishable in this text. Its theology is Reformed and its polity is that suggested by Calvin, so its use to Lutherans would be questionable at best.

**INTRODUCTION TO SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.** By Louis Berkhoff. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Paper. 200 pages. \$5.95.

This reprint of the prolegomena section of Berkhoff's 1932 classical Reformed *Systematic Theology* is helpful for its orderly style; but it puts forth faith and the Holy Spirit as internal testimonies of the truth, subjectivism intolerable for Lutherans.

**TO DIE IS GAIN.** By Johann Christoph Hampe. Translated by Margaret Kohl. John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1979. 145 pages. Paper. \$4.95.

The author recounts the testimonies of people who have "experienced" death and have come back to tell about it. For the skeptic, this major portion of the book is of questionable value. One might also question the interpretations that Hampe gives and the conclusions that he draws in the final two chapters. Theologically, Hampe's implied "universalism" that negates the necessity of Christ's atoning work is especially disturbing. On the other hand, Hampe challenges some of the traditional fears, presuppositions, and definitions concerning death and dying. The reader will find much of value in the first two chapters, in which the author draws together an excellent compend of reactions to death from a number of different disciplines and viewpoints.

**PRAYER FOR TROUBLED TIMES.** By Jay E. Adams. Presbyterian and Reformed, Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1979. 64 pages. Paper.

The petitioner is led to articulate the problem, praying for help, but is never brought to the foot of the Cross, the empty tomb, or any of the objective promises of God.

**THE UNITY OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS.** By William Henry Green. Reprint. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1979. 583 Pages. Paper. \$9.95.

In this thorough study, first published in 1895, the great Princeton scholar worked his way through the entire book of Genesis, meeting head on and disproving point by point the higher critical arguments for the documentary hypothesis of multiple and developmental authorship. Although this argument conclusively dispensed with only the literary criticism of the nineteenth century, it has yet to be refuted by the higher critics. They have since tried to shore up their shaky theory with newer methods, such as form criticism, redaction criticism, and structuralism. But Professor Green has so effectively demolished every piece of the original foundation that everything subsequent is nothing but castle-building in thin air. Baker Book House is to be highly commended for reprinting this classic defense of the Mosaic authorship of Genesis, together with Green's companion volume, *The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch*, which is large in scope but less detailed.

**THE ADVANCE OF BAPTIST ASSOCIATIONS ACROSS AMERICA.** By Elliott Smith. Broadman Press, Nashville, 1979. Paper. 184 Pages. \$3.95.

This is a popular account of "the missionary outreach of Baptists — missionary outreach as it was implemented through, and usually initiated by, the association." Designed for use on the local level, authored by the director of missions, Trinity Southern Baptist Association, Indio, California, this book breaks no new ground but it does provide a readable summary of an important chapter of American Church History.

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## Books Received

**A NEW HEAVEN.** By Richard Holloway. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1979. 125 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

**COMFORTING THOSE WHO GRIEVE.** By Cecil Murphey. John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1979. 64 pages. Paper. No price given.

**GROWING KNOWING JESUS.** By Ian Cowie. John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1979. 154 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

**LESSER VOICES OF THE PASSION.** By Theodore P. Bornhoeft. T.P.B. Publications, 1978. 51 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

**CHRISTIAN MEDITATION (CM).** By Edmund P. Clowney. Craig Press, Nutley, N.J., 1979. 103 pages. Paper. \$2.50.

**A COMMENTARY ON SAINT PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.** By Martin Luther. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1979. 575 pages. Paper. \$7.95.

**INTRODUCING OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS:** With an emphasis on their chronological relationship. By S. S. Urberg. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 61 pages. Paper. \$5.95.

**FROM RATIONALISM TO IRRATIONALITY.** By C. Gregg Singer. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1979. 479 pages. Paper. \$14.95.

**SAINT PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.** By Brooke Foss Westcott. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1979. 212 pages. Paper. \$5.95.

**AN EXEGETICAL GRAMMAR OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT.** By William Douglas Chamberlain. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1979. 233 pages. Paper. \$7.95.

**BIBLICAL ESSAYS.** By J. B. Lightfoot. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1979. 459 pages. Paper. \$8.95.

**THE HISTORY OF THE RELIGION OF ISRAEL: An Old Testament Theology.** By John Howard Raven. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1979. 685 pages. Paper. \$9.95.

**CONTEXTUALIZATION: A THEOLOGY OF GOSPEL AND CULTURE.** By Bruce J. Nicholls. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1979. 72 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

**EVANGELICALS AND SOCIAL ETHICS.** By Klaus Bockmuehl. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1979. 47 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

**THE NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARY ON THE OLD TESTAMENT: THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS.** By G. J. Wenham. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, Grand Rapids, 1979. 362 pages. Cloth. \$9.95.

**REPORT OF THE SIXTY-SECOND ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE E.L.S. Theme: Take Fast Hold of Instruction.** Compiled by Alf Merseth. Lutheran Synod Book Co., Mankato, Mn. 1979. 164 pages. Paper. No price given.

**JEWS AND CHRISTIANS IN DIALOGUE:** New Testament Foundations. By John Koenig. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1979. 185 pages. Paper. \$7.95.

- BIBLICAL AFFIRMATIONS OF WOMAN.** By Leonard Swidler. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1979. 382 pages. Paper. \$9.95. (Cloth \$17.95)
- THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.** By James D. Smart. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1979. 162 pages. Paper. \$7.95
- JESUS AND HIS COMING.** By John A. T. Robinson. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1979. 192 pages. Paper. \$6.95.
- WRESTLING WITH ROMANS.** By John A. T. Robinson. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1979. 148 pages. Paper. \$5.95.
- DECIDE TO LIVE: Adult Approaches to Values.** By William A. Charland, Jr. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1979. 156 pages. Paper. \$6.95.
- NEW DIRECTIONS IN NEW TESTAMENT STUDY.** By Patrick Henry. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1979. 300 pages. Paper. \$9.95. (Cloth \$19.95)
- THE EMERGING ORDER: God in the Age of Scarcity.** By Jeremy Rifkin with Ted Howard. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1979. 303 pages. Paper. No price given.
- UP TO JERUSALEM WHERE HE MUST SUFFER: Sermons and Dialogs for Lent.** By Richard E. Bauerle and Frederick W. Kemper. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979. 125 pages. Paper. No price given.
- THE FEMININE DIMENSION OF THE DIVINE.** By Joan Chamberlain Engelsman. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1979. 203 pages. Paper. \$8.95.
- GOD'S PEOPLE AT WORK IN THE PARISH: A Handbook for Parish Leaders.** By Charles S. Mueller, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979. 63 pages. Paper. No price given.
- WORSHIPING GOD WITH JOY: A Planning Guide for the Worship Committee.** By Hugo J. Gehrke. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979. 32 pages. Paper. No price given.
- SPEAKING BOLDLY GOD'S WORD OF RESCUE: A Planning Guide for the Evangelism Committee.** By Arthur E. Graf. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979. 31 pages. Paper. No price given.
- TEACHING AND LEARNING GOD'S GOOD NEWS: A Planning Guide for the Education Committee.** By Victor A. Constien. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979. 32 pages. Paper. No price given.
- SERVING OTHERS IN JESUS' NAME: A planning Guide for the Social Ministry Committee.** By Leslie F. Weber. Concordia Publishing House, 1979. 32 pages. Paper. No price given.
- SHARING GOD'S CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER: A Planning Guide for the Board of Elders.** By Peter L. Steinke. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979. 32 pages. Paper. No price given.
- GATHERING AND MANAGING GOD'S RESOURCES: A Planning Guide for the Stewardship Committee.** By Marcus T. Zill. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979. 32 pages. Paper. No price given.
- CALLING AND CARING FOR CHURCH WORKERS: A Planning Guide for Parish Officers.** By Frederick A. Niedner. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979. 32 pages. Paper. No price given.

THE ETHICS OF PERSUASIVE PREACHING. By Raymond W. McLaughlin. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1979. 215 pages. Cloth. \$9.95.

ONE-ON-ONE EVANGELISM. By James H. Jauncey. Moody Press, Chicago, 1978. 119 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

A CONSUMING FIRE. By John K. Roth. John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1979. 191 pages. Cloth. \$8.95.

JONAH: An Exposition. By R. T. Kendall. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1979. 269 pages. Paper. \$5.95.

### **A Note from the Editors**

Numbers 1 and 2 (the January and April issues) of volume 45 of the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY have been combined under one cover for financial reasons. The annual CTQ request for voluntary funding produced gratifying results. However, our periodical is faced with the prospects of a lower budget and higher operating and mailing costs.



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